

Combating Monolingualism: A Novice Administrator's Challenge

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In an insightful discussion of the tacit monolingualism of composition studies in the United States, Bruce Horner and John Trimbur highlight the need to evaluate our own scholarly participation in perpetuating an English-Only position. Examining the historical division of English departments from departments organized around the study of other languages, they argue that “a chain of reifications” (596) regarding language use has shaped composition teaching. This tacit language policy reifies languages as static, clearly bounded, and evaluated according to a narrow canon of rules, and it also reifies social identities in terms not only of language use but of nationality. This ideology, which supports a monolingualist view of a linguistic and social order in which the ideal speaker is thought to be a monolingual native speaker of a prestige variety of English, comes into particularly clear view as increasing numbers of multilingual users of English enter institutions of higher education.

As a response to this increasing linguistic diversity, many institutions have hired faculty with some training or expertise in addressing second language issues. My current position as coordinator of English language support programs at Boise State University was created to help our campus address the needs of this more diverse population. In 2001, I joined the English Department faculty as a tenure-track faculty member and was given a permanent one-course release each semester to develop new English language support programs and coordinate existing ones. In this essay I examine the linguistic ideologies inscribed in the way my position has been configured, responding to Horner and Trimbur's call for critical examination of the ways that scholarly, administrative, and pedagogical practices in composition studies perpetuate potentially exclusionary ideologies (Currie).¹ This paper is thus an opportunity for critical reflection about the ways I have used my position to challenge the ideology of monolingualism and on the ways the position

itself, and even the programs I have initiated, may inadvertently support that ideology. It is also an opportunity for other program administrators to imagine how they might adapt new strategies to their own institutional contexts—strategies for bringing about greater integration of multilingual students into a community that continues to see them as permanent outsiders (Spack; Zamel). An equally important purpose is to argue for increasing the number of second language writing specialists who also have administrative recognition of their increasing role as advocates for multilingual students. To address language diversity among users of English, it is critical that composition teachers and scholars develop theories, pedagogies and, as I will argue in this paper, administrative and curricular structures that support a more inclusive, multilingualist stance.

LOCAL DEMOGRAPHICS

At Boise State University, second language learners of English make up a small but growing percentage of the student population. Based on a recent survey of almost 2,000 first-year students, we have been able to estimate that approximately 7.5% of the student population—1,380 out of 18,500 students—consider a language other than English to be their native language. About three hundred are traditional, student-visa-holding international students. The other thousand-plus are immigrants, refugees, and other nonnative English-speaking residents and citizens. Approximately 9% of Idaho's resident children between ages 5 to 17 years speak a language other than English at home. Two of the cities nearest to Boise (within a forty-five-minute drive) have a growing Latino population—now 18% and 28%, respectively. The number of refugees from Bosnia, Sudan, Afghanistan, Somalia, and Albania has also grown recently. The percentage of language-minority students at Boise State University is thus likely to be higher than 10% in the near future. These figures are often greeted with surprise by my colleagues. Because Boise has long been a predominantly Caucasian, English-speaking community, Boise State faculty and staff seem to have imagined the language-minority population to be far smaller than the data demonstrate.

The work of Constant Leung, Roxy Harris, and Ben Rampton (“Idealized”), Linda Harklau, Kay Losey, and Meryl Seigal (*Generation 1.5*), and Ilona Leki (*Understanding*) urges us to recognize the great variation in what we imagine to be “the ESL population” and to critique our common tendency to assume that the prototypical L2 writer is an international student who is thoroughly familiar with academic literacy practices in his or her native culture and who identifies primarily with his or her country of origin. In contrast to this image, language-minority students at Boise State, as in many United States colleges and universities, have dramatically vary-

ing lengths of stay in the United States (from one week to more than thirty years) and dramatically varying L1 academic literacy levels—from no L1 academic literacy to PhDs from the students' native countries. Our students also have highly varied language identities vis-à-vis English and their native languages. That is, in addition to having varied levels of expertise in English and in their L1s, students might have a sense of affiliation with English that may or may not be greater than their affiliation with their native languages. This kind of variation has been examined in research on multilingualism and multiple literacies, global Englishes, and the shifting, negotiated nature of language identity (Rampton²), demonstrating that language boundaries and identities are far more fluid than the common terms “native English speaker” or “ESL” suggest.

DISCOVERING THE L1/L2 DIVIDE

In “Composition Studies and ESL Writing: A Disciplinary Division of Labor,” Paul Kei Matsuda persuasively argues that the L1/L2 division in composition studies developed in relation to specific disciplinary histories of composition and applied linguistics. I would add that this “disciplinary division of labor” has taken a firm hold on the way we conceive of language and language users precisely because of the same monolingualist ideology described by Horner and Trimbur, as well as by linguistic anthropology research on the common identification of one nation with one language (Blommaert and Verschuren). This language ideology also underlies the often rigid dichotomy of L1 (“regular”) and L2 (“ESL”) composition course sequences, program structures, and even research, as well as the common tendency to ignore the internal variation within the multilingual population. For example, a composition teacher might note that a particular student “is ESL” (a syntactic construction that explicitly reifies the student's identity as a particular kind of language user) and should therefore transfer to an ESL class. Such comments ignore the possibility that the student may know English better than his or her native language, and they suggest that the responsibility for working with multilingual writers belongs solely to ESL teachers.

By the time I accepted my new faculty position at Boise State University, I was well aware of this widespread tendency to separate second language composition from “regular” composition, as Matsuda (“Composition”) observes,³ but I did not know exactly how that divide would be manifested at my new institution. When I interviewed for the position, I learned that the primary curricular strategy for dealing with second language writers of English at Boise State was to offer a sequence of three preparatory ESL

writing courses (English 121, 122, and 123) and then to mainstream ESL students into the required first-year, two-semester English composition sequence (see Table 1).

Table 1.

Boise State University's First-year Writing Courses

"Regular" Composition Sequence	ESL Sequence
Adult Basic Education (GED, etc.)	Adult Basic Education (ESL)
No "regular" equivalent	English 121: 3 elective credits (P/F) Intermediate ESL writing
No "regular" equivalent	English 122: 3 elective credits (P/F) High intermediate ESL writing
English 90: Developmental Writing (P/F) (administrative credit only)	English 123: 3 elective credits (P/F) Advanced ESL writing
English 101: English Composition I (3 credit hours)	No ESL equivalent
English 102: English Composition II (3 credit hours)	No ESL equivalent

This strategy perfectly coincides with what Mike Rose calls "the myth of transience," a widely held belief that only after a few courses or perhaps years of "remedial" instruction can legitimate academic work occur (355–59). Second language writing scholar Vivian Zamel notes the role of this myth in higher education as it applies to second language instruction and argues against "the notion that these students' problems are temporary and can be remediated—so long as some isolated set of courses or program of instruction, but not the real courses in the academy, takes on the responsibility of doing so" (Zamel 510). The perception that many multilingual students simply need a few more courses before they can participate in "real" academic courses is often supported by administrative and curricular forms of "linguistic containment," which Matsuda describes in "The Myth of Linguistic Homogeneity in U.S. College Composition" as practices that serve to separate students who do not use prestige varieties of English from the rest of the academic community, imagined to be prototypically, perhaps ideally, monolingual ("Myth"). Thus, although second language writers at Boise State University do take first-year composition courses together with their native English-speaking counterparts, the existence of only three pre-

paratory courses with no other overt support for or training in L2 issues suggests that L2 writers' language differences are expected to disappear after they complete the ESL courses. Such practices, as Horner and Trimbur and Matsuda ("Myth") suggest, fuel the widely held but inappropriate belief that US college composition serves a fundamentally, linguistically homogeneous population.

That myth seemed to play out here at Boise State in this university's administrative and curricular separation. Before I arrived, "one overworked, underpaid adjunct" (as my department chair describes her) who had been teaching the entire ESL sequence was the only person who knew anything about the courses. None of the English 90/101/102 instructors had ever taught them. Moreover, the portfolio assessment program, which every spring allows the writing program to assess how well it is helping students to meet the program's minimum competencies for each course, only evaluated portfolios from the developmental writing course and the two required English composition courses. Until they enrolled in English Composition I, second language writers did not seem to be considered part of the writing program at all. The writing program was perhaps unknowingly participating in the widespread practice of implicitly "relegating the responsibility of working with [language] differences to second-language specialists" (Matsuda, "Myth" 2).

My discovery of this linguistic containment came about before I was officially on duty as a faculty member. As I was getting syllabi together and unpacking boxes, I came across a note from a student left in my new mailbox: "Miss Shuck, Please let me know when I can come and see you. M. P." My responsibilities as an administrator thus began earlier than I had anticipated. I became suddenly grateful for my course release. Once I contacted M. P., I discovered that he had wanted to get institutional credit for courses he had taken at a nearby community college—courses that were coincidentally called English 121, 122, and 123. He also wondered if his community college courses were not evaluated as equivalent, would he be required to take a placement exam and then, potentially, to take three more semesters of writing courses before being allowed to take English 101?

My fact-finding mission on M. P.'s behalf gave me a much more detailed understanding of the ways institutionalized monolingualism had been operating at Boise State. Two separate placement exams existed, both of which were administered by the assessment center in the College of Applied Technology. One was the COMPASS test, which placed students who did not have ACT scores into first-year composition courses, and the other was the Michigan Test of English Language Proficiency, which placed second language writers into the pre-101 ESL sequence.⁴ The question became, then,

should M. P. take the “regular” COMPASS placement exam or the Michigan Test? Might the COMPASS place him in an ESL class, if that were appropriate? Might the Michigan Test place him into (or even out of) English 101? Are the placement-essay readers familiar with important differences between first and second language writing processes and products?⁵ The crossover between the placement instruments, it turned out, was nonexistent. Neither test allowed for a student to be placed into the alternative sequence. Often, administrative assistants in the writing program, international admissions, or the English department simply told students who have unfamiliar, foreign-sounding accents to take the Michigan Test, regardless of actual English language proficiency. Because the COMPASS test primarily assesses grammatical knowledge and editing ability, multilingual students who took the COMPASS test because they did not know about the Michigan Test usually received low scores and ended up in developmental writing, which is not staffed by instructors educated in second language writing.

The same dedicated instructor who had taught all three ESL writing courses before I came to Boise had also read and evaluated every placement essay written by a Michigan Test-taker. Few faculty or staff—or, for that matter, students—seemed to question the inevitability of this isolation of the ESL courses, which was certainly buoyed by the monolingualist ideology discussed by Horner and Trimbur (see also Shuck, “Racializing”). When this instructor left her job to care for a disabled daughter, the staff of the assessment center took over the job of reading placement essays. However, none had any experience in the teaching or assessing of writing (L1 or L2), and so they simply counted errors as a way of determining a placement. Once I took up my new position a few months later, I had to deal first with the issue of training the readers of these essays.

I also had to learn quickly about what other forms of language support English language learners could receive beyond the ESL composition sequence. As is the case in many institutions, a resource often used by English language learners was the university’s writing center (Williams and Severino 165–66). For a small minority of students who actively sought out whatever resources were available, the university’s Gateway Center for Academic Support provided some help—in the form of online and small-group tutoring for any student in common core (general education) courses such as introductory biology, math, and chemistry.⁶ The university also offered free, non-credit ESL courses at its Center for Adult Basic Education, as well as a tuition-funded intensive English program, but because these programs are intended for students not enrolled in degree programs, they did not constitute significant means of support for multilingual Boise State students.

Unless these students were nearly native-like in their English proficiency, were highly capable of navigating the system, or both, the university did not seem to have a place for them.

BECOMING THE “ESL PERSON”

Within a very short time, I learned about the material effect of the monolingual myth on multilingual students at Boise State—particularly in regard to the demands to “purge their work of errors” (in one history instructor’s words), as well as the financial burden and risk of academic probation that results from a student’s delaying fulfillment of the first-year composition requirement for the three semesters that a placement into the lowest level of the three-course ESL sequence would require. It was also becoming clear that the monolingualism that underlies both the curricular structure and the university’s lack of support programs would also have an effect on me in my role as the second language writing specialist. Moreover, my role as the second language writing specialist seemed to be implicated in that very monolingualism, despite my desire to counter it with every strategy up my administrative, pedagogical, and scholarly sleeve. I suggest here that the monolingual ideology has such a firm hold on the discursive practices of the academic community that even the way that my position has been administratively described can feed this pervasive monolingualism without my wanting it to.

Being “the ESL person on campus” is, to say the least, an enormous responsibility. My duties include

- directing the ESL sequence,
- revising its curriculum (in collaboration with the two other ESL writing teachers),
- consulting with faculty across the disciplines who are concerned about nonnative English speakers in their classes,
- consulting with students—matriculated or not—about what kinds of language support are available,
- scheduling and conducting workshops for faculty and staff,
- writing proposals for new programs,
- meeting with upper-level administrators,
- supervising the program budget,

- writing annual program reports,
- meeting with the assessment center director to discuss alternatives to the Michigan Test,
- interviewing prospective instructors for the cross-cultural composition sections that I initiated at Boise State (see Silva, “Examination,” and Matsuda and Silva for a description of such courses),
- and working with the ESL advisory committee, composed of concerned faculty and staff members whose dedicated work resulted in the decision to create my position.

This year, I used funds carried forward from last year’s budget to hire one of our ESL instructors as a temporary assistant. She has helped me to develop a tutoring program, provided mentoring and resources for those tutors, arranged workshops (and collaborated with me on conducting a few of them), investigated funding sources, gathered student data, and offered other important support. She will again be hired only as a temporary assistant this coming year, because her position has not yet been funded as a permanent one.

Despite the active (if temporary) support of my assistant and the ESL Advisory Committee, and the well-established support for students in the program for migrant workers (CAMP), as well as for bilingual education majors, I am perceived as having sole responsibility for all of the nonnative English speakers at Boise State University. Even the members of our advisory committee seem to have breathed a collective sigh of relief that a specialist was brought in to take over the job of developing language support programs. Having a second language specialist, and particularly having one with a comprehensive administrative role, can prevent the rest of the university from taking any responsibility for accommodating linguistic diversity. A number of faculty, both within and outside the writing program, have sent students to me, sometimes for “fixing,” as those faculty members seem to imagine me as the campus ESL tutor, but mostly they send them so that these students can be placed into an ESL writing class for further ESL instruction. While my primary goal as “the ESL specialist” has been precisely to work toward creating a sense of *shared* responsibility among faculty for the welfare of all students, the fact that I am here at all may make it difficult for the entire university community to see such responsibility as inherent in its own work. The misperception of my role, and indeed of the location of responsibility for educating second language learners, is one facet of the containment of language differences prevalent in US higher education. Because of the pervasiveness of such practices and the monolingualist

language ideology underlying them, merely having an L2 writing specialist committed to challenging this ideology is not sufficient for resolving the issue.

I have frequently imagined that this situation might be resolved if the position of coordinator of English language support programs were described as a full-time position within academic support services or some other unit serving the entire campus. I have seen parallels between my role and the role of the service learning coordinator at my institution, although I hold a faculty position and the service learning coordinator is a classified staff person. Both of us work with faculty across disciplines to effect changes in pedagogy and in how the relationships between campus and community are viewed. However, the service learning coordinator's position is housed in the Gateway Center for Academic Support while mine is housed in the English department. Symbolically, service learning is seen as an approach to higher education that cuts across disciplines. This suggests that the responsibility for adopting new pedagogies that connect classroom work with service work can be assumed by instructors throughout the academic community. English language learners, on the other hand, because of the location of the program in the English department, are institutionally regarded as the charges of specialists within the field of English studies—indeed, to be specific, the charges of the one tenure-track faculty member in the English department who specializes in applied linguistics. The rest of the university, then, is symbolically absolved of responsibility for educating this multilingual population.

A kind of autonomy coincides with this marginalization of L2 learners. For example, I can offer individual advising for students, occasionally circumventing an ineffective placement process. As the director of the three-course ESL sequence, I have been able to interview prospective instructors myself, since I have the L2 writing expertise that would allow me to make informed hiring decisions, and simply get them hired without going through the WPA's office. My assistant and I were also able to implement the new tutoring program with no administrative difficulty at all. Such forms of language support, helpful though they may be and easy to accomplish given this autonomy, allow nonnative English-speaking students to be sent somewhere outside of the normal college curriculum, rather than to be supported across the curriculum by means of linguistically inclusive pedagogies. I have thus unintentionally constructed my own position as the only person who can help English language learners. This makes it doubly difficult for the university as a whole to move beyond a strategy of linguistic containment and to reconceptualize linguistic diversity in the academic community.

CHALLENGING MONOLINGUALISM

Because monolingualism is so pervasive, it would indeed be difficult to imagine an administrative position that could be created pointedly to raise awareness of linguistic diversity among native English-speaking students and faculty. Certainly, some institutions have undergraduate foreign language requirements (I use the term “foreign” with some irony—all non-English languages taught in US secondary and tertiary educational institutions are spoken as native languages by citizens of the United States), and some require all undergraduates to take courses designated as having a diversity component. However, such requirements are insufficient for helping to foster a culture in which multilingualism is not perceived as a deficit. If the dominant perspective were instead a multilingualist one, the question then becomes what would language support programs or writing programs look like?

Fortunately, despite the ways in which I have inadvertently perpetuated a monolingualist ideology in the particular ways I have carried out my responsibilities at Boise State, I do have the relative security and status of a tenure-track position, which allows me to make well grounded recommendations regarding cross-curricular language support programs and strategies, as well as to shape our graduate program. Matsuda has rightly argued that a complete blurring of the L1/L2 division is neither realistic nor advantageous (“Composition” 715). I similarly believe that increasing the number of L2 writing specialists among university faculty is critical to reshaping the ways in which language diversity is addressed. Indeed, my work as an interdisciplinary scholar with a background in both composition studies and second language acquisition has led me, as an administrator, to keep a primary goal in mind: to develop curriculum and programs that conceptualize linguistic diversity as a natural state of things, rather than as a problem to be solved. Although my position as coordinator of English language support programs has the potential to reproduce a dominant ideology of monolingualism, I hope to use my scholarly knowledge, as well as my administrative capacity, to work toward dismantling that ideology, which perpetuates exclusionary practices based on a fallacious view of the world as essentially monolingual.

Integrating language-minority students into a writing program means we must accomplish at least the following two things, discussed in more detail in the strategies sections below. First, English language learners should become less “marked” in terms of administration and teaching.⁷ That is, students’ identities as writers should not be so wholly associated with their status as native or nonnative English speakers that the students are *automatically* funneled into either “ESL” classes or “regular” classes. Once the writing program can imagine the prototypical writing class as a fundamentally

linguistically-diverse environment, we are in a better position to accomplish the second goal: to educate composition faculty, as well as faculty across the disciplines, about linguistic diversity. Those of us in administrative positions can thus work toward dismantling the myths of transience and linguistic homogeneity.

Strategy 1: ESL and Cross-Cultural Composition. Administratively “unmarking” students’ language identities means creating placement processes that account for linguistic diversity and offering course options for all students, as Silva (“Examination”), Braine (“ESL Students”), and others have argued. Alice Roy further suggests that completely integrating native and nonnative English speakers is most effective as long as teachers actively construct an atmosphere of equitable treatment and mutual respect. Simply offering a few preparatory ESL courses and then mainstreaming second language learners with no training in L2 issues for their first-year writing and other instructors, as we have long done at Boise State University, does not accomplish this goal. However, I simultaneously believe it would be inappropriate to eliminate those courses entirely. Many nonnative English speakers attempt to take university courses with only an intermediate level of linguistic proficiency. They should, therefore, have the opportunity to take such preparatory courses and receive the same kind of university credit that the study of a foreign language receives. Rather than eliminate preparatory courses, curricular changes must be facilitated primarily at and beyond the first-year level in a composition program. Many colleges and universities offer credit-bearing, first-year ESL composition sequences that parallel “regular” first-year composition. If we offer such ESL sections of composition, they should be credit-bearing, requirement-fulfilling courses. Many language-minority students prefer the comfort of being in an all-multilingual class (Braine, “ESL Students”). While this option may continue to construct multilingual students as “Other” and different from the unmarked norm, it does allow students to determine their own identities as writers.

In addition to ESL sections of first-year courses, we should also adopt cross-cultural composition courses, which systematically integrate native and nonnative English speakers. Matsuda and Silva argue in “Cross-Cultural Composition” that such cross-cultural courses have important advantages over both segregating ESL students and unsystematically mainstreaming them. These include providing a nonthreatening environment for ESL writers, challenging the “remedial” image often associated with ESL classes, and providing important opportunities for native English speakers to learn about members of other linguistic and cultural backgrounds. In addition, at institutions whose L1 and L2 composition programs are administratively separate from each other, cross-cultural sections are a way to allow for more

crossover between “regular” and ESL course sequences. They also acknowledge all students’ varied linguistic identities and provide an opportunity to educate monolingual students about language variation as well. Rhetorical issues such as voice, audience, grammar, use of outside sources, etc., come under critical examination in such a course precisely because those issues become more overtly complicated by the greater linguistic diversity in the room. That was the case with the English 110 course at City University of New York’s Hunter College, described by Trudy Smoke as a response to the legislation to eliminate developmental courses. This course, although not explicitly an ESL course, consisted of a majority of nonnative English speakers. By the end of the course, both native and nonnative speakers had learned a great deal from each other.

As a first step toward offering greater options for multilingual students, Boise State’s writing program offered in fall 2004 one ESL section of English 101, promoting it as an optional alternative to a “regular” section. It filled almost to capacity its first semester, offering support to Braine’s findings about L2 student preferences. However, as coordinator of English language support programs, I was concerned about the potential for segregation that might result from having a separate ESL section. I feared that instructors would—as they did when I first arrived—believe that a student’s nonnative English-speaking status meant that a “regular” 101 placement was a mistake. The following semester, we offered one cross-cultural section of English 102, as well as one ESL section of 101, as a transition to having a cross-cultural section of each course. As of this writing, we now offer one cross-cultural section each of English 101 and English 102, until we have enrollment in all of these sections sufficient to justify offering two alternatives to “regular” 101 or 102: one ESL section *and* one cross-cultural section of each course. In the predominantly monolingual, English-speaking context that is Boise, Idaho, these courses offer more officially instituted support for L2 writers at the English 101/102 level than had previously existed.

I have discovered three administrative challenges in creating cross-cultural sections. First, it is difficult to control the ratio of nonnative to native speakers in a university that does not have separate, parallel courses. If we had two parallel, requirement-fulfilling first-year writing sequences with different course numbers, as my previous university did, we could simply offer two conjoined sections and cap the sections appropriately. At Boise State, we ask that students register for a cross-cultural section in person at the writing program office and identify themselves as native or nonnative speakers (some may find it difficult to categorize themselves so narrowly).

Another administrative challenge is to promote the new sections. Monolingual English speakers should be informed that a specific class will be international and that they will encounter varieties of English with which

they may be unfamiliar at first. I have asked teachers to make announcements, conducted class visits, and written special section descriptions on the online registration system. Without an administrative course release, promoting the course would be much more difficult. The third challenge may be peculiar to institutions in which there is no graduate program in teaching English to speakers of other languages: to find instructors with experience in second language issues. Braine ("Starting") created for composition teachers who don't specialize in ESL a well designed, three-day workshop in L2 issues as a way of overcoming this problem. At our university, we do have a few teachers with varying degrees of ESL teaching experience who happen to live in the area and teach as adjunct instructors. However, I have deliberately invited applicants who have very *little* experience working with non-native English speakers but who are genuinely interested in learning more. They receive a stipend in addition to their regular compensation for teaching a course, and they meet with me periodically to discuss matters of concern. The goal is to enlarge the pool of teachers who are both willing and prepared to work with any L2 writers who might enroll in their future "regular" first-year composition courses. In these ways, we can administratively "unmark" such students while recognizing the very real difficulties that L2 writers face in their academic and perhaps social interactions in English. At the same time, we must also help faculty, staff, and students understand the unrealistic standards to which we often hold nonnative speakers. Without such education, the sink-or-swim, assimilationist approach is here to stay.

Strategy 2: Educating Faculty. Recruiting teachers for cross-cultural or ESL composition sections is only one small way to educate faculty about second language issues. Many other strategies are also necessary, including the kinds of formal and informal publicizing of our work that Rebecca Moore Howard describes: meeting with administrators, exploiting avenues such as campus news sources, and simply "volunteering to talk about our programs at every opportunity" (9). Second language writing specialists such as Paul Kei Matsuda, Tony Silva, and Ilona Leki have been particularly successful in bringing L2 issues into greater prominence in the field of composition studies. The "CCCC Statement on Second Language Writing and Writers" (CCCC Committee), for example, has provided an important foundation for communicating with nonspecialists about issues such as assessment, teacher preparation, and college credit for ESL writing courses. Many courses or orientations for graduate teaching assistants or for writing center consultants also include discussion of L2 issues. A number of universities and colleges go beyond the composition program and the writing center to educate faculty across the curriculum (Mlynarczyk and Babbitt)⁸.

Educating faculty across the curriculum has been one primary administrative focus of mine since I arrived. I have conducted or arranged a number of faculty development workshops, which, although insufficient for covering the vastness of second language writing, second language acquisition, or cultural issues in education, have positive effects beyond what the participants learn during a given workshop. They signal that the responsibility for educating all students, multilingual and monolingual alike, belongs to the entire academic community. The ESL advisory committee also initiated a university teaching award, called the Faculty Award for the Enhancement of Second Language Learner Success, and announced it in the campus-wide electronic newsletter. Along with this announcement, we attached a list of linguistically inclusive teaching strategies (see Appendix), many of which were suggested by multilingual students at Boise State.⁹ I believe these efforts have been partly successful. First, workshop participants have requested that I reproduce those workshops for other groups of faculty and staff. Second, rather than being the “fix-it” person to whom my colleagues send their students, I seem to have become, much to my relief, a resource person on whom the instructors rely to help them develop strategies for addressing the needs of their multilingual students, such as asking pertinent questions about the students’ language backgrounds or pointing out a few patterns of error in a given draft.

To help our colleagues understand in more depth the strengths and struggles that multilingual students bring to our classrooms, I have also attempted to publish multilingual student work (see also Adrian Wurr’s and Erin Whittig’s discussions of service learning and ESL). The culminating and most public activity of my ESL writing class is the English 123 Conference on Language. Although this conference is an activity that I have devised and incorporated into the course curriculum, it is a public event whose audience consists of faculty, staff, administrators, and other students, as well as family and friends of the speakers. The conference achieves what Howard calls for in her article on multimedia presentations to administrators: the use of *pathos* as a significant form of argument. Students speak publicly about their struggles with English or their knowledge of two or more language systems, and the audience listens intently to these formerly silent voices (Shuck, “Ownership”). The dean of our College of Arts and Sciences has made a point of attending the conference almost all of the nine semesters it has been presented. An unexpected result of my students’ presentation of the conference every semester has been that audience members studying English at the adult basic education levels and through intensive English programs are inspired to work toward a college degree. They see that they, too, belong at the university.

One final strategy is in its early development stages here at Boise State. I hope to pilot a faculty liaison program, whereby a faculty member in each department across the curriculum serves as a liaison between that content area—chemistry, nursing, marketing, etc.—and the English Language Support Program. He or she would be an advocate for second language learners in that department and would learn about our university's resources for helping those students. The faculty liaison would participate in the work of the ESL advisory committee, attend at least one half-day workshop on teaching linguistically diverse populations, and invite ESL specialists to the faculty liaison's home department to offer similar workshops. The faculty liaison would also direct students to appropriate language and academic support services. The program will require extra funding to track its effectiveness, to offer faculty development grants to the liaisons, and to cover expenses for workshops, but such a program will instrumentally help the rest of the university community share in the collective responsibility of educating all of its students, faculty, and staff.

By emphasizing this collective responsibility, I do not want to diminish the need for interdisciplinary, advanced scholarship in second language writing. It is critical that we develop graduate programs that integrate L1 and L2 composition perspectives and that we create faculty positions in second language writing. I also urge institutions to recognize officially the role that most such specialists will increasingly play as advocates, consultants, workshop facilitators, and program administrators. As Silva argued in a roundtable discussion at the Conference on College Composition and Composition 2005, (Matsuda, Goldstein, Kroll, Mangelsdorf, and Silva), scholarly and administrative equity is at stake in the creation of such positions. However, until second language writing specialists can be hired, it is possible for WPAs and other composition faculty to consider these as important program and classroom goals, including the establishment of

1. Assessment practices and standards that rely not on an imagined native-speaker ideal but on principles of language variation, negotiation of identities, and communicative agility (i.e., across discourse communities).
2. Placement processes that do not reify students' language identities.
3. Curricular options for multilingual and monolingual students.
4. Continuing conversations that include an understanding of linguistic variation and change between ESL specialists and administrators, fellow faculty members, and students.

CONCLUSION

Integrating multilingual learners and other often marginalized groups into the academic community offers us a look at how we can work within institutional structures to effect ideological as well as pedagogical changes. I have attempted to demonstrate that an ideology that constructs second language learners of English as foreign and “Other” is embedded in the institutional position I occupy. I also urge readers to consider how similar positions and practices in other institutions may enact the same ideology. This ideology has a cumulative, material effect on students’ lives. However, I have also attempted to illustrate some ways we can use our own administrative positions and work with committees, administrative bodies, and faculty development programs to challenge this ideology and help faculty and staff develop a sense of responsibility for all students, regardless of language background. In other words, I believe that those in administrative positions play a critical role as advocates for students and as agents of change. As Howard writes, we should make our work public at every opportunity. Gerri McNenny similarly argues, in her introduction to *Mainstreaming Basic Writers*, that WPAs and other composition scholars must take “a more public, proactive role” (5) in the form of participation in public discourse, the development of curricula that account for diversity, and the documenting of the intellectual work of both students and faculty in writing programs.

There is a central paradox here, to which Mary Soliday alerts us in “Ideologies of Access and the Politics of Agency.” As we develop agency as administrators, we may be even more susceptible to suggestions that we have sole responsibility for solving particular problems—problems that many of our colleagues and the public at large believe to be located in open-admissions policies and associated with students from certain class and ethnic backgrounds. A dominant ideology of “access,” Soliday argues, makes those students and the programs that serve them vulnerable. If students in basic writing or ESL courses do not succeed, the courses (or the students) are blamed, rather than the economic, ideological, and institutional factors that hamper their success. In such a context, it is easy to feel a sense of powerlessness. Smoke writes, “[W]e must respond to our needs with local, perhaps temporary, solutions, knowing that at any time, changes may be imposed on our programs because of political and ideological shifts” (209). There is, then, a felt conflict between our pedagogical and scholarly ideals, on one hand, and the institutional and ideological structures that constrain us, on the other.

To resolve this conflict, we might, as Smoke suggests, create sustainable programs that have within them the means for revision and restructuring. Indeed, social theorist Anthony Giddens argues that structures themselves are the result of human activity and “contain within them the seeds of

change” (18). Agency is, then, not opposed to structures, although we often understand those structures to be powerful institutions or discourses outside of our control. Rather than asking how much power we have within these seemingly restrictive structures, we might do well to ask how our individual and collective agency is related to specific institutional, historical, and political contexts. Giddens argues that agency is recursively related to those contexts. Drawing analogies between linguistic and social systems, he proposes a theory of action that recognizes that the very rules and systems that seem to constrain individual practice also contain within them the means for change. He writes, “According to the notion of the duality of structure, rules and resources are drawn upon by actors in the production of interaction, but are thereby also reconstituted through such interaction” (71). For those of us in administrative positions, but also for anyone on the academic margins—adjunct faculty, students and faculty from underrepresented groups, scholars with certain critical perspectives, etc.—this view of structure offers hope. As we participate in interactions, even those interactions mediated by exclusionary ideologies like monolingualism, we change the rules themselves. We must also recognize that the students for whom we design writing programs are also agents and act in relation to a variety of structures, not only to the programs that we create. All of these human actors—administrators, students, legislators, teachers, family members—interact with each other in various contexts, shaping and reshaping those contexts through their very participation. Even if institutional positions like mine are structured in ways that might justify continued marginalization, as I imagine they will despite our attempts to encourage critical reexamination of pedagogical responsibility, those of us creating and holding such positions must continue to work for change, knowing that change will be the result of this intricate web of human interaction.

APPENDIX:

Linguistically Inclusive Strategies for Working with Nonnative English Speakers (last revised March 3, 2006)

These suggestions come from nonnative English-speaking students at Boise State University and from the English as a Second Language Advisory Committee. The comments are grounded in second language acquisition theory and in multilingual students’ knowledge of the ways in which their second language status affects their learning. These forms of language support are critical to integrating a linguistically and culturally diverse group of people into the academic community. (The suggestions are not listed in any step-by-step order but appear simply as a variety of suggestions.)

CLASSROOM STRATEGIES

1. Identify those who need language support.
 - a. Early in the semester, let all students know that you are happy to talk with any student who feels he or she needs some extra help. That simple step lets students know they are all welcome in your class while it also can assure native English speakers that you do not give “special treatment” to a few students.
 - b. Assign a short piece of in-class writing early in the semester—for example, they should spend no more than 5 minutes summarizing that day’s lecture or activity. You can then talk to those students whose writing might reveal some second language needs. First, by asking, you can confirm that they are indeed second language users, rather than students who write in a nonstandard variety of English. In either case, students should not simply be sent to a tutor, particularly because they might not identify themselves after all as second language learners or as being in need of help. Rather, have a brief conversation with them, asking how they’re doing in the class. You notice that they’ve made some errors in their writing, and you wonder if there is anything you should know about their educational or language background, or if those errors were a result of the short period of time allotted for producing a sample writing piece. Simply opening up the dialogue can pave the way for directing the student to appropriate campus resources or for providing important support as an instructor. (You can also use such quick in-class summaries to find out whether any review of the material might be necessary for the whole class!)
 - c. Ask the whole class if anyone has any particular needs the instructor should be aware of. Of course, don’t ask for a show of hands. Students needing assistance can identify themselves to you by email or after class.
2. Recognize that nonnative speakers do not become native speakers. Grammatical perfection in a second language is an impossibility for most nonnative speakers. See <http://www.boisestate.edu/esl> for additional suggestions regarding such expectations.
3. Allow nonnative English speakers some extended exam time. Writing and reading in a second language can take considerably longer than writing and reading in one’s native language.

4. Allow nonnative English speakers to take exams in a separate room. Some students find it helpful to read questions and multiple-choice options aloud as a way of processing the language in them.
5. Give permission to use bilingual dictionaries. Students are far more likely to look up words like “analyze,” “exception,” “subsequent,” or other typical academic words than they will to look up words they’re being tested on. Indeed, students recognize that they sacrifice valuable exam time if they use a dictionary, but the same students have found the occasional dictionary search for general academic expressions to be quite useful. Moreover, if they don’t know what a discipline-specific term, such as “oxidation” or “habeas corpus,” means in their native language, a mere translation from their native language wouldn’t help them anyway. Thus, the chances for abuse of the dictionary-use privilege are slim.
6. Allow students to tape-record your lectures. This strategy should also be available to native English speakers who simply require time to absorb information and fill in sketchy notes.
7. Put lecture notes, charts, visual aids, course outlines, and details of writing assignments and projects on Blackboard.
8. Pair a native English-speaking student to study with, and perhaps take notes for, a nonnative English speaker in the same class. This strategy benefits the native-speaking “tutors” as well because they, too, are trying to synthesize and remember new ideas.
9. Write an outline on the board or provide another visual means of understanding how the lecture or class period is organized. Nonnative speakers often miss intonational, syntactic and lexical cues, such as stress on particular words to highlight a contrast or phrases such as “now what you don’t want is. . .,” which help native English-speaking listeners identify important points or relations between points.
10. Allow take-home exams or create group exams for all students. With the latter, students collaborate as teams, with each member of the team responsible for a different set of material.
11. Periodically throughout the semester, invite students to register concerns or ask questions about the class. This can be a blanket invitation.
12. Be willing to offer extra explanations occasionally or offer review sessions before exams.

13. Tape-record and listen to your own lectures occasionally. Ask a committee of second language learners to talk with you about phrases or speech patterns they might find difficult. A little awareness goes a long way.
14. Assign all students to study groups or strongly encourage them to form their own. Study-group facilitators are available through the Gateway Center.

DEPARTMENT-LEVEL STRATEGIES

Tutoring/Mentoring:

1. Assign a peer advisor/mentor to each incoming ESL student in your department. These mentors may be people with the same ethnic/cultural/language background or they may be any patient, interested student who is majoring in that field. The mentor would simply be there to help the student navigate program requirements.
2. Arrange for majors in your department to serve as tutors for nonnative speakers in lower-division classes. *ESL specialists can provide assistance and training for such discipline-specific tutors.* As one student says, “We need help on most of the classes and not just the English classes.”
3. Offer internship credit for discipline-specific tutoring.

Other suggestions:

1. Select a faculty member to be a liaison to the English Language Support Program. That person would attend ESL advisory committee meetings and learn about the kinds of English language support currently available. He or she would also serve as an advocate or advisor for nonnative English-speaking majors.
2. Offer ESL-only or balanced, cross-cultural sections of large core courses. The departments of communication and English have offered such sections with great success.
3. Encourage language diversity training among faculty in your department. The English Language Support Program periodically offers workshops on working with nonnative English speakers.

4. Encourage faculty to offer online or hybrid sections of a course. These are particularly useful for giving students time to formulate answers to discussion questions.
5. Consider linking an introductory level core course to an ESL course or an English 101 course. The students would be required to take both courses concurrently. Talk to the coordinator of the English Language Support Programs about such team-teaching or learning community possibilities, which are successful in other institutions but which we do not yet have at Boise State University.

NOTES

1 For a discussion of the role of such exclusionary ideologies in second-language composition, see Sarah Benesch's work, *Critical English for Academic Purposes*. Alistair Pennycook's *English and the Discourses of Colonialism* makes a similar call for critical examination of power relations in English language teaching around the world.

2 See also the work of Yuet-Sim D. Chiang and Mary Schmida, R.B. LePage and Andrée Tabouret-Keller, Diane Belcher and Ulla Connor, Braj Kachru, and Rajendra Singh.

3 For further discussions of this separation, see Alice Roy, Jessica Williams, and George Braine ("ESL Students").

4 The COMPASS, developed by the American College Testing Program (ACT), is a computerized, indirect assessment instrument that asks students to revise and edit sentences in a paragraph provided to them (<http://www.act.org/compass/>). The Michigan Test of English Language Proficiency (MTELP) is a retired component of what is currently the Michigan English Language Assessment Battery (MELAB). Both the MTELP and the MELAB were developed by the University of Michigan's English Language Institute (<http://www.lsa.umich.edu/eli>). For a discussion of important issues in and options for ESL writing placement, see Deborah Crusan's "An Assessment of ESL Writing Placement Assessment."

5 The version of the Michigan Test that we use is a multiple-choice test that has no writing component. Because of the empathy and generosity of the assessment center director, however, Michigan Test-takers are also asked to write a forty-five-minute essay, which has become our primary, and more effective, basis for placement.

6 We do have a federal grant-funded College Assistant Migrant Program (CAMP), which provides significant support (advising, tutoring, and frequent progress reports) for children of migrant farm workers. However, I have not yet been able to determine what percentage of CAMP students identify themselves as nonnative English speakers or what percentage of Boise State University's nonnative English speakers are CAMP students.

7 I discuss the linguistic concept of markedness as it relates to nonnative English speakers is discussed more thoroughly in “Racializing the Nonnative English Speaker”).

8 For a description of an innovative program at the University of Rhode Island, which trains peer tutors in working with second language learners, see Lynne Ronesi’s “Training Undergraduates to Support ESL Classmates: The English Language Fellows Program.”

9 The document in the appendix is a slightly modified version of what our program made available to faculty at our institution.

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