



Journal of Basic Writing

From a Whisper to a Voice: Sociocultural Style and Anti-Racist Pedagogy

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Reworking the Policing of Plagiarism: Borrowings from Basic Writing, Authorship Studies, and the Citation Project

Missy Watson

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CALL FOR ARTICLES

We welcome manuscripts of 20-30 pages, double spaced, on topics related to basic and ESL writing, broadly interpreted. Submissions should follow current MLA guidelines. Manuscripts are refereed anonymously. To assure impartial review, include name(s), affiliation(s), mailing and e-mail addresses, and a short biographical note for publication on the cover page only. The second page should include the title but no author identification, an abstract of about 150 words, and a list of four to five key words. Endnotes should be kept to a minimum. It is the author's responsibility to obtain written permission for including excerpts from student writing, especially as it entails IRB review (which should be noted in an endnote).

Contributions should be submitted as Word document attachments via e-mail to: Hope.Parisi@kbcc.cuny.edu, and Cheryl.Smith@baruch.cuny.edu. You will receive a confirmation of receipt; a report on the status of your submission will follow in eight to ten weeks.

All manuscripts must focus clearly on basic writing and must add substantively to the existing literature. We seek manuscripts that are original, stimulating, well-grounded in theory, and clearly related to practice. Work that reiterates what is known or work previously published will not be considered.

We invite authors to write about such matters as classroom practices in relation to basic writing or second-language theory; cognitive and rhetorical theories and their relation to basic writing; social, psychological, and cultural implications of literacy; discourse theory; grammar, spelling, and error analysis; linguistics; computers and new technologies in basic writing; assessment and evaluation; writing center practices; teaching logs and the development of new methodologies; and cross-disciplinary studies combining basic writing with such fields as psychology, anthropology, journalism, and art. The journal is in active dialogue with the scholarship of new literacies, translanguaging, multimodality, digital rhetorics and online and social-media impacts as per intersectional writing identity formations.

The term "basic writer" is used with wide diversity today, and critiques the institutions and contexts that place students in basic writing and standardize academic language, as much as it may illumine the subtexts of individuals' writing practices. To help readers, therefore, authors should describe clearly the student population and settings which they are discussing.

We particularly encourage a variety of manuscripts: speculative discussions which venture fresh interpretations; essays which draw heavily on student writing as supportive evidence for new observations; research written in non-technical language; and collaborative writings which provocatively debate more than one side of a central controversy. A familiarity with the journal is the best way to determine whether JBW is your next venue for scholarship.

EDITORS' COLUMN

Late August is an emotional time for teachers. We throw a longing glance back at summer before turning, with anticipation, to meet new groups of students and teach new or redesigned lessons and courses. Even through the haze of dread that comes with letting go of all that summer was or promised to be, there is hope. Most students feel the same way. A rising fifth grader we know dreamed in mid-August that he was at school on his first day, lost in the hallway of a suddenly unfamiliar building, searching for his new classroom—dreadful. But then—hope!—when he found his best friend and they continued the search together. College students, we may imagine, are more jaded than the average ten-year old. Still, it's worth asking: as they sit in new chairs in new classrooms on day one, what conflicting emotions are they feeling? What are their assumptions about their institutions, courses, and teachers? What are their goals and how would they design their own educational paths, spaces, identities, and purposes, if given the chance? This issue gets at some of these questions by looking at student experiences across a range of academic encounters with issues ranging from mastering writing style and reading difficult texts to navigating diverse languaging acts and the thorny landscape of academic honesty.

In “From a Whisper to a Voice: Sociocultural Style and Anti-Racist Pedagogy,” Sarah Stanley begins by imagining a scene we rarely see: a student receiving teacher feedback on a draft, specifically feedback on a style choice the student has made in the attempt to construct a meaning that her audience may or may not recognize. Stanley asks: *“if, given how the world surrounding my classroom operates, my students negotiate identity and conflict as they write, then what should be my response to this particular writer?”* In order to take into account the diverse cultural and racial identities at play in teaching and the feedback process, Stanley promotes awareness of racial realism, sociocultural style, and the need for democratic, collective feedback spaces. We have to consciously foreground race, she argues, because “racial friction around instructor feedback and student response is likely happening anyway, regardless of whether or not we name it as such.” To examine the workings of race and the power dynamics inherent in teaching and assessing writing, Stanley offers a case study from her own teaching history to showcase her development from “prioritize[ing] *my* pedagogical relationship” toward putting more emphasis on “the experiences of the people in the room” (italics in the original). Recognizing the value of “the people in the room” grounds her argument that “an impressionistic response that does not also include

democratic discussion with students about intentions will not only limit learning or growth, but I believe it will lead us further away from, as Asao Inoue puts it, ‘socially just futures.’”

Cheryl Hogue Smith also foregrounds the experience of all the people in her classroom as she theorizes an instructional approach designed to steer struggling students away from feelings of failure and inadequacy. In “Aesthetic Reading: Struggling Students Sensing Their Way to Academic Success,” Hogue Smith extends her arguments from an earlier *JBW* article (2012), where she showed how inexperienced readers, driven by the goal of finding correct answers in a text, often adopt a “deferent” stance, relying on “the smartest person in the room” to tell them what the text is about. But, as Hogue Smith demonstrates, “without engaging authentically in aesthetic reading, students are unlikely to find their transactions with difficult texts productive occasions for any kind of legitimate learning.” Rather, “struggling readers only hear the loud echoes that say they aren’t smart enough or good enough to understand a text,” an approach to reading she labels the “anesthetic” stance. To address this lost opportunity to engage and learn, and to counter the potential to experience reading as “emotionally defeating,” Hogue Smith presents the case of one student, Jackie, in a first-year writing class in a learning community at Kingsborough Community College. The instance of Jackie demonstrates how an “assignment. . . designed to avoid the anesthetic stance—and, thus, obliterate the deferent-anesthetic causal pair—can help students become successful readers and revisers.” In tracing Jackie’s progress toward more productive intellectual and emotional reading stances, Hogue Smith offers a method to help students navigate the complexity of the reading process, avoid “feelings of inadequacy, inferiority, and imminent failure,” and ultimately “adopt the aesthetic stance that is crucial to their academic success.”

In “‘Languaging 101’: Translingual Practices for the Translingual Realities of the SEEK Composition Classroom,” Lucas Corcoran uses translingual theory to evolve an instructional approach for engaging students more meaningfully in their language and literacy development. Like Stanley and Hogue Smith, Corcoran foregrounds the people he encounters in his classroom, making room for student voice and experience in the development of a praxis-oriented scholarship. His project takes on the challenge of defining pedagogical, assessment, and curricular responses to the translingual turn that has shaped much scholarly discussion in the field for more than a decade, without adequately articulating a range of classroom approaches or assessment tools for practitioners to apply in their local contexts. As he

explores how instructors and institutions can rise to the challenge of a translingual practice, Corcoran presents a case study of Genesis, a student in his SEEK writing class at John Jay College, to demonstrate how “university-level composition and rhetoric pedagogy should resist the tendency to abstract a singular language from the heterogeneous rhetorical acts that comprise students’ language lives.” Along the way, Corcoran advances the claim that “the ability to theorize and contextualize the ever-shifting contours of language and literacy is the critical skill that will serve students the most throughout their academic careers and their political lives.” By focusing not only on students’ academic experiences but also their political lives, Corcoran underscores the social urgency—and social justice—parameters of writing theory as it meets the complexity of writing practice.

In our last article, “Reworking the Policing of Plagiarism: Borrowings from Basic Writing, Authorship Studies, and the Citation Project,” Missy Watson tackles one of the stickiest questions of our profession: how do we define plagiarism? Her approach to academic dishonesty shifts the scholarly perspective by being more inclusive of student experience while also turning the critical lens away from students’ wrongdoing toward teachers’ assumptions. Because “source use is but one of many discursive features of academic writing to which we hold ideological and emotional attachments that may influence exclusionary perspectives and practices,” Watson insists that we must “examine our own values placed on source use, acknowledge these values as cultural rather than natural, and then work collaboratively with students to demystify and contest the very values we hold and expect students to also share and uphold.” This self-examination can be as fraught with emotion and prone to misstep as trying to account for the range of student voices and experiences in both our theoretical and practical approaches to the basic writing classroom. But Watson makes the case for why it’s worth the risk: “arguably more so in basic writing than in other enclaves of composition studies, scholars and teachers strive to develop self-reflection both in our students and in us,” she says. “Our willingness to develop consciousness-raising tactics that help us politicize, criticize, and re-envision our values and practices invites our pedagogies to transform and to be transformative.”

The self-reflective scholarship we feature in this issue shines a light on all the people in our classrooms. This work is not without some risk—it involves exposure of our gaps and failures as practitioners, and requires the thorny work of representing student experience honestly, ethically, and meaningfully. But the advancement of our scholarly agenda will stagnate

if we fail to continually develop fair, adequate, and even profound ways of bringing all the people in our classrooms into the theories and practices we evolve. Students, not unlike many teachers, have stress dreams about their first day of class, and they imagine their academic lives in ways we may not be accounting for. Our field was founded in the spirit of democratic approaches to the teaching of writing and to the social justice project of access to higher education. What will become of basic writing if we let access to our scholarship narrow, if the multitude of voices that shape our practice at every level is reduced to a single drone?

--**Cheryl C. Smith** and **Hope Parisi**

From a Whisper to a Voice: Sociocultural Style and Anti-Racist Pedagogy

Sarah Stanley

ABSTRACT: Against a Racial Real backdrop, I argue for consciously adopting a sociocultural approach to style in linguistically and racially diverse Basic Writing classrooms. To make this argument, I focus on a multilingual writer named Tejada, who reveals how she had internalized a racialized stereotypical discourse about herself as a minority—a discourse which operated in an unconscious manner despite it informing her written voice on the page. Tejada's revelation led to her decision to amplify, rather than hushing, her own voice. Her epiphany is presented through a case study approach, including a close analysis of Tejada's process writing and recorded transcripts of peer to peer and student to teacher interaction. I end the article with some practical advice for how to promote sociocultural style feedback that develops a practice of micro-affirmation with students.

KEYWORDS: anti-racist pedagogy; Basic Writing; enregisterment; micro-aggression; socio-cultural style

INT. KITCHEN - NIGHT

TEACHER'S POV

A WHITE TEACHER with a RED PEN rewrites a sentence on her student's paper, her eyes never looking up as she CROSSES OUT the parentheticals, notes a skillful phrasing by ✓ing the left margin of the page.

INT. OFFICE - DAY

EXTREME CLOSE UP, SCREEN CAPTURE

as CURSOR selects "add comment" from the insert menu on DOCS, types control+ t, a new tab and a quick Google search is typed in BROWSER "Purdue OWL's use of parentheses," copies text, "Use parentheses to set off nonessential material, such as dates, clarifying

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information, or sources, from a sentence,” pastes, clicks COMMENT.

INT. STUDENT ROOM

a BROWN STUDENT stares at blinking CURSOR, CURSOR moves to click RESOLVE.

I have begun this article with screenplay directions and conventions to draw on a style unfamiliar to some readers of this journal. I've chosen a screenplay form because of how it sets the stage for a story: directions highlight whether or not the storytelling takes place in an interior or exterior setting, may prescribe the casting of the characters ((i.e., BROWN or WHITE)), and yet does not reveal the internal consciousness of the characters. I, and perhaps you too, have had to learn about the form, and how these conventions ((INT., capitalization, new lines)) are used to capture where the focus of the viewer should be before dialogue occurs. Writing in screenplay directions is an attempt to disrupt my own ease of reading, as I highlight the dramatically small scale—that is, the micro and interior scenes of feedback. By including these three short scenes, I intend for their directions to enact the distance between written marks, on pages and on a body of work, as well as the tension between interpretation and intention. In these hypothetical scenes, despite the difference between the technologies and the effects of a red pen, we imagine a teacher who is alone with a stylistic choice of a student writer—in this case, the choice to place a detail in parenthesis. These scenes unfold a story where a series of assessive contexts create a dramatic tension between the characters. Specifically, the character of the TEACHER is a cerebral, well-intentioned, but oblivious WHITE authority. This teacher is not heeding racial realities surrounding these juxtaposed interior scenes. In this way, I'm imagining a version of myself.

Debates about the sociocultural politics of what motivates and should motivate basic writing teaching *and* basic writing teachers will always be caught up in how the world outside the classroom shapes not only the styles inside the classroom, but also how we respond to these styles (see Harris; Lu “Redefining”; “Symposium on Basic Writing”). In these debates, sociocultural difference or conflict is theorized as a resource for a writer's agency; however, this theoretical argument complicates the *practice* of teaching Basic Writing: *if, given how the world surrounding my classroom operates, my students negotiate identity and conflict as they write, then what should be my response to this particular writer?*

In this article, I summon sociocultural politics by questioning not only the place where much of our stylistic feedback about the micro happens—too often outside of our shared time with students as a social group—but also the manner of our feedback. Drawing from Andrea Olinger’s sociocultural style definition, where style involves “the dynamic co-construction of typified indexical meanings (types of people, practices, situations, texts) perceived in a single sign or a cluster of signs and influenced by participants’ language ideologies” (125), my goal is to reveal how this definition works from the interactions of a student named Tejada, her peers, and myself, as a graduate student, teaching Basic Writing at a large, public research university in the northeastern United States in 2009. Presented as a case study, the example involves how a micro feature of Tejada’s style receives impressions from her white teacher (me) and her diverse peer group, and then how this feature becomes registered (*enregistered*), so that Tejada is able to discover and affirm a deeper social-personal resonance, a racial awareness, for her voice.

My goal is to encourage our attention (and our camera angles) to shift from the finished narrative of teaching style as rhetorical choice to a not-yet story where dialogues, reflections, listening, and metalinguistic awareness around sociocultural style and voice emerge. For many, the capitalization of a letter or the placement or absence of a parenthetical are not typical agendas of a classroom, of research, or a subject of almost a decade of thought, as they are for me here. Such stylistic considerations often occur at a late stage of review and away from the public scene of a classroom. What might we miss by not zooming in on such micro moments?

White Response: Registering Impressions Privately

Anti-racist Basic Writing must recognize the ongoing and historical reality of racism in ourselves, our classrooms, and our interpretations. Carmen Kynard, teaching at the John Jay College of Criminal Justice, theorizes anti-racist pedagogy through what Derrick Bell names as a Racial Realist positioning: “And it don’t stop,” referring to the ongoing reality of that position (Kynard 382). I also adopt this positioning, because given the ongoing realities of racism that structure each of our daily lives, impressions of style emerge from race-based experiences. That is, since racism informs our classrooms, our pedagogies, and the interiorities of ourselves and our students, an impression of a micro feature can function as the subtle signal of a racial stereotype, and such recurring impressions create a pattern. Moreover, an impressionistic response that does not also include democratic discussion

with students about intentions will not only limit learning or growth, but I believe it will lead us further away from, as Asao Inoue puts it, “socially just futures.”

Instead, I argue the association between a teacher’s impressionistic response to a student’s stylistic feature requires a public outing. In my position here, I diverge from Star Medzarian, who contends “that to teach style effectively through response, we must use language that moves beyond impression and considers the rhetoricality of students’ stylistic choices” (188). She writes,

Impressionistic description, as I define it in relation to response to student writing, encompasses all commentary that does not refer to the student writing itself. It is the embodiment of our own reactions to texts as readers and is especially problematic for evaluating student writing, as it influences the grade that is ultimately assigned. (189)

Medzarian further aligns a critique of this impressionistic discourse with literary approaches to style and current traditional rhetoric. However, without an acknowledgement of diversity or Bell’s Racial Realism in the writing classroom, Medzarian’s critique of impressionistic discourse risks a reading as another chapter in a field history that assumes monolingual and *white* perspectives when it comes to the embodiment of our own reactions. Inoue calls out these generalized impressionistic judgments because of how they work to assume an embodied sense of “power.” He writes,

And what does strength, authenticity, and honesty look like as textual markers? It is a self-reliant voice that is focused on itself as a cool, rational, thinking self in the writing and in its reading of [a] writer’s own experiences or ideas. This isn’t to say these are bad qualities in writing, only that they are linked to whiteness and this link often has uneven racist consequences in classroom writing assessments. (49-50)

What Inoue references as “whiteness” occurs first through an *impression* based on how a teacher has read a stylistic feature of a student.

The solution is not to replace our impressions of style in favor of teaching conscious rhetorical choices. Rather, the challenge is to recognize how impressions can become a starting point and not the finish line in our discussions with students about stylistic features in their writing. Given this

claim, my argument is that if we adopt a Racial Realist positioning, then we must not ignore, dismiss, or respond in an isolated manner to aspects of student writing which trigger a racial impression about voice; instead we must create a space for sociocultural style.

Dissin' Feedback: A Basic Writing Assessive Context

WHAT IF students answered back to the teacher in the classroom space rather than behind her back in the institutional hallway?—Pamela Gay, Introduction to “Dialogizing Response” (4)

Feedback about style occurs in a power, or assessive, context, initiated by a teacher to students. That is, like the opening scene of this article, our feedback process is often *private* or *interpersonal*, and this choice means we are not able to benefit from the diverse perspectives present in our classrooms. But when teachers share their impression of a particular micro feature, and allow the impression to circulate in a whole classroom environment, we learn to reflect on the limits and possibilities of bringing our impressions of style out into the open, alongside our students. Laura Micciche’s “Making a Case for Rhetorical Grammar” provides insightful topics for classroom discussions where grammar itself is a “positioning tool” for student inquiry into published texts (722). Yet, Micciche does not practice these inquiries as grounded in student writing as an open discussion—a pedagogical decision that limits how peers and Micciche might otherwise have gotten caught up in co-constructing stylistic interpretations of the writing they were doing, not only reading, in the course. However, Min-Zhan Lu’s “Professing Multiculturalism Style in the Contact Zone” *does* invite students into class discussions of sociocultural options in a peer’s writing. Yet, as Lu’s pedagogical decision is mediated through a handout Lu creates, demonstrating how a student’s syntax signals multiple discursive positions, Lu has in a way already framed the discussion, and limits a democratic discussion of sociocultural style. We need more pedagogical style scholarship where participants are invited to share what it is *they* notice, an invitation that may enable similar or alternative positions alongside the impressions of a teacher.

Moreover, racial friction around instructor feedback and student response is likely happening anyway, regardless of whether or not we name it as such. Carole Center’s critique of teacher researcher scholarship in *JBW* provides examples that, as Center contends, “may offer rich analyses of students’ reactions to comments without making the students’ or teachers’

race visible,” noting the problem with this erasure as “readers. . . unable to make use of this research to understand how race may influence the power relations that underlie students’ responses to comments” (30). Center’s analysis of seven years of *JBW* teacher scholarship, including approximately seventy articles, tracks whether or not race is made visible in student-present articles (24). Not only is there a small number of student-present articles, the numbers of racially-visible articles about all subjects, including the teacher, is even smaller. Of note for my argument is Center’s analysis of two student-present articles where race is invisible, by Jane Maher and Sara Chaney. In both texts, rich stories of teacher-student interactions are provided, such as Chaney’s feedback letter to her student Amber, and Maher’s mini-scene of a feedback interaction with her student Robin. At the same time, building from Center’s argument, I highlight how feedback exchanges in Maher’s article reveal a kind of scenario that is relevant to current discussions of feedback as micro-aggression. Maher’s narrative about teaching writing in prison and the challenge of building affirming relationships with students inside reveals both her advocacy and her knowledge of the socioeconomic, racist power structures at work within any project of rehabilitation—especially within educational projects that do not first focus on whether people you work with are habilitated in the first place. Maher’s intention, however, is not the focus of my analysis; it is the impact to Robin. Maher writes,

I had just returned a set of essays to my students. After about five minutes Robin (not her real name) approached my desk and placed her essay in front of me. By the time I had finished commenting on her essay, I had written more than she had, and clearly my comments had offended her. I looked down and saw that she had printed, in large letters, the following words: “Are you dissin’ me?” The other students were still reviewing their essays, so I had a chance to respond: “No, Robin, I’m not dissin’ you, I’m trying to help you become a better writer so you can succeed in this course.” When we had a chance to talk (out in the hall, away from the other students, but within earshot of an officer), I discovered that Robin had completed three years of high school, but during those three years, she had not written one essay, “not even one page, not even one paragraph, not even one word,” yet she had passed all of her English courses. Robin was furious that I had “messed up” her essay “with all that shit you wrote. If you don’t like my writing, just give me a bad grade.” (96)

What Maher points to in the previous contexts of Robin's learning history, where Robin's accomplishments of three years of high school do not include having written an essay, a page, a paragraph, or even a word, is alarming. However, recognizing this reality means that the contrast to what Robin *did* accomplish now by turning in an assignment sets up the tension. Take how Maher's sharing of Robin's reaction includes the term "dissin.'" "Dissin'" is a lexical feature of Robin's style first expressed in a written context to teacher Jane. The term indexes a social meaning in the narrative, as *dissin'* refers to how Robin interprets Jane's feedback. Jane may be trying to validate Robin's concerns by repeating Robin's words back to her, when she exclaims, "No, Robin, I'm not dissin' you." Here is the beginning of a sociocultural interaction, and I assume such interactions between them continue as Maher shares that "since Robin questioned every one of my comments and corrections, she managed to pass my course and the exit examination and qualify for credit-bearing classes" (96).

I read the *dissin'* interaction as a missed opportunity for learning more about Robin, Jane, and the expectations of the other writers in the room about feedback. Rather than exploring this co-construction, Maher's telling of one interaction highlights the rightful blame on a system of inadequate resources, bad teaching, and the consequences; however, since *dissin'* is not unraveled or examined, the reader is unable to interpret what Robin means by *dissin'* or why Jane says what she does in response. In this way, *dissin'* could register a different social meaning for the readers of Center's article, since Center's argument is that the presentation of race in *JBW* is often "colorblind," or too implicit. Once we begin to read with sociocultural style in mind, however, perhaps it is not so implicit. While Center remarks Maher's paraphrase of "messed up" for the word *dissin'*, and captures Robin's emotional response by including "all that shit you wrote," Robin's language does not get taken up as a sociocultural stylistic feature, neither by Center nor Maher, and layers of sociocultural style are left unexposed—sociocultural layers that "would be even more valuable explorations of the struggle over the teacher's authority to comment on student writing" (Center 32).

When Jane opts for a semi-private context, referenced to her readers through a use of parentheticals—"(out in the hall, away from the other students, but within earshot of an officer)"—she not only highlights the privilege of a semi-private context for feedback that the teacher initiates, but also signals a lost opportunity for discovering the role *other* students, the full range of voices available in a context, may register with *dissin'*. The power dynamic between teacher and student in their situation is left unex-

plored and presented as simple. What micro feedback might be an example of this feeling for Robin? Why does Jane include the perspective of *dissin'* in her tale? What does the interaction look like out in the hallway? What impression does Robin get when Jane is so quickly able to assemble more in commentary than she had written initially? And how was Jane able to finally repair this relationship so clearly to conclude its narrative with the student Robin's "teach me, Jane, teach me"?

Sociocultural style researcher Olinger theorizes that our understandings of style "must consider the forces shaping individual's perceptions and the ways in which stylistic meanings might change over time or across contexts" (121). Olinger's interactive take on style foregrounds dynamism and co-construction, as collaboration helps writers notice how style's meanings are "constantly jostling one another and being reshaped," (126) and resulting in "styling" (124). Therefore, sociocultural impressions and disagreement, such as "dissin," should be made part of the feedback on writing in our shared time with all students. Taking such a view, an alternative presents itself. What if instead, the interaction between teacher and student had been more public by way of questions for the rest of the class: "Do you all agree that in marking up Robin's paper, I'm dissin' her? Am I hurting or helping Robin's voice by correcting her writing?" What new opportunities, and for what, would installing such a moment in the classroom offer in terms of styling and recognition?

Interactive Styling: Researching Basic Writing

Medzarian endorses a style pedagogy that contextualizes style with the values of a classroom, which is important; however, we cannot ignore the relationship between an impression and a choice when it comes to style and Basic Writing. The tension echoes educational discourse about access and power because unconscious (impressionistic) occurrence and conscious effect (rhetorical choice) is, in any educational context, emergent. Impressions of language use affect how we voice our identities in an educational context (Besharah and Olivier 26), and play a role in how we shape our relationships. Voice, in this way, is less a feature of "individual accomplishment" (Sperling and Appleman) and more "the capacity of making oneself heard" (Juffermans and Van Der Aa 113).

A collaborative classroom with student writing at the center helps micro features of style get registered, or, put in linguistic anthropological terms, helps to *enregister* choices for that writer. That is, a collaborative

classroom makes possible the emergent connection between how a “register,” or set of linguistic features, and a “voice” become recognized as linked by a social group (Agha; Johnstone). Beyond a stable set of options, style is interactive, and we perform style with others. Style enables us to project a “type of person, practice, situation, text” in a context (Olinger 125). That is, style must reference something specific that is recognizable to another, what Olinger refers to as “typified indexical meanings” (125). Olinger’s reference to indexical meaning points us to Asif Agha’s enregisterment as the process behind a register being recognized *as register* and one that “entails that the population of users. . . understand the stereotypic personas, relationships, and practices that the language conjures” (40).¹

In the case study of a student, Tejada, who had the opportunity, along with all of my writing students, to receive class feedback on stylistic choices in sentence writing, the process of enregisterment led to Tejada’s styling.² For this case study that follows, I work to reveal through selections from classroom transcripts of interaction some of the stance-taking, interaction, and commentary of sociocultural style. These interactions happened through two kinds of sentence workshops; one of these involved student-led sentence workshops and the other were instructor-led sentence workshops, with sentences selected by me from our shared course readings. I ensured that every writer had a chance to stand in front of their peers and lead their own sentence workshop over the semester, just as I determined the type of sentence and focus of the interaction for the published writing. My goal was to facilitate sociocultural style.

I highlight different moments in Tejada’s process to demonstrate how enregisterment led her toward a metalinguistic awareness of her voice in context. By showing a “caught-on-camera” interaction alongside some of her reflective writing, the case study places value on the benefits of social cultural style. Olinger warns that methods of researching sociocultural style may entail “[e]liciting or inferring typified indexical meanings”; yet, it is not possible to do this through written texts alone (127). Since context is paramount in this approach, teacher research should include “writers’ commentary on the texts” (127). I collected all of Tejada’s process drafts and reflections pre and post workshop, and analyzed transcripts of classroom interactions where she participated. I selected from this data snippets of interaction that demonstrated the process of enregisterment, grounding my analysis with Tejada’s explicit reasons for choosing her sentence. In addition, since “indexical meanings are visible when writers take stances on the identities they perceive in particular words or phrases,” inclusion

of embodied description also helps reveal sociocultural style (127). “This stance-taking might be visible in their tone of voice, facial expressions, and laughter” (127). While my transcripts of our class interaction are in the form of recorded spoken language, I did take care to use notation that mimics the audible pauses, interruptions, starts, and stops of the discussion, such as “. . .” to show pauses between one and two seconds of duration.

Classroom Interactions: Enregistering Tejada’s Parenthesis

The story begins with Tejada’s choice of her sentence. As she writes in a reflective post on our learning management software before the class’ second sentence workshop of the semester, on that day in October, “this sentence is very important.” She offers further reflection to her classmates on SPARK about how the topic of the sentence affects “many people’s choices to speak or remain silent.”

After students write these responses that preface their choice of sentences, workshop begins. Tejada is the second writer for workshop that day. She proceeds to write this sentence on the dry erase board:

I, (as part of a minority group) have witnessed and experienced how a single word or action on the part of those who are not categorized within the dominant culture, has contributed to the growth of stereotypical racial views as well as the choices of expression among those who are victimized by prejudice ideologies.

The first thing Tejada has to say after writing her sentence is “yea I know it’s long. It has a lot of stuff.” Note she does not make a claim that the sentence is long because it is complicated, or because it is performing a tangled sense of relationship (which it is); instead it’s just long because “it has a lot of stuff,” or a lot of content, contained within its form. She then offers some context of what motivates her take on the topic. Referencing the incident at the VMA’s involving Taylor Swift, sharing that she can relate to Swift “as a minority,” she continues,

Tejada: And I can actually relate to this because I am a minority group and if we. . . whether we want to accept it or not, race is extremely influential in today’s society and there have been instances in which I have been kind of. . . you know. . . scared of expressing myself. Because-- for example. . . I. . . I tend to sometimes speak in a loud voice, sometimes. And this gives other people an impression

of Hispanic people as being loud. And stuff like that. I also refer to the Kanye West thing at the VMA's [suppressed laughter] where his act, which was-- he was very rude and everything, but because of what he did, and I have encountered many people on campus. . . students who have told me that black people are insensitive and-- or. . . rude actually. So this is an example of how, you know, one action or a single word can contribute to this view. And how these prejudice ideologies kind of, you know, affect our decision on whether to remain silent or speak and express ourselves.

I'm mapping Tejada's use of "kind of's" and "you knows" in this transcript excerpt onto her use of parentheses in her sentence. Her various pauses and shifts in tone reveal a rhetorical context that Tejada is still formalizing, both in her paper and in her relationship to her peers. Her words reveal her strong conviction, and yet, the presence of hedging above illustrates her awareness that she might be speaking to an audience who likely must be persuaded when it comes to the reality behind her words. This relationship to audience is formed in her use of parentheses in her sentence. The connections between racism and Tejada's life as a student has not been made explicit in her written description of her paper's purpose; however, her purposes become clearer as she speaks it.

Tejada: I chose it because my essay is about things that influence us and our choices on whether to express ourselves or, you know, remain silent. And this sentence is really referring to the. . . the quote that I said earlier in earlier classes about Wallace [an instructor-led sentence workshop] in which he says that, you know, things that are said. . . basically society who. . . those people who are not part of the dominant culture are basically it's hard for them to express themselves. In some cases when they do they're rendered invisible. You know? Not heard. Not understood.

After Tejada provides this context, she begins to field questions from her peers. For example, when AJ, an immigrant from Jordan and multilingual writer, asks her to explain again how stereotypes affect speaking or silence after she introduces her paper, I again note more audience cues in her response:

Tejada: Oh, well. Like I said it's like. . . The way you feel. . . I'm sorry. I'm sorry. . . I believe it relates to that because I, myself, have been in situations in which things that I've said or things that I do have

actually contributed to my entire race as a whole. Some people are kind of, I don't know, I'm just saying there are just some people who take your actions. . . This is just directed towards people who are a part of minority groups, obviously, who are permanently affected by this but. . . I just feel like there are situations in which one is presented with. . . pretty much anything you say or anything you do is actually, you know, judged and how that [AJ: So. . .] fear of being judged [AJ: So. . .] kind of affects how you express yourself.

Tejada's sense of relationship here becomes more defined. She tells AJ that, actually, her sentence is "just directed towards people who are a part of minority groups." Such an audience, however, is not invoked by her choice to place her minority group membership in parentheses.

As Tejada's workshop is heading toward a close, I feel like I have to say something about the parentheses or the length, something to help Tejada at that moment get to a direct sense of her insight that she was implicating herself in that she was placing her identity in parentheticals. I want to connect form and content together, as well as to prompt Tejada to consider more critically what her parentheses could mean for her as what she names as her *minority* voice. My struggle to respond to this tangled meaning and also my relationship to it as her white teacher reveals itself in my question to her.

I ask, "Do you want help making this sentence more—do you like it... was it just the idea?" I want to encourage her critical thinking, not lessen it by focusing too much on those parentheticals; but at the same time, the sentence is long, and I have a hard time keeping in mind the various relationships. Tejada responds, in a polite, albeit uncritical manner, "If anyone has any suggestions I will gladly take them." She gets a response from AJ, who tells her "Maybe make two sentences out of that." She jokes with him, "Two? And that still wouldn't be too long? Oh I know I tend to do that." At that point, two women whom I assume are identifying with this minority category as Tejada has presented it in her sentence, contribute. Sonya is from an immigrant family from Lebanon and Taquana is a black woman from Boston; both speak up with some affirming feedback:

Sonya: As a part of a minority group, in parenthesis, maybe you could just start with that. Then you could do a comma, I and then you could. . .

Me: Yeah, you're parenthesis 'as part of a minority group' is kind of

interesting for what you're saying.

Taquana: Yea.

Tejada: Okay. . . Any other. . .

Me: Don't you think? I mean. . .

Sonya: Yeah, no no. Because I think that is a big part of the sentence. . .

Me: Yeah, and yet it's in parenthesis which is like I'm being kind of. . . [whispering] I'm whispering.

Sonya: Yeah.

After this exchange, Tejada thanks us all and says that she will take it "under consideration." The workshop's performative whisper, a prompt, to Tejada to consider her options linger.

Between this workshop and the end of the semester reflection, our coursework and Tejada's relationship to it bear parallels. Take, for example, another interaction in the following unit, *Examining Literacies of Power through Privilege*. One day during this unit, I conducted a sentence workshop based on the published writer Gloria Anzaldúa. Students were assigned to read an excerpt from Anzaldúa's *Borderlands*, and I had chosen to discuss in class a sentence where I noted sociocultural style in Anzaldúa's use of the word "Anglo." I chose it to introduce how Anzaldúa's perspective on linguistic colonization is performed by how she combines both English and Spanish. That is, I wanted to show them that such perspectives could not only be expressed or argued in a text, but also *performed* through styling. She writes, "*El Anglo con cara de inocente nos arrancó la lengua*. Wild tongues can't be tamed, they can only be cut out." After we acknowledge that one sentence is in Spanish and the other in English, I ask about the translation differences in these sentences. We first went word for word in the sentence.

Me: Anglo. Never heard that word? Tejada, what does that word mean?

Tejada: Um, They use it to refer to just people, basically.

Me: Ok, people of color?

Tejada: Um, yea. Actually, it depends. You know how like they use to like, like Anglo Saxon people, that's what they are trying to say.

Me: Oh, so old white people?

Tejada: Yea.

As I reflect back to Tejada's sentence workshop and the sentence within parentheses, I notice how her sentence as shared in workshop connects "a wild tongue" and the Anglo power structure that cuts tongues; yet here Tejada's argument about race and identity now brackets that relationship. Her initial answer to my question "what does Anglo mean" reveals to me now how her response that white people are "just people" in the initial response to the question connects to her sentence workshop. However, there are differences here worth pointing out. First, the "race" of the Anglo was something I made explicit. I did so because I want to focus on relationships between race and language—the lexical choice of *Anglo* is very important in the Spanish sentence, both because of its social meaning *and* its styling. We then go back to our word-by-word translation.

Tejada: [interrupts] *con cara de inocente*...is like with an innocent face *nos arrancó la lengua*. . . basically like he snatched her tongue. . . that's what it says.

Me: Ok, so the Anglo snatched her tongue? That's what the Spanish says.

Tejada: [agrees]

Me: So, the next sentence is "wild tongues can't be tamed, they can only be cut out." What's the relationship between those two ideas? So, would you say it's in the same, like, meaning space?

Tejada: [Shakes head no.]

Me: Ok, why? What does it make you think about?

Nick: Who. Who cut her tongue out.

Nick's response, a white student from Martha's Vinyard, reveals the power of this sentence, since it is the Anglo who becomes connected to the reality of the English sentence of "wild tongues" being "cut out." Perhaps Tejada or her peers lingered on this contrast. Who cuts tongues? What does cutting a tongue look like? What makes a tongue wild?

It is now December when Tejada reflects on her sentence writing in an end of the semester reflective assignment. In her reflection, she discusses a sentence pattern she has noticed—a pattern that affects both what she writes about as well as how she writes. This pattern, according to Tejada, is that she writes about "social issues" in an "extremely formal [and] extended manner." She concludes her reflection by showing how she has disrupted the pattern a bit by the end of the semester. While she is still writing about social issues, she now "[goes] from extremely long, formal, and general sentences to more direct, short, and thought related sentences." She reflects on the sentence she presented at her workshop and what she learned from the workshop in her end of semester reflection. She writes,

In the sentence workshop for Unit 2, I used an elongated sentence "... I, (as part of a minority group) have witnessed and experienced how a single word or action on the part of those who are not categorized within the dominant culture, has contributed to the growth of stereotypical racial views and also limits the choices of expression among those who are victimized by prejudice ideologies." In this sentence I discuss the manner in which social hierarchy affects the "growth of stereotypical racial views" and how it limits "the choices of expression" of those who are "victimized" by it. Within this sentence, I noticed that I wrote "as part of a minority group" within a parenthesis, which seems as if I am refusing to express it completely or almost whispering it. In a way, I also begin to think about how society affects me instead of writing about it in a more general form. I also described the sentence as one of crucial importance throughout my essay and directly associate the "growth of stereotypical racial views" as affecting the choices people make

on whether to speak or remain silent. Now that I think about it, I believe that in a way, I am expressing a form of silence by enclosing the fact that I am a minority within parenthesis.

While it is interesting to me that Tejada does not mention the sentence workshops explicitly here as contexts that brought her attention to this conventional choice, she does use critical reasoning in relation to it. Her consideration occurs in a sociocultural context, regarding the effects of her conventional option. The revised sentence illustrates how she also chose to make her position in the sentence more direct and open in her relationship to audience, since she no longer chose parentheses to bracket that relationship. Finally, she reflects that this choice, “[n]ow that I think about it,” was “expressing a form of silence.” Therefore, to apply Tejada’s reasoning behind this recognition, this suggests to me her micro consideration of how she relates to her social identity vis-à-vis the parentheses and enregistering her voice. This enregistering process helped affirm her voice from a position of relationship. She has now positioned herself in an explicit conversation about race, power, and education. *Wild tongues can’t be tamed.*

Affirming Our Students’ Voices in Basic Writing

[I]f we focus attention on white property in the educational arena, we can begin to expose it and thus prevent it from operating unnoticed. (30) . . . [W]e must teach [students] to recognize the role that race plays in the academy, help them to negotiate this academic environment more successfully, and ultimately give them the tools to change this environment in ways that they see fit.—Steve Lamos, “Basic Writing” (40)

Steve Lamos takes hold of our camera lens and pans out to a more abstract notion of academic literacy as white property. Recently, Inoue also has shown how any pedagogical action is working through assessment ecologies, and he argues such an ecology better be an Anti-racist one. Both Inoue’s and Lamos’s projects involve the practical ways teachers of Basic Writing can position themselves as Anti-racist in the decisions we make about the Basic Writing subject. For Lamos, this involves a macro critique of race and education, while for Inoue this is a more strategic design of laboring practices. For Basic Writing, what role do we see our students playing in such pedagogy?

I ask this question because, like Inoue, and Lamos, *I* hadn't asked this question; instead, *I* through my curricula, practices, and feedback was making systems of privilege visible *to them*.

Tejada and her peers, however, complicate this subject-object relationship, the one where *we* woke teachers make visible systems of power to *those* students. Yet, looking back at these curricular texts now, despite theorizing whiteness operating through systems of privilege, I notice that language curricula that focus on white privilege in the abstract will not necessarily correspond to our students or ourselves making a direct stylistic connection to their and our own positioning within such a system in practice. Even the *most woke* Basic Writing curricula, ones that explicitly teach how privilege operates within all of our lives despite our intentions or desires for transforming that racial reality as individuals living in a systemically racist culture, will remain abstract unless the people in the room ground it with a sociocultural approach to style (McIntosh; Wildman and Davis).

As a white teacher of Basic Writing in the Fall of 2009, I was not equipped with the everyday reality of racial micro-aggression on a college campus and did not encourage, as I would now, establishing a shared lens with students. I also believe that had I also been in closer proximity—that is, intimate daily living with the frustrations and emotional challenges of exclusion, discrimination, abuse, and aggression—our classroom could have been healthier and more transformative. I was too tightly bound to a curricular map—an effect of whiteness, in how I understood what it meant to teach who I was teaching—and this realization helps me to see how the term micro-aggression continues to resonate.

In the 1970s in her role as Massachusetts Institute of Technology's ombudsman, Mary Rowe's term for recurring acts of unintentional prejudice is "micro-inequity," a concept she defined to theorize the experiences of waves and waves of "untraditional people in any context." Applied to my reflection on my own position, the inequity I committed was about privilege; how I prioritized *my* pedagogical relationship rather than the experiences of the people in the room. At the same time, by sharing the stage with my students, I think we all got lucky. Our luck comes in the form of Tejada's writing, who brought the day-to-day, embodied experience of racism inside her own head, and through collaboration, peer interaction, and reflection, negotiated it in a sociocultural context. Her courage is the luck part of this refiguring.

Later, in her career, Rowe developed language for how we can bring about more luck, and how we can refigure how we relate, through the mentoring practice of micro-affirmation. She writes,

Micro-affirmations are tiny acts of opening doors to opportunity, gestures of inclusion and caring, and graceful acts of listening. Micro-affirmations lie in the practice of generosity, in consistently giving credit to others--in providing comfort and support when others are in distress, . . . Micro-affirmations include the myriad details of fair, specific, timely, consistent and clear feedback that help a person build on strength and correct weakness. (4)

Explicit micro-affirmations help us recognize our voice's power in academic discourse. Noticing this refiguring as luck and courage helps me now recognize some Anti-racist features of styling for basic writers.

Synthesizing Rowe's writing, and also Beverly Tatum's ABC approach to diversity, here is how I see micro-affirmation working:

- *Affirm identities by opening "tiny doors," but not directing steps.* As you work to establish the openings for students to step through, pay attention to how these opportunities teach a class audience different sociocultural perspectives. Resist predetermining the micro activity by using your privilege to decide on which sentence of your students' writing are up for discussion. Instead, invite your students to be front and center directing and participating in sociocultural response.
- *Build community by reflecting on what happens.* For yourself, reflect on your classroom's styling interactions and explicitly recognize, by pointing out to students directly, their "gestures of inclusion and caring" to their peers and how their participation connects to the learning environment. For example, looking back, I might have written to Sonya after the workshop and shared "I'm glad you are in our class, Sonya. You pointing out to Tejada that her use of parenthesis was interesting for what she is saying is exactly the kind of close look at our language choices that I hope happens in these workshops."
- *Cultivate leadership by becoming a student of your students.* As you continually prep for the next class, review the previous classes' sociocultural response. Ask yourself, how can I use my instructor time to cultivate what I am learning from my students and how they are learning from each other?

Given these recommendations, listening in a sociocultural approach to style seems paramount. A sociocultural listening invites student-led dis-

cussions that index racism to enter classrooms on students' own terms. In this way, a teacher must not unilaterally determine which aspects of student writing should warrant private feedback and which aspects are public. Given the routineness of micro-aggressions occurring on our campuses, we must provide a sociocultural space to examine together the effects of such conditions on our meaning making. The voices of our students, their points of view, should be where we might start. Our role is listening, and then, joining our students as we affirm sociocultural impressions.

Notes

1. Linguistic anthropologists and style researchers have not concerned themselves with a speaker's own self-consciousness about the process of enregisterment--a context that matters to Basic Writing.
2. In 2009, I conducted classroom-based research on the practice of sentence workshops to learn more about the choices and reasons behind them that students were making in their sentence-writing. Tejada was a student in this course. Theorizing this data as a case example of enregisterment, and using it to argue for a sociocultural approach to style in Basic Writing contexts, however, happened years after I had conducted teacher research in Basic Writing for my dissertation at a large, public, Northeastern University. I have published another case from this same initial study in an earlier issue in *JBW*.

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Aesthetic Reading: Struggling Students Sensing Their Way to Academic Success

Cheryl Hogue Smith

ABSTRACT: This article proposes to extend the revised transactional theory of reading that I introduced to JBW readers in 2012. That revised theory, building on Rosenblatt's distinction between efferent and aesthetic reading, described a third reading stance I named "deferent" to designate the tendency of struggling student readers to defer their interpretations of texts to classmates or teachers deemed to have superior skill or authority. This new essay proposes a fourth, "anesthetic" stance of reading that focuses on counterproductive emotions struggling readers and writers feel that cause them to adopt a deferent stance of reading. This article also examines the dispositions necessary for successful reading and writing events, explores ways in which struggling readers distort those dispositions when reading deferently and anesthetically, and describes an instructional strategy that invites students to aesthetically experience texts in order to avoid the deferent and anesthetic stances. The article concludes with sample writing/reflections from a single case study that is representative of students at Kingsborough Community College and that demonstrates how students can learn to navigate Rosenblatt's efferent-aesthetic continuum.

KEYWORDS: basic writers; fear of failure; reading and writing connection; struggling readers; transactional theory of reading

A few years ago, I expanded upon Louise Rosenblatt's transactional theory of reading to account for problems many struggling readers encounter when they read difficult texts.¹ In that article, I demonstrated how and why students often approach texts passively rather than actively, decoding words but rarely negotiating and creating meaning with them, and argued that when students *do* read actively, they often read to search for "right" answers they have learned reside in texts, often through prior test-prep experiences that reward "correct" answers. I determined that when this mining of texts for "right" answers becomes students' primary purpose for reading, they

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render themselves incapable of transacting with and/or experiencing a text with sufficient interpretive insight.

For readers unfamiliar with the earlier article, let me step back and explain. To begin with, Rosenblatt believes that “every reading act is an event, or a transaction” between a reader and a text, both of which are “two fixed entities acting on one another” that create “two aspects of a total dynamic situation” (“Transactional” 1063). Rosenblatt asserts that when readers transact with a text, they adopt one of two possible purposes—or what she calls “stances”—for reading: the “efferent” or the “aesthetic.” The efferent stance deals more with “the cognitive, the referential, the factual, the analytic, the logical, the quantitative aspects of meaning,” while the aesthetic stance deals more with “the sensuous, the affective, the emotive, the qualitative” (1068). According to Rosenblatt, when readers read efferently, they read texts in order to extract information—like dates in a history text or directions in a user manual—or to pay attention to the rhetorical form or the logic or structure of an argument, and they purposefully “narrow” their “focus of attention” to find specific information (“On the Aesthetic” 23). On the other hand, when readers read aesthetically, they allow their minds and sensibilities to open and experience their transaction with the text both cognitively and affectively (23). Rosenblatt is careful to explain that texts themselves are neither efferent nor aesthetic; instead, readers choose a predominant stance based upon how they think the texts need to be read and adjust their stance as circumstances warrant (“Transactional” 1066-1069). That is, she states, “Stance . . . provides the guiding orientation toward activating particular elements of consciousness” whereby readers choose an initial stance, become “alert to cues” during their reading process, and shift their predominant focus from one stance to the other, effectively gliding along an efferent-aesthetic continuum, upon which “perhaps most” readings “fall nearer the center of the continuum” (1068-1069).

This “consciousness” of the “cues” that act as a “guiding orientation” for any reading helps readers move back and forth between the two stances on the efferent-aesthetic continuum, depending on the signals their metacognitive monitors emit. Without question this maneuvering between stances assumes a fairly sophisticated level of metacognitive awareness on the part of readers, the kind of awareness that Rosenblatt suggests *successful* readers are capable of acting upon when meaning breaks down between the reader and the text, adjusting their readings based upon a “complex, nonlinear, recursive, self-correcting transaction” with a text (1064). Thus, when readers are *successful* at navigating the efferent-aesthetic continuum, they can

both extract information from and experience a text. For example, readers of Shakespeare's *Julius Caesar* can learn about the downfall of the Roman Republic and the rise of the Roman Empire while simultaneously engaging in the heartbreaking drama of the play. But what about *struggling* readers who get lost in—or perhaps never engage in—such a navigation?

To answer this question, and to explain why it's important to do so, let me again revisit the last time I wrote about Rosenblatt's stances, when I posited a *tertium quid*—a third position that is neither efferent nor aesthetic, but is instead a distorted version of the efferent stance that I called the “deferent” stance to describe the very act of students narrowing their focus so they concentrate merely on finding “correct” answers that may not be there for them to find. And when they can't find those “correct” answers, they often adopt a deferent stance of reading and defer their interpretations to those whom they believe are the smartest in the room or to teachers whom they believe are there to provide all the answers. As Robert Probst explains it, students often think that “meaning comes to be something they have to find, or worse, that someone will provide for them, rather than something they must make and take responsibility for” (41). In addition, struggling readers often struggle with complex texts because they internalize the negative feelings associated with frustration and confusion—an internalization I have described as a distorted aesthetic stance and labeled the “anesthetic” stance. In this article, I want to more fully address the anesthetic stance—a stance I will now call a *quartum quid*—and argue that without engaging authentically in aesthetic reading, students are unlikely to find their transactions with difficult texts productive occasions for any kind of legitimate learning.

Contrasted Sets of Reading Events

Readers who adopt an anesthetic stance do so at the expense of the aesthetic stance, turning reading into an emotionally numbing prospect because they anticipate a disheartening outcome and often quit (or wish to quit) at the first sign of difficulty. They regularly turn an intellectual challenge into an emotionally defeating one by *anesthetizing the productive emotions* they might rationally feel when confronting confusion in texts, instead suffering only counterproductive emotions when they interpret their confusion as a sign that they are incapable of understanding. Consequently (and unfortunately), when students struggle unproductively with confusing texts and experience and defer to feelings of inadequacy, inferiority, and imminent failure, the anesthetic (rather than the aesthetic) stance becomes “the

guiding orientation toward activating particular elements of consciousness” (Rosenblatt 1068) in a deferent-anesthetic causal pairing. Correspondingly, just as the deferent and anesthetic stances are each distortions of their efferent and aesthetic counterparts, so, too, are deferent-anesthetic reading events distorted versions of efferent-aesthetic reading events (as I’ll demonstrate momentarily). The distorted deferent-anesthetic reading set then becomes very much like the mirror universe *Star Trek* fans will recognize as the evil opposite of its productive and beneficial—good—counterpart. (See “Mirror, Mirror.”) By more fully fleshing out these two counterparts—and by recognizing the need to eliminate one of them—I hope to show readers of this article (1) how the *quantium quid*—the anesthetic stance—can prevent struggling readers from adopting the aesthetic stance that is crucial to their academic success and (2) what kind of instructional help might rescue such readers.

Efferent-Aesthetic Reading Events

In order to better understand the danger of the deferent-anesthetic causal pair, it might be useful to first examine the relationship between the efferent and aesthetic stances and to further investigate the efferent-aesthetic continuum. It’s hard to ignore the interdependent relationship between the efferent and aesthetic stances. Just like the interdependent relationship between remora fish and sharks, where each creature depends on the other for its survival,² the efferent and aesthetic stances share a symbiotic mutualism in that a reader’s adoption of one is enriched by—and is in many ways necessary for—the adoption of the other. That is, for readers to fully engage with a text, they need to both acquire information from and experience it. Such symbiotic mutualism is key to successful reading and proficient readers.

To explain this further, I turn to Sheridan Blau’s work about reading difficult literary texts, work that builds on Rosenblatt’s transactional model. According to Blau, the most successful readers are those “who, in encounters with difficult texts, demonstrate a particular set of attributes or *dispositions* . . . that expert adult readers characteristically exhibit and readily recognize as the discipline and behaviors of the most accomplished student readers” (210, my emphasis). Blau calls these *dispositions* the “dimensions of performative literacy,” which are comprised of seven traits: “(1) capacity for sustained, focused attention, (2) willingness to suspend closure, (3) willingness to take risks, (4) tolerance for failure, (5) tolerance for ambiguity, paradox, and uncertainty (6) intellectual generosity and fallibilism, [and] (7) metacognitive awareness” (211). When students are able to exhibit these performative

literacy traits, they are able “to perform as autonomous, engaged readers of difficult texts at any level of education” (210), and I would add that for readers to exhibit these traits, they must read both efferently and aesthetically as they glide across the efferent-aesthetic continuum, depending upon their metacognitive monitors for cues as to which stance is at what point more appropriate.

It’s certainly not a stretch to tie Blau’s performative literacy traits to Rosenblatt’s continuum because most of the performative literacy traits logically correlate with either the cognitive aspects of the efferent stance or the affective elements of the aesthetic stance. Specifically, in my reading of Blau, “capacity for sustained, focused attention,” “willingness to suspend closure,” and “intellectual generosity and fallibilism” fall at the efferent end of the continuum since they are largely states of mind or capacities in the cognitive domain that fall within the control of the will, while another three—“willingness to take risks,” “tolerance for failure,” and “tolerance for ambiguity, paradox, and uncertainty”—fall nearer the aesthetic end of the continuum since they all represent states of being that reside more in the affective or aesthetic domain than in the cognitive. Blau’s last performative literacy trait, “metacognitive awareness,” might be said to reside between the efferent and aesthetic poles or to require equal measures of affective and cognitive consciousness, enabling readers to activate whatever capacities of mind and feeling are appropriate as the reader reads the cues that direct attention across the efferent-aesthetic continuum. In my view, the performative literacy traits taken together may be said to provide a working definition of active reading: The first six traits are what readers *put into* their reading as they purposefully engage with texts while working through any frustration and confusion, while the seventh allows them to do so. In this sense, highly competent readers may be said to read “afferently” (a *quintus quid?*), not the opposite of efferently, but in a way that represents the combination of efferent and aesthetic reading, which is to say that when readers are reading afferently, they are metacognitively directing their minds and emotions *towards* the reading, while they are simultaneously extracting information from (reading efferently) and experiencing (reading aesthetically) texts. Hence, it is the metacognitive *afferent* reading that allows readers to effectively glide across the efferent-aesthetic continuum, alternating between the efferent and aesthetic stances as needed, with the reading event perhaps, as Rosenblatt says, falling near the middle of the continuum (1068).

This is not to say that a reading event can’t fall close to either extreme on the continuum. Certainly successful readers read at the far efferent end of

the continuum when they mine texts for facts and/or answers, deliberately anesthetizing themselves during the kind of reading that allows them to cram for tests that, say, ask for names or dates or places, without immersing themselves in the aesthetics that texts offer. And certainly readers can fall at the extreme aesthetic end of the continuum when they are so emotionally engaged with a text that their emotions take over the reading event, as when readers encounter particularly moving lines of poetry or powerful moments or scenes in a novel. Typically, neither of these extremes is dysfunctional for readers who are also capable of reading events that fall somewhere in the middle of the efferent-aesthetic continuum, but reading at the extreme ends of the continuum ignores the interdependent relationship between the two stances that allows for the richest learning to take place.

Deferent-Anesthetic Reading Events

However, again, what about struggling readers who get lost in—or perhaps never engage in—such a navigation across the efferent-aesthetic continuum? When struggling readers encounter difficult texts and begin to feel the frustration and confusion that naturally arise in transactions with difficult texts, those readers can experience their frustration and confusion not as natural feelings that must be experienced in the course of meeting a difficult challenge, but as feelings that are evidence of their own insufficiency as readers and their identity as inferior or failing students. Often, when I have taught complicated texts, students will come into class having given up on the reading. When I ask why they didn't read, they say, "I'm not smart enough for this reading" or "I gave up after the first paragraph" or, in one instance, "Why can't you just tell us what we are supposed to know?" In such circumstances when students struggle with difficult texts, they tend to anaesthetize themselves to the feelings of frustration and confusion that arise when reading—emotions readers naturally experience that are healthy signs of learning—and what remains are the familiar feelings of inferiority that come from a history of "failure," feelings that interpret healthy emotions as signs of inadequacy and that convince students of their imminent failure. Such "failure" then causes students to defer to others. Unfortunately, because the deferent stance is inextricably tied to the anesthetic stance, readers who find themselves in this cyclical trap see little hope of escaping it. To this end, struggling readers only hear the loud echoes that say they aren't smart enough or good enough to understand a text, instead of experiencing a text with an unfettered affect that would allow them to listen to the

metacognitive whispers that could otherwise help them identify problems within the text and then figure out how to address those problems. In this sense, the relationship between the two stances is hardly interdependent. Instead, the deferent and anesthetic stances form a codependent relationship whereby the anesthetic stance acts as an abusive force by *causing* the deferent stance, by *creating* the emotionally destructive and abusive internal relationship readers experience when their fear of failure or conviction of imminent failure guides their reading events. (See Figure 1.)

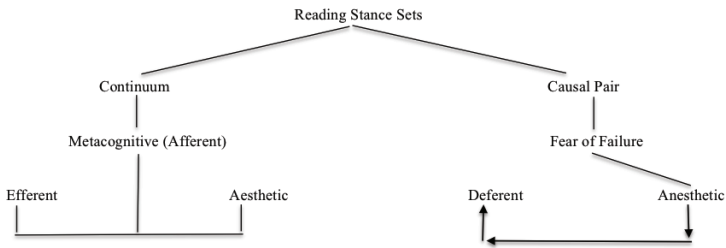


Figure 1. Contrasted Sets of Reading Stances

In addition, the anesthetic stance can cause readers to make academically destructive choices that disable the traits underlying Blau’s performative literacy or entail the exercise of his traits in distorted ways. That is to say, struggling readers have the ability to exercise the traits defining performative literacy, but they often do so in ways that sabotage rather than enable learning. For example, readers who adopt deferent and anesthetic stances often show a capacity for “sustained and focused attention,” but employ it counterproductively when they listen carefully in class to find in the thinking of other students the one “correct” interpretation of a text that they then choose to adopt. Also, because struggling readers often lack sufficient vocabulary, cultural knowledge, and background information, they find much that they don’t understand even at the literal level in the texts typically assigned in college and accept their condition of only half understanding what they read. In that sense, many struggling readers show their capacity to “tolerate ambiguity and uncertainty” without showing any concomitant sense of responsibility for trying to resolve their uncertainties or figure out how to disambiguate what confuses them. For such students, “paradoxes” seem the norm because often when they *do* interpret texts and others’ interpretations run counter to their own, they deliberately and perfunctorily defer to those other interpretations. In fact, because of their acceptance

of ambiguity, paradox, and uncertainty, they are more than happy to be “intellectually generous,” believing in and deferring to others’ interpretations rather than their own. Similarly, it’s actually their distrust in their own capacity as readers and in their own interpretations that accounts for their “willingness to suspend closure” when they read, knowing they will hear the “correct” interpretation when they get to class. By extension, then, they certainly have no problem “believing in their own fallibilism” and deferring to others. Sadly, more than anything, they have developed a “tolerance for failure” in that they expect it to happen, yet they continue on in spite of it. Hence, when such students continue to come to class and endure their feelings of marginality and inferiority, they may be said to exhibit a “willingness to take risks” in the sense that they continue to engage in academic work that they feel unqualified to master. Fortunately, however, this “willingness to take risks” also suggests that they possess the grit and determination that might enable them to escape the deferent-anesthetic causal pairing because it demonstrates their resolve to at least continue to participate in difficult reading events—even if they think they will fail.³

At this point, I should explain that I recognize not all “deferring” of interpretations happens because of the anesthetic stance. That is, some readers rationally and healthily defer to other’s interpretations, but they defer to reason, not emotion. This is the process by which readers readily discover the value of their own interpretations to the interpretations of others—including the value of alternative interpretations—then revisit and alter and revise their own interpretations as they engage with others in conversation about the same text. It is the process wherein readers depend on others to help them in their own understanding of texts, just as they will help others. One example of when readers healthily defer to others is when students, for whatever reason, misread a text. This is best described in Glynda Hull and Mike Rose’s discussion of a Trinidadian/Jamaican student’s logical “misreading” of a poem. Robert, who doesn’t understand the middle-class use of the word “shack” in a poem because a “shack” from his parents’ homelands isn’t a hovel, interprets the poem in such a way that Rose classifies it as a clear misreading of the text. We have all misread texts because, like Robert, we lack some piece of relevant cultural information, but we are usually happy to discover our mistake and correct our reading, constructing a more comprehensive and internally consistent interpretation of the text. But students who defer *because* of the anesthetic stance have difficulty participating in the constructive conversations that allow readers to make the healthy choice to defer to others.

I also recognize that the problem of deferring because of the anesthetic stance is not limited to the assigned texts students must read and then write about: They must also learn how to avoid the deferent-anesthetic causal pair when they write, specifically when they are revising, when writing is more about reading than it is about writing. As I have said before, “You can never outwrite your reading ability” (“Diving”), and never is this more true than during the revision stage. Krista De Castella, Don Byrne, and Martin Covington would call some writers and readers who adopt deferent and anesthetic stances “failure acceptors,” who feel “dejection and loss of hope” and fail because they expect to, a failure that often results in an “*apparent* indifference to academic tasks and their overall disengagement from school” (864, my emphasis). But these students are hardly indifferent, as is evidenced by the degree to which they internalize their fear. Based upon my own experience with students who could be classified as “failure acceptors,” they are the students we lose from our classes after their submitted papers are returned to them with low grades that they see as “proof” of their incompetence. It’s one thing for students to believe they misunderstood or misread or are incapable of understanding the texts of others, but it’s quite another thing—a more hurtful, raw, and painful thing—to believe that any criticisms of their writing is evidence that *they* are deficient, not just their writing. And those feelings of deficiency can trigger the feelings of inadequacy and fear of failure that accompanies the deferent-anesthetic causal pair. Until deferent-anesthetic readers/revisers understand that writing is a process that requires time, effort, some measure of failure, and a general faith they’ll get through it, they will continue to agonize through most revising events.

These contrasted sets of reading stances provide a framework that can help instructors better understand the various ways in which their students experience reading and revising events, especially when it comes to those struggling students who get trapped in deferent-anesthetic reading events. Since the deferent-anesthetic causal pair poses several dangers, the best way to help students avoid it is to obliterate it; this way, students will no longer have it as an option. But how do instructors obliterate the only kind of reading event many struggling students have ever known? One trick is to discover the fatal weakness of the deferent-anesthetic causal pair—which, unsurprisingly, I believe is the anesthetic stance—and destroy it. Picture this: In *Star Wars: Episode IV—A New Hope*, Luke Skywalker completely destroyed the massive Death Star after shooting the thermal exhaust port, which happened to be the Death Star’s fatal weakness. In much the same way, the anesthetic stance is the deferent-anesthetic causal pair’s weakness. So if instructors can

destroy the anesthetic stance for their students, the entire deferent-anesthetic causal pair collapses, leaving students with only the efferent-aesthetic continuum in its wake. The question, then, becomes how instructors can help struggling students free themselves from the anesthetic stance so they can learn to trust in their own abilities as interpreters of texts—both of others and of their own making. The best way I have found to free students from the anesthetic stance is by developing a curriculum that will ensure they have an academic victory with the aesthetic stance instead.

Obliterating the Deferent-Anesthetic Causal Pair

As I move into my discussion about how to collapse the deferent-anesthetic causal pair, let me first explain my professional circumstances. I teach at Kingsborough Community College (KCC) of the City University of New York in a Learning Community Program that combines a cohort of entering freshmen into a Learning Community (LC), or “link,” comprised of three linked courses (taught by three different instructors): an English composition class, a general education class, and a student development class (a crucial course in study skills and orientation to college learning, where the instructor also serves as the student’s advisor/case manager for one academic year). Students freely opt into this program.

Every semester, my particular LC is linked with an art history survey course, and my linked English class is either a developmental course or a first-year composition course that includes thirty-forty percent developmental students (in an Accelerated Learning Program).⁴ The field of art history is typically foreign to KCC students (most think they are signing up for a drawing class when they register), so, at first, most aren’t sure what there is to learn about any given artwork beyond the caption that is displayed underneath it—for the test, of course. KCC LC students typically mirror the very diverse urban population of Brooklyn and are full-time students, yet often work full-time or at least several hours part-time, traveling between one-to-two hours one-way by public transportation. They also often have extensive family obligations that conflict with their studies, and, by their own testimony, the vast majority have never set foot in a museum, even though several world-class museums are only a subway ride away, usually because they believe museumgoers are only rich people who don’t have to worry about paying for rent, food, and childcare and can afford to purchase expensive artworks at figures students can’t even begin to fathom.

For this LC, from the 27,000-year time frame that students cover in art history over a twelve-week semester, my linking partners and I chose to focus our shared assignments on the 1930s-1940s and on the role that art played during World War II. We created a theme for our students—"Dictators, Thieves, and Forgers!"—selecting texts that would help students explore the topics of political art, art theft and forgery, and modern art, all in the context of the early 20th century. The LC courses are fully integrated from the first day to the last, where the scaffolding for the assignments occurs in all three classes since the papers count in all three classes. But because the art history class has so much material to cover, students read in my class most of the visual and written texts we assign for their papers.

To demonstrate how I helped my students free themselves from the anesthetic stance, I provide excerpts from one student's essays throughout a semester. Jackie⁵ was a first-semester student in a developmental English section of the art history LC. In an early-semester literacy narrative about her pre-KCC academic experiences, she explains, "High school years were unpleasant for me. . . . I literally had anxiety, nausea, and sweating every time I stepped foot in school." She dropped out of high school but graduated from a vocational program and entered the work force soon thereafter. A few years later, she decided to pursue her degree at KCC, even though she knew "it would not be easy on me financially." I chose to focus on Jackie because, to me, she represents a typical basic writer/struggling reader at KCC and because her first major rough draft was typical in its problems and limitations. Through excerpts of her writing, I hope to show how an assignment that is designed to avoid the anesthetic stance—and, thus, obliterate the deferent-anesthetic causal pair—can help students become successful readers and revisers.

The Atrocities of War: For the first major assignment of the semester, I provide a prompt that appears simple but is, in fact, difficult to execute for first-semester students; it requires them to use their analyses of visual and written texts as evidence for a wider argument. The actual prompt asks them to "consider how paying attention to sensory details in artworks and written texts can help readers better understand the atrocities of war." This assignment asks students to use their readerly imaginations to *hear, taste, smell, or physically feel* details in a painting and to *see, hear, taste, smell, or physically feel* details in a written text.⁶ My goal in assigning this kind of prompt is to take my students' focus away from texts as mysterious sources of intimidation and occasions for feelings of inadequacy and put it instead onto the students' own sensory experience, on which they are experts and

about which they are unlikely to harbor any feelings of inferiority or self-doubt. The first part of my English course centers on political art during World War II, and we chose Pablo Picasso's *Guernica* (1937) and Elie Wiesel's *Night* as the texts for this paper.

Some background: Picasso painted *Guernica* in response to the German bombing during the Spanish Civil War of the small Basque town of Guernica in Spain. (The Germans were fighting in support of the fascist dictator, Franco, leader of the ruling Nationalist Party.) Guernica posed little threat to the Nationalists, especially since the majority of the men were gone from the town, fighting in the Republican resistance against Franco. There was a military arms warehouse on the outskirts of town; but after three hours of continuous bombing and machine gun fire in Guernica, the warehouse was left unscathed. In other words, mostly women and children were among the 16,000 casualties in the attack that was clearly designed to kill them. Picasso heard about this attack through newspaper accounts that he read while in Paris, and he immediately painted the enormous (11.5' x 25.5') anti-war *Guernica* for inclusion in the Spanish Pavilion of the 1937 Paris World's Fair (Jiménez). In order for students to understand the context of this Picasso painting, my art history linking partner comes to my class to explain these circumstances of Guernica to our students.⁷ *Night* is an autobiographical account by a Jewish survivor of the Holocaust of his nightmarish boyhood experiences in Europe, focusing most on the years he barely survived as a prisoner in Nazi concentration camps. I split written texts for the course into manageable sections and require students to read those sections prior to class.

To help students analyze both the painting and the book (although not at the same time), I put them in groups to interrogate the texts using a worksheet—appropriately named “Interrogating Texts”—that first asks students to individually write their responses to guided questions about their experience of reading (and rereading) before they then compare their interpretations with other students'. (See Appendix A for a sample.) Throughout this exercise, students consider how the imagined sensory details in the painting and book give readers a better understanding of the atrocities of war and how both texts act as examples in their discussion about sensory details. This exercise also asks students to pay attention to what they *don't* understand rather than what they *do*, whereby they constantly ask questions of the text, note areas that still confuse them, and discuss their questions and constantly revised interpretations with others. (I will explain more about the “Interrogating Texts” exercise shortly.)

Students at first find this activity odd and difficult because they've never before considered how visual details might sound, taste, smell, or feel or how written details might look, sound, taste, smell, or feel. But they very quickly are able to imagine these sensory details—and by doing so, they *experience* the events of the bombing and Holocaust through their engagement with the painting and book, becoming more aware of how horrific the events really were. It's one thing, they typically tell me, for example, to just passively read (and dismiss) *Guernica*, but quite another to think about the taste of blood an impaled horse is tasting; to consider the smell of burning buildings and flesh; to think about a mother's wails as she holds her cold, dead baby's body; or to consider the pain as flames burn a man alive. Eavesdropping on the student conversations as they interrogate the texts, I hear no unhealthy deferring to other's interpretations, nor do I hear students hint that they are incapable of understanding the readings in relation to the prompt. Instead, the conversations they have with others help them to discover the value their interpretations have to the thinking of other readers, appreciate alternative interpretations to their own thinking, shift the focus to what confuses them instead of focusing on a single answer that they think they're supposed to find, and become comfortable with that confusion.

To show an example of how students executed the assignment, below is an excerpt from Jackie's atrocities of war final draft—the paragraph she wrote about sound—that is indicative of the quality of writing I received from most students:

Sound is what we listen or hear. Different sounds bring about different reactions. Using sensory details like sound, permits the reader to listen to what the writer or painter is expressing through his words or painting. In *Guernica*, Picasso, depicts sound loud and clear. The expression on the faces of the people depicted in the painting allows us to hear their cries and screams, like the man on the right with his hands raised and looking up and with his mouth open as if screaming for help from the flames that surround him. Once again, in *Guernica*, in the middle ground far left side the woman holding her dying baby is staring up at the sky with her mouth open giving the viewer the audio of her yell or anguished cry. In *Night*, Wiesel describes how the sound of a bell was traumatizing to him, saying “The bell announced that we were dismissed, and “The bell rang, signaling that the selection had ended in the entire camp. (pg 73) “The bell. It was already time to part, to go to bed. The bell regu-

lated everything. It gave me orders and I executed them blindly. I hated that bell. Whenever I happened to dream of a better world, I imagined a universe without a bell.” (pg 81) “That afternoon at four o’clock, as usual the bell called all the Blockalteste for their daily report.” In *Night* the bell represented many different things, but most of all it reminded him of his confinement. Sound can be so powerful to the point of where it brings good and bad memories or reactions because sound comes with a feeling of attachment behind it. The details in Wiesel’s writing are so descriptive that we can see how war can be enslaving through sound. The sound of the bell represented his enslavement, helping us hear the atrocities of war.

In this paragraph, Jackie is choosing details in both texts to act as examples for her argument that sound can “bring about different reactions” to the atrocities of war, and she is able to convey to readers her understanding that “sound can be so powerful to the point of where it brings good and bad memories or reactions because sound comes with a feeling of attachment behind it.” She is analyzing the texts in relation to the sense of sound, and in her conversation, she is synthesizing her sources to explain the connection between the sense of sound and the examples she is choosing to include. She does leave gaps in her prose (e.g., concluding the paragraph only about *Night*), but this is the first paper from a developmental student who had to synthesize her reading of two sources. In Jackie’s reflection at the conclusion of this assignment, she did admit, “Being out of school for a while overwhelmed me in trying to put the paper together,” but her “fear subsided a little” after referring back to the course materials that she discussed with her classmates.

Since students aren’t writing about the actual texts, but about how paying attention to sensory details in artworks and written texts can help readers better understand the atrocities of war, they don’t focus their attention on right or wrong answers—or, therefore, on any fear of failure or conviction of imminent failure. There are no right answers for them to find, and they know it. Instead, this assignment invites students to adopt a predominant aesthetic stance when reading *Guernica* and *Night* since they have to use their imaginative sensory perception to viscerally experience the horrors that humans are capable of inflicting upon one another. But they also read efferently as they discover a significant amount about the Spanish Civil War and the Nazi death camps, suggesting an efferent-aesthetic reading event. And this navigation across the efferent-aesthetic continuum prepares them for what is to come.

Hitler, Goering, and Vermeer: Since the first paper is designed to help students experience what productive learning *feels* like, I up the ante for the second (and last) major paper. This extraordinarily more difficult assignment asks students to explore why Adolph Hitler and Hermann Goering stole art in general and coveted Johannes Vermeer's paintings in particular. The primary source for this paper is Edward Dolnick's *The Forger's Spell*, a 293-page book about a forger named Han van Meegeren who forged Vermeer paintings and sold them to at least one high-ranking Nazi official (Goering) and one prominent museum (Museum Boymans—now the Museum Boijmans Van Beuninge—in Rotterdam, the Netherlands). From this tale, students also learn a considerable amount about how self-proclaimed art connoisseurs Hitler and Goering plundered Europe as they “acquired” valuable art masterpieces, and students discover so much about Vermeer's style, technique, mystery, and brilliance that they come to realize why his paintings are so revered among museumgoers and art collectors alike. *The Forger's Spell* is entirely different from *Night* in that it is significantly more challenging for students, not only because of its length and complexity, but because the chapters don't tell a linear story; instead, they shuttle back and forth between historical periods—from the 1930s-40s to the 1600s to modern day—in no particular order, according to Dolnick's own testimony, other than what best served his writer's instincts on how to tell the story that emerged as his narrative progressed and as he revised it to suit his artistic and historical responsibilities.

In addition to reading this challenging book, students also watch the documentary *The Rape of Europa* about the Nazi's intellectually hypocritical and ethically perverse fascination with and theft of Europe's art. The final text for this paper is any one of the five Vermeer paintings at the Metropolitan Museum of Art. As in the previous paper, students have to synthesize their sources, using both *The Forger's Spell* and *The Rape of Europa* as they talk about various reasons why Hitler and Goering would have wanted art in general and the Vermeer painting they chose in particular. This means that students need to read their painting closely and explain why, based on their own experience with the painting, Hitler and Goering would choose that particular Vermeer over the other four Vermeer paintings in the museum. Jackie chose to write about *Young Woman with a Water Pitcher* (1660-1662).⁸

Below is a paragraph from Jackie's paper that explores one of the reasons why Hitler and Goering would want a Vermeer painting. (Note: The Linz Museum was the museum Hitler planned to construct in his hometown

in Austria, and Carin Hall was Goering's country estate in Germany that, according to *The Rape of Europa*, had more art than the European painting collection in the National Gallery of Art in Washington D.C.)

According to *The Forger's Spell*, Edward Dolnick, explains that Hitler and Goering considered themselves art experts and collectors, and presumed that Europe's finest artworks belonged to Germany (6). Dolnick adds how Goering in an interview mentioned that what Hitler wanted after power was art, and Goering himself believed he deserved to be around the most exceptional artworks (7). This bringing us to one of the many reasons that Hitler and Goering coveted a Vermeer, prestige. The collection of art brought them prestige in the eyes of the world. Both would possess what no one else could have, giving them importance and power. Dolnick, reveals an exchange Goering made with an art dealer, for one Vermeer painting he gave the art dealer 137 paintings. Dolnick also, explains how Goering mentions that a Vermeer was a distinctive label like a "Rolls Royce" (85). This pompous remark shows how Goering probably was not interested in the actual painting and cared more about the name of the artist. *The Rape of Europa*, a documentary on the looted artworks of Europe, also claims Goering was a distinct art collector; he was concerned more with size and prestige of his collection. Hitler and Goering wanted to be associated with the best, and the best for both was a Vermeer. Prestige is one of the reasons for furnishing the Linz Museum and Carin Hall. Although Hitler and Goering had countless and costly artworks, it seems like until a Vermeer was in their hands it was not complete. One definition of prestige in *Webster's Merriam* online dictionary is "commanding position in people's minds." As Hitler and Goering collected more art, their importance was elevated. Vermeer's paintings were so limited, which would bring a larger sense of prestige, making their obsession for a Vermeer stronger.

Jackie's paragraph is quite complex conceptually in its principal claim and manages to communicate a multi-faceted body of information. She makes good use of the evidence provided in *The Forger's Spell* and *The Rape of Europa* to back her case for the pretentiousness of Hitler and Goering and to warrant her claim that they were less interested in Vermeer for aesthetic or

intellectual reasons than for the prestige that owning a Vermeer painting would bring them. She even adds a definition of “prestige” in order to explain why collecting art would “elevate” Hitler’s and Goering’s “importance.” At the very least, Jackie’s paragraph demonstrates that she understood what she read in quite sophisticated and challenging texts about Hitler, Goering, and Vermeer, which she could scarcely have been able to do if she had felt defeated by the complexity of the book or documentary. On the contrary, the above paragraph demonstrates that Jackie learned much about Hitler and Goering and their fascination with art and that she successfully managed the task of producing a coherent and cogent argument based upon her synthesis of multiple complex sources. Without question Jackie was successful at navigating the efferent-aesthetic continuum, both extracting information from and experiencing texts, demonstrating that she had the kind of awareness that Rosenblatt suggests successful readers are capable of acting upon when maneuvering between the efferent and aesthetic stances. And this kind of maneuvering can scarcely be done without a metacognitive awareness of her reading events.

In fact, Jackie’s subsequent reflection on this paper is especially illuminating for what it reveals about her progress as a reader and writer over the previous few weeks. She begins by noting that the in-class exercise on “interrogating text was a big help in writing this paper. The view of the other students in my group allowed me to view things from their point of view. When I needed, I referred back to the interrogating text to remind of important parts that I wanted to add to my paper.” Referring back to her classmates’ thoughts and comparing it to her own seems to have helped Jackie achieve a kind of emotional distance on her own language and logic, enabling her both to critique and to appreciate her own thinking. Jackie’s own words demonstrate her intellectual generosity and fallibilism; her willingness to suspend closure and take risks; and her tolerance for failure, ambiguity, paradox, and uncertainty. In addition, her own description of how her aims and process in writing this paper changed from her earlier practice shows a concern for her reader that can only come for a writer who trusts in the value of her own interpretation of the text she is writing about: “To try to convince the reader why my reason were valid was difficult, because relatable reasons were hard to blend...The changes I notice is that I’m trying to elaborate my sentences and not trying to write without leaving the reader confused or with incomplete information.” Here, she is showing confidence in her own thinking and a capacity to attend to the needs of her readers, which leads

her to read her own prose in a way that notices and does not retreat from the problems and confusion it might pose for another reader.

But most telling from Jackie's reflection were statements about the assignment itself. For example, "This prompt was less stressful for me...It was not difficult for me to incorporate [my] sources with my reasons." Jackie repeated several times in her reflection that this paper was much easier for her than the first. Yet this paper assignment is rhetorically more sophisticated in that students have to scour *The Forger's Spell* and *The Rape of Europa* in order to find sufficient reasons as to why Hitler and Goering coveted art in general and Vermeer in particular and synthesize evidence for each of those reasons; in other words, students have to have a capacity for sustained, focused attention. On top of this, they have to analyze a Vermeer painting to explain why Hitler and Goering would want that particular Vermeer painting, and to do this, they have to demonstrate their mastery of what makes Vermeer so special to begin with, which they learn from *The Forger's Spell* and through their own aesthetic experiences when visiting the painting at the Met. By all accounts, the second paper is substantially more difficult, yet Jackie found it easier to execute. I can't help but think that because Jackie experienced the feelings of victory from the first paper and learned how to navigate across Rosenblatt's efferent-aesthetic continuum, she was able to do so with the second. And since Jackie could not have successfully completed this complex second assignment with all the markers of effective performative literacy had she not first experienced successful reading and revising events, the transferability of such success seems indisputable.

Dispositions, Transfer, and Transformation

The academic interest in the problem of "transfer of learning" has exploded in recent writing scholarship: Rebecca Nowacek, Ellen Carillo, and Kathleen Yancey, Liane Robertson, and Kara Taczak are just a few who have extensively studied "transfer of learning." But each of these authors investigates considerably more prepared students than the ones I describe in this article; their students haven't taken on failure as an identity and already (or can easily) grasp that failure is an avenue toward learning (even though many first-year composition students do, in fact, exhibit some of the behaviors I have described throughout). Similarly, Dana Lynn Driscoll et al. explore how "dispositions. . . form a single but important piece of the complex puzzle that depicts the mechanisms behind writing development and transfer." Much broader than Blau's performative literacy dispositions, they identify

“five key dispositions”—attribution, persistence, self-efficacy, self-regulation, and value—that they believe are necessary for competence in writing, and I (and Blau) would argue are necessary for competence in reading, as well. That is, if students want to have successful writing (and reading) events and transfer that knowledge they developed during one learning experience to subsequent reading and writing events, they need to attribute their learning successes to themselves (even if those “successes” are “failures”), persist when confronted with difficulty, believe in their own self-efficacy as learners, self-regulate when they exhibit behaviors counter to learning, and place value on learning. Not surprisingly, Driscoll et al. presume in their discussion—as do Nowacek, Carillo, and Yancey, Robertson, and Taczak—a level of proficiency on the part of students or, at the very least, do not discuss those students with counterproductive learning habits who would exhibit “disruptive” disposition behaviors—those that “inhibit learning success”—instead of “generative” disposition behaviors—those that “facilitate [learning] success.” But “disruptive” versus “generative” behaviors are not nearly nuanced enough when discussing struggling readers and writers who adopt the deferent and anesthetic stances. That is, Driscoll et al.’s dispositions can be distorted in much the same way as Blau’s: Students often attribute their learning failures to themselves when they expect failure to happen and are not surprised when it does; they can persist when confronted with difficulty when they choose to defer to others; they can demonstrate a kind of self-efficacy when they determine who the “smarter” learners are; they can self-regulate when they choose to defer to those “smarter” learners; and they can place value on learning—the learning they can “acquire” from others when they hear others’ interpretations of texts. So in their research about “disruptive” and “generative” dispositions that can “form a single but important piece of the complex puzzle that depicts the mechanisms behind writing development and transfer,” Driscoll et al. do not account for the “distorted” dispositions that can trap struggling students in a deferent-anesthetic causal paring. If we want students to develop generative dispositions and consistently exhibit Blau’s performative literacy dispositions (as he intends them), students need to *experience success* with the *process* of learning so that the *experience of success* can transfer with students every time they enter new reading and revising events and navigate across Rosenblatt’s continuum. Without this experience of success, struggling readers are in danger of transferring prior experiences of “failures” as they enter reading and revising events, expecting to fail once again. So for students to transfer generative dispositions and

effective performative literacy dispositions, they must first transform their feelings of imminent failure into feelings of anticipated success.

In "Reading as Transformation," Brian Gogan describes the interdisciplinarity of reading transformation: "Key to reading's importance is its ubiquity: reading, much like writing, is an activity that extends beyond disciplinary boundaries and informs transformative learning in most, if not all, disciplinary fields" (46). The same is true with feelings of success and failure: If either is experienced in one academic context, it can be experienced in another. Jackie, who, again, admitted that "being out of school for a while overwhelmed me in trying to put a paper together" was fearful of the first assignment and of failure, yet she worked through that fear by revisiting her interrogating texts exercises that she completed with her peers. And by the time she approached the reading and writing events of the second, "less stressful" assignment, Jackie clearly transferred her experiences of success with the first assignment to the second. Then, after two successes under her belt, Jackie even felt prepared to move to first-year composition: "I was disappointed that I failed the [placement exam], but am glad that I failed. I have learned so much information on how to write a college essay that if I passed the [placement exam] I would have failed [first-year composition]. I am knowledgeable of the different types of essay, that I can be at ease going into the next English course. All this information will go with me and assist me in all my essays to come."

I attribute much of Jackie's transformation from fearful to confident student on the success of the interrogating texts exercises from the atrocities of war paper that allowed Jackie and her classmates to read and discuss their sensory interpretations without danger of "incorrect" answers. Gogan explains that the transformational effects of reading occur through "receptive," "relational," and "recursive" activities (46). "Receptive reading activity," Gogan explains, "transforms readers from passive receivers to active meaning-makers" (46), and because the interrogating texts exercise requires all students in a group to read aloud their individual answers to guided questions before any discussion takes place, students take ownership of their own interpretations and actively participate in the construction of meaning as they individually and collectively work through difficult texts. Gogan describes "relational reading activity" as that which "challenges reductive understandings of reading that involve one discrete text and one discrete reader, . . . and positions both identity and meaning as contingent upon relationships involving other texts, contexts, individuals, and groups" (46), which is the cornerstone of interrogating texts since it is designed to

help students find and fill gaps in texts, discover intertextuality, recognize multiple interpretations of texts, and defend warranted interpretations. Finally, Gogan explains that recursive reading activity “effects transformation by encouraging readers to revisit, return to, and literally re-course through text, . . . [to] journey within texts, meandering in a more circuitous fashion” (47); the instructions in interrogating texts constantly ask students to reread, and in that process, students are constantly revising their interpretations every time they read the text, thereby learning the power of rereading as a strategy for dealing with difficult texts. Here I would note that students rarely come to class not having read the required reading because they quickly learn that this exercise values what confuses them; they feel safe coming to class with questions and recognize that their group members will help them better understand the text—if they’ve at least read it in the first place.⁹ Even though Jackie attributes much of her success (and diminishing fears) to the interrogating texts exercises, what she doesn’t recognize—and there’s no reason why she should—is that because the assignment focused on readers’ own imaginative sensory experiences in *Guernica* and *Night*, any discussion she had with others about the texts were going to be productive. It was a pedagogical maneuver designed to remove any fear of failure, and the interrogating texts exercise was the vehicle I chose to help transform students from fearful students who often found themselves succumbing to the anesthetic stance and, thus, deferring to others’ interpretations to empowered students who felt a significantly more difficult reading and writing assignment “was less stressful” to execute.

Yancey, Robertson, and Taczak contend that to help students transfer their knowledge about how they write from one class to another, instructors would need to teach students through “a course organized through key terms or concepts [about writing] rather than through a set of assignments or processes” (40). I have no basis in which to examine their claims about a class that teaches for transfer through a set of assignments and reflections “organized through key terms or concepts” about writing, but I do want to argue—in fact, have argued in this article—that a class “organized . . . through a set of assignments or processes” can be beneficial to struggling readers who tend to adopt deferent and anesthetic stances. As Jackie has demonstrated through her own words, experiencing feelings of success with one assignment can transfer those feelings of success to the next assignment, which will help students exhibit Blau’s performative literacy dispositions and Driscoll et al.’s five key dispositions that are necessary for “writing development and transfer” and navigating across Rosenblatt’s efferent-aesthetic continuum.

Sensing Their Way to Academic Success

Clearly, my circumstances are unusual in that I link with an art historian, but any written and/or visual text that contains strong sensory details can substitute for the sensory assignment that I believe helped my students avoid the deferent and anesthetic stances. For example, photos of homeless people paired with Jo Goodwin Parker's "What is Poverty?" or photos of the Black Lives Matter movement and Martin Luther King's "Letter from Birmingham Jail" come to mind. I can also see instructors using film in conjunction with written texts as an avenue for students to experience "reading" without focusing on imminent failure. (I would caution, however, that instructors avoid anything so emotionally jarring that students shut down.) Whatever that first assignment may look like, if it is designed for students to discover themselves as successful learners who can exhibit Blau's performative literacy dispositions and Driscoll et al.'s five key dispositions, they can transform from students who fear failure into students who expect success. And once students develop productive, successful feelings towards literacy practices, they will become "alert to cues" (Rosenblatt "Transactional" 1068) during their transactions with texts and learn to dance along the efferent-aesthetic continuum during reading events. For my students, that begins with an assignment that focuses on the aesthetics of sensory details in *Guernica* and *Night*.

I should mention that in past presentations of this material, participants have asked whether or not I teach students about the anesthetic and/or deferent stances. I don't. Doing so, I think, would be a tricky move since the very suggestion that they might have something to fear may actually trigger or exacerbate that fear. I never talk about the anesthetic or deferent stances to my students, but I do talk about how reading and writing are messy and frustrating processes that should confuse them, and I promise that we will work as a class to push through that confusion.

Finally, I recognize that Jackie is just one case of a first-semester student in one developmental English course during one twelve-week semester, but having taught these assignments (and others similar to them), I can attest that Jackie's transformation from a reader who was in danger during the reading events of my class of adopting an anesthetic—and, therefore, deferent—stance to a reader who could easily navigate across the efferent-aesthetic continuum is indicative of many students who were in her class and of many who came before and after her. Incidentally, I recently ran into Jackie in the hallway at Kingsborough. She was excited to see me because she wanted me

to know that she was graduating with a degree in the mental health field, and one of her professors recommended her for a scholarship to a prestigious four-year university. This professor specifically commented on how strong and effectual Jackie's writing is (a testament, I believe, to how strong and effectual a reader Jackie is). Jackie said she not only wanted me to know this, but she also wanted to tell me again how happy she was that she "failed" into my developmental class because she felt that she was, indeed, able to apply what she learned about writing to all her future classes. So Jackie is now about to enroll in a prestigious mental health program, probably with a scholarship in hand. In the end, Jackie (and her classmates) simply sensed her way to academic success.

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Notes

1. See Smith "Interrogating Texts."
2. Because remora fish suction themselves to sharks and eat the parasites off the shark's skin, the shark is divested of the parasites that could kill it. Not only does the remora get nourished, but the shark also protects it from other predators. The two together have a mutually beneficial—symbiotic—relationship.
3. My model of two parallel but opposite reading stances might remind readers of Carol Dweck's distinction between a growth and fixed mindset. While there are, no doubt, some resemblances and some overlapping in the students who fit both models, my model is oriented toward student feelings and behaviors that operate not in general but in particular kinds of intellectual and academic challenges, and my analysis sees the possibility of growth for students not through exhortation or

information, but through experience. Dweck's model resides mainly in the efferent realm, while mine resides in the aesthetic.

4. The Accelerated Learning Program model at KCC gives students who tested into developmental English the opportunity to register into first-year composition while simultaneously taking a two-unit supplemental course taught by the same instructor. This supplemental class is an extension of the English class, where the instructor helps students succeed on the reading and writing assignments for the English course. It is not a supplemental grammar course.
5. "Jackie" is a pseudonym, and her work is used with permission. No changes have been made to her text.
6. We no longer include "see" when analyzing the visual text of a painting because doing so confuses rather than helps students.
7. For an image of the painting, please see the Museo Nacional Centro de Arte Reina Sophia Website.
8. For an image of this painting, please see the Metropolitan Museum of Art Web site.
9. See Smith "Interrogating Texts" for more about this assignment.

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Appendix A

Interrogating Texts: Atrocities of War

Below are excerpts from “Interrogating Texts” that students worked on in class. Before students begin, I provide the following instructions orally to students:

1. Read the first direction/question.
2. Answer the question or respond to the direction; you must *write* your responses. Remember that any questions you have of the text constitutes an acceptable and valuable response.
3. Wait patiently for your group members to write their responses. Do not move ahead to other questions; your discussions with your group members may influence subsequent responses. (Students have the following direction after each question, which I deleted from this Appendix for space considerations: “**Wait for your group members to finish writing their answers, and then discuss all of your answers before moving on.”)
4. *Read aloud* your responses; you cannot say what you intended to write, but must read what you actually wrote.
5. Discuss your responses only after everyone has *read* their writing; do not discuss any of the responses in between each group member’s reading.
6. After everyone has read, discuss all you want, including possible answers to the questions you all discovered.
7. After your discussions for each question, write down anything you just learned from your group. (Students have the following direction after each question, which I deleted from this Appendix for space considerations: “**Write down anything you just learned from your group that you hadn’t thought of before you discussed it.”)
8. Move to the next question/direction.

Interrogating Texts: Guernica (1937)

Pablo Picasso (1881-1973)

1. "Reread" *Guernica*, paying attention not only to what Picasso is "saying," but the details he uses to say it. Write below everything you discover, including any questions you have.
2. What sensory details do you find in *Guernica* that play upon the sense of sound? (Remember that some details can play on multiple senses.)
3. What sensory details do you find in *Guernica* that play upon the sense of taste? (Remember that some details can play on multiple senses.)
4. How do the sensory details in *Guernica* give viewers a different understanding of the atrocities of war?
5. How can *Guernica* act as an example in your discussion about sensory details?

Interrogating Texts: Night, Part 3 (pages 85-120)

Elie Wiesel

1. Reread pages 85-95, from the paragraph that begins "An icy wind blew violently" through the sentence "Next to him lay his violin, trampled, an eerily poignant little corpse." Based upon your reading of this portion of the text, paraphrase what you think Wiesel is saying. (Do not look at the text as you do this.) Keep in mind the prompt as you do so. In other words, slant your paraphrase through the lens of the prompt, and pay attention to how you can imagine a sensory response to the descriptive details Wiesel describes. After you paraphrase the text, write down any questions that this text leaves you with.
2. Reread one more time pages 85-95, from the paragraph that begins "An icy wind blew violently" through the sentence "Next to him lay his violin, trampled, an eerily poignant little corpse," and underline the one sentence that you think is most important to the meaning of the entire section/chapter. Explain why you think this one sentence is the most important sentence in the piece, keeping in mind what the prompt is asking you to do. If you found some of this text difficult, mark what you think were the most confusing parts, and discuss these with your group.

3. Wiesel paints a descriptive narrative about a young Jew in WWII, just as Picasso painted a descriptive narrative about the bombing of Guernica. Compare the sensory details in Wiesel’s narrative with Picasso’s painting. How might these details help readers (both of text and image) better understand the atrocities of war? Be sure to also list any questions you may have about this topic. (If it is useful, use the organization of the chart below.)

SENSORY DETAILS IN *NIGHT* AND *GUERNICA*

Sensory Detail	<i>Night</i> (Be sure to list page numbers for all details.)	Pg #	<i>Guernica</i> (Be specific so you can recall all the details.)
Sight			
Sound			
Touch			
Smell			
Taste			

“Languaging 101”: Translingual Practices for the Translingual Realities of the SEEK Composition Classroom

Lucas Corcoran

ABSTRACT: This article uses the translingual turn in composition/rhetoric studies as a springboard to argue for the development of students’ meta-linguistic and meta-rhetorical awareness as it took place for first-year college writers in the local context of a SEEK classroom at a branch college of the City University of New York. I theorize and describe a semester-long assignment sequence that positioned students’ ordinary language repertoires as the primary site of academic inquiry. Students collected linguistic ethnographic information and synthesized it with related research to write case studies that interpret their everyday language and literacy practices from a variety of perspectives. The article offers a close-up on the work of one student in particular.

KEYWORDS: translingualism; translanguaging; dialogic pedagogy; first-year writing; basic writing; ethnography; rhetoric; linguistics

The translingual turn in composition/rhetoric studies has touched upon nearly all aspects of the field.¹ It has changed the way we conduct ethnographic studies of language and literacy practices; it has challenged entrenched assumptions of writing assessment; and it has ushered in new pedagogies that view students’ linguistic repertoires as educational resources to be built upon, instead of deficits to be corrected. However, as critics of the translingual turn have often argued, a translingual approach to college writing has seemingly yet to articulate classroom practices and tools for assessment that instructors can readily apply to their local institutional settings. In the following, I respond to this critique by reporting on an assignment sequence and a set of classroom practices that comprised a first-year composition course, titled “Languaging 101,” that I taught in the fall of 2016 in the

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SEEK program at John Jay College of Criminal Justice, the City University of New York (CUNY).

This article tracks a semester-long writing project that culminates in students composing case studies based in their ethnographic observations of their own linguistic repertoires and those of speakers in their communities. Students then contextualize their observations within relevant research about language and linguistics. This curriculum provides students, especially multilingual ones, with a scaffolded set of assignments that integrates day-to-day language practices with conventionalized academic literacies. With ethnographic explorations of language as the primary mode of inquiry, I frame a set of course-specific learning outcomes that I believe are also entirely scalable to university-wide writing programs.

My model denies that languages exist as stable systems prior to their rhetorical enactment. Students are, therefore, not expected to master a uniform "English," but rather they are encouraged to develop a meta-vocabulary, what I will call, after Ira Shor, a "third idiom," for examining the rhetorical and linguistic dimensions of everyday practices and performances. Accordingly, I argue that university-level composition and rhetoric pedagogy should resist the tendency to abstract a singular language from the heterogeneous rhetorical acts that comprise students' language lives. In developing this site-specific curriculum, I also make a broader case that all institutions could adopt course curricula, classroom practices, and methodologies for student assessment that localize language within the practical conditions of its production and reception. Finally, I claim that the ability to theorize and contextualize the ever-shifting contours of language and literacy is the critical skill that will serve students the most throughout their academic careers and their political lives.

Translanguaging and Translingualism

The notion of "translanguaging" has developed in applied linguistics and bilingual education to describe speakers whose language and literacy practices do not easily collate into the distinct and putatively stable "standard" languages, like Mandarin, Urdu, and English, for example. The ideology of monolingualism quietly maintains standard languages as stable and internally coherent systems of signification in which all speakers are putatively able to participate. In contrast, "translanguaging" articulates a model in which speakers operate from a *holistically integrated linguistic repertoire* that might include a variety of linguistic features traditionally associated

with particular nation-states and language communities. Translanguaging contends that multilingual speakers neither “switch between” nor “mix together” languages. Rather, they strategically select linguistic features from heteroglossic repertoires in response to the situational affordances of different communicative contexts. Two scholars key to the idea of translanguaging, Ofelia García and Li Wei, group these idiosyncratic and syncretic language practices under the general heading of “dynamic bilingualism.” These practices operate “like an all-terrain vehicle (ATV) with individuals using their entire linguistic repertoire to adapt to both the ridges and the craters of communication in uneven (and unequal) interactive terrains” (16). Translanguaging legitimizes as it credits and represents the often unrecognized language and literacy practices that speakers and writers perform in what Mary Louise Pratt calls “contact zones,” the transcultural and transnational spaces in which “cultures, meet, clash, and grapple with each other, often in the context of highly asymmetrical relations of power, such as colonialism, slavery, or their aftermaths as they are lived out in many parts of the world today” (34). Translanguaging highlights the improvisatory and performative aspects of language, compelling researchers and educators to shift their level of analysis away from how speakers might acquire essentialized “languages” towards how they incorporate and perform language as culturally-bounded on-going practical activity.

Working mostly from within writing studies, Min-Zhan Lu and Bruce Horner see language as a series of praxis-based, rhetorical acts that gain their significance in response to linguistic conventions built up over time. On their account, there is no predetermined set of constitutive rules that define these conventions: conventions persist temporally insofar as speakers performatively enact them. According to Lu and Horner, “The seeming regularities of language can best be understood not as the preexisting rules determining language practices, but, rather, as the product of those practices: an effect of the ongoing process of sedimentation in which engagement of language participates, a process of building up over time” (“Translingual Literacy” 588). This perspective can help students and teachers conceptualize language as always in a mode of *becoming*. Language is a temporalized set of “rules” that speakers create *through* practice as much as they follow *in* practice. A translingual approach emphasizes the rhetorical foundations of everyday language and literacy as it points to the heightened forms of rhetorical dexterity that multilingual speakers often command. Rebecca Lorimer Leonard uses the notion “rhetorical attunement” to stress the rhetoricity of writing across languages. Lorimer Leonard explains that multilingual writers are “tuned

toward the communicative predicaments of multilingual interaction” (228). Multilingual writers in this sense are already expert rhetoricians, strategically negotiating linguistic features in light of audience, genre, and purpose. This idea locates what is often isolated as “language” as an outcome of the strategies that speakers invent and re-create in response to the exigencies of shifting rhetorical situations. Thinking of language as a catch-all term for a series of attempts to attune to and also to challenge received linguistic and literate conventions helps deconstruct the belief that languages coherently exist *prior* to their enactment and performance.

Although translanguaging and translingualism might seem as an unwarranted attempt to extend post-structural thinking to relatively stable and neutral academic language and literacy practices, I argue that these heteroglossic accounts of multilingualism represent the necessary theoretical correlatives to teaching college-level composition and rhetoric courses in which nearly one hundred percent of students may identify as speakers of languages other than English (LOTEs)—as in the SEEK classes that I describe below. In these courses, the pedagogical methodologies suggested by translanguaging and translingualism re-embed multilingualism within its rhetorical and cultural conditions of production and reception. This provides students with a space to reflect critically upon the nuanced discursive strategies developed for and through heteroglossic practices.

Linguistic Ecologies of the SEEK Composition Classroom

Founded in 1965 during the wave of mid-20th century progressivism that had been gaining traction throughout the United States, the SEEK program first began at the City College of New York, CUNY, with the goal of providing equal access to Black and largely Puerto Rican students to the then flagship university of the entire CUNY system. Now available at all the four-year colleges throughout CUNY, SEEK’s stated mission is “to provide comprehensive academic support to assist capable students who otherwise might not be able to attend college due to their educational and financial circumstances.” In order to qualify for SEEK, students must both have “an admissions index score that is below the cut point for regular admissions to a particular senior college” and a family income that comes in below certain financial thresholds mandated by SEEK. For example, currently a family of two needs to make less than \$29,637; a family of three, \$37,296; and a family of four, \$44,995 (*SEEK*). Although these income thresholds remain well above the federal poverty line, they illustrate a stark image of life in New

York City, a city defined by its prohibitively expensive rental market and its exorbitant cost of living and are furthermore indicative of the general working-class background of SEEK students.

Drawing nearly exclusively from New York City's public high schools, SEEK primarily serves a population comprised of first generation, 1.5 generation, or second generation students. These students bring rich language histories to the classroom, possessing the linguistic skills and rhetorical dexterity required to navigate the communicative demands of day-to-day multilingualism in New York City. In response to a survey I conducted on the first day of class of my fall 2016 course, 19 out of 22 students reported speaking a LOTE. Out of these 19 students, 14 students reported that they spoke Spanish; 2 Bengali; 1 Mandarin; and 1 Arabic. These numbers demonstrate the multilingualism that generally characterizes my SEEK classroom. To further illustrate this point: in response to a similar poll taken in my summer 2017 SEEK course, which attempted to account for students who identified as speaking two or more LOTEs, 12 students reported that they spoke Spanish; 4 French; 3 Arabic; 2 Bengali; 2 Urdu; 1 Ewe; 1 Haitian Creole; 1 Hindi; 1 Mandarin; 1 Russian; and 1 Wolof. Such a pronounced multilingual presence in classrooms like mine might often trigger a "standard" composition and rhetoric pedagogy, verging on an ESL form of skill-and-drill approaches to grammar. My translingual pedagogy, however, locates such language diversity and the rhetorical acts that compose it as the primary experiential "text," which students interpret both in class dialogue and through the lenses of academic literacies. This approach aligns with the social justice goals of the SEEK program by acknowledging a student population who has largely lived their language lives between and beyond the borders of standard languages.

There is an undeniable presence of linguistic, cultural, and racial diversity in the SEEK composition classroom. This fact, coupled with students' general working-class background, often marks SEEK students as "basic" or "developmental" writers, even though they are enrolled in same first-year composition sequence as non-SEEK John Jay students. In the language of CUNY, the designation of "SEEK" is often pejorative. It signifies a student population that inhabits a borderlands somewhere between the fully "mainstream" curriculum of CUNY's four-year campuses and the labyrinth of remedial courses at CUNY's two-year colleges. The non-dominant and translingual profiles of SEEK students often impels a writing pedagogy that intends for students to first master a universalized "English" before moving onto more complex conceptual tasks like rhetorical analysis. A translingual approach undoes these linguistic prejudices and aligns itself with the

founding intentions of basic writing, as inaugurated by Mina Shaughnessy at SEEK's inception at the City College of New York, CUNY, in 1965. As John Trimbur aptly notes, translingualism does not constitute a novel idea in the field, but rather a continuation of a disciplinary and pedagogical attention to language difference that relates back "to the City University of New York (CUNY) and the formation of basic writing in the late 1960s and 1970s, when open admissions precipitated a new kind of reading on the part of composition teachers and a new understanding of what error or language differences might mean" (220). Such a pedagogy that Trimbur describes was one of the first to ask instructors to view their students as language practitioners and innovators instead of language rule-followers or rule-breakers. The first basic writing scholars rallied around this rejection of belletristic models of composition, and the translingual turn in composition/rhetoric studies, in many ways, can be best understood as a linguistic exposition of this way reading student work.

In this vein, translingualism responds to "default" composition and rhetoric pedagogies that divide and delegitimize students' linguistic proficiency against a privileged variety of English. The ideology of monolingualism that locates languages as a set of discretely-bounded and internally uniformed systems underpins this division and further reifies a monolithic "English" as the boundary stone that divides the college composition and rhetoric classroom from the language and literacy practices of everyday life. Paul Kei Matsuda labels this tacit yet operative force of monolingualism the "policy of linguistic containment," arguing, "the first-year composition course has been a site of linguistic containment, quarantining from the rest of higher education students who have not yet been socialized into dominant linguistic practices" (641). What holds true for "mainstream" composition courses I wager holds doubly true for SEEK composition courses: without concerted effort to the contrary, students' non-dominant and translingual profiles coupled with their racialized identities compels a false imperative for a "back-to-basics" approach to writing education.

Nelson Flores and Jonathan Rosa describe such a phenomenon as the effect of "raciolinguistic ideologies," a term that they use to highlight how, no matter how closely minoritized students strive to align their linguistic repertoires to "standard usage," their racialized identities relegate their language to a subaltern status unrecognizable to what Asao Inoue describes as a "white racial habitus" (10). Describing "standard usage," Flores and Rosa argue, "non-racialized people are able to deviate from these idealized linguistic practices and enjoy the embrace of mainstream institutions while

racialized people can adhere to these idealized linguistic practices and still face profound institutional exclusion based on the perceptions of the white listening subject” (165). This idea suggests that speakers’ racialized bodies might very well construct rhetorical ethos more than their linguistic capacities. On this account, what has been traditionally taken as “extra” linguistic features actually yields “intra” linguistic meaning. A translingual approach builds on this idea and grounds language practices within the ideological and corporeal orientations of production and reception.

In line with recent scholarship on translingualism, my course aims at a series of learning objectives derived from viewing “language (including varieties of Englishes, discourses, media, or modalities) as performative: not something we have but something we do” and “all communicative practices as mesopolitical acts, actively negotiating and constituting complex relations of power at the dynamic intersection of the social-historical (macro) and the personal (micro) levels” (Lu and Horner, “Introduction” 28). I describe below how this translingual starting point re-focuses composition towards meta-linguistic and meta-rhetorical awareness as its main pedagogical objective and away from code-acquisition models that favor, tacitly or overtly, the mastery of a singular, privileged variety of English.

Starting with Language: Critical Hip-Hop Pedagogies

In response to the translingual reality of the SEEK composition classroom, my pedagogy positions students as critical interpreters of their everyday language resources by making inquiry into multilingualism the central theme of the course. My curriculum draws its inspiration from H. Samy Alim’s notion of Critical Hip-Hop Language Pedagogies (CHHLPs). In Alim’s conception, CHHLPs “view the school as a primary site of language ideological combat, and begins with efforts to uncover and understand the complex and conflicting language ideologies within particular educational institutions” (“Critical Hip-Hop” 164). For Alim, an emphasis on students’ material language as a pedagogy’s prime subject matter surfaces the classroom as an already contested linguistic setting. Students with minoritized linguistic practices must constantly negotiate their language resources in light of monolingual institutional conventions and policies. Alim sees CHHLPs as a pedagogical tool to prompt students to become chroniclers of the linguistic struggles that are already taking place in the educational institutions in which they find themselves. This type of education optimizes class dialogue and community-centered writing projects to frame everyday

language as a serious matter of inquiry. After the dialogic examination of language ideologies already present in the classroom, CHHLPs uses the theoretical nomenclatures co-developed by teachers and students in order to “encourage students to become ethnographers and collect their own speech data from local communities” (“Critical Hip-Hop” 167). Through self-reflexive analysis of their own language repertoires and community-driven ethnographic writing, CHHLPs reposition linguistically marginalized students as active language investigators instead of passive language learners.

Underlying this shift resides the belief that students already possess profoundly nuanced understandings of language and rhetoric and their socio-political, cultural, and material implications. The pedagogical task for educators, then, is to develop students’ implicit knowledge of their practical language and rhetorical mastery already in play to a level of explicit awareness.

Combined with translanguaging, this approach has the potential to reframe fundamentally institutional-wide writing program learning outcomes and the ways in which college-level composition and rhetoric instructors teach “basic” or “developmental” writers. By the same hand, it can bring critical attention to how monolingual ideologies can tacitly use students’ racialized bodies and non-dominant translanguaging profiles as an excuse to quarantine them off from “mainstream” first-year composition courses. Instead of the unidirectional acquisition of standardized “English” as one of the primary objectives of a composition curriculum or a writing program, instructors and WPAs, I argue, can educate and assess for students’ meta-linguistic awareness and meta-rhetorical awareness. These forms of awareness are the abilities to explicate embedded linguistic and rhetorical knowledges, make analytical interventions in them, and situate such knowledges within the political economies of their everyday use. A pedagogy focused on the critical inquiry into language can also help challenge the student-deficit model of learning and replace it with an asset or experiential model that authenticates students’ linguistic repertoires both as legitimate themes for academic inquiry and as an effective tool for class dialogue and the writing process.

The “Translatable” Writing Curriculum at John Jay

Utilizing John Jay’s institutional-wide inquiry-driven composition curriculum, awarded the CCCC Writing Program Certificate of Excellence in 2012-13, students in my particular course write case studies in which they

first collect ethnographic descriptions by reflecting upon their own linguistic identities and from reporting on the language practices of their communities; they then go on to synthesize this information with research literature on language and linguistics. Describing John Jay's curricular model for composition courses, Mark McBeth and Tim McCormack write, "Using scaffolded assignments, reflective writing, and a rhetorical focus, this curricular design engages students in deep revision as they compose for diverse audiences in diverse contexts" (43). In the first semester of this two-semester sequence, students create a writing portfolio that models the stages of composing an inquiry-driven research project. Instead of persuasive, thesis-driven writing, the assignments ask students to employ the writing process as tool for discovery and critical exploration of topics in light of secondary research. At John Jay, instructors have the overt leeway to premise the above curricular design around a variety of themes. However, the following core curricula structure is standardized throughout John Jay's first semester writing course:

- *Personal narrative*: Students use the course section's unique theme as lens to write about their own first-hand experiences.
- *Research proposal*: Students reflect upon their narratives' motifs in order to develop potential research questions and lines of inquiry.
- *Annotated bibliography*: Students summarize and interrogate sources that they find in response to the ideas set out in their proposals.
- *Scripted interview*: Students have two choices: they can either (i) write a fictional conversation between the sources in their annotated bibliographies; or (ii) they can interview an expert on their topic.
- *Outline*: Students write a blueprint for their draft that allows them map out their ideas for the first draft.
- *First draft research paper*: Students use writing as an epistemological tool: they begin to synthesize the research they have so far collected.
- *Second draft of research paper*: Students shape their ideas into a more fine-tuned form and also engage explicitly the conventions of academic discourse.
- *Reflective portfolio cover letter*: Students review all their assignments from the course and reflect upon their progress.

When I began teaching at John Jay in the fall semester of 2014 as a Graduate Teaching Fellow, this standardized curriculum provided me with a much-

needed road map to follow. As a brand-new college writing instructor, I did not even know that composition/rhetoric studies existed as a field at the time. When I began my doctoral studies, I was early modern scholar, and I arrived to my first day of class with the belief that I was about to teach what amounted to a literature course: we would read literary texts, discuss them, and students would write essays about them—practices to which I had grown accustomed in my years of academic training. However, this literature-based model quickly fell apart. I realized that the most perceptive discussions in class happened when we left the assigned text behind altogether. The energy in the room shifted and students’ eyes lit up when we kicked around ideas at the margins of established academic discourse: the poor lighting inside most CUNY classrooms or our daily commutes on the MTA. From these average everyday beginnings, our “small talk” often changed into charged dialogues revolving around the politics and promises of being a working-class college student. I started to wonder what a first-year composition course would look like that got rid of mandated course texts and only focused on interpreting the texts of everyday life.

In the subsequent semesters, I tinkered with the official course title and the exact sequence of the assignments. I experimented with such themes as life in New York City and a meta-exploration of inquiry itself; I flipped the outline and put it in between the drafts, so students could reverse engineer and organize the ideas that they wrote from one draft to another. Then, in the spring semester of 2016, I took part in Ofelia García’s graduate seminar on translanguaging at the Graduate Center, CUNY, where the Ph.D. students were asked to write a case study that revolved around the empirical implications of the linguistic theories we were learning.

Through taking this course, I realized John Jay’s standardized first-year composition curriculum could provide students with a clear-cut curricular framework that they could use in order to write a language-focused case study: I had the hunch that I could “translate”—both in form and content—what I was learning with Ofelia to the undergraduate classroom. In choosing my fall 2016 course’s theme of “languaging,” my goal was to put into praxis with my students what I, as a student, was studying myself. As both an adjunct and then graduate student, my shift of John Jay’s standardized FYC curriculum towards “languaging” afforded me the chance to implement a series of learning outcomes at odds with tacit institutional goals of language normalization. Drawing on John Jay’s assignment sequence, I situate the personal narrative and the scripted interview as methods for the collection of ethnographic descriptions. In the proposal, students derive inquiry

questions from these first two assignments in order to conduct secondary research. Finally, students use these two assignments as primary texts that they will interpret in composing the final research project for the course in the form of an ethnographic case study.

A Dialogic Model: Composing the Third Idiom

Ira Shor argues that “skills developed through consideration of an experiential problem will make education an ongoing process of life—a state of being rather than a course in an institution” (*Critical Teaching* 105). To start with students’ authentic language means *both* to start with highly idiosyncratic situations *and* with an examination of the public political rhetorics that regulate everyday life. The translingual turn provides a praxis for starting with a critical notion of experience, since it asks educators to root language in its lived performance and reception, instead of abstracting out a stable, atemporal body of linguistic knowledge. A pedagogical scaffolding that invites students to see language as an embodied know-how—a *savoir-faire*—comprises a first step in establishing the students’ ongoing language and literacy practices as a credible theme for serious class inquiry.

I often use class dialogue to ask students to reflect on the rhetorical and linguistic aspects of the daily social practices that make up life in New York City—ordering a cup coffee with cream and two sugars at a bodega, the do’s and don’ts of taking the 7 train, the cultural milieu of the South Bronx. Students quickly make nuanced observations regarding these practices and readily identify their unwritten but normative roles and scripts. However, they often seem reluctant to label their ability to negotiate these linguistic practices as anything other than “common sense,” something quite undistinguished in light of institutionally legitimized knowledges. In other words, students most often struggle to *theorize* these experiences. They lack the habits of mind needed to develop a meta-vocabulary through which they can analyze and critique everyday practices. My translingual pedagogy intervenes in order to provide students with tools for developing meta-vocabularies for theorizing the languages in which their lives are already enmeshed.

Languaging, a term which can be dated back to its appearance in sociology in the 70s (Maturana and Valerie) and which has recently entered the disciplinary discourse of composition/rhetoric studies, provides my course a conceptual starting point for implementing this learning outcome. The forward force of the tensed term “languaging”—its felt but perhaps implicit

meaning—fosters inquiry into the practical and embodied senses of language while muting the power of the unmoving substantive “language” to control linguistic rules and conventions. “Languaging” written on the board prompts students to ask, “Is that a *real* word?,” a gateway question into discussing the relationship between linguistic innovation and rhetorical ethos. Both in form and content, languaging motivates student to wonder what language *is* and *who* has the power to make that call. Students frequently point out upon seeing the word that if they wrote “languaging” in a paper it would be marked as an error, but when I write it on the board, with my authority as instructor, it is seen as a creative innovation.

Although “Languaging 101” is already written in the heading of the syllabus before the first day begins, my students and I spend the first few classes hashing out possible meanings of languaging and the possible trajectories of the course. I like to broadcast to my students that, even as a scholar immersed in the research literature, I still cannot give a finished definition of languaging, that the power of the term lies in its radical openness, and that their input as students can only actively contribute to shaping its definition and use. In composing their own definitions of languaging, students begin to see the course as authentically their own, a curriculum not of key words to be memorized but of concepts to be theorized together as a community.

To begin discussing languaging in class, I first ask students to work together in small groups to account for what meaningful effects the “-ing” ending creates when added to the end of a word. I write pairs such as “work” and “working” and “She talks” and “She’s talking” on the board. I then ask students, without yet giving linguistic explanations, to work out an account of these differences of each pair in their groups that they then can report to rest of the class. I also use this classroom activity as an opportunity for students to demonstrate their expertise in LOTEs, by inviting students to think about linguistic structures similar to the English “-ing” ending in other languages. Students most often volunteer the -ando/-iendo endings in Spanish, as in the difference between “Habla” and “Está hablando.” This acknowledgement of LOTEs further seeks to authenticate students as established expert language users, capable of comparative linguistics. It also sets the translingual trajectory of the course, setting up student-generated meta-descriptions of language as one of the very first classroom activities.

After the class has dialogically worked out a provisional definition of the “-ing” ending and its linguistic force, I can now pose a new problem to the class. With students still in their small groups, I write “language” on one side of the board, and “languaging” on the other. Then, I invite students to

discover, by using their initial theories regarding the “-ing” ending, what “linguaging” might mean and how its meaning might differ from the traditional term “language.” This classroom activity establishes what Shor describes as a “third idiom.” In Shor’s account, the third idiom constitutes the class discourse that transpires when teachers and students strive to bracket out their pre-conceived notions of what counts as appropriate and inappropriate discourse in the classroom (*Empowering Education*). Whether or not it is actually possible to rid the classroom of the discursive prejudices held by students and teachers alike remains highly questionable. However, the *attempt* to bracket them fosters a critical self-reflexive stance of speaking and listening in the classroom and focuses the class’s attention on composing *ad hoc* vocabularies from and for the existential particularities of any course. On Shor’s account, the third idiom brings language to the forefront of the class, inaugurating students as co-authors of terminology and frameworks needed to generate successful inquiry. On my account, the third idiom comprises the terms that students and teachers generate out of experience in order to better understand *that* experience: both ways, the third idiom is self-reflexive and dialogic, drawing on the linguistic practices that students and teachers bring to class. As a discursive amalgam, it discovers a vocabulary of familiar words, rhetorics, and ideas used to understand these selfsame words, rhetorics, and ideas in unfamiliar ways. The third idiom draws upon languaging acts to springboard class dialogue, which nominates both teachers and students to compose from first-hand access and account.

Students further their conceptions of languaging as developed in the course’s first two assignments as they continue to collect primary data from their own experience. The overt instruction to students is that they can use the *full range* of their linguistic repertoire. This hopes to foster a critical stance toward monolingualism as an ideology institutionalized in the college composition classroom which relegates non-elite Englishes, and all LOTEs, to the margins. The work of one student, Genesis Urbaez, detailed below, opened up particularly strong and consistently deepened throughout the semester as she continued to develop a meta-vocabulary—her third idiom—to explore the types of bilingualism she and her mother exercise on a daily basis.²

A Context for Bilingualism

Thinking Through Ethnography: During the last week of class, I take my students to the SEEK computer lab, so they can work on their final projects and receive direct feedback during the writing process. Each day soon after

we walked in, Genesis called me over to ask for direct feedback on her work; she wanted to be sure that she was getting it *right*. So we would sit there in the cramped rows of aging desktops, with wall-mounted rotating fans whirling in the background, going over of her paragraphs, sentence by sentence. The case-study project seemed to speak to her: she appeared ready to take the curricular structure as a chance to learn more about her life and her family, her language and her identity.

In hopes of assessing the successes and the pitfalls of this experiential and language centered approach to pedagogy, I asked Genesis to reflect upon her experiences in the post-course interviews that I often conduct with students for participant-feedback on my teaching practices. These interviews are quite low-stakes: I ask students what worked for them and what didn't, and I try to see if I can catch a glimmer of the hoped-for learning outcomes in their responses. In one particular interview, I wanted to get an idea of how well Genesis took to the notion of languaging and whether it helped or hindered the general experiential approach of my pedagogy. Genesis, along with 11 other students out of the 22 total from my fall 2016 101 course, also had elected to take my spring 2017 201 course, so I had the chance to observe her development as a writer and a thinker over a full academic year. Early in our 201 course with “Languaging 101” still fresh in our memories, Genesis and I sat down after a class for an interview in order to reflect about the successes and the failures of our prior course together.

In the interview, Genesis identified the initial class dialogues on locating lived experience through languaging as one of the more challenging aspects of the course. She also pointed out how task-oriented group work helped students reflect critically about their language lives. Genesis told me: “After we did all the group work that really helped everybody getting their ideas together: ‘Okay, you think this is what languaging is—maybe this is good.’ Then, we put it all together, and we finally figured out what we’re trying to say what languaging is. But only in the beginning...we didn’t really know what we were getting ourselves into.” Genesis’s comments reveal the intellectual labor she and other students undertook in order to develop a theoretical vocabulary from the ground up, the beginnings of a third idiom derived from and for the language that is lived in the seemingly mundane routines of everyday life. Her remarks also show that working through highly-scaffolded conceptual problems can foster an epistemological framing of the classroom as community. Clearly, the introduction of the unfamiliar and academic term “languaging” comprised for Genesis an overt direction preventing a completely holistic epistemology from taking hold over

the course. At the same time, this move helped coordinate group dialogue toward yet-to-be-determined ideas, likewise prompting students to move past receiving the class to actively co-creating core concepts. By offering students languaging as an open-ended neologism in need of definition, the course authorized students as genuine stakeholders. It situated students' own language repertoires as the central course content.

Genesis demonstrated the type of critical inquiry fostered in class dialogue on languaging in her autobiography. In this assignment, students reflect upon the roles that language plays in their lives, both on a practical level and as a formative influence upon their identities. These goals lead it to resemble the "language portfolio" often used in K-12 settings of bilingual education programs in the New York City public schools. These projects comprise: "a way for students to record and celebrate their language learning and cultural experiences over time" and "a place for students to describe their experiences in different languages and with different cultures," which, as such, makes the assignment open-ended enough for *all* students, including students who identify as monolingual, to analyze their own linguistic and cultural experiences (CUNY-NYSIEB, 23). Most often, students in my SEEK courses use the languaging autobiography as space to recount and interpret how they first learned English.

For the entire course, Genesis used her writing as a way to reflect upon how her language life told the story of her relationship with her mother and their migration from New York City to the Dominican Republic and back again. In her opening paragraph, Genesis narrates:

My mother was not economically stable when I was young. Right after I was born we moved to the Dominican Republic. My mom and dad divorced, so my mother decided to take off to the United States with me when I was about one year old. We used to stay in someone's home, where she rented a room. We lived there for a short period of time until my mom got back on her feet. When she did, we got our own apartment. Since my mom was now economically stable she was able to afford a lot of things she couldn't before. She was able to buy a television with cable. I spent a lot of time watching television, I watched shows like Barney and Sesame Street. I learned a lot of English watching those shows. By the time I was 4 and had entered school I knew English perfectly.

Instead of approaching language as an abstract set of rules to be de-contextually acquired, Genesis's writing shows how she interprets an early language-learning experience in terms of a web of social, cultural, and material conditions. Building from our class dialogue on languaging, Genesis employs the term as a self-reflexive interpretive framework: capacious enough to encompass essential features of her upbringing and identity and narrow enough to provide her with a focused set of experiences to think through.

Genesis in turn used the second primary-data assignment, the interview, to understand how her mother learned English both formally in the Dominican Republic and informally on the job in New York City. In the introduction to her interview, Genesis describes her mother's first experiences of learning English in the Dominican Republic:

My mother, Maria Peña, was born in the Dominican Republic in 1962. She grew up in a small town called Jimaní, in a Spanish speaking home. All she spoke was Spanish, until she went to a Institute to learn English. She was 31 years old when she started learning English. It was difficult for her because all her life all she knew was Spanish. Listening to music helped her a lot. She used to write down the lyrics to English songs and go over them.

In this pre-interview description of her mother, Genesis uses the same framework that she used in her languaging autobiography to understand her own language learning experience to interpret a particular language learning experience of her mother's in a new light. Both her languaging autobiography and her interview show Genesis situating her and her mother's language lives within their family's history, and their family's history, in turn, within their language lives.

Genesis adeptly continues this line of inquiry during her interview that she recorded with her mother, which I have transcribed below:

Genesis: Do you consider yourself to be bilingual?

Maria: Yes, it doesn't matter that I have accent in English. But I'm bilingual.

Genesis: What does being bilingual mean to you?

Maria: For me, bilingual means a lot of thing. Because with my language I can help a lot of people in my job.

Genesis: What's your job and how does being bilingual help you?

Maria: My job is—I'm a teacher assistant. And I have a lot of parents that don't speak English.

Genesis: How did you learn English?

Maria: I learn English in the Dominican Republic, years ago before I come here, in 1992. And I know how to write, I know how to read—everything. I love English.

Genesis: Do you feel like you're fluent in both languages?

Maria: No, I'm fluent in my language but I'm not fluent in English. I can talk, I can read, I can write, but I'm not fluent. I know.

Genesis: Why do you feel like that?

Maria: Because that's true! (**Laughter**). I have an accent because I didn't learn English here. I learn English when I was a grown, a big, a grown woman—

Genesis: A teenager?

Maria: A teenager? No, a big woman.

Genesis: What makes you want to know English?

Maria: Because I need it in my job. And, sometimes, when I go by myself to the doctor appointment or some place, I don't understand what the people say. That's the reason that right now I'm going to City College, taking reading and writing.

Genesis: Why is being bilingual important in community?

Maria: Because in my community there are a lot of people from different countries and different cultures, so that's the reason that everybody need to speak English and another language.

From a composition standpoint, Genesis establishes a thematic link with the self-reflection she performed in her languaging autobiography. The interview affords her the chance to practice in a new genre the analytical tools and interpretative frameworks around languaging that she developed in the first assignment. The questions that Genesis poses in this interview exhibit her skill set of thematizing an area of inquiry, in this case that of bilingualism, and of asking relevant questions that open the subject-matter to different interpretive perspectives. From a critical standpoint, Genesis's questions and Maria's answers highlight a nascent inquiry into unqualified notions of bilingualism. Instead of viewing being bilingual as a neutral linguistic capacity, Genesis's line of questioning contextualizes bilingualism as a series of site-based, context-bound language practices seen in terms of labor, community, and migration. One can witness a shift here from language-as-object to language-as-practice in this exchange, as Genesis roots language in its material conditions of production. The relationships between labor, community, and migration were all themes that Genesis would also take

up in her proposal and explore during her research in the library in order to write her case study.

Shifting to the Library: From these two primary-data assignments, students generate short research proposals in which they invent themes along with relevant research questions based on their languaging autobiographies and their interviews. The proposal functions as the "hinge" assignment in the curriculum that bridges students' ethnographic writing on their first-person experiences with language and the experiences of others in their communities to the research that they will conduct in the library. Students often find this rhetorical move troublesome, because it pushes them to codify implicit thoughts and intuitions orbiting around languaging into objectively defined research questions. In general, students ask questions that are either too big: "What's the relationship between language and culture?" or too small: "How many Arabic speakers are there in Queens?" in order to generate productive research results. Genesis, though, soon showed a clear grasp of how to come up with "mid-sized" questions to focus her inquiry.

In our interview, Genesis described the process of moving from this first-person, experiential mode to generating research questions for the proposal assignment: "I had to basically figure out what my main point was in all of it. So with my autobiography and with the interview I had to figure out: 'Okay, so how do they connect, and what's like the big picture?'" As Genesis's remark shows, the proposal asks students to find large-scale connections between their languaging autobiographies and their interviews, then orient these connections towards future inquiry. She explains: "I saw the connection with the interview and my autobiography. So I was like: 'Okay, so how can I make one idea with those two [the interview and the autobiography], and connect it with the research I'm about to do?'" Genesis shows that ethnographic writing can locate students' own language as course content to be conceptualized. It also signals her emergent rhetorical ethos: here, she articulates the rhetorical steps of the research process as clearly as her other written work adeptly performed very similar steps.

The following excerpt from Genesis's proposal likewise reveals her developing aptitude for posing research questions derived from the ethnography of her languaging autobiography and interview:

My research question is, does being bilingual benefit someone financially? Another question that goes along with that is, does it depend on how fluent you are in both languages? A person may speak two languages but can be fluent in one and speak the other

with an accent. I want to know if someone's opportunity can be affected if they speak their second language with an accent. My last question is, does the second language you speak help you get opportunities? Being bilingual can open many doors, but I want to know if it depends on what language you speak.

Genesis's proposal evinces a clear thematic parallel to her interview with her mother. In the interview, Maria suggests that she is not "fluent" in English because of her accent, despite expressing confidence in the efficacy of her language and literacy practices. In this excerpt, Genesis takes a critical stance against facile narratives that present a simplistic connection between bilingualism and its advantages in the labor market. Genesis acknowledges that indeed being bilingual might aid someone's job hunt but also interrogates what kinds of bilingualism have value in the labor market. She now develops a concrete and objective line of inquiry that she can begin to answer through secondary research and that will possibly provide her with a new understanding of how language's relationship to labor plays out concretely in her and her mother's lives.

After the proposal, students go on to write the research component of their case studies. We spend a class in the library going over research methods, and students write annotated bibliographies that summarize the sources that they found in response to the inquiry questions set out in their proposals. The most difficult part of the assignment sequence comes next: when I ask students to apply the insights they garnered from their secondary sources to understand the primary data that they collected in their languaging autobiographies and their interviews in a new light. Such a rhetorical task can present a challenge even for seasoned researchers, and I found myself struggling to break down into concrete steps the hermeneutic procedure by which writers interpret a dataset in terms of a particular theory. Genesis, however, incisively summarized this process as: "For some [research sources], this [research] is explaining exactly what I'm talking about, and for others [i.e. other sources] the research is the main topic and then the autobiography might be explaining what the research is really trying to say." The chiasmic arrangement of Genesis's remark reveals the dialectical nature of synthesizing primary and secondary sources: in some instances, the secondary literature helps researchers better understand their primary data set. In others, the primary data set helps them understand the research in new and innovative ways.

Genesis's insight points to the main learning objective of the total assignment sequence: students' development of a second-order, meta-vocabulary for analyzing and re-contextualizing their language repertoires and linguistic ecologies in new ways. In the introduction to the final draft of her case study, Genesis sets out her new interpretive framework in the final draft of her case study, re-reading the interview with her mother and her secondary research differently:

After the interview I started asking myself why does being bilingual help someone get better job opportunities, does it depend on how fluent you are when speaking the languages, and do the languages you speak help you get different types of job opportunities. Researchers found that being bilingual can lead to higher pay and that some jobs require for you to be fluent in all aspects of both languages.

In this passage, Genesis continues to refine and specify the line of inquiry that she initially set out in her research proposal, narrowing her research questions down even further to focus on the possible economic advantages and disadvantages of bilingualism in the labor market. In answering this research question, Genesis also begins to explore the notion of language "fluency" and how it relates to a potential employee's job prospects. Genesis writes that her mother:

can speak, read, and write in English but not on a level to say that she is fluent. Despite not being fluent in English, she was still able to get a job because of her bilingual skills. But, not every career place is like the one my mother works in. Different jobs call for different levels of fluency in the languages a person speaks. According to West (2010), for a specific job you might need to be fluent when speaking both languages but in another one it might be important to write or be able to translate both languages (p. 21). In other words, not all jobs require the same level of fluency in a person's first or second language. The big picture is that the area someone is fluent in may need to vary in order to use two languages everyday at work.

Genesis here enacts the rhetorical moves needed to make sense of one source in light of another. Her paragraph first paraphrases her interview with her mother, then summarizes a secondary research source, and finally synthesizes the two into an original conclusion derived equally from both sources.

Again, students found this part of the assignment sequence most challenging: they struggled to incorporate vastly different discursive conventions of auto-ethnographic reflection and interviews with academic research literacies. Despite these difficulties, I believe this assignment sequence's initial emphasis on auto-ethnography and other ethnographic data helps ground students where they already had a stake. Although students in this course still had troubles with navigating electronic databases, scholarly journals, and academic citation styles, they seemed to feel, as Genesis's experience makes clear, more connected with the writing process and the content of the course as these centered on conceptualizing and researching the language and literacy practices already in play for them in their communities.

Conclusion

Teaching my translingual first-year composition course in the SEEK program at John Jay College prompted students to develop meta-linguistic and meta-rhetorical awareness through research into actual language and literacy practices which became the object of analytical reflection. Although the translingual turn in composition/rhetoric studies has provided my course with a theoretical backdrop to implement a pedagogy concerned with the development of such forms of awareness, this outcome aligns with long-standing critical attention to the material, cultural, and social antecedents of language and literacy practices, dating back to the passage of *Students' Rights to Their Own Language* in 1974.

To base a writing course on languaging and the linguistic diversity present in SEEK calls for acknowledging LOTE and the multilingual lives that these students lead, including how these lives interact with the institutionalized norms of the college composition classroom. As Ricardo Otheguy, Wallis Reed, and Ofelia García argue, "The *difference* between monolinguals and bilinguals is that monolinguals are allowed to deploy all or most of their lexical and structural repertoire mostly freely, whereas bilinguals can only do so in the safety of environments that are sheltered from the prescriptive power of named languages" (295). To explore language in a way that moves beyond the study of formalized rules and conventions, it is imperative to ask students to think about how rhetorical situations and institutional spaces set the standard for appropriate or inappropriate language and literacy acts. Overtly acknowledging and encouraging LOTE as an acceptable language resource for course writing and themes for investigation opens up the class-

room as a space of critical inquiry and encourages students to develop their own rhetorical ethos as language investigators.

As the archives of the *Journal Basic of Writing* readily affirm, there has been no shortage of basic writing studies that advocate for students' everyday language and literacy practices as legitimate and highly nuanced forms of linguistic and rhetorical practice. A founding principle of basic writing studies is that there is nothing "basic" about basic writers and the skills they already have in hand. However, these arguments have continually lost ground to reductive notions of language and literacy made in the name of austerity and standardization—we simply do not have the time nor the money to teach anything but the "basics." If the translingual turn presents anything new to basic writing studies, it is an argument theoretically nuanced enough to champion a cause that has long been vitally evident to those of us who teach daily in basic writing classrooms: language only comes from the flesh-and-blood speakers who preform it, who embody it, who live in and through it. The recent emphasis on "languaging" in the field of composition/rhetoric studies suggests, I hope, a renewal of the belief that language is best understood in terms of its material and ideological conditions of production and reception. By moving away from "language" and towards "languaging," the translingual turn can help us realize that *to language* means to convey oneself in the world, to pick up the rhetorical and linguistic tools at hand, and to work within or against their historical conventions of use.

The pedagogical focus of my above-described course argues that students already know how to language, that they language every day, and that classroom discourse itself comprises a highly nuanced and complex form of languaging. As composition and rhetoric educators, our labor, then, consists of developing pedagogical techniques that bring explicit attention to languaging in all its forms: classroom practices and assignments that invite our students to reflect deeply upon their own authentic language and literacy practices and that prompt them to develop sophisticated and analytical vocabularies to describe these practices. Finally, this form of composition and rhetoric education, I suggest, distances itself from the tacit yet extremely potent rhetoric of neoliberalism which today positions the university as a minimalist commercial enterprise, where students purchase isolated skills one course at a time, in a society where standardized "English" is a type of cultural capital that only a select few are enabled to legitimately possess.

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Notes

1. This article is an expanded version of a paper I gave at the Council on Basic Writing's featured session at CCCC 2017 entitled, "Emerging Voices in Basic Writing Studies."
2. Genesis and her mother, Maria Peña, asked to have their full names included in this article.

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Reworking the Policing of Plagiarism: Borrowings from Basic Writing, Authorship Studies, and the Citation Project

Missy Watson

ABSTRACT: In this essay, I examine the sociopolitical consequences of policing plagiarism and evaluating students' ethics within the context of basic writing's longstanding tradition of remediating and reshaping pedagogies, ideological stances, and what counts as academic writing. With the hope of illustrating how we might be more intentional about resisting policing tactics, I provide a handful of anecdotes demonstrating how scholarship on authorship and plagiarism, alongside my research with the Citation Project (a large-scale study of student source use), has helped me rework source use in the classroom as a practice within a larger system of values in academic discourse. I argue that we teachers of basic writing, alongside all teachers of composition, must examine our own values placed on source use, acknowledge these values as cultural rather than natural, and then work collaboratively with students to demystify and contest the very values we hold and expect students to also share and uphold. And in doing so, I believe we may further contribute to the field's ongoing endeavor of reworking academic English in ways that make the language and its writing more accessible to and representative of all of its many users.

KEYWORDS: academic discourse; basic writing; Citation Project; pedagogy; plagiarism; source use

Plagiarism scholar Rebecca Moore Howard illustrated nearly twenty years ago in *Standing in the Shadows of Giants: Plagiarists, Authors, Collaborators* that plagiarism is a challenging concept to define, especially due to the blurry lines of intention and authorship. She argued for educators to treat plagiarism contextually and to stop vilifying students for unintentional errors like inaccurate source use and inadequate paraphrasing (see also Buranen and Roy; Howard "A Plagiarism Pentimento"; Howard and Robillard; Pennycook; Price; Robillard; Shi "Cultural Backgrounds," "Textual Borrowing"; Valentine). For decades now, teachers of writing across contexts have begun

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acknowledging the need to complicate our understandings and treatments of plagiarism, taking into consideration varying degrees of offense and intention and the reality that assessing intention is not always clear-cut. Students turning in research papers with inaccurate or incomplete citations by no means equates to students copying verbatim into their essay full paragraphs from a source without attribution, which by no means equates to students seeking editing services or purchasing entire papers to submit as their own. When dealing with what we may suspect to be ineffective academic source use, it is critical to investigate contributing factors and treat each assumed act of plagiarism individually, scrupulously, and contextually.

Despite the many advances in plagiarism studies, it is still not far-fetched to assume, as Candace Spigelman and Kami Day did in 2006, that “most faculty in higher education regard plagiarism as an academic sin” (139). Disparaging attitudes felt toward students persist (and get circulated in publications and in our small talk on campus and at conferences), such as the assumption that students are merely careless, unethical, or negligent, that they are prone to copying and pasting from the internet without much regard to the ethics or consequences. I have certainly found myself policing students’ perspectives and source-use practices, thinking things like, “That’s not an academic way to use sources; it’s just not right. I’d do it this way,” or “That’s not a good attitude to have about source use!” or “This student’s borrowing from this source utterly disregards academic values and the strategies I taught in class!” I see in these responses uncritical assumptions deeming academic source use as superior and students’ differing ways with language and source use as unethical, unfitting for academic contexts, or, at best, inferior. And I see what composition teachers Spigelman and Day have acknowledged: that the issue of plagiarism is “emotionally saturated” (139, see also Biswas; Robillard “We Won’t Get Fooled Again”). Our responses to student source use are anything but neutral. Just as our emotions might soar when observing students who have excelled in adopting academic discourse and source use, we often can’t help but to care about and even get worked up over what we observe as improper or careless practices. Our time and pedagogical investment alone is reason enough to expect and accept our emotional investment in students’ learning or lack thereof.

Basic writing teachers and scholars are no strangers to staring emotions, discursive hegemony, and cross-cultural conflict straight in the face, especially for the purposes of glaring inward at ourselves. Indeed, arguably more so in basic writing than in other enclaves of composition studies, scholars and teachers strive to develop self-reflection both in our students

and in *us*. Our willingness to develop consciousness-raising tactics that help us politicize, criticize, and re-envision our values and practices invites our pedagogies to transform and to be transformative. Mina Shaughnessy's *Errors and Expectations* not only paved the way for the subfield of basic writing; it prompted a tradition of "remediating" our own pedagogical knowledge and methods. And while we haven't stopped since, such reflexive qualities necessitate growing and ongoing introspections. That's because although we've long recognized the emotional baggage accompanying hegemonic discourse, the challenge endures in basic writing and far beyond of acknowledging and effectively contesting our deep-seated and deeply felt assumptions about what's academic writing and what's not—emotions that keep us, consciously or not, focused on "guarding the tower" from "those who do not seem to belong in the community" (Shaughnessy, "Diving In" 234). Source use is but one of many discursive features of academic writing to which we hold ideological *and* emotional attachments that may influence exclusionary perspectives and practices.

As Bruce Horner called us to do in "Relocating Basic Writing," we ought to keep central to our pedagogies our field's understanding of "correctness" as arbitrary, which may help us avoid uncritically deeming deviations to academic discourse as errors and deficits, including, I'd add, in students' source use. Assuming standardized approaches to source use are inherently superior not only runs counter to what we know about how language and writing works and evolves; it is also unethical in its tacit upholding of standard language ideologies that maintain social and racial hierarchies through subordinating and oppressing all language users who defy, consciously and not, standardized practices, especially those students who identify as people of color, immigrants, children of immigrants, and English language learners. Particularly because these student populations have long comprised basic writing classrooms, "the basic writing course" as Horner argues, "is a site for the ongoing and culturally crucial task of reworking English and its writing" (16). For me, theory and pedagogy on the teaching of source use and the treatment of plagiarism remains a topic ripe for reworking, particularly in the context of basic writing, which undeniably remains a veteran discipline for contesting the language and language practices of the academy. It's worth emphasizing, then, that reworking source use affords more than uncovering best pedagogical practices; it serves also to reshape—although, admittedly, far more slowly and modestly than perhaps we'd like—the cultural values and language ideologies upheld across the globe (and largely perpetuated in our very classrooms) that hierarchize languages and their users.

In what follows, I begin by examining the sociopolitical consequences of policing plagiarism and evaluating students' ethics. Then, with the hope of illustrating how we might be more intentional about resisting policing tactics, I provide a handful of anecdotes from my own attempts to apply composition theory and research to my teaching of effective academic source use. More specifically, I demonstrate how scholarship on authorship and plagiarism, alongside my research with the Citation Project (a large-scale study of student source use), has helped me rework source use as a practice within a larger system of values in academic discourse. I argue that we teachers of basic writing, alongside all teachers of composition, must examine our own values placed on source use, acknowledge these values as cultural rather than natural, and then work collaboratively with students to demystify and contest the very values we hold and expect students to also share and uphold. And in doing so, I believe, we may further contribute to the field's ongoing endeavor of reworking academic English in ways that make the language and its writing more accessible to and representative of all of its many users.

Policing Plagiarism, Evaluating Ethics

It is my wish that teachers across the disciplines would collectively heed to Howard's plea in her 2001 article published in *The Chronicle of Higher Education* to "Forget about Policing Plagiarism. Just Teach." As Howard argues, when we teachers focus on policing, "we risk becoming the enemies rather than the mentors of our students" (n.p.). Policing students' ineffective uses of sources, particularly in cases where intention is indiscernible, can damage teacher-student relationships, shut down opportunities for learning, rouse harmful anxiety and embarrassment in students, and exclude students from higher education and career prospects (in cases where expulsion is sought). Further, policing plagiarism works to perpetuate perceptions deeming students' language and literacy practices inferior and unethical, which, in and of itself, can further provoke lasting material consequences for students. Thus, we can liken such practices to the sorts of "othering" and "cultural deficit" pedagogies long criticized in basic writing as a major perpetrator in the politics of remediation (Soliday). Assuming students and their literacies are inferior or immoral—and, thus, in need of policing—perpetuates historical misconceptions of diverse student populations as being culturally incompatible within academic communities. But, as Mary Soliday reminds us in *The Politics of Remediation*, institutional systems and discourses (alongside the material realities of students) are the real culprits leveraging the successes,

or not, of basic writing students, not students themselves and not their respective cultures.

My own interest in the politics of policing plagiarism soared in 2012. While conducting research on writing and the internationalization at a private university, I interviewed over a dozen administrators from across programs and disciplines who worked regularly with international graduate students. Three of my participants mentioned a troubling case in which an international graduate student was at the time being kicked out of the university for plagiarism charges. According to the participants I interviewed, the investigation revealed that the student, who had a strong GPA and an even better reputation among faculty, had borrowed too closely from some of her sources. Apparently, the student openly cited those sources in her thesis, was working under the close mentorship of her faculty advisor (who regularly read her work and never suspected irresponsible source use), and was herself under the impression that she was using sources effectively and ethically. All three participants who mentioned the case expressed disapproval of the program's and institution's decision, while one shared her belief that this was an intentional scare tactic designed to ward off potential plagiarists among incoming international graduate students. I never learned whatever came of this student and whether she was ever able to complete her graduate studies and pursue her career of choice. Indeed, all that I knew came to me anecdotally. But needless to say, the case shook me. Among many other concerns, I began to wonder, if a high achieving and highly celebrated graduate international student was susceptible to such harsh punishment over what appears to be an unintentional misuse of sources, what risks face our students who do not hold such status, standing, and privilege? This was a case that, for me, made unquestionably clear the material and gatekeeping effects of "guarding the tower" by way of policing source use.

Basic writing's longstanding tradition of acknowledging the politics of academic discourse and remediation, alongside its commitment to negotiating struggle and conflict in the composition classroom, provides useful frameworks for re-envisioning pedagogical and institutional approaches to addressing plagiarism and the teaching of effective academic source use. Min-Zhan Lu in 1991 deconstructed essentialist views of language that treat language as apolitical and that perpetuate a "politics of linguistic innocence" (27). Such a stance, said Lu, leads teachers to overlook "the political dimensions of the linguistic choices students make in their writing" (27). Viewing language instead as "a site of struggle among competing discourses," Lu emphasized the need to help students learn how to better "respond to

the potential dissonance between academic discourse and their home discourses” (27). Today, we readily acknowledge the impossibility of teaching academic discourse in politically and ideologically innocent ways. Just as Lu encouraged us to do in the early 90’s, we must continue to acknowledge the tensions between home and school discourses, including source-use practices and the concept of plagiarism, recognizing that our practices and values are cultural, ideological, and political.

Consider another case from an international graduate student who attended the same private university mentioned above. While working together in the writing center one day on the student’s research paper, I observed what appeared to be missing quotation marks around a passage followed by a citation. I inquired, and the student’s response led to a forty-minute discussion of his writing process and of US academic source-use practices. He readily acknowledged that the section I noticed was indeed copied from the source he cited. He went on to explain how *every* sentence in his 8-page paper was likewise copied from a source. I learned that the bulk of his process for writing involved reading and re-reading for days on end. He would identify across his sources what he considered to be—based on his topic or central idea—the most central, compelling, and representative points and connections. Some passages he borrowed were multiple sentences, but many were far shorter. After copying each passage verbatim onto sheets and sheets of paper, he cut them into individual strips. Scattering all of the excerpts across his living room floor, he began to meticulously string them together—adjusting, adding, and removing passages and parts of passages until he was satisfied with the harmony he sought to create. With his order set, he typed it all up, spending additional hours revising his prose, adding transitions and citations, and accounting for discrepancies in verb form, noun number, tone, word choice, and other grammatical and mechanical inconsistencies. He felt his writing and his writing process were masterful, and I agreed. His painstaking process, which led to a product not valued in US academic discourse, was undeniably rigorous, intellectual, artful, and—by my reading—effective in illustrating his nuanced synthesis of complex ideas represented across multiple texts.

Students’ cultural, linguistic, and national backgrounds have long been cited in plagiarism research as informing their source-use practices (e.g., Currie; Kirkland and Saunders; Shi “Cultural Background,” “Textual Borrowing”). Among other issues raised, scholars have suggested that some students, depending on their backgrounds, may not be aware of which textual borrowing practices are allowed and effective and which are not in US

academic contexts. We can certainly interpret the example above as a case supporting that claim. This student openly and proudly recounted his writing process, expressed surprise over my explanations of source-use practices deemed acceptable and not, and further expressed serious concern over the consequences facing students who engaged sources as he did. He shared his experiences writing in his home country that further supported the notion that his unawareness was culturally rooted. However, there is more worth considering here beyond acknowledging that cultural differences were a factor. He also expressed anxiety and remorse over having to dramatically alter his own writing practices; he was at once both frantic about the work he now faced in revising and in grief over a sense of loss he felt imagining abandoning the artifact he so devotedly and artfully crafted. I recall him staring at his pages, shaking his head and questioning softly but repeatedly, “This is wrong?” It seemed in that moment he was struggling to cope with an emotional response he was not often accustomed to facing: a sense of failure. In his home country, he was a high-ranking educational administrator and leader, and he always presented himself and treated his graduate studies as a serious scholar. Having to confront his own diligent practices under the framework of US source-use ideologies (which deemed his practices unfit and unethical) seemed a shocking and painful experience.

Undoubtedly, the kinds of source-use practices occurring outside of US academia—in students’ homes, in the media, and across nations and cultures—may be at odds at times with what we expect in our classrooms and in academia at large. This realization affords us the chance to rework our pedagogies so that they take into account what students already know and do, and what students want or need to know and do to thrive during their stay in academia. But perhaps more importantly, acknowledging the cultural constructedness and hegemonic consequences of US academic practices, including source use, affords us the chance to rework our very own notions about teaching and about what constitutes effective writing. Rather than linger over the differences in students’ source-use knowledge and practices or panic over how to “catch up” these students, we can and should complicate and even contest—among colleagues and with students—the very ideologies that hierarchize literacy practices and the students who use them.

I want to acknowledge, however, that when I claim that instructors should move beyond policing students, I do not mean to suggest that we invite a free-for-all when it comes to source use, documentation, or academic integrity. As indicated above, there are varying degrees of what constitutes plagiarism, and we ought not let slide the most egregious acts of plagiarism,

such as students purchasing papers or copying/pasting bodies of work with the intent to pass it off as their own. Upon leaving the writing center, the international graduate student I worked with that day went on to carefully revise his draft and to polish—over the next several months and after many more writing center consultations—his paraphrasing, summarizing, synthesizing, and citation skills to meet US academic expectations. And over those months, he was very clear about how grateful and excited he was to meet those standards. Thus, I recognize the need for instructors to use their expertise and to work with students to gain the knowledge and skills they seek. And I further understand the need for instructors to use their best judgment when blatant plagiarism is detected and to devise appropriate strategies for dealing with this and any type of plagiarism, including, when necessary, through establishing and ensuring due process in instructors' respective departments, programs, and institutions.

What I hope to demonstrate here instead is the need to be increasingly thoughtful of and intentional about how we treat the less-so-obvious accounts of plagiarism (such as improper or missing citations, copied sections missing quotations, and ineffective paraphrase), as well as the need to draw on self-remediating traditions in basic writing to reframe our dispositions and practices regarding source use and plagiarism and to rework our understandings of effective academic writing. To be fair, the move to police may be one that results out of caring—caring about teaching students what they'll need to know to succeed in and beyond academia, caring about hard work and students' intellectual advancement, and caring about academic standards and values. In fact, my bet is that teachers in basic writing and beyond are doing their best to accomplish these goals, all while working within many constraints. But, as we've long realized in basic writing, learning the language, grammar, syntax, styles, and genres of academic discourse influences how and what students think, which among its positive assimilative effects can also be devastating to some students, especially students of color, immigrants, transmigrants, English language learners, and working-class students who may struggle to manage the push and pull of their different communities, languages, and identities. We must further see this issue as applicable in academic practices like citation and in the use and synthesis of sources. Following self-remediating traditions in basic writing, we must be ever mindful of our biases toward academic discourse and of the fact that our own buy in is socially and culturally constructed.

We in basic writing, and in academia writ large, share beliefs about the need to draw on sources, which sources are appropriate, how to integrate

sources into writing, how to best acknowledge and cite sources. While certain scholarly source-use beliefs and practices are upheld outside of academia (such as US copyright laws and the very real penalties for using ideas/content without permission), we cannot deny that our practices are based on ideologies developed historically in academic communities. Acknowledging source use as cultural invites us to interrogate what are too often uncritical preferences for academic source use.

As has been well documented and historicized, the conceptual development of “authorship” is a cultural invention wherein capitalistic ideologies serve as major forces in establishing the myths of autonomy and originality in Western contexts. Our understandings of what constitutes authorship are thus motivated by profit-driven enterprises, which we can readily connect to the advent of the printing press and later to conceptualizations of intellectual property and the forging of copyright laws. Roland Barthes is often called on in this scholarship for contesting the prospect of “originality” in authorship, defining a composition instead as “a tissue of quotations drawn from the innumerable centres of culture” so much that “the writer can only imitate a gesture that is always anterior, never original” (146). Michel Foucault conceives Western views of the author as either *heroic* (since, historically and culturally, texts have been viewed as religiously transcended, sacred, creative, and original works) or *dead* (since the form and product of writing outlives the life of the author and since it is not evident to readers that the author is a historically, socially, and culturally shaped individual). Both Barthes and Foucault, therefore, critique normalized assumptions and practices that inaccurately position the author as original, autonomous, or detached from historical and cultural contexts. They help us see that authorship is necessarily about borrowing and that the terms we set for how to borrow are cultural.

Scholars like Thomas Inge criticize English and composition for holding on to such traditional definitions of authorship—mainly the narrow view that the author works alone and is considered what Jack Stillinger calls a “solitary genius”—despite our recognition that all texts are constructed based on various influences of social and political interactions, including those interactions amongst multiple individuals during composition and revision processes. Inge posits that our habit of viewing texts as unique works of individual authors (instead of collaborative pieces) falsely substantiates an idealistic view of how literary texts are constructed. Further, ideologies privileging an individual, creative “genius” writer are the basis of the fundamental definition of plagiarism. These problematic value systems—which

are antithetical to basic writing perspectives on collaborative learning and the literacy development of diverse writers—may also explain, according to Ron Scollon, the difficulty experienced or resistance seemingly displayed by some intercultural students since their understanding of source use may stem from different ideological bases (6).¹ Applied to the present issue, knowing why we as a culture place so much value on originality and autonomy may help us process those teaching moments when we feel shaken to learn, for instance, that a student sought help with editing. Indeed, upholding assumptions of authorship as a decontextualized, dehistoricized, and individualized creative exercise is counterproductive to all learning environments, including and especially in basic writing where students may come from the most vulnerable communities.

While we are not in the business of policing or converting students to adopt our ethics, we are professionally equipped to work with students to demystify the values that drive the intertextual moves we make in academic writing. I argue for the need to recognize and honor students' different practices and goals, but I also recognize, of course, that many students wish to gain practice and expertise in academic discourse (at least to achieve success during their college careers, if not for other ambitions beyond). We as their basic writing teachers can and should work with them to gain strategies for better understanding what is expected in academic culture when it comes to source use and other rhetorical practices. But demystifying what is expected is not and should not be the same as falling into problematic and downright unjust binaries such as right/wrong and good/bad.

As teachers of student populations viewed under deficit frameworks, many of us are already accustomed to questioning and transforming our own visceral responses to students and their writing. And, certainly, teachers in basic writing and far beyond already take the time to consult with students in hopes of determining intention and teaching rather than penalizing students who do not use sources effectively in academic contexts. For instructors who investigate and get to know the student and circumstances, they may be less likely to penalize those who they believe to be ethical or trying their best. Nevertheless, being judges of ethics is unavoidably tricky. That's because it also follows that some teachers may be more likely to penalize those students who they perceive as *unethical* or *undeserving*, or at least those who they have little evidence to believe otherwise. Clearly, we cannot be sure that some students are unethical or underserving, which is why it is worth emphasizing this as a perception and not a certainty. I appreciate Judy Angona's cry for teachers to "be committed to judging [students'] actions

wisely” and to “wield the power we hold humbly, with unwavering respect for the lives and futures of those entrusted to our care” (209). And yet, I find unsettling even well-intentioned acknowledgements that “occasional lapses of judgment that can result in the submission of plagiarized work” can come from “even the most dedicated and honest student” who may “be overwhelmed by the heavy workloads and unrelenting deadlines that define academic success” (209). On the one hand, this perspective reminds us to assume the best in students and to, accordingly, give them credit; on the other hand, it reifies a tendency to assume we are authorized and effective judges of who is “dedicated and honest,” and correspondingly, who is not. These are troubling assumptions, especially given what we know about basic writers being among the most vulnerable students, students too often deemed unfit for academia.

Given the politics of plagiarism, we would better honor students and attain more sound pedagogy if we were more mindful and proactive in our responses to instances where we sense ineffective and unethical source use. While approaches to better handling the teaching of plagiarism will necessarily vary to address the situated needs of localized contexts, there are three fundamental goals I wish to highlight here for basic writing instructors.

First, *we should pause and question ourselves when our instincts tell us an essay feels inauthentic, and we should be mindful of moments when we jump on Google to search for phrases that feel more sophisticated than we assume the student is.* Along the same lines, we may want to reconsider supporting corporations like Turnitin.com that profit from policing students and from archiving their essays (Howard “Should Educators”). Howard suggests these approaches lead to “replacing the student-teacher relationship with the criminal-police relationship” (“Forget about Policing Plagiarism,” n.p.), a shaky social dynamic I’m guessing most basic writing teachers wouldn’t consciously pursue.

Second, *it is important that we resist hierarchizing ethics, remembering that students’ knowledge of and ethics surrounding source use are different, not inferior.* I suspect this perspective (that students’ source-use knowledge and practices are different, not inferior) may disturb some academic professionals who may have grown frustrated by the most egregious of plagiarism offenses that many of us have experienced or heard about. I can hear some readers asking of me, “How can you say our knowledge on source use isn’t preferable to students, some of which know nothing about it, while others assume it’s acceptable to have their roommates write their papers!” I acknowledge this concern, and I recognize, of course, that we are experts and their teachers.

But I see more promise when teachers avoid assuming their understanding and treatment of writing are superior to students. So steeped in our professional expertise and academic culture, we forget that academic practices are not truths with a capital ‘T’. Relatedly, we should recall, as Lu reminded us long ago, that “students’ fear of acculturation and the accompanying sense of contradiction and ambiguity” are not to be seen as a deficits (32). Thus, we cannot overlook students’ anxiety—conscious and self-proclaimed, or not—regarding the ways they may transform in response to engaging and attaining academic discourse, as well as the ways they may react to policing practices.

Third, *we need to develop teaching practices that examine and address academic and institutional ideals for effective academic source use but that avoid policing agendas that diminish our own teacherly ethos, pitting students against us and, correspondingly, pitting us against them.* We can examine with students their and others’ affective responses to academic discourse in order for students to determine their own critical stances on the values of (and problems with) academic discourse. Rather than treating citation in the basic writing classroom as a procedural editing practice weeding out error, we could and should treat source use and citation as rhetorical moves within discursive styles, situated across specific communities and negotiated by both readers and writers.²

Classroom Applications: Borrowing from Authorship Studies

When addressing source use in my own composition classrooms, I have tried to incorporate some of what I’ve learned from authorship studies so that students also come to understand writing from sources as socially constructed rather than universal or commonsensical. Likewise, I have drawn on my experiences studying student source-use practices with a team of Citation Project researchers, and I attempt to apply this knowledge by working alongside students to also critically analyze theirs and others’ source uses. The narratives of pedagogical experiences that follow, while brief, aim to exemplify a handful of classroom approaches that begin to deconstruct with students the cultural and value-ridden aspects of academic source use.³

I have found that drawing on research in authorship studies, especially the theoretical perspectives summarized in the last section, can help open up classroom conversations about the cultural and political dynamics of academic source use. Indeed, one means by which we may work to develop a critical consciousness in our students about effective academic source use

is to examine with students these very theories from authorship studies, guiding students to better understand just what it is we in academia expect, why, and even to consider whether we as teachers and students perceive these cultural logics as sensible and effective, or not. Such conversations also clarify why we expect students to work solitarily despite the undeniable values of collaboration, and they may invite us to rethink and problematize the demands for solitary learning in the first place.

I teach first-year composition courses at City College of New York, a senior CUNY campus celebrated for its astonishing diversity, and perhaps best known in composition studies for its contributions to basic writing made possible through the seminal research of Mina Shaughnessy and Marilyn Sternglass. It is typical in any given composition class at City College for most students to be of color and multilingual (with many using English as an additional language), and for there to be more than a dozen different native countries and languages represented among students. The twenty-eight filled desks barely fit within most classrooms. Although the space constraints may not be conducive to learning, most students—who in their late teens and early twenties are already familiar with the consequences of linguistic and racial hierarchies—are well equipped for critical investigations into academic norms and language ideologies. As such, I treat the politics of language as a topic of inquiry in my composition classes, assigning readings and assignments that not only aim to help students gain the academic writing skills expected in first-year composition but to also begin to “recognize the role of language attitudes and standards in empowering, oppressing, and hierarchizing languages and their users” (Watson and Shapiro).

As part of this curriculum—during their second major writing assignment, a researched argument essay—I engage students in examining the cultural politics of effective source use in academic contexts. To start, I pose to students an array of questions about source-use practices, many of which can be addressed based on students’ experiences and knowledges of US history, pop culture, and copyright. The purpose of the questions is to invite students to critically understand and even begin to challenge what they, like many of their teachers past and present, may have taken for granted as commonsense or incontestably sanctioned. For instance, in my spring 2017 composition course at City College, I posed the following questions:

1. Why do writers use sources? Why do writers cite sources?
2. Where do we more commonly see source use? What does it look like?

3. What do we know about how source use varies across cultures and other contexts?
4. Why do we value sources and source use so much in academia?
5. What constitutes plagiarism? What are the different “kinds” or “degrees” of plagiarism?
6. Why do we treat and punish plagiarism the ways that we do?
7. What might be the relationship between our treatment of plagiarism in academia and long-held Western values that suggest language can be owned and therefore stolen?
8. What other Western cultural values do we see in our source-use practices? For instance, why might we focus on distinguishing our voice from others? What does an emphasis on individualism suggest about our values?⁴

While I admit these conversations can take a bit of warming up, students in my 2017 course were noticeably quiet. They were a chatty group and even though we’d spent the last several weeks investigating the problems with standard language ideology and with treating academic writing as a normalized communicative construct, they hesitated to place academic source use under these same frameworks. Indeed, as I came to realize, though to no big surprise, they were expecting me to lecture on how serious of an offense it is to plagiarize, rather than for to talk about, for instance, how thought-provoking it is that in this culture we think we can own language. After some prodding with this very notion—that we think we can own language—students expressed agreement that this belief is indeed sort of silly.

With the ice broken, students had much more to say. They brought up examples from pop culture, such as the absurdity of Paris Hilton trying to copyright the phrase, “That’s hot.” We then talked about the politics of publication and how odd it is that so many citizens in our country don’t have access to the same printed knowledge that we do as members of higher education institutions, one student questioning, “How come my mom can’t access what I can through the CCNY library?” Two students shared past instances where they had felt they were trying their best but a teacher still assumed, without solid evidence, that they had cheated. Most admitted not feeling confident that they’ll ever become expert at knowing how to cite and document sources in their bibliographies, and don’t really understand why they get into so much trouble for putting commas in the wrong places when quoting. In past semesters, students who grew up in other cultures shared their confusion over quotations and why we in the West dismiss the value of memorizing content in favor of inventing new ideas, and why we expect

public example, some students argued that suspicion of students' intentions and ownership of language is driven by communicative hierarchies, while other students emphasized that these biases are fueled, consciously or not, by racist assumptions.

While research on the intersections of race and plagiarism have not yet surfaced in academic circles (to my knowledge), when given the opportunity to interrogate the issue, students readily recognized that racism is a real player in the political project of plagiarism. Students concluded that cases like Martínez's provide disconcerting evidence that judgments about students' ownership of written language may at times be based on their identities and on their spoken language, which, as I helped to contextualize, goes against what research shows about the cognitive and social abilities of language users who code-switch across languages and dialects. The case of Martínez serves as a useful reminder to students and teachers alike that we cannot assume, based on what someone looks like or sounds like, what their writing will look like and sound like. And we can't make assumptions about the kind of person they are or what they care about. As these sorts of judgments are made unconsciously, we must be diligent about reflecting on our own day-to-day assumptions about and responses to plagiarism and authorship.

By sharing insights from authorship studies with students, and by shaping class discussion around those issues, my aim is to inform students about the larger contexts and purposes of source-use practices, and to critically consider the extent to which source-use practices are treated for what they are: cultural and ethical belief systems and procedures. If we teachers approach source-use practices dialogically—acknowledging them as cultural, political, and value-ridden moves—we can build better relationships with students by demystifying ideological expectations embedded in academic discourse rather than attempting to convert them to our ideological systems or, worse, police and penalize them for their differences or lack of knowledge. Instead of focusing on classroom procedures such as lecturing about plagiarism, using scare tactics, and assigning exercises or quizzes to train students how to avoid plagiarism, I believe our labors are better spent working with students to deconstruct the value systems in academia many of us see as common sense but forget are actually cultural and hegemonic constructions.

Classroom Applications: Borrowing from the Citation Project

My next set of brief pedagogical examples stems from my efforts to apply to my teaching insights from the Citation Project (hereafter, CP), a

multi-institution empirical study of students' source-use practices. Like my immersion in authorship studies, my experience with the CP has helped shape how I treat source use when I teach composition. Using citation content analysis, CP research helps reveal the extent to which students are engaging with sources in ways deemed effective in academia. The CP originated out of Syracuse University in 2008 through a single-institution pilot study that was presented in Howard, Tanya K. Rodrigue, and Tricia Serviss' "Writing from Sources, Writing from Sentences." Later research conducted through the CP involved dozens of college composition teacher-researchers from across 16 US higher education institutions who collectively studied 174 college student research papers in order to code, among some other things, whether students were summarizing, paraphrasing, patchwriting, or copying with and without quotations ("The Citation Project").

I participated in the CP from 2009 to 2014 and had the privilege of gaining invaluable insights from CP Principle Researchers Sandra Jamieson and Rebecca Moore Howard, the larger team of researchers working across the nation, as well as the rigorous research methodology the CP utilized. After extensive training and the initial collection and selection processes of source-based student essays, CP researchers like myself work to locate and closely review all sources cited in a given essay's works cited or bibliography page, systematically isolate the source uses within the body of the student essay, compare the actual source with the student's source use, analyze and code the ways in which students are borrowing from their sources, and then norm results with a fellow CP researcher. Thus, all 174 student essays were coded by at least two trained researchers who, for every coded instance within a given paper, reveal their results to their CP colleague and work to reconcile any differences. In cases where differences can't be resolved, a third and usually senior CP researcher joins the coding and reconciliation process.

In my classrooms, I tell students about the CP and share some of its findings. Two examples of compelling CP discoveries I often disclose include the finding that ~70% of students' citations come from the first two pages of their sources ("Unraveling"), and that students' engagement with sources is often limited to the sentence level (and thus instances of summary in research writing are rare, while the summaries that do emerge are regularly incomplete or inaccurate) (Howard, Rodrigue, and Serviss). I get a laugh every time I share with students that I'm quite aware that 70% of the time they may be just scanning the first two pages of their sources to grab a quote and move on. We talk about how this habit may be further indicative of how, often, too little time is put into reading sources thoroughly and, then, how

that translates into them being less prepared to write accurate and comprehensive summaries of their texts.

Some of the more fruitful discussions I have with students, however, revolve around the concept of patchwriting. Patchwriting, as defined by Howard in 1999, is the “copying from a source text and then deleting some words, altering grammatical structures, or plugging in one-for-one substitutes” (“New Abolitionism” 89). Building from this definition, the CP explains that “Patchwriting involves restating a phrase, clause, or one or more sentences while staying close to the language or syntax of the source” (“Research Methods”). Howard suggests that rather than treating patchwriting as we do other forms and degrees of plagiarism, we should understand it as “a move toward membership in a discourse community” (*Standing* 7) and, thus, evidence of students learning and practicing paraphrase and other rhetorical moves expected in academic writing. Understanding patchwriting as a learning strategy and as evidence of a novice attempting to gain entrance within a new community of writers, rather than simply an act of plagiarism, certainly complicates cases where students are penalized for unintentionally borrowing too much from sources, as was the case with the international graduate student I referenced earlier.

When my students and I discussed patchwriting in my 2017 composition course, many admitted to being unaware that teachers may consider patchwriting plagiarism, and some expressed shock given their realization that they were explicitly taught by former teachers to patchwrite, though their teachers called it paraphrase. Thus, they assumed paraphrase consisted of “Restating a phrase, clause, or one or more sentences” even if their sentences remained “close to the language or syntax of the source” (“Research Methods”). To sharpen their ability to distinguish between paraphrase and patchwriting, we analyzed examples of patchwriting, and students came to know that paraphrase is indeed what they should be striving to produce. I reasoned with students that paraphrasing will enhance their reading comprehension and offer them more practice with varying their sentence structures. We thus got to talking about syntax, too, and whether we agreed that imitating syntax constitutes plagiarism, especially if the content is different and if our aim is to practice the kinds of syntactical constructions found in academic writing.⁵

During this discussion of patchwriting, as is typically the case for this lesson, I also took a moment to share with students some of the reflections co-researchers and I expressed while participating in the CP. As teacher-researchers we regularly found ourselves astounded when coding papers

to observe patchwriting in a majority of student writing samples. For us, this served as support for Howard's theory that patchwriting is indeed a way in which students learn to paraphrase and begin engaging in academic discourse. After all, we wouldn't assume that if most students are patchwriting, most must be cheaters; rather, we should interpret this as evidence that patchwriting, as part of learning, is a move we may come to expect from writers new to the communities for which they are writing. I encouraged students to be at peace if they've been patchwriting up to this point. After all, I reminded them, it's a learning strategy. But I acknowledged that paraphrase is far more highly valued in academic writing than patchwriting and that, unfortunately, teachers and institutions alike may still be inclined to penalize or even expel students for patchwriting offenses.

I should also note here that the regularity of patchwriting in student papers led us CP researchers to realize that had we not engaged in such close analysis of students' citations, we would have probably overlooked a majority of these instances as teachers assessing these papers. Importantly, we as CP researchers did not conclude from this finding that we must police more often when we grade in order to uncover all the many instances of patchwriting we now know are out there; instead, we further recognized just how problematic it is, period, when we police and then penalize those "spottable" instances of patchwriting. This is because, as we can imagine, the students with the most easily detectable patchwriting occurrences may very well be those who find themselves in basic writing classrooms—students who have had less practice with the English language and, more specifically, with the variety of standardized English expected in their academic papers. More specifically, for instance, we as teachers may be able to more easily spot patchwriting in papers written by students who use English as an additional language in comparison to native English speakers who may have more exposure to and practice with English and academic discourse. But that doesn't mean that native English speakers who appear to already match even our highest expectations for academic writing aren't patchwriting; they just may integrate their patchwriting in more seamless and less obvious ways, at least to the naked eye. This means our teacherly judgments in those moments where we detect plagiarism and patchwriting, as discussed earlier, may be incredibly discriminatory. Such a finding calls for challenging instinctive moves to police, especially when there may be a tendency to police certain students, usually those already disadvantaged, over others.

When talking about these and other findings afforded by the CP, my aim is to incite dialog with students about plagiarism and source use, topics

undergraduates to invent new ideas in the first place when they're here to learn, examples which I added to the discussion. We went on to joke about the obsessiveness of formatting styles in academic culture, while acknowledging the benefit of settling on certain conventions when publishing work. We drew connections between capitalistic economies and the notion that language can make profits, and thus, be considered stolen when borrowed without attributing as expected. We recognized that academia is built on textual knowledge and so, in many ways, texts serve as our currency. We began to see how such market-driven notions translate into ethical expectations, so-called "honor codes," and individualist assessment in higher education. And we also talked about the cognitive value of "inventing" even while still soaking in new knowledge.

We talked about these examples, and many more, that suggest source use as cultural and political. And some students, I hope, found comfort in realizing there's a whole lot of confusion over what constitutes plagiarism and effective academic source use. Conversations like this give students and me an opportunity to dig up together some of the oft-invisible cultural values inherent in our source uses. I can't claim that I get through all of the above questions all the time, nor to ever feeling satisfied that these issues are addressed with students as thoroughly as I'd like. Nevertheless, my larger pedagogical aim seems to get accomplished in that I start inviting students to shift from viewing plagiarism and source use dogmatically, toward understanding plagiarism and source use as constructed (and, thus, worthy of our critical deconstruction). These large group discussions, it seems to me, heighten critical awareness, soften the blow of policy, and position me on their side, precisely where I ought to be.

I also find that there are both challenges and benefits to bringing up what can be emotionally charged discussions on source use. Our conversation in the 2017 course got particularly heated when we reflected on the high-stakes practice of teachers policing students' source use and ethics. After all, as I emphasized herein and with students that day, assumptions about students' ethics are inextricably tied to students' bodies and identities; meanwhile, the consequences of plagiarism charges can have lasting material effects on students. We discussed and then students wrote about for homework the case of Tiffany C. Martínez, an undergraduate student at Suffolk University, who made headlines in academic circles when she exposed being confronted before her peers by an English professor who considered some of the language appearing in her essay to be "too academic" and judged as "not [her] language" (Zamudio-Suaréz). Through analysis of this

that too many have only been introduced to through scare tactics or drilling. I want students to know that source-use practices are hard—that most writers are (or at some point were) struggling to engage in academic writing and to integrate sources effectively. I openly tell them I vividly recall patchwriting my way to learning academic discourse. I also tell them that I’ve hired editors to review my writing in the past. We discuss the politics of academics’ use of editors being perceived differently than when students have their roommates edit their English papers. I welcome them to join me in critical discussions about just how problematic it is that we demonize and penalize patchwriting and collaboration, including getting help with editing. And these concessions, I’ve found, help students and me extend our collective understanding of source-use practices, and the values we have about them, as inherently cultural and political. I hope with these conversations, students begin to see that we’re on the same side, that I’m not determined to police them, that instead I wish to help them better understand what may be expected when they participate in academic discourse, and why.

I also spend time teaching students how to study their own source-use practices in ways similar to how researchers for the CP coded citation practices. In my 2017 course, like in semesters before and after, I began by defining and exemplifying with students different “moves” writers use to integrate sources, including summarizing, paraphrasing, patchwriting, quoting, and copying (see Appendix A for the handout I distribute). Once students grasped our shared definitions and had a more critical understanding of the values and politics attached to varying source uses, I tasked them with analyzing and coding their own source integration. Students brought in a full draft of a source-heavy essay and full copies of all their sources cited. Their mini self-study began with these instructions: “The goal of this workshop is for you to take a closer look at what *you* do when integrating sources into your writing. Do you primarily quote? Do you summarize? Do you use quotation marks when you borrow exact passages from texts? Do you patchwrite?” Students thus combed through their papers to identify and determine (in each instance a source was used) whether they were summarizing, paraphrasing, patchwriting, quoting, or copying (see Appendix B for the handout used to guide students through this exercise). Students further coded each source use to indicate the page from the source, just as we did as researchers in the CP, in order to see whether they’re relying on only the first and second pages. Again, as mentioned, all of these definitions and practices are taken directly from the CP methodology, and so, I tell students, “this assignment is about you acting as a researcher of your own writing.”

Once they had studied their source uses and shared findings with a classmate, I asked students to reflect on and write about their experience and what observations they made, noting especially their plans for revision given whatever patterns in their source use they uncovered. More specifically, I wrote up on the board, “Might you need to include more summary? Rewrite any passages so that they’re a stronger paraphrase and not patchwriting? Format the passage so that it’s a quote and not a copy? Reread any texts to determine the main argument or to draw on passages from later pages?” Next, the highlight of this exercise, in my view, was the moment after students studied their source uses and we all came together to discuss findings. I asked students how many of them made each “move,” and I jotted down our results on the board. It may come as no surprise that a majority of source uses students cited were quotes, while patchwriting came in second. These results are typical across semesters. We then discussed again why we might want to summarize sources before zooming in with a quote or paraphrase, why we strive to move from patchwriting to paraphrase, and indeed, why we might vary our moves so that we’re not just quoting again and again. While I found there were far fewer instances of copying without quotations that students found in their papers, I still made a point to introduce that strategy as one frowned upon and considered plagiarism in academic discourse.

I didn’t collect these worksheets, signaling again to students that I’m not interested in policing their current approaches. But I found that after this set of lessons the issue of academic source use came up later in both private and public conversations with students. For instance, one student whom I’ll call Lilly approached me after class the day of our Citation Project workshop. She confided that she coded a large majority of her source uses as patchwriting, and she expressed her surprise in realizing she had been patchwriting for years with much success. I recall Lilly saying, “But I’m an honors student,” as if such status made her patchwriting practices all the more sinful, or, rather, as if she no longer truly deserved or earned the status she held. I reminded her that patchwriting is normal and that even professors like myself engaged in patchwriting in our pursuit to master academic discourse. I reassured her that her ability to recognize her source-use practices and her willingness to share her realizations were strengths. Lilly followed up on the issue the following class to make sure I knew, perhaps out of a lingering concern over the ethics and consequences of plagiarism, that she adjusted all of her patchwriting instances in her research paper to be paraphrases instead.

As these instructional narratives aim to illustrate, we can engage students in analyzing academic source use to discover what intertextual practices academics do, why (historically and culturally) they do it, and whether we as teachers and students wish to problematize and contest such values and practices. We can further help students pay more attention to their own source-use practices, providing useful context and terminology to help them gain strategies more highly valued in academic contexts. Such pedagogical approaches move us beyond policing plagiarism, and instead invite us to investigate and critically question with students the discursive and ideological precedent for academic source-use conventions.

Anecdotally speaking, students from my classes in multiple institutional settings have responded favorably to these lessons. Indeed, many welcome the opportunity to deconstruct and criticize normalized practices in and beyond academia. Some have made clear how much the Citation Project findings and practices motivated them to pay more attention to their own patchwriting and to put more effort into improving their paraphrasing practices. And every semester—during open discussions where students suggest what I should keep or change the next time I teach the course—I have a few students who cite this lesson as the most meaningful of the term. When assessing students' source-driven writing, I notice fewer quote-heavy research papers and more instances of summary and of effective paraphrase.

Through the co-inquiry and self-assessment that students experience through these lessons, I believe they may gain a fuller understanding of where they are as writers when it comes to source integration, what sorts of moves they may strive for to better match their writing to expectations in academic discourse, and how they might get there. And they also develop more critical perspectives on citation as a cultural practice, which I see as affording students invaluable metacognitive benefits. Just as metalinguistic awareness aids in the learning of new languages and potentially transferring knowledge across contexts (Ellis; Downs; Long; Matsuda; Schmidt), I believe that building meta-awareness about source use—that is, challenging students to reflect on their own writerly habits and to objectify source use as a practice that they have been socially constructed to understand in culturally situated ways—will enhance students' knowledge of, and skills with, composing source-based writing.

Conclusion

By drawing on authorship studies and inviting basic writing students to engage in Citation Project methods to analyze their own source-use practices, we can move beyond lecturing about plagiarism, encouraging uncritical memorization of citation rules, or harping on the consequences of plagiarism. We can instead treat source use in Westernized academic contexts as a topic of inquiry, in and of itself.⁶

The critical approaches to teaching academic source use that I advocate for here can be aligned to what Jane Hindman deemed in 1999 as the process of “inventing academic discourse” whereby students and faculty work collaboratively to assess and authorize knowledge-making practices and to “make strange” what is typically assumed by insiders as “natural” in academic discourse. As Hindman explained, “Crucial to this invention process is students’ participation, for it empowers not just their critical consciousness but ours, destabilizes not just their inscription but our re-inscription in the academy’s language and methods” (30). Inviting and acknowledging students’ perspectives and discursive practices, including source-use practices, in the words of Hindman, would “require us to recognize the ideology informing our own commonplace knowledge and language” and would “surely de-center our insider vision” (30). Developing critical consciousness in us and our students through contextualizing and analyzing of source use, I believe, could be an additional means by which instructors adopting critical pedagogies in the basic writing classroom can work to “de-center our insider vision.” Basic writing is particularly poised for such an approach, and basic writers have the most to gain from disrupting the still too-often overlooked hegemony of academic discourse.

When we can treat the expectations for authoring and the “moves” for incorporating sources into our writing as value-ridden cultural practices at their core, we can help students to better understand, deconstruct, and practice these moves with heightened metacognitive and critical awareness. Ultimately, I believe that with careful, reflective, and collective efforts, we might all agree to stop policing students and instead use our labors to design better pedagogical approaches, as Howard encouraged us to do so long ago.

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Notes

1. See Peter Jaszi and Martha Woodmansee for another useful historicization of copyright as tied to romantic notions of author. See also Bloch, Donahue, and Pennycook for overviews on how the notion of plagiarism emerges in Western thinking and varies across cultural contexts.
2. Influencing my approach is M. J. Braun and Sarah Prineas' call to help students understand *why* academics place so much value on giving credit to the words and ideas of another, as well as Kathryn Valentine's move to consider plagiarism as a literacy practice and a discursive construction (89).
3. Amy Robillard and Kelly Ritter have designed entire courses and assignments around topics in authorship studies whereby they investigate with students the cultural work and political layers informing the textual practice of plagiarism (Robillard "Situating Plagiarism") and the rhetorics of online paper mills (Ritter). Margaret Price also offers a useful classroom practice: she tasks students in her classes with co-composing course policies on plagiarism as a way to highlight the issue as being more complex and to make discussions more meaningful to students. These scholars offer noteworthy models to borrow from in our own basic writing classrooms.
4. In the past, I have supplemented these discussions with readings. I have found the excerpt from Pennycook's "Borrowing Others' Words: Text, Ownership, Memory, and Plagiarism," titled, "The Originality Myth: From Divine to Discursive Ventriloquy" to be especially helpful in facilitating discussions around the historical and ideological reasons for contemporary source-use practices, beliefs, and policies, as well as David Finkelstein's "History of the Book, Authorship, Book Design, and Publishing."
5. While I haven't used it yet, I'm betting Sarah R. Wakefield's "Instructional Note: Using Music Sampling to Teach Research Skills" would be a great way to explore borrowing, remixing, and imitation. Wakefield teaches the "philosophy of citation" by drawing on the music of Sean

(P-Diddy) Combs who is known for his sampling, appropriation, and imitation of previous hit songs from other artists.

6. Like any pedagogical approach, there are challenges and limitations worth considering here. Inserting new approaches requires additional labor from the instructor, often without the financial support of their institutions. Instructors may also struggle to find time in an already-stretched curriculum. I should emphasize, then, that a broad-strokes discussion of Western authorship can be accomplished surprisingly quickly, as can the activity whereby students study their own source use in a given paper. When under time constraints, I've dedicated just a single class period, which can still spark critical discussions and practices. Lastly, for those concerned about students not having access to printing, teachers can ask students to have all documents accessible on their phones or laptops. Alternatively, the class might meet in a computer lab for the Citation Project part of the lesson since students won't have to print and since they can use the search function to locate quotes in their source files.

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Appendix A

HANDOUT: “MOVES” WRITERS MAKE WHEN USING SOURCES

Adapted from citationproject.net

The following definitions were written by Sandra Jamieson and Rebecca Moore Howard of the Citation Project. You'll be using them to analyze your own source uses in your Research Paper.

Summarizing: Restating and compressing the main points of an entire text or at least three or more consecutive sentences in the text, reducing the summarized passage by at least 50% and using 20% or less of the language from that passage.

Paraphrasing: Restating a phrase, clause, or one or two sentences while using no more than 20% of the language of the source.

Patchwriting: Restating a phrase, clause, or one or more sentences while staying close to the language or syntax of the source.

Quoting: A passage in a student text that is (a) copied exactly and (b) marked as quotation, either by using quotation marks or by block indenting. If, however, words have been changed or rearranged or if pieces of the passage have been deleted or additional words added, the passage should be marked as patchwriting, not quotation.

Copying: A passage in a student text that is (a) copied exactly and (b) not marked as quotation. If, however, words have been changed or rearranged or if pieces of the passage have been deleted or additional words added, the passage should be marked as patchwriting, not quotation.

Appendix B

WORKSHEET: SOURCE-USE WORKSHOP

The goal of this workshop is for you to take a closer look at what *you* do when integrating sources into your writing. Do you primarily quote? Do you summarize? Do you use quotation marks when you borrow exact passages from texts? Do you patchwrite? In a way, this assignment is about you acting as a researcher of your own writing. Ideally, you'll gain some meta-awareness about academic writing and about you as a writer.

Step 1: Take out your draft. Locate your first source use and identify where it begins and where it ends. Draw a square around the entire source use. Mark in your margins “#1”. Note: If you have a full sentence of your own interpretations and claims, this should be considered a break from the source use (even if the discussion is related).

Step 2: Read through your Box #1 source use. Then, go back to the actual source (in print or otherwise) that you referenced in Box #1. Locate the exact place/passage in your text where you are borrowing information. Compare the text's passage with your Box #1 and try to decipher whether you are summarizing, paraphrasing, patchwriting, quoting, or copying. If you're still confused about patchwriting, see the example at <http://awelu.srv.lu.se/academic-integrity/plagiarism/different-kinds-of-plagiarism/patchwriting>. If you're undecided between paraphrase and patchwriting, you may need to compare closely the language and syntax in the passage from the text with your language and syntax in Box #1. Once you've decided on which move(s) you're making (and there can be more than one), mark this/these in your margins (i.e., if you're quoting, write “quoting” in the margins). Then, mark your results in the table below.

Step 3: Repeat Steps 1 and 2 for the next 5-7 source uses (for a total of 6-8).

Step 4: Share your process and findings with a classmate. If you found that you were summarizing, paraphrasing, or patchwriting, consult with your peer to see if s/he agrees with your conclusions.

Step 5: Based on your findings and your discussion with your classmate, reflect on any patterns you observe and write down any notes you have for revisions you need to make. Do you need to include more summary? Do you need to rewrite any passages so that they're a stronger paraphrase and not patchwriting? Do you need to format the passage so that it's a quote and not a copy? Do you need to reread any texts to determine the main argument or to draw on passages from later pages?

BOX	Pg in Paper	Pg in Source	Summarizing	Paraphrasing	Patchwriting	Quoting	Copying
1							
2							
3							
4							
5							
6							
7							
8							

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