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Dismantling Racial Microaggression: Translingual, Nonnative Identities as Pedagogical Resources

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As a nonnative English speaker who has taught first-year writing as both a graduate student and a professional track faculty member, I can attest to the multiple challenges nonnative English-speaking teachers of writing (NNESTs) constantly face on the ground of their nonnativeness. Resistance comes from not just native students but also nonnative students who expect to receive a “real American” learning experience from native English-speaking teachers (NESTs), who are presumed to have the voice of authority. Witnessing first-hand students’ weird looks and shrugs—even when they try to hide their reactions—when they meet me for the first time has intrigued me to examine the relatively nascent literature about the complex relationship between students and nonnative teachers of writing, particularly those who come from marginalized communities.

Scholars have asserted the need to understand the diversity of NNESTs (Huang, 2014; Moussu & Llorca, 2008; Park, 2012). Many explore the intersections of race and nonnativeness and challenge the normalized assumptions about teachers’ identity (Amin, 2001; Pennycook, 2007; Romney, 2010; Yazan & Rudolph, 2018). Several have examined the intersection of teachers’ racial and linguistic identities (Fan & de Jong, 2019; Huang & Varghese, 2015) and highlighted the issue of “linguistic racial profiling” NNESTs encounter due to their race (Romney, 2010). Some studies specifically address students’ perceptions and reception of the distinction between native and nonnative English-speaking teachers, especially teachers of writing in first-year composition classes (Liu, 2005), while others discuss how nonnative English-speaking teachers of writing construct and negotiate their ethos and professional identity as they venture into teaching first-year writing (Ruecker et al., 2018). However, the experiences of NNESTs, whose composite, intersectional, and

translingual identities are potential pedagogical resources, have been under-examined (Zheng, 2017). This chapter details the pedagogical practices, grounded in Brian Morgan’s “teacher identity as pedagogy” (2004, p. 178), which I adopted in my first-year writing course, *English 101: Academic Writing*, to respond to the multiple layers of (dis)comfort and discrimination directed towards my NNEST identity. My teacher identity does not refer to only my linguistic identity (Zheng, 2017) but also to my multi-layered, intersectional minority identity, that of a nonnative, Arab, Muslim woman.

For some students, my intersectional positionality as a nonnative, female, Muslim faculty member may trigger overt resistance. For other students, resistance takes a more subtle form, that of microaggressions, a term defined as “commonplace verbal or behavioral indignities whether intentional or unintentional, which communicate hostile, derogatory, or negative racial slights and insults” (Sue et al. 2007, p. 273). In this chapter, I delineate my classroom practices that utilize teachers’ identities as pedagogical resources. Instead of zeroing in on differences and inequalities, I deploy these differences as “substance and process of learning” (Morgan, 2004, p. 178) and make a case for a “pedagogy of discomfort” that challenges students to question their beliefs and assumptions about multiple identities and what it means to be a NNEST and prompts them to examine asymmetrical power relations (Prebel, 2016). These practices include text selections that center around the minority teacher’s persona and identity that challenge students’ level of comfort around a NNEST and their preconceived notions of what an effective teacher of writing should be, and an inquiry-based digital storytelling assignment that follows a translingual approach which corroborates and substantiates the proposition that NNESTs’ translinguistic identities as a strength, not a constraint. I manifest how my interventions shape students’ thinking about marginal identities, more specifically my Muslim, female, and nonnative identity, and challenge the conviction of an appropriate *single story*. I provide tools to explore the very questions that my “axis of identities” raises in the classroom—and a call to reposition the role of nonnative English-speaking teachers of writing (NNESTs).

Intersectionality: Multiple Layers of Non-Nativity and Prejudice

The current political situation in the United States negatively stigmatizes minorities and fosters strong feelings of (dis)comfort, thus making it essential to consider the ideology of nativeness, an *Us-versus-Them* division (Shuck, 2006). A native speaker of English is *perceived* to be *White Anglo-Saxon* (Mat-

suda, 2003; Norton, 1997) while nativism indicates a distrust of difference. The word *native* is also used to provoke a sense of nationalism (Higham, 1981). Thus, the dichotomy of native versus nonnative speakers of English (Faez, 2011; Mahboob, 2010) is a discourse “that is often used to justify exclusionary practices that perpetuate the normalization of Whiteness, American-ness, and nativeness in certain prestige varieties of English” (Shuck, 2006, p. 260). This discriminatory discourse validates students’ perceptions of NNESTs as deficient and less competent while White NES teachers of writing as having perfect, authentic, and authoritative voice, due to their stark *White* accent (Amin, 2001; Baratta, 2018; Huang, 2018; Romney, 2010). It is a type of discourse that positions me, a nonnative speaker of English, as well as other minorities as *linguistic Other*: less visible, less trusted, and even feared—creating and solidifying discomfort around NNESTs. As Barbara Perry has noted, when we consider the intersection of gender with these other identities, the situation becomes more complicated, “murkier,” and even “stormier” (2014, p. 79). Perceiving the native speaker as the standard automatically places me, a Muslim female NNEST, as, foreigner, and ultimately *Other* and *outside the nation*—nonnative to the nation, regardless of my education and competency in the English language. And, while Anglo-Saxon immigrants are accepted in the United States, other immigrants are frequently asked about their birthplace and origin, since they speak with an accent that is different from that constructed norm (Amin, 2001). While not all foreign accents are devalued, accents that are not linked to *white* skin or those that signal a *third-world* homeland accrue negative reactions and increase the level of discomfort students display towards NNESTs (Lippi-Green, 2012). With the term *White* being synonymous with *Western*, *Third-World-looking* refers to *non-Western* and automatically *subordinate*—*others* “to be feared, ridiculed, and loathed for their difference” (Perry, 2014, p. 75).

While race and accent already play roles in how I am perceived, my *hijab* (the veil or headscarf that Muslim women wear) is another pertinent marker, placing me in the “them” category, complicating my role as NNEST, especially because of the negative stigma attached to the veil (Macdonald, 2006). Sahar Amer in her book, *What Is Veiling?*, describes how veiling, when associated with Islam, is not a neutral term, but rather a judgmental term that evokes discomfort and “fear, anxiety, and a rising sense of threat” (2014, p. 2). Ultimately, as a *headscarfed* Muslim female NNEST teacher, with non-Western, Islamic conservative attire, I am “caught at the intersection of discrimination against religion and discrimination against women” (Aziz, 2014, p. 5). I anticipate being viewed as less linguistically competent, nonnative, outsider, and by extension, *other*.

Multiple Forms of Racial Microaggressions Towards my NNEST Identity

I've occupied multiple positions—graduate student, contingent faculty—and it's not always possible to know how those positions are at issue when I experience multiple types of microaggression in the classroom¹ like many NNEST teachers (see Tseptsura and Wang-Hiles, this volume, for examples). I teach a wide range of courses, including composition, writing center theory and practice, grammar, and women's studies, at a public East Coast Research I university where at least 50 percent of students identify as White. As a Muslim female NNEST, wearing a conservative all black hijab that covers my torso and a long sleeve maxi dress covering my full body, I am highly visible. That visibility puts my identity to the test from the first moment I walk into the classroom. Each semester, I encounter different forms of microaggression with my students' looks, questioning if they are or I am in the right classroom, occupying the rightful space, with some whispering, "Is this the teacher?" and others checking their phones to confirm the location of the classroom. As I introduce myself, I feel as if—like many NNEST, (e.g., Tseptsura, this volume)—I have to present a mini-version of my curriculum vitae, so students will know they are in trusted hands.

Students' reactions and concerns persist and even appear at the end of the semester. In course evaluations, a standard practice that invites students to critique instructors' teaching pedagogies, my English 101 students, for example, wrote about their initial reactions upon discovering I am their teacher:

I'm not going to lie, I was kind of taken aback when I realized that I was going to be taught English by someone with an accent. But I realized later that she knew her stuff, and I can honestly say that I learned more from her than any teacher this semester and probably all the teachers I've had here at Maryland. Thanks for everything.

Another noted:

She made sure that all students that attended were involved in every class. She truly cares and is extremely knowledgeable about the topic and wants us all to do well. But she talks really fast, sometimes it was hard to get everything down because of the accent.

1 Microaggression in the classroom includes "interrogations of the teachers' nativeness, insinuations of their foreignness to English, and behavioral indications that they are 'invading' the classroom" (Ramjattan, 2019, p. 374).

Clearly, students have acknowledged my expertise and command of the materials but still acknowledged how my accent can be a barrier. Additionally, a student from my *English 101X: Academic Writing* class, which is designed for students for whom English is a second language, indicated in his end-of-semester course evaluation that “I learned so much about writing this semester and my writing improved but I expected the teacher for this class to be white and with no accent,” confirming that even ESL students may exhibit more resistance to NNESTs. My students’ end-of-semester comments further confirm the rampant misconception among students of what a teacher of writing should be or look like.

Moreover, in the end-of-semester course evaluation, students are asked about the qualities the instructor deserves special praise or needs special attention; one of my students wrote about how I “made sure everyone understood and went to great lengths to ensure that no one was confused,” while another mentioned how they enjoyed that I was so full of energy: “She was very kind and took the time to read each student’s papers.” However, they wished I “talked a bit slower.” Even though most of the comments have a positive aspect, they still insinuate that my accent, in combination with my speaking style, composes a stigma that is attached to my NNEST’s persona. Nonetheless, students’ evaluations of my teaching qualities present insights about my teacher identity, further confirming the value of teacher identity as pedagogy.

Feminist Composition Pedagogy: “Pedagogy of Discomfort”

To challenge these stereotypes and deconstruct the notion of the normative image of the ideal teacher, I have utilized feminist composition pedagogy, which is defined

as a keen awareness of classroom dynamics, continuously striving to confront issues of power and authority as they play out between students and teachers; it is an attempt to move students to critical consciousness, especially in regards to racism, classism, sexism, homophobia, and other ideological forces that create hierarchies. (Siebler, 2008, p. 3)

Using feminist composition pedagogy has allowed me to create a high-energy learning environment to engage with my students in difficult conversations and to overcome the multiple barriers and levels of misjudgment that my female, Muslim, and nonnative body encounters. I developed a three-part pedagogical strategy: 1) recognizing and naming the discomfort and then

teaching writing skills through that discomfort, 2) teaching the inquiry-based digital storytelling assignment that creates a space for translingual affordances, and 3) engaging in reflective teaching practices to ensure my growth and further solidify my competency as an NNEST.

Recognizing and Naming Discomfort: Teaching Controversial Texts and Unfamiliar Topics

The pedagogical strategies I have developed to respond to my unique situation and to my students' preconceived stereotypes is to bring materials that make the concerns of my students an object of discussion. I have designed writing assignments around difficult texts and unfamiliar topics, veiling for example, that reflect my own identity not just as a teacher but also as a person. I evoke and utilize a pedagogical notion of "teacher identity as pedagogy" (Morgan, 2004, p. 178), as I make the identity that is an issue for my students a subject of analysis for us to think about together. I use the tensions that arise in a text that reflects my identity as a resource of pedagogy and for engaging in critical dialogue. Such texts allow my students to see my intellect beyond my female body, the headscarf that represents my religious affiliation, and the speech pattern that marks my nonnativeness.

English 101: Academic Writing at my institution is rhetorical in its approach and is based on a common set of assignments, beginning with a summary assignment, moving to a rhetorical analysis, and then scaffolding a research paper that begins with an inquiry into a topic through a digital storytelling assignment. The goal is first to inquire and to determine what is known—and credible—about a topic or issue. Engaging in inquiry and responding to questions lead to rhetorical practice. Thus, inquiry and rhetoric rely on investigating, listening to, and reflecting upon the diverse thoughts and ideas of others. Reflection and revision are major parts of the curriculum. During the first week of classes, as I introduce the Summary assignment, I assign Naheed Mustafa's article, "My Body Is My Own Business," published by *The Globe & Mail* in 1993. Mustafa argues that women should not be judged by their bodies and that hijab is a form of strength and empowerment, contrary to the popular principle of the hijab representing male oppression. Summarizing the text and engaging in in-class discussions around the author's main points, purpose, and audience invite unsanctioned, critical conversations and open the space for my students and me to hone close reading practices and to think critically about identity. These conversations challenge the walls of rejection and the existing stereotypes and craft space for me to explain the multiple identities that exist in this country and to legitimize them as normative while

challenging the idea that the *White, female body* constitutes the standard, and anything that is non-White is different, foreign, or in other words, *nonnative, other*. Through the naming of the discomfort and using the tension as a resource, I, with my students, navigate through layers of resistance and microaggressions and engage in critical discussions and learning.

As my students start to become comfortable around these difficult conversations, and as we transition to a rhetorical analysis assignment, I require my students to analyze TED Talks such as Dalia Mogahed's *What it's like to be Muslim in America* or Kimberley Crenshaw's *The Urgency of Intersectionality*. But, before they set out to analyze those texts, I encourage students to participate in a discussion of Chimamanda Ngozi Adichie's *The Danger of a Single Story*, encouraging students to see that too often we focus on a single story, excluding cultural influences, other perspectives, and the rich tapestry of different experiences in the world. I emphasize that the *single story* approach is limiting and makes us misinterpret people, their backgrounds, and their lives while leading to misjudgment, disconnection, and conflict. Students realize how Adichie addresses concerns of listening, reflection, and argument—key themes in the curriculum, especially as they move through their own inquiries and arguments. The discussions cultivate spaces that promote tolerance and acceptance while demystifying the idea of multiplicity and *othering*.

Discussions of identity and tolerance feel awkward in the beginning, but students eventually start to open up. One student praised the selection of these texts and the discussion around them in this way:

The TED Talk, “What it’s like to be Muslim in America,” Mrs. Hijazi asked us to analyze, made me and other classmates engage in a critical and important discussion, especially since we live in a polarized and challenging sociopolitical environment. These discussions made us think capaciously about our identity and contest the concept of one American identity.

Another wrote: “I thought that the choice of the TED Talk was especially relevant in today’s social climate, and it really made me think about the tragedy of 9/11 from a different perspective.” While teaching around difficult conversations is an effective classroom strategy that can be used by all teachers, NESTs and NNESTs, it is particularly effectual for NNESTs as they confront the subjects that feed into the dominant stereotype of how a teacher of writing should look or sound. Avoiding these conversations perpetuates the same narratives that have dehumanized others who look different or whose beliefs are not part of the Western standard. By integrating discussions that intrigue students to explore their emotions around discomfort, I dismantle

barriers that cloud and color my students' critical analysis and prevent them from solidifying their biases.

Digital Storytelling with a Translingual Approach: From Confrontation to Affirmation

As an academic invested in translingual writing, I design assignments to solicit students' reactions towards translingual practices and to challenge them to think critically about their own internalized monolingual bias. Adopting Suresh Canagarajah's conceptualization that "translingual addresses the synergy, treating languages as always in contact and mutually influencing each other, with emergent meanings and grammars . . . an understanding of the production, circulation, and reception of texts that are always mobile; that draw from diverse languages, symbol systems, and modalities of communication; and that involve inter-community negotiations" (2013, p. 41), I encourage my students to engage in translingual practices in multiple texts, written or digital. Digital storytelling brings students' interests and backgrounds into the pedagogical process, allowing everyone to have a voice while affording them the flexibility in finding forms of expression and making linguistic and content decisions.

The Digital Storytelling assignment, an open-ended narrative inquiry project, is the first step in the inquiry and research process in my writing class. At this stage in their writing process, students do not make an argument but rather engage in an exchange of ideas. The Digital Storytelling assignment, a combination of multimodal and translingual approaches, is an affordance for students to remix different forms of print and digital languages to create a translingual amalgam of literacies. By exploring these different forms of expression, my students challenge their conception of themselves as authors and their definition of acceptable academic genres. The assignment is a chance for them to invest in questioning their beliefs, opinions, interpretations, and assumptions—rather than using them as a foundation. It is a time when they may ask hard questions, even if those hard questions challenge their beliefs and viewpoints. And, of course, I add a disclaimer that after inquiry, many of them may still believe the same thing, but that belief will be honed, nuanced, tested, enriched, and supported with evidence rather than merely accepted.

In the Digital Storytelling assignment, students are asked to consider a personal experience and question and probe that experience, seeking an understanding of what is at issue in the experience. In this assignment, I ask them to do what academics do: begin with a topic of inquiry, formulating a set of questions to pursue and research. As they record their stories, they are encour-

aged to engage in different modes and translanguaging writing practices, mixing the languages they know. To give them an example, I show my own digital story, in which I share one of my experiences at the airport being scrutinized and questioned due to my religious, Middle Eastern identity, and the type of inquiry and academic topics I would be able to pursue based on my personal story—such as racial profiling. In my digital story, I show personal images of myself and my children and use short sentences in Arabic. I ask my students to reflect on my translanguaging practice, and the majority express their feelings of being curious and intrigued. As they watch my digital story, they focus on the sound and the flow of the narrative of the video. Some shared that the inclusion of Arabic made them experience “what Arabic to English speakers feel learning English,” a student wrote in her reflection. She explained how they “felt a positive response to the formatting and inclusion of the Arabic” and saw the power of language others have that they may not have.

Translanguaging writing as an approach resists the monolingualist reification of language and nation and allows for “honoring the power of all language users to shape language to specific ends [and] recognizing the linguistic heterogeneity of all users of language both within the United States and globally” (Horner et al., 2011, p. 305). It invites students with diverse linguistic and cultural backgrounds to negotiate the various languages and rhetorical styles they bring into their writing (Lu & Horner, 2013). Digital stories, with their own set of affordances and pedagogy, map space for students to develop their unique voices and invite them to consider multiple stories, including those not their own. This helps deconstruct the negative stigma attached to accents that are not considered standard or *White*, including mine. Integrating digital stories in the writing classroom helps my students showcase their voices in a variety of ways—to express strong voices by telling their own stories in their own ways and their own accents, while expanding the audience for their work. Sharing their digital stories through multiple venues, such as YouTube, allows my students, with their multiple accents, to reach out to a broader audience, ultimately making both our composition classroom and the Digital Storytelling assignment “commit[s] to creating connections between the external world and the classroom” (Siebler, 2008, p. 3). Through this assignment, students gain agency, regardless of what accent they have, whether considered native or nonnative, moving away from the imagined, native-nonnative binary.

In these pedagogical practices, my students and I question our personal positionalities and challenge our assumptions, allowing for nuanced understanding and acceptance, regardless of our different personal beliefs which shape our personalities. The composition classroom becomes a space for dialogues about contradictions, allowing students to engage in self-development.

However, this self-development is not unidirectional but multidirectional, as we educators recognize our own discomfort with students' resistance to our nonnative identity and place in the classroom. However, through text selections and inquiry-based assignments, my students are already thinking about identity, and my faculty identity is more fully recognized in the classroom. By making my students aware of the multilayered identity I occupy and perform in the classroom, I am able to challenge and change conventional educational practices that have solidified the *native speaker fallacy* (Phillipson, 1992).

My students learn how to approach and value a multiplicity of identities. This discomfort can provide opportunities for reflection on and examination of beliefs not only about writing but also about different identities and modes of writing. My classroom becomes a space where we challenge our assumptions about ourselves and others. I start with my students confronting their external biases towards different types of teacher identity and persona. Instead of just enhancing their understanding of composition principles, I help them think through their biases and prejudice first. I help students to become more aware of microaggressions, their own and those of others so that they can be ready to respond helpfully in a way that fosters understanding and learning.

An Extra Layer of Translingual Practices

While I use the same curriculum, assignments, and text selections in all of my *English 101: Academic Writing* classes, I tend to emphasize my speech patterns more overtly in *English 101X*, the course section designated for nonnative speakers. When I introduce myself on the first day of class, I make a declarative statement to my students: be prepared to engage in class discussion and to speak out in class. All of us have an accent, including me. Although this statement may put me at a disadvantage since I am not the presumed native English-speaking teacher (NEST), it encourages my students to open up and feel comfortable about valuing their own accents. I repeat the statement several times throughout the semester to encourage those who are reluctant to participate to be comfortable with their nonnative identities.

In addition to underscoring my accent to facilitate our discussions, I draw on my translingual identity and utilize my first language. A good number of international students who take *English 101X* come from Gulf countries where Arabic is the main language. When my students feel frustrated and do not understand a concept, I switch to Arabic to explain the concept. When choosing the correct vocabulary to use in their essays, they often struggle to find the best word to use. Through our conversation, I help them use the right one instead of relying on a thesaurus, which may not give the correct word,

considering the context. Also, when engaging in literal translation, I explain why a linguistic form or rhetorical concept that works in Arabic composition does not necessarily translate to an English context. For many of them, including students who come from other countries and who speak languages other than Arabic, I became a familiar face; several expressed their appreciation of having a teacher who went through the same struggles they are facing and has come a long way. Many expressed feeling happy and empowered for being able to honor their first or second language as they had the chance to use it in combination with English in their digital stories to express their views and identities.

Engaging in Reflective Practices: Becoming Comfortable

Thinking introspectively about one's own teacher subjectivities in the classroom allows for self-reflection that informs our pedagogical approaches and practices. Assignments in my *English 101: Academic Writing* focus on identities and allow students to practice reflection, a mode of cognition and inquiry that allows writers to build on existing writing skills, question their attitudes towards writing, and evaluate the rhetorical choices they make (Taczak, 2015). Ultimately, for the last assignment, the "Reflective Memo," students reflect on all the writing they did throughout the semester. I ask them about the challenges they had in the course and how they addressed those challenges in their writings. I inquire about how their prior knowledge of writing expanded, confirmed, complicated, and or altered their writing practices and approaches. I ask students to reflect on the Digital Storytelling assignment and the choices of the TED Talks; to address how beneficial or helpful the digital story is to their initial inquiry or writing; and to answer if they would keep it as part of the curriculum. One student wrote:

I was pleasantly surprised by how many different ways we were able to express ourselves in this course, beyond just writing papers. I do not think that I would have learned what I did if we did not use so many modes of communication, such as digital storytelling. This class has opened my eyes to how academic writing is not limited to a strict, formulaic paper, but rather a wide variety of methods for communicating with the audience. The class showed me the importance of different and multiple identities.

This type of response shows that my students are becoming comfortable with different texts and accepting the plurality of identities and accents. By

stepping back to reflect on their writing, the assignments, and the assigned texts, students ponder on the diverse thoughts and ideas of others and engage in critical thinking. Since writers' identities are shaped and reshaped by their lives, including prior experiences, with reflection, they tap into and reevaluate these experiences as they become better writers (Taczak, 2015). While stepping back to think critically about their writing process and development (Yancey, 1998), they also reflect thoughtfully on perspectives that are different from their own. Ultimately, these reflections further confirm the purpose of my assignments: that students' beliefs are honed, enriched, and supported with evidence rather than merely accepted and allow for developing a better understanding of others. These reflections empower me as a NNEST and guide my pedagogical advancement. My pedagogical strategies for negotiating my teacher persona produce material effect, allowing me and my students to navigate and dismantle multiple layers of discrimination and misconception—moving away from resistance to acceptance.

Conclusion

In the past, academic discourse has been dominated by a monolingual orientation that defined the so-called native speaker, which renders the expertise of the NNEST, as less, deficient, or even illegitimate. Multiple subject positions, including accent, race, gender, and religion, intersect to position minority female composition faculty as vulnerable and expose to complex patterns of bias; we are perceived as *Other* and as outside the nation—*nonnative* to the nation and nonnative speakers of English. Therefore, it is important to challenge the dominant, normative view of language and adopt pedagogical and classroom practices which center around critical strategies that address microaggressions in the classroom and allow for understanding the value of translingual faculty and teaching practices. The academic writing program at the institution where I work has been supportive on a macro and micro level, promoting and adopting various pedagogical practices that honor diversity and multiplicity and support NNESTs. For instance, recently Chimamanda Adichie's TED Talk *The Danger of a Single Story* became part of the standard syllabus to teach the "Summary" and "Rhetorical Analysis" assignments. Students are asked to discuss how Adichie addresses concerns of social justice, civic deliberation, listening, reflection, and argument, key themes pertinent to their own inquiries and arguments. Adichie's TED talk is also used in "New Teacher Orientation," when academic writing program administrators (a role I had for two years) shape new faculty members' pedagogical practices by illustrating lessons on responding to students' writing, reactive versus respon-

sive commentary, lesson planning, and dealing with classroom scenarios including classroom disruptions. For professional development day events, the academic writing program has been inviting speakers from various minority groups, including ones who identify as NNEST. These scholars encourage teaching practices that address microaggressions and invigorate antiracist pedagogy.

I have helped organize workshops for NNESTs titled “Coffee with Multilingual Teachers,” in which I drew from my experience as a Muslim female NNEST and shared ways to deal with students’ resistance. We discussed the challenges NNESTs face while teaching *English 101: Academic Writing* and how these challenges have changed in relation to becoming more experienced as teachers. During these workshops, NNESTs were encouraged to share their feelings of any kind of resistance or discrimination from students because of their NNEST identity and how they handled the situation. Some shared their experiences overcoming differences and achieving student engagement and acceptance. I raised the challenge of engaging with translingual teaching practices in an asynchronous online format in which students could not necessarily hear their own differing accents or my own. Unsurprisingly, my concerns were shared by other NNESTs. Together, we talked about lesson plans that we found to be successful and unsuccessful in an environment that facilitated collegiality and collaboration. We even signed up for a “teaching-partner” program, a peer pedagogical support program that provides writing instructors an opportunity to observe and be observed by another instructor and otherwise offers a source of peer support throughout the semester and mutual reflection where both teachers would grow. The analysis and discussions between teaching partners have provided contexts and conditions that affect future training and support of writing teachers.

In addition, unlike earlier studies on NNESTs that mainly address the discrimination that NNESTs face due to their nonnative identity, this chapter describes pedagogical practices centered around NNESTs’ intersectional, multilayered identity, in relation to race, gender, nonnativeness, and translingual status, and denotes it as a strength instead of a deficiency. Throughout this chapter, which is a reflection on my own positionality and my classroom practices that utilize translingual writing in order to challenge the dominant, normative view of NNESTs as less competent, I call for a curriculum that helps students see past a single genre and mode of delivery—a single story of identity. I also call for more support from writing program administrators to assist NNESTs to honor and explore their identities as pedagogical practices in the classroom and facilitate a translingual identity, and to engage in reflective teaching practices (Khor et al., and Tseptsura, this volume).

Beyond offering statements of inclusion and diversity, institutions can expand their curriculums to include authors who identify as NNEST—something my institution started doing. Consistent attention to explicit anti-racist and social justice pedagogies, through readings, discussions, and campus-wide events, helps solidify everyone’s knowledge of anti-racist and social justice pedagogical practices, which help eliminate “linguistic racial injustice.” Honoring multiple identities helps administrators and students see beyond a standard identity construct and recognize that NNESTs are not a homogeneous group; with each having a different linguistic, translingual, or even multilayered identity, each contributes to the richness and multiplicity of identities that defeat the single story or native speaker fallacies or the imagined ideal status of a NEST.

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