

## § Afterword

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As we write this, we are excited to see this collection finally heading towards production. It has certainly been a long journey, as we conceived this project in early 2018 when we were still in an advisor/advisee relationship at an institution we have both since moved on from. This collection was initially inspired by our work across writing studies and applied linguistics, combined with our firsthand experiences navigating the politics around native speaker privilege and prejudices—Todd as a White native English-speaker spending time in the Czech Republic and Chile and Mariya as a nonnative English-speaker coming to the US from a very different education system, an experience she details in this collection. We had read the extensive body of work on these issues by TESOL and applied linguistics scholars such as George Braine, Ahmar Mahboob, and Ali Faud Selvi, which we drew on as we began to bring this issue to the writing studies community through a 2018 publication in *CCC* (Ruecker et al., 2018) as well as Mariya's work helping to establish the NNEST SIG at the *Conference on College Composition and Communication*.

Based on our own experiences and the stories that our 2018 study participants shared, we knew there was a need for a more robust resource targeting the field of writing studies audience more specifically. When we sent out the call for proposals for this collection in 2019, we were confident we had a unique idea and would make a meaningful contribution in a field that had increasingly turned its focus to the intersections of language, race, and linguistic justice. Our confidence quickly turned to a quiet slog as we encountered mixed reactions from reviewers—reactions that seemed to push against our efforts to bridge dialogues across TESOL, applied linguistics, and writing studies. Earlier, we experienced similar challenges with our *CCC* article (Ruecker et al., 2018) when the editors did not quite know what to do with it in the face of mixed responses from reviewers situated firmly on either side of the disciplinary divide. We were able to find more unequivocal support with our current publisher, but our four-year-long journey towards publishing this collection is a testament to the divisions between our different subfields that

continue to exist despite the valiant work of well-known scholars trying to overcome that divide (e.g., Atkinson et al., 2015; Bou Ayash & Kilfoil, 2023; Matsuda, 2006; Silva & Leki, 2004; Silva & Wang, 2020; Zawacki & Habib, 2014; among others).

Our work as editors of the collection was further complicated and prolonged by the negotiations we had to carry out between our authors and multiple reviewers. In putting together this collection, we made a point of including the work of newer scholars to have a better representation of NNES writing professionals at different stages of their careers. Admittedly, several authors needed a few rounds of feedback and revision to develop various aspects of their chapters. However, at multiple points we had to push back against some feedback that called for certain rhetorical choices that were presented as universal practices rather than an individual's suggestions. Furthermore, as editors we made the choice to respect the variety of Englishes our authors brought to their chapters and consciously strove not to edit their writing beyond minor typos. Todd felt this would be especially inappropriate for him as a White NES to engage in this work (see Kuzhabekova, 2019, for the politics around this editing).

Unfortunately, we were not always able to avoid missteps in negotiating between reviewers, editors, and authors. We would like to give tribute to two chapters that are no longer included in this collection because in our efforts to expedite the publication process, we did not push back against some feedback that was ultimately perceived by the authors as offensive, intruding, or not supportive. We especially regret our lack of caution in passing on this feedback uncritically because these chapters were by NNES BIPOC scholars who were describing their personal experiences with linguistic injustice and prejudice. This experience was a difficult lesson that we as editors need to take principled stands to protect the integrity of our authors' and our own work. We have found guidelines such as *The Anti-Racist Scholarly Reviewing Practices* (2021) document timely and helpful as we had to push against disciplinary boundaries. We found some of the suggested practices especially relevant to our work, such as the call to validate multiple sources of expertise, including authors' own lived experiences. For instance, we received comments from some TESOL-based reviewers that questioned the autobiographical approaches in some of the chapters in this collection. At the same time, while we did not receive such comments from reviewers working from the writing studies perspective, one reviewer of our earlier 2018 article criticized us for using quantitative data. We hope that more editors and reviewers adopt more inclusive practices such as the recommendations outlined in *The Anti-Racist Scholarly Reviewing Practices* guide (2021).

One theme that has come up at multiple points as we have worked on this collection is that it is disheartening that we are still detailing some of the same experiences that early NNEST scholars in TESOL did in the late 1990s. Whereas it feels that the writing studies field has come a long way since then, the chapters in this collection detail not only prejudice from students but also colleagues and others who should arguably “know better.” It is true that writing programs across U.S. institutions (as well as institutions more broadly) have been becoming more diverse in recent decades, and in many cases this growing diversity of the student populations has pushed writing programs to pay more attention to linguistic diversity; the translingual and transnational movements of the past two decades are a testament to that growing awareness. However, not all programs and not all universities are equally diverse, and unfortunately, not all have been equally engaging with scholarship and ideas surrounding linguistic diversity.

When Mariya first started teaching writing as a graduate student at a Midwestern flagship university a decade ago, she was the only international student in the English department, with only a handful of international students who had completed the program before her. The undergraduate student population was (and still is) over 80% White, with a majority of students being in-state. Like many other NNEST instructors, Mariya found scholarship on native speaker bias and linguistic justice extremely helpful and instrumental in her professionalization. However, she did not get introduced to that scholarship until she enrolled in her Ph.D. program—despite completing an MA degree in TESOL. The topic of linguistic diversity was largely absent from the TA training she received while teaching in the writing program at her first institution. We hope that this collection will contribute to our collective fields’ efforts to ensure that writing programs across the country do not suffer from similar curricular lapses. As many scholars and professionals in our fields strive to “expose and intervene in the dominant ideologies of monolingualism and nationalism that continue to shape compositionists’ belief systems and professional practices” (Bou Ayash & Kilfoil, 2023, p. 9), it is our hope that this collection will help writing programs widen their focus to pay closer attention to the scope and potential of linguistic diversity within their instructor ranks and treat that diversity as a resource rather than a liability.

Since we started this collection, our country has become even more divided, and overt displays of racism and other forms of prejudice have become more widely tolerated and even codified into law in many states. Nonetheless, we are heartened to see that the authors in this collection have found strength from work in our field as they have found various ways to navigate, challenge, and overcome prejudices. We hope that this collection will prove itself another such

source of strength and help build a sense of community where fellow NNESTs of writing can find support and understanding. Ultimately, the chapters in this collection offer a variety of approaches to shape attitudes of future generations around language diversity. The process of steering this collection to publication has taught us as editors that we need to continually reflect on our own actions and words as we strive to curtail the systemic practices of exclusion in academic publishing and the disciplinary divide within our fields.

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