Seminar Series

English Second Language & Learning Styles: Culture and Discourse in the Classroom

Northeastern University
Feb. 4, 2019
Creating a More Inclusive, Welcoming, Educational Experience for English Language Learners in Higher Education

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University of British Columbia
Outline

PART 1 - INTRODUCTION

1. Warm-up discussion questions
2. My background (theoretical framework/approach); institutional context
3. Changing contexts: Global issues and opportunities in international education with ELLs

PART 2 - FIVE THEMES

1. Ideologies surrounding English lg education and international students in higher education
2. Challenges facing int’l students (and institutions) in undergraduate and graduate programs
3. Processes of socialization into local classroom norms, practices and communities
4. Socialization into academic English discourse and “habits of mind”
5. Assessment standards with (or for) diverse learners

PART 3 - DISCUSSION
Controversial Emails to International Students at Duke Suggest a Greater Struggle: Assimilation

By Lily Jackson | JANUARY 28, 2019

Ten years ago the response to the email would have been different.

This time international students spoke up. And they rallied against displays of discrimination, said Ruby Yuan, a junior studying journalism at the University of Southern California. But they shouldn’t have to, he said.

Last week a Duke University administrator sent an email advising international graduate students to speak English among themselves while in a student lounge on the campus — not just in class. They were advised to speak English “100% of the time” in any “professional setting.” Megan Neely, a graduate student at Duke University, said she was shocked to see the email.

The messages, which led an office to revoke the email policy, highlight one of the many cultural American campuses.
Creating a More Inclusive, Welcoming, Educational Experience for English Language Learners in Higher Education

Brainstorming

• Think of 2-3 pressing issues connected with this theme in your context.

  E.g., particular barriers to inclusive education; to English language learners
PART 1

1. Warm-up Discussion Questions

• What are some of the
  o IDEOLOGIES (beliefs—e.g., about the benefits of international education); and
  o PRACTICES affecting international (ELL) students’ inclusion and learning at your institution?

• How much discussion has there been at the institutional level in your context about how best to integrate and support ELLs?
PART 1 (cont’d)...

2. My theoretical background

- Language socialization;
- Second language learning;
- Academic discourse socialization

• A sociocultural/anthropological approach to understanding apprenticeship, belonging, and the negotiation of participation in new communities and practices;
• Especially the role of “language” as semiotic medium + outcome of socialization
Language Learning  
(= Socialization)

Explicit and implicit mediation i.e., linguistic and social interaction, instruction / modeling; observation, experience; and other ‘affordances’

Into...

- relevant communicative practices  
  e.g., ways of using language, other semiotic systems
- membership in particular cultures or communities
- new values, ideologies, identities, activities, routines, affective stances, norms/conventions, etc. (habitus)
FIGURE 1: The Multifaceted Nature of Language Learning and Teaching

MACRO LEVEL OF IDEOLOGICAL STRUCTURES

Belief Systems
Cultural Values
Political Values
Religious Values
Economic Values

MESO LEVEL OF SOCIOCULTURAL INSTITUTIONS AND COMMUNITIES

Social Identities
Investment
Agency
Power
Families
Schools
Neighborhood
Places of Work
Places of Worship
Social Organizations

Semiotic Resources
Linguistic
Prosodic
Interactional
Nonverbal
Graphic
Pictorial
Auditory
Artifactual

MICRO LEVEL OF SOCIAL ACTIVITY

Multilingual Contexts of Action and Interaction Contributing to Multilingual Repertoires

INDIVIDUALS ENGAGING WITH OTHERS

Regularly Recurring Contexts of Use

Neurobiological Mechanisms and Cognitive Capacities

Douglas Fir Group (2016)
LS = Highly Situated View of Learning
(Not always seamless, inevitable, or harmonious)

Learning as belonging
• participating in communities, networks, local cultures… actual and imagined, seeking affiliation/alignment, achieving intersubjectivity

Learning as doing
• engaging in relevant practices with intentionality, agency, self/other regulation; performativity

Learning as becoming
• expanding identities, repertoires, possibilities, in complex systems, new affiliations

Learning as experiencing
• constructing / internalizing meaning, knowledge, new habitus

◆ Learning as developing (not ‘acquiring’), investing in L2
◆ Learning as TRANSFORMING….self, others, systems/CoPs, capital

(adapted from Wenger, 1998)
Research on L2 Socialization

Insights into L1 & L2 language/culture learning processes and embedded or circulating values & ideologies

Insights into (ethnographic) and discursive ways of researching lang/literacy development and acculturation and/or contestation

Insights into ways of raising students’ (and others’) awareness of key sociocultural aspects of communication events / language/texts → possible interventions

Insights into ways of engaging students in common, important, high-stakes practices (and lgs) & consequences of noncompliance or inappropriateness
Research Approaches

• Document/policy/media analysis
• Interviews with stakeholders (all types); participants’ journals, etc.
• Observations of in-class, online, out of class, (etc.) discourse & interaction
• Analysis of learning artifacts: presentations, assignments, papers, posters, projects, theses, etc.
• Short-term studies (snapshot) vs. longitudinal, ethnographic ones
• Evaluations of programs; assessment of students (pre/post); etc.
• Tracking of students’ progression from EAP to mainstream courses (e.g., multiple-case studies)
3. Changing institutional contexts and pressures
Discussion Questions

• How is your own institutional or classroom context changing?
• Why?
• What are some of the consequences?
• How does the situation affect YOU?
3. Changing institutional contexts and pressures

• Greater diversity (but large #s of particular ethnic groups)
• Greater internationalization, globalization
• Student mobility initiatives, transnationalism
• “The global university” / “global citizenship”
• “Intercultural (communication) competence”
• Competition for top academic talent
• University pressures -- reduced public funding
• Others?
## 2017-18 Percentage international students

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>School</th>
<th>City, State</th>
<th>International</th>
</tr>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Florida Institute of Technology</td>
<td>Melbourne, FL</td>
<td>32%</td>
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<tr>
<td>The New School</td>
<td>New York, NY</td>
<td>32%</td>
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<tr>
<td>University of Rochester</td>
<td>Rochester, NY</td>
<td>24%</td>
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<tr>
<td>Boston University</td>
<td>Boston, MA</td>
<td>22%</td>
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<tr>
<td>Carnegie Mellon University</td>
<td>Pittsburgh, PA</td>
<td>22%</td>
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<tr>
<td>Suffolk University</td>
<td>Boston, MA</td>
<td>22%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Brandeis University</td>
<td>Waltham, MA</td>
<td>21%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Illinois Institute of Technology</td>
<td>Chicago, IL</td>
<td>21%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>University of California–San Diego</td>
<td>La Jolla, CA</td>
<td>20%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>New York University</td>
<td>New York, NY</td>
<td>19%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Northeastern University</td>
<td>Boston, MA</td>
<td>19%</td>
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<tr>
<td>University</td>
<td>Location</td>
<td>Acceptance Rate</td>
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<td>------------------------------------</td>
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</tr>
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</table>
“271,738 international students enrolled for the first time at a U.S. college or university in the 2017-18 academic year. The size of the total international student population increased by 1.5 percent to 1,094,792.”

https://www.iie.org/opendoors
Context: Programs for Int’l Students

- Bridge, pathway, conditional admission
- “Direct entry,” exchange…
- Commercial (Navitas) vs. in-house;
- Undergrad / graduate
- Credit / no-credit
- “Mainstream academic programs”
- Foundations writing programs
- Writing centers; Writing in Disciplines; W across Curric.
- Advanced (disciplinary) (multi)literacy instruction vs. generic reading/writing (etc) skills approach
  - issues with transfer to mainstream
- Sheltered/adjunct programs

**UBC**

- Vantage College, English Language Institute
- UBC-Ritsumeikan Academic Exchange program
PART 2:
THEME 1, IDEOLOGIES

• “International students”
• “Local students”
• International experience and English language learning
• Neoliberalism
“International Students”: Essentialized Category

• Different L1/C1 (or varieties: standard, non-standard; minority)
• Rural/urban; main campus, satellite; $ vs. scholarship
• Class & gender issues (or other social categories—e.g., science, social science, humanities); scholarship vs $$
• Years in country/program; undergrad vs grad (cf. “sea turtle” discourse)
• Transnational status and trajectory
• Religion/culture
• Different forms of social (and other forms of capital)
• Performed aspects based on positioning by self/other
Possible social dimensions, differences & intersections in SLA

- Occupation
- Religion
- Ethnicity
- Affinity groups
- Etc…

Others:
- TRACK / program type
- AGE
- RACE
- MIGRATION STATUS
- SEX OR GENDER
- SEXUALITY
- PLACE (rural, urban)
- CAPITAL (social, cultural, symbolic, economic)
- FAMILY ROLE (parent, sibling order)
- SEXUALITY

Intersectionalities:
e.g., White working class males opting (and counseled) out of L2 study in Canada, UK, Australia (Duff, 2017; Lanvers, 2017)
Local (Domestic) Students: Also Essentialized

• *Akogare* (Japanese concept; desire); exotic ‘other’
• Local demo = much more diverse than newcomers expect
• More students from same backgrounds than expected
• Difficult to enter/join local English-mediated CoPs
  – Minimal daily out-of-class English conversation (e.g., 10 min/day)
  – Exclusion by group members for projects (Fei, 2016; Leki)
THEME 2:
Challenges facing ELLs/International Students?
THEME 2:
Challenges for ELLs/International Students

• Social
• Psychological or affective
  • Homesickness, isolation, competition, vulnerable/shifting identities; “loss”
  • Pressure from families (stress); Vancouver: expectation to become PRs and sponsors
  • Anxiety
  • #s of students from same L1/C1 backgrounds in same programs, dorms, etc.
• Linguistic/discursive (nominalization, density, stance-taking, unfam genres...)
• Academic, epistemological – expectations re: writing, critical thinking
• Cultural (in and out of class; course content/background knowledge, styles)
• Financial
• Uncertain future trajectories (home/abroad; Anderson, 2017)
• Etc.
Support Systems for International ELL Students?
Based on work with Mexican study-abroad students; we also did research with a cohort of Koreans over one year.

Conceptualizing English learners within local + transnational ecologies and “networks”—not CoP

**Negotiating Institutional Cultures and Resources at a Canadian University**

(see Zappa-Hollman & Duff, 2015 TQ)
Communities & Networks

Liliana’s Individual Network of Practice (Mexican university student in Canada)

Zappa-Hollman & Duff (2015) *TESOL Quarterly*
https://ubc.academia.edu/PatriciaDuff
THEME 3: Socialization into local classroom norms, practices, communities

• Socialization by whom? (T, Ss, peers?)
• Explicit or implicit? How?
• Which practices?
  • (instruction, modeling, scaffolding, feedback...)
  • Multimodality
• Effect?

• GENRES/ACTIVITIES – division of labour, etc.

• E.g., group work: challenges (recent research)
• Presentations...
• Scholarly writing

Silence / “participation”
Turn-taking (wait-time)
Participation structures
Positioning
(“NNS,” “Chinese”)
Identity
Exclusion/inclusion
(in-class and in out-of-class group work)

(See Morita, 2004 - TQ)
Mapping Participation Patterns in Classrooms

This image captures a short interaction between a teacher and two students in a high school social studies class in my earlier research.

We can map who speaks to whom, what—and whose—ideas (and phrases) are affirmed (by whom), and then consider who’s left out of class discussions.
“Contact Zones” (Pratt, 1991)

“social spaces where cultures meet, clash and grapple with each other, often in contexts of highly asymmetrical relations of power...”

Imagined, elusive, homogeneous speech communities
In keeping with autonomous, fraternal models of community, analyses of language use commonly assume that principles of cooperation and shared understanding are normally in effect. Descriptions of interactions between people in conversation, classrooms, medical and bureaucratic settings, readily take it for granted that the situation is governed by a single set of rules or norms shared by all participants. The analysis focuses then on how those rules produce or fail to produce an orderly, coherent exchange. Models involving games and moves are often used to describe interactions. Despite whatever conflicts or systematic social differences might be in play, it is assumed that all participants are engaged in the same game and that the game is the same for all players. Often it is. But of course it often is not, as, for example, when speakers are from different classes or cultures, or one party is exercising authority and another is submitting to it or questioning it.

Pratt (1991, p. 38)
“You need to speak the language to play the game,” the 33-year-old says. “Once I did that I was able to successfully build relationships in the Valley, successfully raise money and successfully grow and lead our company… Now I live here so it’s all kind of standard, but five years ago it wasn’t.”

By Lennox Morrison, 14 March 2017

And many people are keen to have the freshest tech talk tripping off their tongue. “In the UK and America, by using a term like ‘algorithmic computing’ or ‘agile development’ it’s almost a code for signalling you’re one of the ‘in crowd’ who understands these terms,” says Steggles. “If you can speak like that, then you’re up-to-date with current events — there’s a subtext that goes along with it.”

THEME 4: Socialization into academic English discourse and new “habits of mind” (Bourdieu’s “habitus”)

- Challenges of English for academic purposes:
  - (Unfamiliar) Genres and registers; disciplinary expectations/diffs
  - Lexical density, nominalization, syntactic complexity (etc.) (vs. vernacular)

- Academic discourse socialization

- Habits of mind/habitus
  - Dispositions, norms re: e.g., critical thinking.... (cf. Anna Dong)
  - Thinking like a lawyer, scientist, historian, business manager, etc.
Academic Discourse Socialization

Examples:

• Register, genre, event, activity
• Critical thinking, knowledge structures
• Stance marking
• Lexical/syntactic/semantic complexity:
  • Nominalization
  • Lexical density
  • Semantic gravity (theory+abstraction vs. concrete examples)

• Also challenges of informal (vernacular) discourse and register shifts
“Most students need explicit teaching of sophisticated genres, specialized language conventions, disciplinary norms of precision and accuracy, and higher-level interpretive processes”


The historians [in contrast to the chemists and mathematicians] emphasized paying attention to the **author or source** when reading any text. That is, before reading, they would consider who the authors of the texts were and **what their biases might be**. Their purpose during the reading seemed to be to **figure out what story a particular author wanted to tell**; in other words, they were keenly aware that they were reading an interpretation of historical events and not “Truth.” ...

p. 50
In this task students were required to reflect on their experience of multinational teamwork by examining their visible and invisible values, beliefs, assumptions, and behaviors based on Solomon and Schell’s (2009) model of intercultural competency. The journal comprises three principal stages:

- **Excavation**—where the student identifies “individualism” as a “below the surface” value underpinning his experience of a group assignment;
- **Reflection**—in which the student concludes that valuing individualism over his Chinese peers’ communitarianism led to his “discounting” of his collaborators’ opinions; and
- **Transformation**—where the student pledges that in future teamwork situations his behavior will be guided by the intercultural competence skills he claims to have gained through this reflective process.
The Knowledge Practices of Critical Thinking

“Reflective Journal” Assignment in Business in the Global Environment (Szenes et al., 2015)

Figure 33.3 Semantic profile of a successful reflective journal in business studies.
Fig. 9. Semantic profiles of two student essays in school English.
Dong (2015)  

Critical thinking in second language writing: Concept, theory and pedagogy
<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Critical Thinking Band Descriptors</th>
<th>5 Very good</th>
<th>4 Good</th>
<th>3 Average</th>
<th>2 Poor</th>
<th>1 Very poor</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Clarity</td>
<td>Completely understandable; Free from any confusion or ambiguity</td>
<td>Fairly understandable even though some words are not completely clear</td>
<td>Understandable, but some words or sentences are not clear enough or slightly confusing</td>
<td>Presenting a number of unclear referents or sentences that are not easily understandable or rather confusing</td>
<td>Hardly understandable; Full of confusion or ambiguity</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Accuracy</td>
<td>Completely free from errors, mistakes or distortions; True; Correct</td>
<td>Fairly correct; No misleading information</td>
<td>Most of the information is fairly correct; Some information needs further verification, but is not quite misleading</td>
<td>Some of the information is not correct, or with unidentified sources; Some information is quite misleading</td>
<td>Presenting many errors or mistakes; Very misleading</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Precision</td>
<td>Completely exact to the sufficient level of detail; Presenting sufficient examples and explanations; Very specific</td>
<td>Exact to the necessary level of detail; Presenting necessary examples and explanations; Fairly specific</td>
<td>Exact to the fundamental level of detail; Presenting some examples and explanations but not enough; Not very specific</td>
<td>Not exact to the necessary level of detail; Lacking some necessary examples or explanations; Not specific</td>
<td>Not exact to the fundamental level of detail; Very general; Lacking many necessary examples or explanations; Not specific at all</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Relevance</td>
<td>Implying a completely close relationship with the task; Covering all the key points; Presenting no irrelevant information</td>
<td>Implying a fairly close relationship with the task; Covering almost all the key points; Presenting no irrelevant information</td>
<td>Implying some relationship with the task; Not covering all the key points; Presenting some information that is not closely related to the task</td>
<td>Not implying a close relationship with the task; Missing some key points; Presenting some information that is not related to the task</td>
<td>Not implying any relationship with the task; Missing all the key points</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>5 Depth</td>
<td>6 Breadth</td>
<td>7 Logic</td>
<td>8 Significance</td>
<td>9 Fairness</td>
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<td></td>
<td>Implying thoroughness in thinking; Presenting full understanding of the complexities</td>
<td>Encompassing multiple viewpoints; Fully considering differing ideas</td>
<td>Completely making sense; No contradictions; No logical errors; Providing strongly convincing evidence to fully support all the key viewpoints</td>
<td>Presenting ethical appropriateness in the aspects of viewpoints, evidence, argument and conclusion; The writing is based on verifiable facts; Not showing any bias in terms of religion, ethics, gender, age, profession, etc.</td>
<td>Presenting ethical appropriateness in the aspects of viewpoints, evidence, argument and conclusion; Most of the writing is based on verifiable facts; Not showing any obvious bias in terms of religion, ethics, gender, age, profession, etc.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Implying depth in thinking; Presenting an understanding of the complexities</td>
<td>Encompassing multiple viewpoints; Appropriately considering differing ideas</td>
<td>Fairly making sense; No contradictions; No logical errors; Providing fairly convincing evidence to support almost all the key viewpoints</td>
<td>Having appropriate importance; Showing appropriate substantiality in meaning; Highlighting most of the important features</td>
<td>Presenting necessary ethical appropriateness in the aspects of viewpoints, evidence, argument and conclusion; Most of the writing is based on verifiable facts; Not showing any obvious bias in terms of religion, ethics, gender, age, profession, etc.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Not implying enough depth in thinking; Presenting a basic understanding of the complexities</td>
<td>Encompassing multiple viewpoints to some extent; Not broad-minded enough; Not fully considering differing ideas</td>
<td>Making sense; No obvious contradictions or logical errors; Lacking convincing evidence for several key viewpoints</td>
<td>Having importance; Missing some important features; Or presenting certain features that are not important enough</td>
<td>Not presenting necessary ethical appropriateness in some of the aspects of viewpoints, evidence, argument and conclusion; Part of the writing is not based on verifiable facts; Showing some obvious bias in terms of religion, ethics, gender, age, profession, etc.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Not implying depth in thinking; Not presenting any basic understanding of the complexities</td>
<td>Narrow-minded in perspective; Not considering much about differing ideas</td>
<td>Having some obvious contradictions or logical errors; Lacking convincing evidence for all the key viewpoints</td>
<td>Presenting some features that are not important enough; Not substantial enough in meaning; Not highlighting the important features</td>
<td>Not presenting ethical appropriateness in many of the aspects of viewpoints, evidence, argument and conclusion; Most of the writing is not based on verifiable facts; Showing obvious bias in terms of religion, ethics, gender, age, profession, etc.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Not implying any depth in thinking; Not presenting any basic understanding of the complexities</td>
<td>Very narrow-minded in perspective; Not considering differing ideas</td>
<td>Having many obvious contradictions or logical errors; Lacking convincing evidence for all the key viewpoints</td>
<td>Not having any importance; Not showing any substantiality in meaning</td>
<td>Not presenting ethical appropriateness in many of the aspects of viewpoints, evidence, argument and conclusion; Most of the writing is not based on verifiable facts; Showing obvious bias in terms of religion, ethics, gender, age, profession, etc.</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
THEME 5:
Assessment standards & practices with diverse learners

• What are some issues or debates related to student assessment in your context?
• What have been some practical solutions?
• What kinds of program evaluations are conducted?
THEME 5:
Assessment standards & practices with diverse learners

• Norm-referenced vs. criterion-referenced
• Rubrics?
• Assessing language vs. disciplinary content
• High stakes → progression to mainstream, Yr2, grad programs, etc.
• Assessing other aspects of performance: e.g., ”participation”
• Implicit vs. explicit norms, models, feedback, etc.
• Different standards for multilingual (non-English-L1) backgrounds?
  • Language use (accuracy, complexity); time; etc.
• Issues, options, strategies?
Do They Make a Difference? The Impact of English Language Programs on Second Language Students in Canadian Universities

JANNA FOX
Carleton University
Ottawa, Canada

LIYING CHENG
Queen’s University
Kingston, Canada

BRUNO D. ZUMBO
University of British Columbia
Vancouver, Canada
this study provides empirical evidence that English language programs had a direct, positive, and significant effect on the academic and social engagement of the L2 students considered here. (p. 77)
PART 3: DISCUSSION

Creating a More Inclusive, Welcoming, Educational Experience for English Language Learners

How can you help raise awareness and change the local culture of teaching, learning, assessment, etc. (as needed)?

- What can administrators do?
- What can local/domestic students do?
- What can international students do?
- What can society do?
Thank you!
References


