

Deconstructing Whiteness in the Globalized Classroom

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Abstract: In this essay, we share our own experiences of enacting whiteness and its effects for teaching in the globalized classroom. We engage in a dialogue to deconstruct our own whitely identities and consider the unearned authority imbued in this position, which left unchecked, reinscribes oppressive race relations in the globalized classroom.

University classrooms in the contemporary United States are an increasingly globalized space: no longer are the seats within these classrooms reserved solely for the white sons (and, more recently, daughters) of America; rather, classrooms today represent a diverse student population: white students, yes, but also people of color from the U.S. and several countries across the globe. The teacher, too, has increasingly come to embody globalization. The white man wearing elbow patches is still often found facilitating student learning, but so too are those whose home countries are thousands of miles from the classroom they are in. The globalized classroom represents a rich opportunity for student learning, but it is also a complex space, one that requires consideration of the multifaceted ways identities are intersecting at any given moment for both students and teachers. In this essay, we share our experiences of teaching in the globalized classroom to consider its complexity, particularly in terms of race and racism.

We share our experiences in what follows of being raced as white and non-white, and of racing our students as white and non-white. Though one of us is not white and one of us is, we find that both of us have enacted whiteness in our teacher role. Whiteness is not just about the physical characteristics of one's perceived skin color: "Whiteness is not necessarily a product of being white. Whiteness is, rather, an articulation of epistemologies that have been racialized; whiteness is a rhetoric" (Condon, 2011, p. 3). As Frye (2001) has described it:

Being whiteskinned (like being male) is a matter of physical traits presumed to be physically determined; being whitely (like being masculine) I conceive as a deeply ingrained way of being in the world. Following the analogy with masculinity, I assume that the connection between whiteness and light-colored skin is a *contingent* connection: this character could be manifested by persons who are *not* "white;" it can be absent in persons who *are*. (p. 87)

This "way of being in the world" of course manifests itself in our classrooms. While it's expected that different ways of being are represented in a globalized classroom, it is important to consider the particular effects of whiteness, especially when enacted by instructors since "Whiteness is

connected to institutional racism...by the fact that individuals with this sort of character are well-suited to the social roles of agents of institutional racism" (Frye, 2001, p. 87). Both of our experiences represent the prevalence of whiteness in the U.S. academy. This may be in part because the "teacher role" is closely related to middle-class values, which share many characteristics to whiteness (such as a belief in and the enforcement of rules, and a belief in one's own authority)—though whiteness and "middle-class-ness" are not one and the same (Frye, 2001, p. 93).

Whiteness is "related to individual or personal racism" (Frye, 2001, p. 88), but it is not solely racism when racism is conceived of as hatred towards people of color. "One can be white," Frye (2001) explained, "even if one's beliefs and feelings are relatively well-informed, humane, and good-willed" (p. 88). Whately people—and often teachers, we argue—"generally consider themselves to be benevolent and good-willed, fair, honest and ethical" (Frye, 2001, p. 89). Whately teachers do not see themselves as perpetuators of institutionalized racism in the classroom, though they are discursively connected to institutional racism at a deeper level. *We* did not imagine ourselves as perpetuators of institutionalized racism. Rather, whately people are taught to consider their roles as a "judge—a judge of responsibility and of punishment," a "preacher" who "point[s] out wrongs and tell[s] others what to do," a "martyr—to take all responsibility and all glory" and finally a "peacemaker," one who "could see all sides and see how it all ought to be" (Frye, 2001, p. 88-89). These roles offer a façade for our behaviors, allowing us to see our behaviors as not racist, but in students' "best interests." The best interests, however, are whately interests.

We share our experiences and those of others not to self-deprecate or exalt, but rather in an attempt to deconstruct the ways in which our own and others' whiteness permeates the globalized classroom and to demonstrate that "Whiteness is a narrative not only about language but also about white supremacy" (Condon, 2011, p. 4). Through our conversations, we have found that whiteness is shared and prevalent within the "teacher" position and within power structures in and out of the classroom whose boundaries expand into the global space. Bobbi's narratives demonstrate the authority granted white and whately teachers and the attending costs of this unearned authority; DJ (Dae-Joong Kim)'s accounts are grounded in aspiring to be whately and enacting whately values since it seems "whately" is what teachers are "supposed to" be in personal, as well as discursive and institutional power structures where whiteness dominates largely due to asymmetries in the dominant power structure and its biased rhetoric. In what follows, we use our own narratives in attempt to do the work we are calling for: to deconstruct our identities and consider whately teachers' unearned authority, which left unchecked, reinscribes oppressive race relations in the globalized classroom.

Furthermore, our narratives and their attending analyses represent the evolution of our thoughts as we've conversed with each other—moments of "unlearning" in order to learn our own roles in the classroom. These conversations and moments of unlearning have been possible for us because of the globalized classroom; otherwise, we would not have gotten this chance to explore our roles as teachers in this space. For us, the globalized classroom is not a utopia or dystopia but a space of hope because it is always in on-going construction, disagreement, and movement of transnational beings. The globalized classroom is not what the first world romantically embellishes as the space of consensus, fair exchanges of knowledge without tariff (all forms of discriminations), or beautiful plains without obstacles. On one hand, as a miniature of the global space, here students and teachers are exposed to doubts, instability, unfair exchanges, and dominance and resistance, on which border-crossing unidentifiable Others raze down racial, national, linguistic, cultural, gender, economic, and political stone walls in every U.S. classroom. On the other hand, this does not mean that local difference and its significance can be ignored in the classroom. Local difference is always already mediated by globalization. In the globalized classroom, global and differential race and racism is a

local/global phenomenon hidden under and covered by euphemistic ideas of mutual understanding, global collaboration, hospitality to cultural differences, multicultural awareness, diversity for efficiency, and so on which morally, politically and ideologically strengthen the positions of subjects (those who hold global whiteness). In this classroom, exchange students, international students, international teachers, and teachers with global backgrounds tend to be excluded from "us" to be regarded as "they" whose visas prove their only legitimate presences here (the U.S.).

We shared ideas and thoughts about these problematic spaces we experienced in seemingly opposite contexts: Bobbi as a white teacher within a non-white multilingual space and DJ as a non-white international teacher in a monolingual (with some exceptions), and largely racially, nationally homogeneous space (except for some ethnic students). Sometimes, we had to go through disagreements and logical and practical cul-de-sacs, but that helped us engage with these issues with our central aim for social justice. Thus, this article is about a journey to open a space of hope in a future where whiteness in the classroom gives way to internationally democratic encounters of differences by which global justice can occur. In what follows, we share our dialogue over time; though we have written from a "we" perspective in this introduction, we have done so because we are both drawing from the same theoretical idea of whiteness to ground our experiences. When relaying and reflecting on our individual personal experiences, however, we must keep our voices separate. A unified "we" cannot accurately account for the range of differences we embody due to our different personal backgrounds and experiences and how those are read onto us. Furthermore, a "we" voice might conflate and expunge our differences, when in fact we believe the opposite is necessary in a globalized world: we need to *know* our differences in order to engage in a dialogue with others, not to erase difference but to understand and create a new space/conversation. Our choices for this format go beyond our own interests; we also wanted to invite readers into our conversation in order to reflect on their own experiences in the globalized classroom. In short, we use this format in order to welcome readers to participate in rather than merely be informed by what we're saying. We return to a unified voice in the conclusion to come together on the idea that this work is ongoing and that no matter our individual experiences, we must commit to it together.

DJ: What I am and where I am located share one similar discourse—I am an Other^[1]-in-class. This is an ontological discourse^[2] that defines the significance of my presence as a teacher and a learner in this space to the extent that this fundamental position can be discussed, which also makes possible our (Bobbi's and my) dialogic conversations in this writing. Discourse is the space where Otherness and disagreements emerge, deconstructing subjectivity and unity. Our dialogue in this sense is not purporting unity but antagonisms against our socially determined teaching identities and positions. I use the word "ontological" because here my presence itself becomes highly problematic, and on this foundational instability, discourses of race, nation, and globalization are embedded. Indeed, this is the starting point to explain my transnational or trans-spatial experience I have gone through teaching in the U.S.; without this positioning, I remain a dis-identifiable being. Pivoting on the question of the connections between a teacher's linguistic, national, and cultural identity and pedagogy, this article also saunters around an untraditional experience—how a non-native-English-speaking teacher teaches English (more specifically composition) to native-English-speaking college freshmen. More specifically, I will talk about what it's like to be a non-white teacher of mostly white students. However, readers should not expect to glean a success story in which a subject with a linguistic disability achieves excellence as a teacher of English^[3].

Rather, in this article, I am testifying here what I experienced as a desubjectified (racial and national) Other meeting Others^[4] (American/other international students and colleagues) in the swamp of unexpected conflicts mostly related to racism and globalization. The best analogous example that represents a similar experience to mine is *Entre les Murs (The Class)* directed by Laurent Cantet.^[5] In

this movie, a French teacher is struggling with his internalized prejudices and racism, only to be locked in his own racial, gendered, and national wall by insulting and punishing an African student and a rude but dauntless white female student. Each time the instructor tries to avoid racism, classism, and other discriminations, he falls into a trap of self-righteousness. However, this movie is not stuck in blaming one's self or others. The best scene in the movie is when the teacher tries to keep a heated and precarious discussion, aimed for disagreement, going with his students. Though his position is unstable and his arguments get slippery and sloppy, he refuses to end his endeavor to engage in discussion with his students.

In this respect, the movie presents a hard but positive truth that the classroom can be a space not of consensus but of dissensus and radical equality. The radical equality happens when a teacher courageously abandons the assumptions about his own authority and students' unrecognized unstable identities to get in a debate off guard with students. This can be possible only when the teacher discovers and realizes how his position is ultimately (over)determined by prefabricated layers of oppressive (racial, national, gender, etc.) formations on the state and global levels. Disorientation is a necessary pedagogical step in this sense, especially in the globalized classroom where culture shock, misunderstanding, misrecognition, alienation, and dislocation happen regardless of a teacher's assumed position.

In truth, I have experienced these kinds of quandaries several times while teaching in the U.S. and have had unexpected learning moments in these classes. I at first felt disoriented because this radically shook the foundation of my being's "there" that I had thought I belonged to nationally, racially, linguistically, culturally, and ontologically. When I was in Korea, I was a racially and nationally unproblematic being; I was one of "we," namely, an ordinary Korean speaking Korean among other Koreans. Though I experienced class or regional discrimination sometimes, I was never exposed to racial issues and never thought of myself as a racial Other in Korea. But here in the U.S., walking, talking, sulking, and eating, I feel disoriented and sometimes discriminated against. It takes time to bear people's suspicious looks, pretentious kindness, hospitality hiding hostility, and the racial assumption that I am a shy, sly, and effeminate Asian male, the most prominent stereotypes of Asians. Yet, this disorientation and estrangement are not negative experiences. No, these were, are, and will be positive trans-spatial experiences. Going through these experiences, I have been able to attain authenticity because of my experience of being an Other without a solid identity. In fact, I have been able to find a real "I" under the "otherization" that put my identity into more complex (racial, national, gender) discourses. Also, heterogeneity and becoming an Other has uncovered my hidden *ethos* (dwelling place in Greek) where globalization is embodied. If I kept living in Korea as a being in a nationally, racially homogenous space, I could not have had this chance to speculate on potential alterity in my presence because I was inured to colorblindness and internal racism in Korea.^[6]

For the most part, my experience is a result of globalization. I can be here because I am a body moving across borders—a trans-spatial being. But, as Negri (2000) posits, "Globalization must be met with a counter-globalization" (p. 207). In fact, the U.S. town where I belong to now is an un-global space, though it is slowly globalizing. In this Midwest town, whiteness was and is dominating, albeit it's going through an influx of gaining more ethnically and nationally diverse people. For example, when I arrived, I inevitably noticed that my foreignness, like pollen from Asia, caused some to have allergic reactions such as "Why are you here? Studying English?" I tried to explain, but in many cases, those explanations did not satisfy questioners' curiosity because my position was recognized as an unconventional one.

Moreover, after I started teaching, all the contextual positioning of my presence in the classroom became more complex. Always, becoming an "Other" as a teacher in the classroom was not easy. For

example, when I first entered the classroom to teach a first-year composition course, students looked at me, but they did not pay attention. One of them loudly said the instructor must be late. When I walked to the front seat and sat on the supposed instructor's chair, students stopped talking and looked at me with puzzlement. When I opened my mouth and spoke to introduce myself, one of the students loudly said, "Can you say that again?" I felt intimidated, though I knew (hoped) that she only wanted to catch clearly what I was saying. The hierarchical relations between students and me seemed to be reversed; I felt like I was an English Language Learning student in front of all native-English-speaking teachers. Then, one of the students vividly asked, "When did you first come to the U.S.?" I answered without hesitation, "Five years ago." Facing a doubtful expression on her face, and sensing awkwardness in the class, I declared, "But you don't need to worry too much about communication with me. I can understand what you say mostly." I knew that "mostly" would not be convincing, but that was the limit of confidence I could offer. I perceived that this linguistic otherness determined my linguistic identity, which led to determinations of my other national and racial identities. I was marked as a foreigner whose English was not his mother tongue.

From then on, while teaching a few classes, I sometimes could not resist the tempting desire to gain, amplify, and stabilize my authority in the classroom to escape from the unstable position I held. I tried to stand tall and speak with authority, which negatively disoriented me from my own pedagogical idea to create a democratic classroom—namely, ultimately equal relationships between teacher and students. Not only did I try to behave like a whitely teacher, but I also tried to erase my foreignness, clunky accent, and different facial expressions to show that I was qualified as a teacher in the context I was in. But, the more I pretended, the less I felt confident and secure. My Otherness would not go away easily. Rather, what I found out, through painful self-reflections, were really devastating results. I endeavored to gain authority as if I were a white/whitely teacher. Clearing this mesmerizing effect of pretension was painful but revealed that I was an Other, which is truly problematic as well as fruitful.

By and large, I learned that I was an Asian Other in a classroom of American Others, but I failed to learn how to reflect on my own position in terms of others' positions. Among what I learned, related to my learning of the significance of the instability of my teaching identity as a (racial and national) Other in the U.S. academy, the most interesting things for me while teaching three classes for two semesters have been the moments when I have engaged with issues related to my quandaries—race and nationality and their problematic contextualization with pedagogical acts in the classroom.

As such, race and racism is a generic, but unstable, topic in every classroom in the U.S. Maybe it is because race itself is an unstable discourse as a product of constantly changing transnational power structures. The idea of race in the classroom has changed over time and has forced us to conceive ourselves in various discourses. For instance, *Everyday Anti-Racism* (2008), a comprehensive book written by various writers with foci on practical and theoretical understandings of racial issues in the classroom, purports to present a broad picture of these issues in primary and secondary educational institutions. But all the writings in the book cannot satiate my thirst for an explanation of my untraditional position. The reason of this limit is simple—most writers in the book do not challenge but firmly hold on to a seemingly self-evident thought that he or she is *able* to teach students and readers race and racial issues because they think that those issues are *teachable*. Are they? What does something that is teachable mean? It might well mean that students can be convinced or persuaded to think in ways a teacher purveys. To many teachers, acceptance, acknowledgement, and reflection are what teachers would like to evince from students. However, this idea of "teachable" presupposes that a teacher's knowledge about race and racial issues are deliverable and truthful. For example, Priya Parmar and Shirley Steinberg (2008), in discussing their positioning in class as a white Jewish teacher and an Asian Indian teacher in public high schools, state,

"As teachers, we have found that identifying ourselves to students in terms of our own positionality...has been a way to carve a safe space for students in which to discuss sensitive racial and ethnic matters" (p. 283).

Although mostly accepting their statement, I personally cannot agree to the idea that teachers' positioning will produce students' safe space for learning. My experience tells that it did not. Sometimes leading discussions about racism or immigration during class, I was located in a volcano of debates where these interstices and fissures occurred and magma of unconscious prejudices flew and were ossified into obstacles for communication. One time, reading and discussing Malcolm X's essay, a white female student claimed that white people were really racially discriminated against.^[7] I was shocked and dumbfounded by her explicit comment. Another white student said that because of scholarships for ethnic students, she could not get one; a student retorted that maybe President Obama's daughter did not need to pay tuition because of these scholarships. Debates went on, and I really felt frustrated by the unconscious racism in students' mindsets. Yet, I admit that the class really disclosed where I was living and in what situation I was located; I was living in a location where racism was and is prevalent. Then, what is the significance of my pedagogical practice of raising issues most of the students are not familiar with? My answer is that I have tried to render a differential discursive location and create a new location where students can engage with new thoughts and new ways to understand the world they live in. In short, I have tried to create differential spaces. Differential space is a space where difference functions to switch teachers' and students' mindsets from internalized racism to deconstruction of everyone's whiteness in order to face up to the truth of one's own unearned privilege by virtue of whiteness. This differential space can be created and cognitively mapped within differential racism in globalization. Yet, differential space occurs within global racism. This version of racism in global context can be called differential racism according to Balibar.^[8] This differential racism is more complicated racism than the previous one because it is global racism mediated by colonial and local difference, as well as ideologies of multicultural difference.

Before I could create a differential space, I was located by the institution and read by my students because of differential racism. This positioning in my case brought about confusions, alienations, denials, awkwardness, and so on for both me and my students. Maybe it was because I was an Other; I did not speak English as fluently as they did, and I might not (to them) have had the authority to talk about American history and racism. Though these explanations cannot answer the previous question of whether race or racial issues are teachable or not, especially for a teacher who is an Other in the U.S., through my frustration with students I could tease out that there was something "wrong" with my "teaching." In fact, I was not "teaching" but creating "disagreements" in class, which produced a differential space, because to me those issues were not "teachable" regardless of my lack of knowledge, experience, linguistic accuracy, or authority.

As a result of my experience, I radically posit that race and racial issues are not "teachable" but in permanent disagreements because they are not subject to consensus or convergence of relevant knowledge. Teaching cannot accompany learning inasmuch as a teacher asserts that race and racism is a topic of the past to be learned for preparation of a history test, denying that whiteness (or whiteness) is property^[9] or forcing students to accept the idea that they are living in a colorblind society. The moment of teaching comes as soon as a teacher recognizes that consensus is not possible but that only disagreements can shake up the unverified hypothesis that race and racism is a subject to be taught not to be resulted in contention. What's more, contemporary race and racism is expanding its interactive discourse, keeping up the pace of globalization and its products of (post) colonialism and asymmetrical power structures in the global space perpetrated by global capitalism. Race and racism becomes more complicated issue on the global expanse where new immigrants,

migrants, refugees, and all other border-crossing beings, such as Gloria Anzaldúa's (1987) *mestizos/mestizas*, Negri's (2000) *multitude* (as a new global nomadic proletariat), post-colonial subalterns, etc. run into new and differential racism. Differential racism is covered up by cultural pretensions that minorities' differences are tolerable insofar as they do not implement their power to change the majority.

Upon these conditions, a need to deconstruct seemingly stabilized racial discourses in the classroom and expand this discourse into broader and more complex issues of globalized differential racism against immigrants, migrants, refugees, and all the other border-crossing people becomes more urgent. In this context, I have tried to deconstruct my own positioning in local and global contexts and rebuild an untraditional position to create an instable space of discussion in classes. But, this turns out to be a mixture of success and failure necessarily. Going through this pedagogical experiment, I realize that this deconstruction and unstable construction of a new space might not be possible without collaboration with a colleague who can provide a second glance on my position. That's the reason why I started conversation with a white female colleague, Bobbi Olson.

Bobbi: I am a white American citizen^[10], raised and educated in predominantly (and often overwhelmingly) white environments. English is my first and only language. I tell my identity because these markers influence how my students perceive me and how I act and have acted as a teacher. I have taught composition courses at three different institutions of higher education. Most of my students have been white, although there have been multilingual students—both international and American citizens, but none of whom were white^[11]—in some of the classes I've taught in the past. I have also taught a class open only to international students, in which all of my students were multilingual, and I was the only white person in the room. My experiences teaching multilingual students in the classroom has made me think more critically and wonder what I can do to be a more effective teacher of *all* of my students present in the classroom and their worldviews, worldviews that do not always align with the whitely ones I've embodied and that have served me well throughout my own education.

Part of my feeling that I need to be a better teacher to *all* of my students comes from my experiences hearing and learning from many multilingual writers when working with them in the one-with-one context of the writing center. Through conversations in this context, I have been granted insight to the position of multilingual students in the U.S. university structure, though of course I cannot fully realize this position since it is not one I share. The experiences multilingual students have in the U.S. university that they have revealed to me, however, demonstrate the ways in which multilingual students in this context are often invisible, except for when teachers view multilingual students as "problems"—which seems to be the predominant perspective voiced about multilingual students by their (white) teachers. (They're "problems" because they do not behave "normally"—i.e., as white students do.)

DJ's perspective offers what it means to be an "Other" teaching in a mostly white classroom in the U.S.; my perspective focuses on what it means to be a white teacher of multilingual students, all of whom, in my experience, were not white. While this makes me an Other in the classroom^[12] in that I was the one who was different from my rather homogenous group of multilingual international students, it does not make me Other to the extent DJ was in his classroom due to the racial order that is prevalent both in and out of the classroom. For DJ's white students, his Otherness indicated foreignness; for my students my Otherness was valued for it was white. To my students, my white face and native-speaking use of English represented a point of access to the power structure dominant in the U.S. university, as well as in the global power structure more broadly as the use of English consistently spreads internationally. To my students, my native-English-speaking use of the language "represent[ed] capital and power" but also "symbolize[d] a kind of dividing rod of class and

racial disparity within the United States and around the world" (Grant & Lee, 2009, p. 45). DJ and I both consider our race because teaching in a globalized classroom necessitates a consideration of it, both our own and our students'.

Why must we think about race? The short answer seems to me that whether it is acknowledged or not, race is present in the classroom: our behaviors as teachers stem from the presence of race, and our students similarly operate within race structures. To reach the teaching goals DJ and I share—which means considering not only how our own presences in the classroom affect student learning but also calling out the structures that underlie institutions in the U.S.—race has to be explicitly addressed. To remain silent on how race affects social and institutional structures in the U.S. ignores the reality that race has infiltrated the ways students are treated in the classroom and university writ large. According to Omi and Winant (1994), in order to advance towards racial progress, "we should think of race as an element of social structure rather than as an irregularity within it; we should see race as a dimension of representation rather than an illusion" (p. 55). We need to help students see the ways in which their race affords them privilege or denies them access in often invisible ways. We need to, as teachers, think about how our own race and ways of being reinscribe oppressive racist structures, structures that many whitely teachers would say we're fighting against. To do this work, though, both DJ and I recognize that "Challenging the dominant racial ideology inherently involves not only reconceptualizing one's own racial identity, but a reformulation of the meaning of race in general" (Omi & Winant, 1994, p. 91). To "reformulate the meaning of race in general," we must first understand race as it currently exists. For my work, this means calling out that part of the "problem" of multilingual writers in the American classroom is their race.

Although no one seems to name the racializing of multilingual students, the fact is, they are raced in American classrooms, though it's not usually explicitly acknowledged because their national differences and linguistic identities cover their racial identities so that the racial structure seems to be hidden from their positions. But, this is not true—multilingual students' racial presences are scanned and mapped in race discourse where their presences are marked by non-whiteness. Even white multilingual students from Europe will be exposed to global racism because their whiteness is not immediately regarded as whiteness. Multilingual students feel "different" from their white classmates, and their white classmates often treat them as such. (White students will talk about the "Asian" student in the classroom or the "foreign" kid, but seldom, if ever, the "white" boy who sits in the corner. I've never heard a white student describe a white classmate with white as a defining characteristic.) Yet conversation about multilingual students is often framed around their linguistic "deficiency"^[13], and race goes unnamed. A focus on linguistic "deficiency"—in which multilingual students are "problems" because of their "different" use of the English language—means that teachers, administrators, and other "normal" (i.e. white) American students don't have to name what else they perceive to be different about multilingual students, which is particularly telling in that in my experience, most of these teachers, administrators, and students who complain about the "difficult" multilingual students are white and/or act in whitely ways. (That, too, often goes unacknowledged.)

The focus on multilingual students' "deficiency" in English permits instructors, administrators, fellow students, etc. to hide behind that reasoning in order to deny the reality that multilingual students are viewed and treated as Other because of other uglier reasons—multilingual students are often *not* American, *not* native-English speakers, *not*-white, and *not*-the-same. This tactic, much like the paradigms of race Omi and Winant (1994) explain, "neglect[s] the specificity of race as an autonomous field of social conflict, political organization, and cultural/ideological meaning" (p. 48). In short, race is never named and therefore never addressed. (And therefore the actors can believe there are no bad teachers and/or students being racist in the classroom.) This omission is

problematic in its own right, for as Bonilla-Silva (2010) reveals in his discussion of "colorblind racism," little advancement towards racial progress can occur when privileged parties refuse to recognize or admit their involvement in racism. This omission goes beyond the fact that no progress can be made, though—omission provides space for the ongoing practice of implicit racism because we negate the relevance of race to people's lived experiences. For multilingual students in the American university, that race is never named means that there isn't an easy end or transformation to the discrimination multilingual students face in U.S. institutions of higher education, a discrimination that I believe is more deeply seeded than how multilingual students use the English language. [14]

I believe it is imperative to think about my own teaching and the possibility I have for replicating racial structures in the classroom because I have heard the individual stories of multilingual students feeling Othered, and conversely, I have heard instructors do the Othering in both written and oral form. For these individuals, I think it matters to try and help whitely teachers understand how race affects multilingual students' experiences. On a broader level, though, I think it matters because they're not just individual cases: racism happens on a systemic level. International student enrollment in U.S. universities has been consistently on the rise, and it is reasonable to expect it will continue to do so. As multilingual students become a larger percentage of our student population in the U.S., I think it is only right that we think about how to teach them well, especially given that international multilingual students are often recruited by universities for profit. If capitalizing on many multilingual students' increased international tuition rate and additional fees, it seems an ethical demand that we consider multilingual students' particular needs and experiences in the U.S. university. At the very least, we need to look for ways that we do not make them feel as if they do not belong in American classrooms, for it's very likely they feel that way in many other spaces in the U.S.

One thing that comes up for me as a white instructor, however, is that I could very well choose NOT to talk about race. Because white and whitely is perceived as "normal" in the U.S., it is rare that students would bring up (or ask questions based on) my race and behavior. For DJ, this hasn't been true. He is viewed as Other (*not* white) the moment he steps into the American classroom. But white and whitely teachers, because they don't often think about race in connection to their lived experiences very often, often don't consider the way their race is read and how that manifests itself in the classroom. There have been several instances where I didn't. So yes, I can "choose" to talk about race in ways that DJ cannot because his (white) students recognize his non-whiteness (yet grant him more authority when he acts whitely), but not talking about race is an act of white privilege, and in particular, a form of unearned authority—authority granted to white instructors not by virtue of their actions, but by the perception of their skin tone.

What concerns me about my role as a teacher is how much of this role is based on characteristics I cannot control, on a sense of perceived authority I did not earn, but which is "central to whiteness" (Frye, 2001, p. 91). When my classroom of all multilingual international students saw me walk in the door the first day of our class, they viewed me as Teacher before I ever introduced myself, for "Whites symbolize power and privilege and all forms of capital" (Grant & Lee, 2009, p. 57). This symbolized whiteness is whiteness, and once I began to speak—and my status as a native-English speaker became clear without me ever stating that fact—the students had already granted me full authority in the classroom. But what happens when white (and whitely) instructors do not think about this unearned authority, when they operate as if the treatment given them is automatically expected? More specifically, what happens when white/ly teachers are not even aware of this unearned authority and behave as if it is natural and neutral? The repercussions of unexamined unearned authority is that this authority goes unchecked; in these cases, students don't learn, or perhaps more

accurately, what they learn is who has the right to authority based on race structures. Here's an example:

Ali^[15], an international multilingual student, came to the writing center with a paper he had labored over for several weeks. He sat there dejected as he handed me the graded product, fully marked up in red pen with many curt comments but no explanations behind them. In the top corner, the instructor had written "Don't you listen to what I say? Your grammar never improves." In this moment, Ali didn't learn grammar: he learned he didn't belong.

In this moment with Ali, I could not erase the teacher's comments, nor could I as a writing center tutor change his grade to reflect the thoughts I had about what he had written, which did not line up with the instructor's assessment. (It has helped me rethink my own presentation of self and authority in my written feedback to my students, though.) Yet in this moment, Ali and I could still disrupt the implication that Ali didn't belong. As I reflect on this session, I realize that in this space we could have interrupted the instructor's whiteness and belief in his "rightness" by talking together about what perspective those comments might have come out of. In this moment, Ali and I could have still done the work of deconstructing the comments from the instructor and our own identities to critically reflect on the authority granted white and whitely teachers and why. In doing so, I believe we would have made an attempt towards disrupting the racial order by critiquing it, even if in our work together we could not ultimately change that instructor's previous comments.

The unearned authority accorded to white teachers comes in part from their race, but this authority is represented by teachers and students as coming from other things: the credentials a teacher has earned through graduate degrees, for example, or in multilingual students' teachers' cases, the teacher's native-English-speaking status. Riffing on Peggy McIntosh's metaphor of unpacking the knapsack of white privilege^[16], I have composed a list of the ways my teaching body—based on a perception of my race and whiteness—is experienced differently in the classroom than I believe DJ's and other people of color's to be even if they are whitely, too^[17].

My Unearned Authority

1. I can expect that my students assume I have the necessary credentials to be their teacher.
2. I can feel assured that my students will not question the legitimacy of my degree since it is from an American university.
3. I can expect that my students will not wonder where my degree is from in the first place.
4. I can assume that my students will not question my spoken language, and that I won't have to think that carefully about my pronunciation.
5. I can expect that my students will not question my course design or teaching approach based on their perception of my credentials.
6. I can expect that most of my students will not question my ability to grade their work, lead class discussions, answer their questions, and so on.
7. I can expect that students will respect the expectations I set forth without questioning or challenging me.
8. I can enter the classroom and not be mistaken for another student.
9. I can admit when I do not know something and not perpetuate the idea that my race is less intelligent.

10. I can choose to disclose where I was born if I want to, but it is not an immediate question that comes to my students' minds.
11. I can expect that when I speak, my students are not making judgments of my intelligence based on my pronunciation^[18].
12. I can expect that my students will assume the feedback I provide them is the "correct" answer.
13. I can expect that if I want to converse with my colleagues about a particular teaching situation, most of them will look like me and have a similar worldview (Rothenberg, 2000) as me.
14. I can feel assured that my students will not assume I earned my teaching position because of a commitment to "diversity" (Geller et. al., 2007, p. 98).
15. I can expect that my students will not ask me how many languages I know because it is clear I am a native-English speaker, which is the only language they care that I know.

DJ: In response to Bobbi's consideration of the shadowy, covert authority of whiteness in the multilingual classroom and its ideological connection to racism: I fell into complex sequences of thoughts about Bobbi's idea of difference and white teachers' (un)intentional omission of racial issues in class as well as her self-deconstructing ways of addressing her unearned authority in terms of whiteness as a property. Her arguments of instructors' Othering reveal a common ground I am standing in as much as it also shows how we could continue our conversation on this issue. I think we can have conversation because we have the courage to deconstruct our own positioning. And, this equal deconstruction results in more troubling but helpful thoughts on how our idea of difference is related to radical equality in our classes also. Then what is the fundamental aim of this conversation? My answer is "racial (including global) justice in the classroom." My ideas of racial justice are mostly influenced by Catherine Prendergast's (2003) titanic study on "how literacy has been accepted as White property in crucial contexts that helped shape the country" (p. 7). As she testifies, literacy has been biased and manipulated by the state to exclude people who do not possess whiteness as property. However, agreeing with most of her arguments, I could not personally agree with her last remark in the introduction that "A literacy that creates rather than threatens unity in this country, I maintain, will be one that takes this insight, and its mandate to confront and end a history of injustice, to heart" (p. 15).

Though I agree that someday we might be able to accomplish this utopian task, I resist the idea of unity as the final goal. What's more, our project here goes beyond racial justice in the U.S., purporting to address differential racism in the global classroom and to create differential space. In this context, as a theoretical account of our conversation, I would like to delve into the meaning of difference *per se*. Our conversations about the global situation embed and embody our differences rather than reveal a way to converge those differences. All those differential conversations are possible because of radical "equality" based on "difference" between us.

Nowadays people hesitate to express the overtly discriminative idea that difference is difficult. But, in fact, difference is always difficult to understand because difference razes down reasonably beautiful concepts of unity, identity, consensus, collaboration, mutual understanding, and so on. In a sense, difference can be powerful when it has an affinity to equality. History and current local and global situations prove that equality originates from and sustains on totally different prepositions; disagreement, revolution, constant debates—namely all efforts to render difference be difference. As such, in history equality is a bloody word aiming for pure difference without unification; endless demonstrations and revolutions have had to have people in the past and in the present shed immense tears and blood to make this term survive in this world because equality denies our utopian belief in unity.^[19] Equality is a process, not a result of changes. In global history, a region of activists has fought

to actualize equality only to crawl into this unattainable goal because it is against given social systems on the state or global levels that purport to build a unity uprooting differences. More importantly, even difference itself as a concept without its context has become a catchword for differential racism to the extent that this term is imbued by ideals of peace, coexistence, multiculturalism, cosmopolitanism, salad bowl, melting pot, et cetera, et cetera, et cetera.

Difference is not a noun but a verb because it disagrees to any unified system, e.g. whiteness, as an individual praxis. What's more, difference as praxis against racism presupposes its equal dissemination for everyone for radical democracy. Prevalently, difference loses its power whenever people who hold whiteness deny that difference exists in class in forms of disagreement and equal difference between teacher, colleagues and students. People possessing whiteness are afraid to admit that racial difference in power structures exist as much as their unearned authority as a teacher with whiteness is disrupting an equal chance of true education for both teachers and students. To my surprise, many white students—and even some non-white students and colleagues I have met—have told me that race and racism is played-out in the U.S. because racism was a phenomenon of a historical phase that has since died out.

In addition, many are afraid to discuss race and racism even when they do acknowledge its remaining prevalence. For example, most of my colleagues in a class I took for first-year composition teachers said that they were avoiding racial issues in their classes because they did not know how to initiate or continue these conversations, and it was awkward for them, as mostly white teachers, to discuss in their classes. Thus, when I said that I had tried to bring up issues of racism and xenophobia in my classes, they looked shocked and worried. One colleague even said that when she raised a racial issue, students, who were mostly white, stayed in a dead silence, showing embarrassment. As a result of her experience, this teacher doubtfully asked me how students could actively participate in discussions about race and racism in my class. The professor who led this class guessed that students might have actively spoken out their opinions about racism freely in front of me because I was a foreigner and an Asian.

Frankly speaking, I felt confused by these reactions. I thought the intentional omission of race and racism in our first year writing classes denied the possibility that each student has a different perspective about race and racism. Those colleagues easily presupposed that students were ignorant because "they" looked hesitant to speak about race or racism. My experience tells me that this is not true. The problems lie on how to approach these issues. Right after a teacher holds on to a common sense that race is indifferent to him or her so that he or she can teach impartially, he or she falls into a deception and an unintentional complicity to systemic racial formation. Bobbi's attempts to deconstruct her own whiteness also prove this. She is trying to abandon her pretentious impartiality and unquestioned authorities in order to start discussion with racial (national) Others because she realizes that she could turn into an Other in a global race system. Her listing of unearned authorities—whether shared with students or not—is a way to think about and open discussions about race and racism in the globalized classroom. Still, this requires, as Bobbi's case shows, painful differentiation and deconstruction of identity, consensus, and unity. Indeed, differentiation of an authoritative subject position as a teacher with unearned authority via her whiteness (though it is undeniable that some authority is earned given a teacher's position) is a constantly on-going deconstruction of unity and consensus; even difference itself has to be differentiated in order not to be forcibly integrated into conceptual, ideological unity. Speaking in the voice of Jacques Rancière (2010), a French philosopher, I claim that equality and difference, for this reason, is *dissensus*. And, *dissensus* is a way to actualize democratic justice in the racially hierarchical global classroom.

Race and racial issues are subject to *dissensus*^[20] which Rancière (2010) coined to explain how consensus is detrimental to political efforts to create more democratic space and how disagreement

as *dissensus* is important to make real difference in politics.^[21] *Dissensus* deconstructs the ideology of consensus and germinates radical equalities that deconstruct hierarchical, hegemonic structures; it destructs hierarchical ideology in the classroom of "you have to agree to my idea because you are students." This does not mean that teachers are unnecessary, nor can Rancière's arguments be universally adaptable. Rather, the lesson I learned by my teaching is that most students already "know" TOO MUCH about race and racism in terms of consensus, and their racial experiences are already too realistic and unified to be discussed in class only via fixed textbooks. What the students and teachers need is to first *unlearn* their knowledge manipulated by media that promulgates racial prejudices so that they are able to explore meaning of their experiences in terms of whiteness and structural racism. Differentiation and *dissensus* presupposes unlearning in the classroom. This is a way to create radically democratic equality in the classroom so that everyone realizes they all are in the same rhetorical position to create differential space—"*I don't know, but I need to learn why I have the potentialities to become racist easily and how to disagree with these potentialities.*" Yet, this is not just applicable to me but to all teachers regardless of their racial, national identities.

In Bobbi's case, unless she unlearned those unearned authorities international multilingual students might have about her and learned simultaneously how those students could learn and unlearn their own problematic positions, a democratic struggle to create equality and differentiation might not occur in Bobbi's teaching and learning experience in the classroom, writing center, and everyday life. Bobbi has deconstructively reflected on her own unearned authorities and other white teachers' hidden racism to assume potential Otherness (i.e. I am white and/or whitely and I am different from you, but I feel also the same Otherness in this class), and brought about thinking of the ways she could create space for *dissensus*, for example, with Ali in their writing center session (i.e. though I am not different from other white teachers racially, I admit that I am situated in the global racial structure which forms me as a potential racist, but I am able to disagree with and deconstruct these positions and can participate in discussions about racism with you in moments of *dissensus*). This is an example of the simultaneous process of unlearning and learning as well as a creation of differential space for radical democracy to create radically equal articulations to disrupt teachers' whiteness. Whiteness is a rhetorical, personal and institutional system from which every individual with singular differences, regardless of their color or position, can detach themselves in order to articulate hegemonic antagonism, though this requires painful deconstruction of one's whiteness. Bobbi's and my experiences could be on the same page not because we are in the same discourses (I am different from Bobbi in terms of gender, nationality, race, and language) but because we are in the same pedagogical situation where we are potentially Others in the globalized classroom. We are sailors of different colors in the same boat crossing borders as we are on the sea of equal potentiality of disagreements.

Along with this theoretical linking of difference and equality for desubjectified teachers' roles and their engagement with students' *dissensus* to bring up race and racism in classroom and my interpretation of Bobbi's case, henceforth I also reflect on my own cases. In these cases, I consider the whole complexity of issues and the endless search for ways to unlearn my prejudices and learn new perspectives about my position as an Other in class. Class discussion was not easy in these moments. Sometimes, going through these moments, I felt vertigo as if I was standing on a precipice looking down to an abyss of ambiguity of my positions and identities as a teacher. For example, in my second semester writing class, there were two African American students in the class and a Chicana student; the rest of the students were white. In this class, I read a paper written by Jewel^[22], an African American female student. The assignment was a rhetorical analysis about a text students chose. Reading through Jewel's paper about rap culture in the U.S., I was dumbfounded by her African American English vernacular. The content of the paper was great; she intelligently analyzed the

significance of rap culture as a resistance against the majority. However, based on my knowledge of prescriptive English grammar, her writing seemed to have too many grammatical "errors," and sentences were confusing and sloppy from my perspective. I, who had learned grammar in high school and struggled with mastery of my command of English, could not help but doubt my ability to grade her writing.

Though I learned about African American vernacular and its difference from so-called "standard" English and why this is historically relevant to racial justice in the classroom, I did not know how to handle Jewel's paper.^[23] Eventually, I decided to talk about this with her, but she, mostly shy and quiet in class, said she had not thought before that her writing used African American vernacular. I gave her a better grade than I thought I should at first, but still I am confused whether I did right or not. Did I Otherize her because of my linguistic incapability to recognize vernacular differences? Did I racialize her? In another class, we discussed Fredrick Douglass's essay, "How I Learned to Read and Write." I asked an African American male student his opinion about racism and racist history several times, but he rejected talking about that issue and just said that the U.S. does not have racism today. I was also embarrassed. I now realize that it was "I" in the subjective, dominant position as a teacher that embarrassed these students; in truth I could not abandon and unlearn my prejudiced belief that those students would like to talk about their ethnic identity and culture in a white-dominated, but globalized classroom where an international teacher was talking about race and racism based on his own prejudice. The realization happened when I was also Otherized.

A few weeks later, while discussing Asian American experience in an essay by Amy Tan, out of curiosity a student asked for me to speak Korean. This was another embarrassing moment to me, though I could not pinpoint exactly how and why I felt embarrassed. After a long hesitation, I finally translated part of the essay from English to Korean and spoke out loud (even though, in fact, Amy Tan is a Chinese American writer). Students listened carefully and said that the sounds and pronunciation were much different from those in English. Then, one student asked if I felt more comfortable speaking in Korean or in English; I said absolutely I felt more comfortable whenever I spoke in Korean because it was my mother tongue. Discussing the meaning of mother tongue, I wondered in my deep heart why I had to feel awkward when I spoke in my mother tongue in front of those native-English speakers.

After I left school that day, I thought about my experiences with my African American students and my own experience of speaking Korean in the classroom, and I finally realized why I felt embarrassed and why they did also. I felt embarrassed because I had to declare my national (and linguistic and racial) identity in front of mostly white and almost all American students, uncovering my foreignness and Otherness. I felt naked because it made me self-realize that I was different. The cases with my two African American students and my own reversed situation revealed that I did not recognize that asking those questions created a hierarchical structure of assuming teacher's authority, which prevented further discussion and learning. I unintentionally endeavored to create a consensus, forcing those two African American students to articulate their thoughts about race and racism in front of their white classmates; I acted as if I had been a whitely teacher in a white students' class. In truth, I held firmly to an authority of racial dominance over those African American students—so that my position was overdetermined by whiteness, in the form of racial consensus in the classroom.

Denying my assumptions, those two African American students created *dissensus* against my hegemonic consensus. By their reactions, I could realize I did not go through unlearning my prejudices, and I was counting on my authority of whiteness in classroom. I had to unlearn those assumptions and engage with these issues by deconstructing my internalized racism, recognizing how my own lacks turned them into Others so as to cover my Otherness in the classroom. At the moment when I thought that I could pose those questions to these two African American students, I

held on to the seemingly neutral position I assumed I held—Asian, foreigner, and a middle-aged male teacher. In fact, I painfully had to acknowledge that I became a racist at those moments and could not deconstruct my seemingly safe, neutral position. But this is not self-blaming. Self-blaming is a way to ascribe structural polemics onto an individual situation, which is bound to result in losing a chance to scan and map the constantly changing and heterogeneous global, racial discourses of whiteness my Otherized, and sometimes Otherizing presence is situated in. My feeling was much closer to "shame," a shame that I could fundamentally feel.

All in all, in the broadest sense, all of us are singular, different beings in a globally racial system. I mean we are all trans-spatial beings (those beings crossing discursive or physical borders); in particular, we are equally vulnerable, and we are on the verge of becoming Others and the victim of various systems. In the racial system—which is the framework for every social space in the U.S. formed throughout racial history—I am as vulnerable as my African American students who also possessed different positions. Those vulnerable positions also uncovered the ontological equality in race and national discourses. Then, how can I constantly unlearn these prejudices and learn and participate in *dissensus* with students? I listen to Bobbi's account to find a way to break through this quandary.

Bobbi: I include here an example of faculty speaking about multilingual students to highlight the attitudes often present—though perhaps unspoken—in U.S. universities regarding multilingual students. While this example is an individual one, I think it is representative of the thoughts on many college campuses across the U.S. DJ's experience certainly speaks to these same sentiments.

I was invited to speak to a group of faculty from a department other than my own to share my experience in working with multilingual writers. What I think these (all white) faculty wanted were some tips and strategies for responding to and assessing multilingual students' writing—writing and behaviors that they viewed as very different and unacceptable in relation to their American, native-English-speaking students. These faculty members claimed that their main concern was the ways in which multilingual students' use of English deviated from what the instructors viewed as "standard" English. (Their notion of "standard" English was really just a prescriptivist use of English grammar, and one that did not consider how the language acquisition process worked, or that there is no one "standard" as language is living, not static.) As we conversed, frustrations in working with multilingual students rose to the surface:

"They don't know how to do group work."

"They don't participate in class."

"They don't know English."

One participant's final remark, "*They don't belong here,*" finally speaks to the sentiment I think all of the other concerns were hinting at: *these students don't look like the students I thought I would be teaching.* In DJ's case, his students were thinking *this teacher doesn't look like the teacher I thought I would have. How can this teacher teach me?*

It is easy in this moment, I think, to judge. To say that the remarks I heard and that are implicit in DJ's telling of his classroom experience are indicative of a widespread viewpoint in which multilingual writers are Others is a simple move to make: the speakers' use of the pronoun "they" signals a clear differentiation in their minds as being not-the-same as the rest of their students. While there *are* differences, the problem is that these thoughts then manifest themselves in treating multilingual students as not-the-same, which almost always means less-than.

I don't tell this story in order to point out how "bad" these instructors were. Within our conversation about this situation, DJ asked me "What makes you any different?" And that's the million dollar question. I cannot undo the fact that my white face is read as one of power. What I can undo, or begin to unsettle, is my whiteness in an attempt to disrupt the attitudes that permeated beneath those instructors' comments. I can disrupt my own thoughts in order to not recreate what I heard those instructors saying in that moment. To disrupt the I-am-right-and-Others-are-wrong whiteness perspective evidenced in a "we" versus "they" mentality, I can attempt, as Frye (2001) suggested:

[To] refuse to enact, embody, animate this category—the white race—as I am supposed to, I can free up my energies and actions from a range of disabling confinements and burdens, and align my will with the forces which eventually will dissolve or dismantle that race as such. If it is objected that it is an exercise of white privilege to dissociate myself from the white race this way, I would say that in fact this project is strictly forbidden by the rules of white solidarity and white supremacy, and is *not* one of the privileges of white power. It may also be objected that my adoption or recommendation of this strategy implies that the right thing to do, in general, for everyone, is to dissolve, dismantle, bring an end to, races; and if this indeed is the implication, it can sound very threatening to some of the people whose races are thus to be erased. (p. 98-99)

Neither DJ nor I (nor Frye) wants a unified classroom in which difference is dissolved; if I disrupt in the ways Frye describes, however, I have a chance of unsettling my own whitely behaviors and disrupting them in the classroom. I have the chance at not continuing to Other raced students in the classroom and instead create a new space, one that values difference instead of trying to expunge it or focus solely on it.

One way of disrupting my pattern of whiteness has been re-examining my classroom materials, such as the readings and essay prompts I assign. Thinking about our classroom materials and experiences, I believe, is necessary in order to notice the values and worldviews they reflect, particularly because we probably did not even notice that they reflect/promote certain values and worldviews in the first place. In her examination of the way her gender, class, and race led to her own (at the time unnoticed) privilege throughout her life, Paula Rothenberg (2000) reflects on how this privilege affected how she taught and what students learned—her worldview made the readings she selected seem "natural," for instance, though she realizes now they were decidedly Eurocentric. Rothenberg (2000) reminds us of the importance for teachers to consider what type of information they disseminate to their students, for students don't just learn "content" in the classrooms; rather she cites Edgar Friedenberg's argument "that the real lessons our students learned in school were not in the curriculum but in the school culture—the kinds of treatment they received, and thus came to expect, from those in authority" (p. 134). What are multilingual students learning in the American classroom, when, like Ali, they are made to feel as if they don't belong? I imagine they are learning just that: that they *don't* belong. When students do not see their own experiences and perspectives included in the classroom materials they are a part of, it is a signal that these experiences and perspectives have no worth in that space. It's clear, then, that we are in the position to perpetuate institutional racism after all.

I've found that beginning by asking myself questions helps distance me from the ingrained attributes represented in my classroom materials. For instance, what are the readings I've chosen to assign? Will multilingual students (and/or other raced students) identify with any of them? Is a multilingual student's perspective included or even acknowledged? In my own past as a teacher, for example, I think of the ways in which a course centered on "argument" sponsored an exclusively Western notion of argument—one that is linear and direct. Some of my students in those previous classes who were

schooled to construct arguments more subtly and indirectly surely did not see their previous experiences and knowledge included in my syllabus or course design. The signal to them in those moments was that their prior experiences were *wrong*. But I had never realized there *were* other styles of argument. I was too entrenched in my own thinking and schooling—based on white, Western standards, just as I was white and had a Western mindset—to think there was anything beyond that which I could present to my students. In so doing, I as a teacher did what I've heard done to many multilingual students: reinforced the feeling that they didn't belong, that their ways of knowing (and being) had no real place in the American classroom.

Here's another example of the ways in which what we do in the classroom may exclude students—in particular multilingual students—when we as teachers do not think beyond our own experiences (including race and culture). As a new teacher, I often borrowed assignment ideas from more experienced instructors. I mostly adopted them as they were, with perhaps just a few changes in order for me to get my own head wrapped around what I was asking students to do. One such assignment required students to analyze political cartoons of their choosing. After class on the day I explained the assignment, Sami^[24], the only multilingual student in the course, came and talked to me. He expressed that he could not do the assignment, as he had no familiarity with the genre of political cartoons or understanding of the knowledge of the politics in which the humor was dependent upon. In his home country, it was illegal to make comments about government actions and/or leaders. I simply hadn't thought of this. I had realized that this assignment might be difficult for students because political cartoons are often laden with implications rather than direct statements. Yet when I thought about the difficulties, I was viewing them through my own framework: as a white American. Perhaps the more experienced instructors who taught this assignment had thought of how it might be ethnocentric, but I don't recall that that idea had ever been raised in any discussions among teachers I had been a part of, and I naively had not thought of it on my own. If the assignment was presented in other classrooms similarly to how I presented it, it is likely that many international multilingual students struggled with this assignment. And unlike Sami, many of those students probably did not voice their concerns because of the authority they perceived their instructors to have. (I believe Sami did speak to me because being such a young female at the time meant that my authority was more tenuous.)

Although my assignment was naïve and lacked thinking on my part about *all* of my students' perspectives, I think there are cases too where assignments created with good intentions to help students think about and dismantle racism can still be problematic. Matak^[25] came to the writing center^[26] wanting help thinking about how to approach an assignment. His instructor had asked his students to think about the ways in which white privilege affects education, housing, or employment. (I don't think the assignment specifically said in America, but it was clear that was the assumption. The assignment was complicated, and both Matak and I were confused as to where to start: Matak because he was unsure of what he was being asked to do, and me because I was uncomfortable with having the conversations I knew we'd have to have.) Matak asked me what white privilege was, for he didn't understand the phrase. In trying to explain it to him, at one point Matak interjected with "but in America, anyone can be president." Matak was a refugee who had lived through more horror and atrocities than I could begin to imagine; I didn't want to be the one who disclosed the fallacy of the ideal that had brought him to this country, that "equality for all" was a myth in action. As I think about Matak and our afternoon together, struggling to think about what race means in America and how it affects people's lives in unequal distributions of power, I think about how I imagine that that teacher was trying to do good work, trying to do just what DJ and I think is so important: to call attention to the ways in which race affects daily life in America.

But it seems that this whitely teacher's assignment did good work for a select group of students. What was Matak going to gain in this moment? In his book *Faces at the Bottom of the Well* (1992), Derrick Bell shows through his narratives that change in America is often in service of whites. (Furthermore, narratives OF change are often in service of whites.) Matak's assignment seems to skirt on this as well, at least in application. White students probably did gain an increased understanding in the ways in which they were privileged, and that what they believed they had "earned" in life came as a result not just of their achievements but also of their race. In her memoir *Lit*, Mary Karr (2009) writes of her father's metaphor for the privileged. Though in this case, she is referring specifically to class privilege, because of the ways in which race and class are intertwined in the U.S., I think the metaphor is apt to discuss white privilege more generally: "Born on third base, my daddy always said of the well off, and think they hit a homerun" (p. 41). This assignment helped the white students realize they didn't hit the homerun, but what did it make Matak realize? That he was on first, with no hope of catching up? The questions here are not easy, but I think the beginning step of questioning is a start: asking ourselves questions like how *all* of our students might approach an assignment and anticipating the range of possibilities and incorporating them into our assignment and course designs helps create a more inclusive space, one not bound to the hierarchical constitution of whiteness. And it's important, I think, to share with our students our own unease and uncertainty regarding race matters.

In addition to how we design our courses and assignments, I think it's also important to think critically about the language used when referencing multilingual students. Since "the use of language and how we signify is central to circulating, enforcing, and performing difference" (Denny, 2010, p. 122), how teachers talk about multilingual students reflects teachers' ideas about the position of multilingual students in the university (and America). The faculty who signaled their belief that multilingual students are Other by using the pronoun "they" then perpetuate the belief that multilingual students are Other when using that language in conversation. The infamous example of the UCLA student who posted her self-proclaimed "rant" on YouTube about "Asians in the library"^[27] demonstrates the ways in which language use positioning multilingual students as Other influences how (white) people behave towards multilingual students. This young (seemingly white) woman states that "The PROBLEM" as she sees it, "is these HORDES of Asian people that UCLA accepts into our school every single year—which is fine—but if you're gonna come to UCLA, then use AMERICAN manners." The rest of the "rant" is filled with her feelings on "them" and reveals just how much she does not see herself as a part of "their" world and vice versa—"they" are not truly a part of "our" (white, American) school. *They, they, they* versus *we/our/my*. The division evident in these statements and underlying mindsets only perpetuates racism and racist structures. If we follow Frye's (2001) advice for feminists' fight against racism, then instead of maintaining the rigid divisions patent in this young woman's spiel, it may be possible to:

[C]ontribute to the demise of racism if we upset the logical symmetry of race—if Black women, for instance, cultivate a racial identity and a distinctive (sexually egalitarian) Black community (and other women of racialized groups, likewise), while white women are undermining white racial identity and cultivating communities and agency among women along lines of affinity not defined by race. Such an approach would work toward a genuine redistribution of power. (Frye, 2001, p. 99)

We can create a genuine redistribution of power by creating a differential space in our classrooms; clinging to "us" versus "them," however, only maintains the existing racial space.

What I have just said is my theoretical analysis of this situation; the personal reactions I had to this particular case are harder to articulate, but important to the work of thinking about *dissensus* and

radical equality. My difficulty of articulation is not caused by my whiteness alone but also by the whiteness present in the young woman's rhetoric that uncovered my own structural involvement in this global racism. When hearing this young woman talk for the first time, I immediately bristled. I bristled partly because of her obvious Othering, a phenomenon I'm trying to work against. But hearing her, I also realized that *she* was not different from *me* in as far as racism is not something differentiated from me—I am entrapped in it as well. While I heard her words and flinched, I also resented this viral speech for making the work that much harder. My multilingual international students may have feared that I secretly had the same thoughts as this young woman, despite my friendly demeanor in the classroom. Without investigating issues such as these—without probing into uncomfortable places—my students and I are merely replicating the structure that already is. What we need to do instead is to create a new structure, one that asks all of us to remove ourselves from the assumptions of "normal" within our identities and consider the effects of those identities together. This is where Frye's "redistribution of power" can occur.

All of this is not to say deconstructing one's whiteness in order to create a differential space in the globalized classroom—one not entrenched in racism, but aware of it—is easy, however. It has been very difficult for me both here on paper and in my conversations with DJ to explore my whitely behaviors and what effects those have had on my students. It's been uncomfortable, challenging, and troubling to turn inward in those ways. I have been hesitant to move into too personal of information, instead relying on "objective" analysis. DJ has pushed me to go further, and it has been in those moments that I have begun to unlearn my whitely behaviors in order to disrupt them. But my resistance to digging deeper is an effect of my white privilege as well: by virtue of my structural involvement in whiteness, I haven't had to consider my perspective and experiences as anything but "normal." I haven't *had* to talk about my race before, so when trying to do this work, I have been scared, defensive, and conflicted. Who am I to talk of these issues? I've thought. Who am I to say anything back to DJ, a person of color? Anti-racist work is scary, and I realize I will continually "mess up." That does not seem a justified reason to not continue this work, however—it would indeed seem another act of white privilege.

DJ: Reading Bobbi's struggle and quandaries, I think about the different kind of stalemate I encountered as an international teacher. Bobbi's thoughtful articulation of complex polarity between "we" and "they" and her pedagogical strategies to deconstruct these institutional systems by designing more inclusive courses and assignments as well as critical reflections on language in the globalized classroom guide me to think of my own classes and think over how complexly globalized these classes have been. But one thing I have struggled with in her story and explanation is the more complex discourses in our classrooms influenced and overdetermined by the global politico-economically asymmetrical structure. In this global space, the developed countries, European countries, the U.S., and some newly uprising developing countries, create a space where race and racism contextualize with colonialism and global inequality. Cultural difference is the product of this asymmetrical power structure and history. I, like all other students and teachers, am not excluded from this global situation in my classroom.

Then, how can I create equality and *dissensus* in class by deconstructing my position in global context? All my experience as a teacher convolutes around the problems of worldviews. As Bobbi described, worldviews and value systems in textbooks, media, and our mindsets turn classrooms into arenas of oppressions and discriminations. Assigning biased readings and writings, ignoring different writing styles and arguments, or putting racial difference into judgments about students in my classes (as I did) are common mistakes instructors make. Not a single space can be a racism-free safe zone not only in the U.S., but also in the world. Our classes are global classes since we are connected to other spaces in the world where a more pandemic global, differential racism works regardless of

our race or national origins. What is going on in Korea, Tibet, France, and Africa are connected to seemingly insular classrooms where teachers are teaching with the presence of international students, second or third generation students from immigrant families, first or second generation refugees, or from an international body like me. Global racism is equally prevalent as much as each of us and our ontological, linguistic, and cultural positions are equally different. Global racism is a trans-spatial phenomenon. *Thus, "being equally different" opens a possibility to create dissensus and unlearning to prepare for true learning.* But, how can Bobbi and I manage to create a classroom where learning and unlearning happen simultaneously and cope with these unstable spaces of constant improvisations and deconstructions? What can be pedagogical strategies for the globalized classroom?

Hereafter, I will suggest a couple of steps to create equal difference and *dissensus* in class to teach and learn in the globalized classroom.

1. Teachers need to self-reflect possible otherness as Bobbi and I have tried to do here. That is a way to turn the binary structure of "we" and "they" into the polemic and individually differential, but radically equal space of Others. Only in this creation of space of Others, does emergence of a classroom as a differential space where everyone can participate without feeling discriminated against be possible. Before starting to teach, I speculated on my own prejudices: fear against skin-deep difference of colors and their cultural differences; feeling intimidated when two African American males, sitting on a couch on their porch, gazed at me; having prejudices against white males because I was suspicious that those white people were always pretending to look nice, and I could be deceived by their kindness—I am a racist more or less.

However, this is not religious confession or repentance. Neither Bobbi nor I believe we must express those prejudices in front of students, which obviously can be another form of harassment to some students. Self-victimization is not ethical, and explicit honesty without regarding others' different structure of emotion does not guarantee truth; in many cases, honesty can be an excuse for intended discriminations. What I tried to do is to speculate and explore possibilities and realize how complex my position in class is and how easily I can turn into a racist. This speculation helps me go through unlearning, creating *dissensus*, and possible shape-shifting resilience of my identities to create a learning community where I engage with all those disturbing issues with students arguing, laughing, disagreeing to each other's position and preconceptions, and constantly finding that we are in the same humanity in which whiteness is meaningless, though it has real implications for individuals' lived experiences. This also happened during all of my conversations with Bobbi in person and electronically. Indeed, virtual admittance of my potentiality of racism and hatred against someone who is different might maim my authority as a teacher, but this act helps me—a stuttering foreign-faced Asian male—reflect honestly on the ethical meaning of transitions of my identities as a border-crosser and virtual encounters with Others. However, these encounters with Others in (virtual or actual) global spaces are not utopian but always polemic and full of struggles. The dichotomy of "they" and "we" which Bobbi experienced is always already prevalent and ineradicable. Furthermore, I do not have power to change whole dynamics of racism in this postmodern world where race becomes not a topic of serious issue but a quip for political joke. In this sense, the teacher's role in globalized classroom must start from speculative, virtual admittance of complexity and

colonial, post-colonial, and asymmetrical geopolitics where the first world has exploited the third world for their wealth and consumerism. These are not paradoxical denials of our responsibilities but the first stage we can stand for further discussion of how to get over these and what we have to do on this limbo between "we" and "they."

2. If teachers stop at this speculative mapping of our positions in global, racial contexts, the production of space of *dissensus* and equal difference cannot lead to a democratic space of learning. Teachers need to develop their own strategies to cope with the class as an open global space.^[28] It is obvious that more and more global experience will come into a classroom with increasing influx of national and racial Others in traditionally homogeneous classrooms. Teachers should be open-minded to different cultures and backgrounds, but this does not mean that we can accept those differences easily to create a unity. Rather, we have to produce more salient, honest, and contextual inquiries in class. Writings about students' trans-spatial experiences and discussions on global contexts of these experiences helped bring about *dissensus* in my case.

Conclusion

Our conversation ends here, but it will never actually end because our presences in the world and its affiliation to whiteness as well as our constant struggle to deconstruct ourselves to engage with the amplifying effects of global racism cannot stop as long as we teach, unlearn, and learn. Anti-racist work is such that these ideas are something we will—we must—continually come back to in order to disrupt the racist structures that are present in the globalized classroom. In addition to there being no closure to this process, we also cannot say that our cases were successful if "success" means unity and harmony in the classroom; rather, we look for *dissensus* in the classroom in relation to race in the globalized classroom, for it is in the *dissensus* that there is space to unlearn and recreate. Our classes have taught us that we and our students are Others, but we have the power to create new space in the global classroom. This new space is not utopia but a differential space where our "bodily presences" communicate with Others. In addition to our bodily presences, there too are the behaviors rooted in a whitely epistemology we have to be cognizant of, as our narratives of instructors' (including our own) whitely ways of being's effects on students demonstrate. As teachers in roles of perceived authority, our whitely ways need to be examined. Though Frye (2001) is talking about the role of white feminists in the quote that follows, we believe her ideas are of particular importance for instructors more broadly to keep in mind as well. She wrote that:

We have to avoid, or be extremely alert in, environments in which whiteness is particularly required or rewarded (e.g., academia). We know we have to *practice* new ways of being in environments which nurture different habits of feeling, perception, and thought, and that we will have to make these environments for ourselves since the world will not offer them to us. We know that the process will be collective and that this collectivity does not mean we will blend seamlessly with the others into a colorless mass; women unlearning femininity together have not become clones of each other or of those who have been valuable models. (p. 100)

When as instructors we realize "another way of being is possible" (Frye, 2001, p. 100), and reconsider how we make room for those other ways of being in our classrooms, we are helping to "transform

consciousness" (Frye, 2001 p. 100). In unlearning our own whiteness and subsequent unearned authority, there is still space for difference, for radical equality.

This work is not easy, obviously, and it can be difficult, disconcerting, and troubling. Yet, "To the extent that we try, we will be called to lean into that trouble rather than to corral, contain, or legislate it; because to be troubled is a necessary condition for learning and change" (Condon, 2011, p. 7). The classrooms in American universities have already changed and are changing at this moment with shifting global situations; instructors, too, must adapt as well if we are to most ethically teach within a globalized classroom, where race, nationality, linguistic identity, and several other identity markers intersect. With purposeful reflection, we can disrupt the structures that disadvantage so-called Others in the classroom. We have been "troubled" as we have begun the work represented here, but rather than run away, we have tried to engage with each other to hear each other's perspective in order to unlock our own. Our investment in Justice, especially racial justice, does not exist only as a fancy catchphrase hung on the wall of the average classroom, nor is it a product of consensus; rather it is a bridge over troubled water filled with racial and national borders. Setting a journey over this water demands the courage to enjoy the turmoil of disagreements, intellectual savvy to map our constantly changing positions, and face-to-face conversations with Others in this zone of learning—the globalized classroom.

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Notes

[1] As Homi Bhabha (1990) claims in the introduction of *Nation and Narrative*, "The other is never outside or beyond us; it emerges forcefully, within cultural discourse, when we think we speak most intimately and indigenously 'between ourselves'" (p.4). The "other" in my discussion does not refer to someone outside or beyond "me," "us," or "them." Rather, Bhabha's "others" are ontological otherizations happening in-between ourselves. In my sections of this article, I am using Other instead of "other" to indicate and emphasize the ideological status of Others in global racism in contrast to the ontological presences of "others." My rhetorical choices implicate ontological others veiled under Others in discourses.

[2] Here, main meaning of "discourse" originates from Ernesto Laclau's theoretical context. According to Laclau (1985), discourse is ontological because it is both ideological and material. Like Derrida, there is nothing outside discourse. Within discourse, hegemonic articulations happen and bring forth various hegemonic positions. Hegemonic articulations in the social are radically equivalent in radical democracy; everyone can articulate to gain their hegemonic positions because there is no center and the chain of signifiers has nodal points of an empty signifier. Within these discourses, my ontological presence is discursively determined by various ideological and material conditions. In this sense, in this article, I will explore how my ontological presence as a non-native-English-speaker teacher's position in global discourses achieves hegemonic articulation and how this articulation and practice create radical equality or equivalence.

[3] In fact, some writings I find about international teachers teaching courses in the U.S. academy are mostly comprised of success stories or "how I could get over cultural differences." For instance, in the collective essay "Lessons From the Culturally Diverse Classroom: Intellectual Challenges and Opportunities for Teaching in the American University" (2010), three authors (Schwieger, Gros, and Barberan), who are international teachers and teach composition classes in Georgia State University, narrate their experiences as international teachers and teach composition classes in a multicultural classroom and describe their classes as multicultural utopian spaces; they even compare the American educational system with Medici during the Renaissance. Except for a teacher from France, most of these authors just praise cultural difference and cultural diversity they have experienced in the classroom without theoretically analyzing the hidden institutional and ideological aspects. Their narratives, at most, are full of superficial appreciations of a differential American educational system. Their description of the American university where a TA can work as a part-time professor hides the institutional apparatus in U.S. universities that entraps instructors' differential identities and lowers their academic positions under the name of multiculturalism. In fact, the spaces in modern academic institutions are not colorblind, democratic, nor equally power-distributed utopian spaces; rather

the spaces are locations where differences unfold interstices or fissures in those modern pedagogical ideologies such as ideal communications, democratic collaborations, and pedagogical unity.

[4] Here I am using Other not as a cultural Other or the general word but as the product of Otherization such as alienation, discrimination, and racial formation on the state and global levels. Everyone is susceptible to Otherization; this ontological commonality opens a new way to deconstruct the general belief on consensus based on heuristic purpose of education—transforming students into those who are as intelligent and duteous as teachers.

[5] I am using this movie because it avoids any easy generalization of the globalized classroom. Unlike many previous movies about teachers' struggles with uncommunicable students and their final breakthroughs, this movie, in mock-documentary style, exposes a lot of issues that demystify the general view of the globalized classroom.

[6] In South Korea, interests and debates on racial and multicultural discourses are sharply rising because 1) more and more laborers from mostly South Asia are coming in and the ratio of biracial families is spiking; and 2) more North Korean refugees are coming into Korea. Though South Korea and North Korea were one nation before the Korean War, the social antagonism against these North Koreans is getting ferocious.

[7] This is related to white students' reverse discrimination in various cases in first year composition classes at various universities, as Catherine Prendergast (2003) exemplifies and discusses in *Literacy and Racial Justice* (p. 99-100).

[8] According to Balibar (1991), in the contemporary Anglo-Saxon countries, "[i]deologically, current racism....centers upon the immigration complex, fits into a framework of 'racism without races'.... whose dominant theme is....the insurmountability of cultural differences, a racism which, [postulates] 'only' the harmfulness of abolishing frontiers, the incompatibility of life-styles and traditions; in short,....differential racism"(p. 21).

[9] Whiteness as a property is an idea Cheryl I. Harris explored in a paper published in *Harvard Law Review*. In this paper, Harris (1993) claims that "Whiteness as property has taken on more subtle forms, but retains its core characteristic—the legal legitimation of expectations, power, and control that enshrine the status quo as a neutral baseline, while making the maintenance of white privilege and domination" (p. 1715). Given Harris' argument that "According whiteness actual legal status converted an aspect of identity into an external object of property" (p. 1725), whiteness as property builds the representational system in the U.S. In the U.S., other ethnic identities, especially unstable, unidentifiable identities of immigrants, become alienable, while whiteness as property and the inalienable right remains as an absent cause of hegemonic positions that whites hold in the economic and political hierarchy. Here I use whiteness and whiteness on the same context not ignoring their differences, but pointing out their sharing the commonality of their traits as properties.

[10] I include my status as "citizen" because of the current emphasis in the U.S. on the legal status of individuals and the relegating of non-citizens as "less than." In this context, authority and legitimacy are accorded to me by virtue of my legal status, which I was born into.

[11] While I acknowledge the reality that a white person can be multilingual, the great majority of multilingual students in U.S. universities currently are not white. I use the term "multilingual" to refer to students whose first language is not English and who are not read as white. For those who I know to be international multilingual students, I designate them accordingly.

[12] Unless I state otherwise, when using examples from my classroom, I am talking about the class I taught that was only for international multilingual students.

[13] While I acknowledge that linguistic identity and racial identity are complexly interwoven in these cases, my main point here is to bring to light the way multilingual students are raced and how the lack of recognition of their race adds to their Othering in the U.S. university.

[14] We use the term "racism" in this article due to the racial structure of the U.S. and by extension, the U.S. classroom, where we draw our experiences from. "Xenophobia" we take to mean a more global form of racism

in terms of hating those deemed Others. Etymologically speaking, xenophobia means hostility against strangers. In this sense, xenophobia is a broader term of people's universal fear against strangers; however, race and racism is more systematic and the product of history and discourses. For this reason, xenophobia as hatred against those who have different nationalities is in affinity to global racism, but the global racism is a more systematic, geopolitical discrimination against people who are not white.

[15] Pseudonym.

[16] Available in part at <http://www.nymbp.org/reference/WhitePrivilege.pdf>

[17] It is important to note that some of these are not always true for me at times, particularly as I am a female teacher, and authority is not as often freely ascribed to female teachers, particularly young ones. When I started teaching composition, I was not much older than some of my students; some of the instances I name in this list were definitely less true at that time. Race, however, and in turn, whiteness, still seems to me to be one of the strongest indicators of who "earns" authority and who does not.

[18] There are exceptions to this, of course—for example, people who use American Southern pronunciations of words are often judged by those from other parts of the U.S. as less intelligent.

[19] Philosophically speaking, the idea of unity originates from Plato's "One" in which multiples lose their differences. Hegel's dialectics aiming for an absolute unity also subsumes exclusion of others through teleological development of history. Traditional Marxists could not get over this ideal unity which also made possible exclusions of different identities from unified ideas of the nation, the state, the proletariat, etc. Recently, Negri's multitude, though this also emphasizes singularities and their differences, also can be criticized as a part of this dialectical understanding of the world. I personally believe that utopian desire and hope should be kept, while constant deconstruction of any unification on the level of practice and theory has to be predetermined.

[20] Steven Corcoran's introductory explanation of Rancière's terms in *Dissensus: On Politics and Aesthetics* (2010), states that "Consensus...is defined by 'the idea of the proper' and the distribution of places of the proper and improper it implies...By contrast, the logic of dissensus consists in the demonstration of a certain impropriety which disrupts the identity...." (p. 2).

[21] Rancière's idea is simple but powerful. He claims that politics in itself is dissensus or disagreement against wrongs. Consensus which founds the idea of consensus democracy is a state apparatus which Rancière calls police. Rancière claims that modern politics is meta-politics that perpetually creates radical equality in political spaces. This effort to create equalities entails acts to make unsaid to be said, unseen to be seen, unheard to be heard, etc. See Rancière's *Disagreement* (1999).

[22] Pseudonym.

[23] My readings of the Conference on College Composition and Communication's (CCCC) resolution, *Students' Right to Their Own Language* (1975) and its significance via Prendergast's *Literacy and Racial Justice* (2003) (p. 95-102) helped me acknowledge this issue and the significance of it.

[24] Pseudonym.

[25] Pseudonym.

[26] Though the writing center is a different pedagogical space than the classroom, Matak's narrative shows the ways in which assignments with good intentions might still Otherize students who are commonly viewed as Others. I use his experience as a concrete example—and reminder to myself—that whiteness permeates our teaching and has real disadvantages for students.

[27] Available at http://www.youtube.com/watch?v=x0JKb_Cn1qc

[28] For example, in my class, with hands-on practice, via integrating diverse visual/audio media into PowerPoint presentations, I have introduced global aspects of issues such as migration, immigration, multinational corporation, eating disorders in global space, etc. I started telling my own position and my own

stories. I also had fish bowl debates on immigration and racism or panel discussions on who the students think they are in the global space. Sometimes, students responded to these various perspectives of global issues listlessly; however, as the class progressed, more and more students started responding that they had learned a lot from these presentations. For example, reading and discussing together Gloria Anzaldua's "How to Tame a Wild Tongue" and Amy Tan's "Mother Tongue" in 50 essays (2006) I compared and analyzed similar phenomena of oppression on women and immigrants in different locations; plus, I showed various news on YouTube and contentious blogs on websites to bring up disagreeable discussions. Reading students' response papers about these two essays after the class, I noticed how much students could improve their understanding of meaning of "immigration," "bilingualism," and "globalization." My pedagogical aim of "difference" played a positive role to elicit more thoughtful responses from the students. As my case proves, a pedagogical idea of difference is not just a concept but a joint discourse that is able to incorporate various different modes of practices into a praxis which forms differential theories for the future.

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Complete APA Citation

Kim, Dae-Joong, & Olson, Bobbi. (2013, August 7). Deconstructing whiteness in the globalized classroom. *Across the Disciplines*, 10(3). Retrieved from https://wac.colostate.edu/docs/atd/race/kim_olson.pdf