The Language Ideologies of White First-Year Composition Instructors: Exploring Intersections between Writing Pedagogy, Attitudes toward Language, and White Identity

by

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Abstract

First-year composition (FYC) has historically functioned as a space for furthering the linguistic assimilation of students into "appropriate" forms of communication in academic spaces. While often going unstated in course/writing program goals, Standardized American English (SAE) has typically been the language variety elevated in FYC classrooms. As SAE is associated with White individuals, the (un)spoken privileging of this variety in the classroom has been heavily critiqued as a way of furthering White supremacy. Further research into specifically how uncritical writing pedagogies can work to foster environments of White supremacy is one necessary avenue for further inquiry. In particular, research into how the language ideologies, or beliefs about language, may contribute to or resist these systemic problems can help understand the motivations instructors may have in enacting various pedagogical practices.

To engage in such research, I completed a two-semester participatory action research project (PAR) with White instructors to examine their language ideologies and how those ideologies may influence their FYC pedagogies. Through focus groups, interviews, surveys, and on-going discussion groups with White lecturers and graduate student instructors, I collected and coded numerous transcripts and classroom documents (e.g., syllabi, assessments, feedback on student papers, et cetera). In building off of findings from relevant research in writing studies, linguistics, and whiteness studies, I identified and coded for a variety of themes relevant to assessment strategies, explicit and implicit race discussions, as well as attempts at antiracist pedagogical practices to uncover the language ideologies that motivated instructors and how those ideologies responded to various writing and student constructs.

The findings of this work are wide-ranging and identify multiple, intersecting challenges for creating more linguistically just FYC classroom spaces and practices. In summary, however, the findings of this project identified how White instructors avoid explicit acknowledgments of race in pedagogical discussions and classroom materials. This color-blind approach extended to how they viewed whiteness as well, as often felt trapped by discourse of whiteness and privilege. Additionally, the White instructors shifted toward expressing more anti-racist/non-SLI pedagogies in group sessions than when in individual settings, further creating questions around sincerity and participation Within their classroom practices, further findings from this research indicate that White instructors may identify instances of students of color using non-SAE varieties as being more authentic and instances of SAE as being performative. These many tensions seem to surface most explicitly in discussing assessment, as White instructors seem to experience a great degree of uncertainty when assessing writing. Responding to these tensions, they may utilize cooperative forms of assessment (e.g. negotiations and self-assessments) in an attempt to both be more linguistically inclusive but also to shift responsibility for assessment away from just themselves.

Following discussion of these findings, I label the language ideologies observed in this data as White Supremacist Language Ideologies (WSLI), a term I define and unpack further with specific examples and patterns of enactment found in this research. Lastly, this dissertation points to more critical language pedagogies as being one possible response to these intersecting issues by providing both examples of what these pedagogies might look like and further areas of investigation for writing programs to consider how WSLI may function in their writing spaces.

Chapter 1: Introduction

1.1 The Purpose of this Project

In the summer of 2020, I joined a group of a dozen or so Graduate Student Instructors (GSIs) within the English Department Writing Program (EDWP) to help develop a new training program for incoming GSIs to the EDWP that centered discussions of race explicitly throughout the training. While it took us several months to develop this this two-week training course, we had numerous discussions on race and our positionalities, as well as moments to reflect on how our identities were affecting how we entered these planning spaces and how the incoming GSIs who shared aspects of our positionalities might engage with the coursework we were developing. It was during this planning and creation stage though that we engaged in racial affinity groups, a method commonly used in activist focused groups that has individuals opt-into conversations about race with other individuals who share their racial identity. For the white affinity spaces, of which I was a part, the logic behind them was that they would enable us as White[1] individuals to discuss our whiteness in a way that didn't allow us as White people to engage in the typical tropes of using our privilege to stay silent or engaging in micro/macro-aggressions. It was our intention as the group devising this training to use these affinity spaces during the planning to help develop training sessions that centered connections between race and language in the

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[1] Similar to other scholarship (see Davilla, 2022; Lockett, Ruiz, Sanchez, & Carter, 2021), I capitalize instances of White throughout this piece in certain contexts. Specifically, I do so when referring to White people and/or White supremacy to draw connections between White-identity and White supremacy and encourage readers to reflect on their proximity to both.

classroom and to then give us experience in these affinity groups which we would also use as a part of the training program.

The training didn't go nearly as smoothly as we had hoped, with some incoming GSIs initially confused by and objecting to the racial affinity group spaces, including a few White GSIs who objected to this work on the grounds that discussing race/racial (in)justice was not relevant to a writing classroom. Despite this, overall we as a group were proud of the work we had done and encouraged by the feedback we received at the end of the training. However, both in the moment and reflecting on the multiple white affinity group spaces I participated in, I found myself troubled. From some instructors outright rejecting the validity of multiple Englishes to others refusing to entertain the idea that their beliefs about writing could be biased, it felt like we were sending these instructors out to their classrooms knowing that they were going to (purposefully or otherwise) engage in racial discrimination through the proxy of language.

Given the limited (two week long and four sessions total) nature of the training, it wasn't a surprise that individuals had trouble opening up and talking about their white racial identity in these spaces. Furthermore, it wasn't surprising that we as a group of White people had a hard time talking about race in general. Given the limited nature of our time together and my own limitations as a facilitator of these spaces, I couldn't help but feel a bit disappointed. I was disappointed that I perceived many instructors to be leaving the space of that training relatively ill equipped to reflect on and problematize how their beliefs about language were influenced by their racial biases. As such, this dissertation was my attempt to re-engage in this work with the timeline and depth a dissertation project affords and demands. As I will discuss more fully in later chapters, this project stumbled in many of the same ways the previous mentioned training did as well—challenges with discussing race explicitly, the potential for performativity/self-

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congratulations, and potential opposition to more substantive rethinking of our pedagogies beyond just diversifying our reading lists a bit more. However, what I hope this work helps illuminate is possibilities for better identifying the influence of White supremacy on writing pedagogy and better addressing how we can create more linguistically inclusive writing classrooms.

1.2 Overview of the Project

Recent scholarship has illustrated a pressing need for further research into how race, language, and writing pedagogy intersect in education toward more anti-racist ends (Inoue, 2015, 2019a, 2019b; Perryman-Clark, 2016), as well as the historical reasons for that have created this exigence (Gere et al., 2021; Elliot, 2005; Hammond, 2019). As the field of writing studies interest has shifted in part toward efforts at resisting how a "white racial habitus" evaluates individuals language and bodies to White supremacist ends (Inoue, 2015), scholarship has concerned itself with anti-racist efforts at "linguistic justice"—or, ways of dismantling White language supremacy (Baker-Bell, 2020). This dissertation seeks to examine the language ideologies, or beliefs about language (Wassink & Curzan, 2004), of White-identifying first-year composition (FYC) writing instructors. Although there is research that has interrogated how whiteness influences the practices of White K-12 educators (Amos, 2016; Crowley, 2019; Mason, 2016; McIntyre, 1997), the influence of race on language ideologies (Alim, Rickford, & Ball, 2016), and the postsecondary writing classroom as a site of What language supremacy (Borsheim-Black, 2015; Hammond, 2018; Inoue, 2015) there exists significantly little research that focuses specific inquiry on the intersections between these three areas. Additionally, although the goals and methods of justice-oriented writing pedagogy and research are varied (Poe, Inoue, & Elliot, 2018), the research into intersections between White supremacy and

language in the writing classroom has tended to portray the effects of White supremacy as a monolithic force that (White) instructors take up in an all-or-nothing fashion and particularly has an effect on assessment. While this scholarship engages in important work, underemphasize the importance of instructor identity of writing there is a need for further research to complicate how White explore how instructors' positionalities may intersect with the beliefs about language they enact in their pedagogies in similar and differing ways across all aspects of their classrooms. In particular, what can be learned from research into the beliefs and materials of White writing instructors, who often make up the majority of instructors at many institutions, concerning how whiteness and instructor identity may relate to one another? How do the effects of whiteness manifest themselves in and beyond the act of assessment, such as in syllabi or written comments?

Therefore, this dissertation examines intersections between those aforementioned areas to surface how they may relate to White-identifying writing instructors' classroom practices. I focus specifically on White instructors in this work as whiteness and White supremacy is often less apparent to White people (Frankenberg, 1993). This dissertation additionally uses a participatory action research (PAR) approach, a method that destabilizes the researcher/researched boundary and emphasizes participant agency (McIntyre, 2008) in order to include myself (the researcher) in this study as a White instructor This study follows in the tradition of what Zingsheim and Goltz (2011) summarize as the intertwined dual purposes of much research exploring issues relevant to whiteness: identifying how whiteness is enacted in educational spaces and exploring pedagogical possibilities. In collecting and analyzing data from focus groups, interviews, discussion groups, syllabi, assessments, feedback, and more, this

project seeks to respond to the following research questions—with additional sub-questions detailed further in the methods chapter:

1. What language ideologies can be found within the expressed beliefs, practices, and materials of White-identifying FYC instructors?

2. How do discussions and reflections on language ideologies and their own classroom practices/materials help White instructors to identify connections between language ideologies and their positionality?

3. What kinds of participatory supports do White-identifying FYC instructors need to begin and sustain thoughtful inquiry into their positionality and pedagogy?

In order to sufficiently address the both theoretical and practical trajectories of these questions and how the findings from this project can help build more anti-White supremacist pedagogies (Inoue, 2019b), this dissertation will first provide an overview of the literature relevant to language ideologies, linguistic diversity/justice, and whiteness, before moving on further to describe the specific PAR methods and multiple findings and discussion chapters. The details of these individual chapters are provided below.

1.3 Overview of Chapters

Chapter 2: Reviewing and Connecting Literature on Whiteness, Language Ideologies, and Writing Pedagogy

This chapter uses literature in writing studies, linguistics, and whiteness research to identify how writing instructors' language ideologies are influenced by White supremacy and how those beliefs about language may affect practices. Specifically, within this chapter I unpack how writing is connected to (racial) identity and how whiteness manifests as a construct in the space of FYC. In reviewing this research, I identify an exigence for focusing on the language ideologies of White-identifying instructors in particular in conducting research, while also detailing how my identity influenced the participatory methodological approach this project uses.

Chapter 3: Investigating Whiteness as a White Educator: Participatory Research as a
Methodology of Individual and Communal Praxis

This chapter will clarify how whiteness intersects with examinations of teacher beliefs, such as their language ideologies, and why participatory action research (PAR) can be one method for investigating the complexity of teachers' belief systems. I aim to illustrate how scholarship has demonstrated the need for problematizing how many constructs of first-year writing courses enable environments in which language ideologies first and foremost cater to White bodies, e.g. Inoue's (2015) "white habitus." Through this process, I illustrate why one response to this exigence should be to directly engage White instructors about their language ideologies in participatory work. This chapter will additionally clarify how the positionality of the researcher was considered in conducting this research and how participatory research, which inherently blurs the lines between researcher and participant, can serve as a method for investigating others and ourselves in identity-based research.

Chapter 4: Vulnerable Introspection or Performative Allyship?: Unpacking the Shifting
Language Ideologies of White Composition Instructors

This chapter serves to explore the ways in which White writing instructors engage in "White Talk"—or, "talk that serves to insulate white people from examining their individual and collective role(s) in the perpetuation of racism" (McIntyre, 1997, p. 31). As such, this chapter seeks to clarify in a detailed manner how whiteness may show up in conversations concerning race and pedagogy, an important goal as white discourses often hide in abstractions (Inoue, 2015,p. 42). In particular, this chapter maps how White writing instructors' expressed language ideologies shifted from more conservative ideologies of language in individual settings of assessment (e.g., commenting on a student paper, interviews) to more critical language

ideologies in group settings (e.g., discussion group, communal annotation), as well as shifting in commenting on various specific features of non-SAE writing.

Chapter 5: "Like, that's not what you're supposed to sound like": Appropriacy, Authenticity, and (Anti)Racist Writing Pedagogy

Within this chapter, I discuss how the often ambiguously applied concept of voice (Hyland, 2008) may enact "appropriacy" arguments—i.e., audience-centric arguments that solely imagine audience preference for SAE—through the construct of the narrative-genre in FYC. In perceiving the voice of certain student or experienced writers of color as more authentic when using a non-SAE variety, and focusing almost entirely on narrative-based writing as an outlet for non-SAE writing, instructors' perceptions of voice may flatten the linguistic abilities of students of color, but they may also discourage White students from also more critically interrogating the subjectivity of their own "voices" in their writing. Additionally, through the negotiation of assessment materials and viewing certain student demographics as having "real" voices, such as Black, African-American English-using students while viewing the users of other non-SAE varieties voices as being inauthentic (e.g., Chinese ESL students), instructors may also differentially constrain linguistically marginalized student populations in their classrooms.

Chapter 6: The Challenges of Confronting White Supremacist Language Ideologies: Possibilities for Creating more Critical Language Spaces in First-Year Composition

With this chapter I aim to connect how the multiple findings of this project identified patterns concerning the ways in which White instructors attempted to enable or constrain linguistic diversity in their classrooms and the language ideologies motivating those decisions— which I define as White Supremacist Language Ideologies (WSLI). Writing instructors, through making moves that minimize connections between race and language, centering white-constructs

of linguistic diversity, and otherwise creating classrooms that portray non-SAE as deficit while portraying SAE as simultaneously "neutral" and superior, enable White supremacy in their writing pedagogy.

Chapter 7: Implications for Pedagogy, Further Research and Activism

In this chapter I outline suggestions for (White) instructors and writing programs to push back on WSLI in ways that enable practices of linguistic justice. Through providing examples of more critical language pedagogies, e.g., critical language awareness (Shapiro, 2022), might aid such efforts, this chapter emphasizes both implications for practice and theo

Chapter 2: Reviewing and Connecting Literature on Whiteness, Language Ideologies, and Writing Pedagogy

2.1 Introduction to Literature Review

Because "there is no getting around race in our epistemologies" (Inoue, 2015, p. 54), it is important to consider both here and throughout any research project, but particularly one that is attempting to focus specifically on issues of race and racism, one's own positionality (Lockett et al., 2021, p. 25). While positionality statements that offer to the reader a list of categories within which the researcher identifies can be helpful by providing further context as to the researchers relationship to the issues at hand, these types of statements at best may be limited in making more meaningful connections between the researcher and systems of oppression and at worst may serve a simply performative purpose for privileged individuals to attempt to distance themselves from more meaningful reflective work. So, while it is important to note that I do identify as White, cis-male, disabled, middle-class, and monolingual this list alone does little to situate the implications of my identities on this research within the broader context that issues of race and racism need to happen in (Milner IV, 2007, p. 397). I include this statement here to serve as a preface to this literature review chapter, as I believe that my positionality is relevant to the voices I'm choosing to elevate here in this review, how I'm interpreting those voices, and how I am positioning myself and my research within the exigence(s) identified in this review. However, as will be unpacked in the following methods chapter and later discussion/implications chapters, I attempt to explicitly and consistently consider the implications of my identity as a White writing instructor on the design and findings of this project. As such, this prefacing list of

labels here serves just as a transparent starting point for more meaningful introspection I engage in throughout this text.

The overall purpose of this chapter is to review relevant literature in the areas of whiteness, language ideologies, first-year writing/composition, and writing assessment. In doing so, I aim to illustrate how scholarship among these aforementioned areas has demonstrated the need for problematizing how many constructs of first-year writing courses enable environments in which language ideologies first and foremost cater to White bodies, e.g. Inoue's (2015) "white habitus." More specifically, in this literature review I show how FYC often functions as a colonialist space that privileges language ideologies that favor White-bodies, and how—although research has examined the systems and materials that contribute to this privileging—the research has neglected to bring into focus how the beliefs and practices of the primary local gatekeepers (aka the instructors) of these classroom spaces play into, resist, or otherwise participate in language ideologies that uphold White language supremacy[2]. In examining the literature in this way, I hope to also illustrate why one response to this exigence should be to directly engage White instructors about their language ideologies in a participatory project.

2.2 Unpacking Whiteness as a Construct

While race is a social construct (Frankenberg, 1993; Inoue, 2015; Oluo, 2018), it is "a foundational idea with devastating consequences" due to how constructs of race are used for hierarchical ends (Goodman et al, 2012, p. 2). As this study focuses on whiteness and White educators, unpacking and defining the term *whiteness* is first and foremost necessary. However,

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[2] Supremacy within this essay refers to "more than the occasional practice of favoring one's kind, but an interconnected system of rules, customs, and privileges...that consistently enable the majority group to remain ahead (Delgado, Stefanic, & Harris, 2017, p. 9). White supremacy refers to the "conscious and unconscious ideas of white superiority and entitlement..reenacted across a broad array of institutions and social settings" (Ansley, 2010, p. 592). White Language Supremacy then refers to the language ideologies that contribute to the systemic privileging of discourses associated with White-identifying/identified individuals.

defining what whiteness is by itself, as in—explaining whiteness as a solitary construct—is not possible. What I mean here, is that so often whiteness is identified and privileged only through the comparison to an "other" it seeks to make seem deficit. However challenging whiteness may be to define, as a "foundational concept for racism" it demands further examination (Battey & Leyva, 2016, p. 51). Given then the importance of identifying whiteness, and the challenge of identifying whiteness for White people—how we talk about it matters. Clarifying in a detailed manner what we mean by "whiteness" is particularly important as whiteness and white discourses often hide in abstractions (Inoue, 2015,p. 42). Given then the importance of clearly defining whiteness toward the goals of this project, I will draw upon the work of a number of scholars engaged in both Critical Race scholarship and Writing Studies to articulate what I view as four significant operations of whiteness for my purposes here.

Whiteness often appears invisible to White people, most often only being identified through confrontation with a difference White people desire to make deficit.

White writing instructors may often assume their language pedagogies to be neutral or natural (Inoue, 2019a). However, when we explicitly talk about one specific construct of race such as whiteness, we inevitably "assign everyone a place in the relations of racism" (Frankenberg, 1993, p. 6, emphasis original). The racist hierarchical interconnection of constructs of race is perhaps even more so relevant to discussions of the construct of whiteness given how the dominance of whiteness and its false neutrality is often established through the ways White people typically define themselves and their whiteness against a perceived deficit Other (McIntyre, 1997, p. 17). Whiteness is weaponized against people of color for the purposes of making their ways of being seem inadequate or lesser than those of White individuals (Barnett, 2000; Daniels, 2018; Lipsitz, 2018). In this way, whiteness possesses "a dual nature:

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privileging Whites and oppressing those outside the boundary of White" (Battey & Leyva, 2016, p. 51). These deficit comparisons are typically not viewed by White people as being explicitly racialized (McIntosh, 1989; McIntyre, 1997), rather they are often coded in discussions of appropriacy and/or professionalism, particularly regarding language, wherein the desired discursive practices are very much racialized (Anzaldúa, 1987; Smitherman, 1977). Examples of whiteness being defined through deficit comparisons relevant to language can be seen in Lippi-Green's (2011) "Language Subordination Model" (p. 70), where promises and threats are made about employment opportunities to encourage non-SAE (and often non-White) individuals to utilize SAE.

Whiteness is the default standard within dominant institutions in the United States.

This means that within institutions such as schools, healthcare, the workforce, et cetera, whiteness is assumed to be a neutral—or, at times, even beneficial—standard in most contexts (Oluo, 2018). Within these environments, whiteness then is usually defined as whatever set of dispositions are most associated with White bodies (Inoue, 2015), and the non-White individuals are then defined by the value they bring to White institutions and individuals (Liu, 2017). This can be seen in the purposeful inattention to race in scholarship on assessing writing (Hammond, 2019), and in policy statements such as the National Council of Teachers of English's (NCTE) (2020) recent revision to their policy on English Language Learner (ELL) students, which asserts that "[n]ewcomers...need to develop both conversational and academic English" without ever explaining what educational or larger structures make this "need" so apparent.

Whiteness as a part of White identity needs to be seen through an intersectional lens.

Just as McIntosh (1989) works to unpack the ways in which white privilege and cis-male privilege may be intertwined, so too must examinations of white identity consider how bodies in

their entirety are seen as adhering (or not) to principles of whiteness (Ahmed, 2007;

Frankenberg, 1993). Kerschbaum (2014) notes that although "broad identity categories are an

integral part of the way we make sense of our lives,...they run the risk of stereotyping or

misidentifying people" (p. 64). As such, even in studying a group of entirely White-identifying

individuals, one must be sensitive to how gender identity, (dis)ability, SES, linguistic identity

and other salient aspects are working to complicate any given space.

Whiteness resists being identified as whiteness or as a problem for White people to confront.

White individuals' lack of orientation toward their whiteness may be why, "white,

monolingual writing instructors and graduate students" do not typically have much knowledge

about how to engage in conversations and work relevant to linguistic diversity (Perryman-Clark,

2016, pp. 209-210). White people (whether they realize it or not) and dominant institutions work

to privilege and protect aspects of whiteness, making identifying and calling out the false

neutrality of whiteness challenging (Frankenberg, 1993; Lipsitz, 2018). These efforts are further

made challenging as White people who hold authority in many dominant spaces will typically

struggle with being challenged to think about race and themselves as being racialized beings

(DiAngelo, 2018). Furthermore, just because whiteness is identified and accepted as being

whiteness, it doesn't mean individuals will see it as being problematic. For example, writing

teachers may enable whiteness in their pedagogies through framing their privileging of certain

language varieties as being a pragmatic necessity for students (Canagarajah, 2013; Inoue, 2019a;

Jordan, 2012).

While the above brief list is by no means exhaustive, it does begin to provide a way to

consider some of the core challenges of examining the practices of White teachers as being

influenced by whiteness; furthermore, these four aspects of whiteness helps me, as a White

person who struggles to identify whiteness, both to possibly locate instances of the construct of whiteness in spaces relevant to FYC and illustrate the exigence for doing so. In attempting to distill these four considerations into a singular definition for use in this project, whiteness can perhaps be more simply defined as a *shifting* social construct embedded in major institutions in the U.S. that privileges *together* the bodies and cultural practices of White people—while also insulating those White people from seeing or questioning that privilege—and simultaneously devalues the bodies and ways of being of non-White individuals. I want to emphasize "shifting" as a part of this definition, as the bodies perceived as white and the practices identified as white are not always static. I, additionally, emphasize "together" in this definition to signify how this privileging depends on individuals 1) having access to cultural practices associated with White bodies (e.g. Standardized English) but also, and very importantly here for this project, 2) depends on individuals being perceived as white. The implications for this definition in the context of this project will be discussed further in the findings and discussion sections.

As Frankenberg (1993) writes, speaking about whiteness as a social construct "asserts that there are locations, discourses, and material relations to which the term 'whiteness' applies" (p. 6). In other words, if we believe that whiteness is a social construct embedded to some degree and in some instances in the systems around us, its existence demands study. The challenge then becomes, however, in what ways can educators (particularly White persons like myself) identify whiteness in such a way that is cognizant of both the ways in which it is implicated in individual practices but also the broader pedagogical practices of institution and the field of Writing Studies at large? Given that whiteness resists even identification, it will be necessary to consider in the following chapter the methods engaged in with this project that may help get at this identification

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specific to language ideology, as well as in this chapter how I am theorizing connections between whiteness, writing, (racial) identity, and language ideologies.

2.3 Language Ideologies and Connections to Identity

While it may seem overly obvious to some to state that language or linguistic identity is an important part of how individuals navigate the world and are perceived by others, linguistic identity is often overlooked in broader, public discourse around identity (Alim, Rickford, & Ball, 2016). This gap in public discourse is especially problematic given how often language is used as a proxy for discriminating against a variety of protected classes (Lippi-Green, 2011), particularly influencing how individuals view race (Alim et al., 2016; Inoue, 2019a). Standardized American English (SAE), a language variety that has been referred to by many names/acronyms, is one variety that has been elevated within academic and professional settings in the U.S. (Lippi-Green, 2011), and it is typically what many writing programs teach as writing that follows appropriate conventions or has good grammar (Davila, 2022).

Defining SAE specifically is challenging. This is partially due to scholarly debates concerning whether or not SAE is a variety or simply a "cultural emblem" whose accepted features shift to suit audience's perceptions of the speaker (Flores & Rosa, 2015, p. 152). There are, however, a few ways in which SAE is typically defined: writing that is perceived as "unmarked" (Davila, 2016), associated with good/proper grammar (Davila, 2022), expected within dominant institutions (Lippi-Green, 2011), codified by language authorities (Wolfram & Schilling-Estes, 2006, p. 10), and typically identified through contrastive rhetorics (i.e., what it isn't) against marked/different language (Matsuda, 1997). This last point is particularly important for connecting SAE to ideologies about language, as standardized language varieties are "largely defined by the *absence* of socially disfavored structures" while non-standardized

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varieties often "are typically characterized by [their] *presence*" (Wolfram & Schilling-Estes, 2006, p. 16) [emphasis original]. Despite these challenges and controversies in definition, the connections between SAE, White individuals, and racial injustice is well documented (Baker-Bell, Williams-Farrier, Jackson, Johnson, Kynard, & McMurtry, 2020; Gere et al., 2021; Lippi-Green, 2011). Some scholars prefer to explicitly acknowledge this connection in how they refer to this variety—e.g., White Mainstream English (Smitherman & Alim, 2012; Baker-Bell, 2020). While the aforementioned scholarship discusses associations between SAE and White individuals, SAE is used by many individuals of various racial identities. This clarification is important, just as it is important to clarify that other varieties associated with specific racial demographics, like African American English (AAE), are also not just used exclusively by one population *or* by all members of that population. A person's linguistic positionality and racial positionality, therefore, are not synonymous even though there may exist more or less common associations between those positionalities. It is because of this common association between SAE and White individuals that scholarship has explored this relationship in many ways, e.g., Inoue's (2015) White habitus and Rosa & Flores' (2015) White listening subject.

Regardless of its name, given these perceived connections between White individuals and SAE, SAE is a variety that has been used as a tool of White supremacy via colonialist assessment and education practices (Hammond, 2018). The overwhelming privileged status that SAE has been afforded, through in being used as a tool of colonization and White supremacy via writing education (Gomes, 2018; Hammond, 2018), can make its dominance seem natural or appropriate. Just like one operation of whiteness is how it seems invisible, particularly to White people, so to do this assumptions about the superiority of SAE enable many problematic beliefs about language and oppressive systems.

"Commonsense" notions regarding language present in much media and the attitudes of the general public are fraught with misinformation, e.g., the use of African American English (AAE) encourages criminality, which leads to racist understandings of how language does/should work (Lippi-Green, 2011). This, unfortunately, extends to the space of language/writing classrooms as well. As a classroom space both with historical foundations based on racialized anxieties about students' writing (Elliot, 2005) and generative scholarship on antiracist writing pedagogies (Inoue, 2015), the first-year composition (FYC) classroom within the United States is a site in which instructors may receive, believe, and enact complicated and possibly problematic language ideologies. As Wassink and Curzan (2004) discuss, language ideologies signify "a system of collectively held beliefs or dispositions toward language. More generally, an ideology encompasses those ideas and/or attitudes we hold that in some way characterize us" (p. 175). The line of language inquiry that research emphasizing language ideologies prompts often focuses on how individuals' reactions to language "are not neutral or purely linguistic," rather they are born out of powerful biases "about the intersection of language style and social attributes that usually remain tacit" (Anderson, 2015, p. 780).

To illustrate the biases these ideologies sow, think, for example, of the different kinds of assumptions people might make about a person's intelligence when they perceive a speaker's accent to be an Appalachian accent, French accent, or a Jersey accent. Consider how those assumptions might change depending on the accent of the listener as well—i.e., How much does this other person sound like me or others I know, care for, respect, or dislike? Or, consider how the use of *double negatives* (e.g., "He ain't done nothing…") or AAE verb conjugations in 3rd person (e.g., "She talk…") often gets taken as a sign of (a lack of) a user's intelligence. These, of course, are relevant for written language as well. Take, as another example, the list of "banished

words" Lake Superior State University publishes each year that often features numerous terms associated with younger generations (*Traditions*, n.d.). Think about *singular they* as yet another example; as Curzan (2014a) discusses, *singular they* has been widely used for centuries in written and spoken language, included in the works of Jane Austen and Shakespeare. In fact, the use of *singular they* predates 18th century efforts to prescribe generic he as the preferred singular pronoun. Despite these facts, and use of singular they being endorsed by major organizations such as MLA and APA, there is no shortage of individuals decrying it as improper or harmful. It is perhaps for these reasons that, as Gee (1996) identifies, ideology often carries with it a "slight negative tinge," due to how frequently ideology is associated with both personal and systemic biases (p. 1). Ideologies then don't just necessarily reveal how we perceive others but also how we see ourselves in relation to others (Wortham, 2001). For example, consider how much of the current fervor against *singular they* is less about language or grammar and is rather about how language can be used as a proxy for discriminating against transgender and non-binary individuals.

Unfortunately, pointing out the long history of a contested term like *singular the*y and its frequent usage won't necessarily change a person's mind on the subject. As Lawson, Vosniadou, Van Deur, Wyra1, & Jeffries (2019) explain, beliefs are not held by individuals in isolation. Rather beliefs exist as clusters within belief systems that are an "evolving structure" connecting multiple beliefs across a variety of topics that are "activated, depending on the context, to interpret incoming information" (p. 230). An individual who holds binary views on gender identity is likely going to have those views affect how they use or view *singular they*, as we aren't ever just talking about language when we talk about language (Lippi-Green, 2011). To summarize, our ideologies—which are shaped by our positionalities in ways that foster biases—

do affect our views on the world around us and our place in it. To unpack this understanding of language ideologies further and the complications that can occur when attempting to examine ideologies, I want to take a short detour to briefly review some of the literature on teacher beliefs to examine how beliefs (aka ideologies) may or may not align with practices and possible reasons for their alignment and divergence.

As research into teacher practices has shown, beliefs affect teachers' practices in the classroom (Lawson et al., 2019; Pajares, 1992). However, beliefs are not always rational or consistent (Lawson et al., 2019), and this is true for beliefs about writing and language education in particular. As Phipps and Borg (2009) demonstrate in their study of teachers' beliefs and practices regarding grammar instruction, there exists a tension between "theoretical or idealistic beliefs" about how things should be versus the practices teachers use based on their lived experiences and actual classroom spaces (p. 382). However, these tensions were not necessarily due to hypocrisy on the part of the teacher, rather failure to enact beliefs into practice can be due to a variety of contextual factors, such as time constraints and institutional regulations—such as course goals (Mao & Crosthwaite, 2019; Phipps & Borg, 2009).

What this means is that although beliefs do affect teachers' practices in the classroom, it is not possible to study teacher beliefs by just observing classroom practices and materials—as one would only be seeing a version of their beliefs potentially warped by external constraints. However, the opposite approach to studying teacher beliefs also presents challenges. In studying these beliefs, one can't simply *just* ask teachers about their beliefs, as teachers may then only present their idealistic beliefs (Phipps & Borg, 2009). What this means for research examining beliefs about language, such as projects studying language ideologies, is that researchers must take care to navigate understanding participants' idealistic beliefs versus their actual practice in

designing studies that involve both explicit discussion about beliefs as well as examinations of actual practices or interactions with classroom materials. More on the challenges of designing such a project will be discussed in the methodology chapter of this dissertation.

Since we know that ideologies/beliefs do affect practice in the classroom, I want to return now to unpacking relationships between language ideologies and whiteness in FYC. In both my personal experience being a White instructor and in my experiences interacting with other White instructors, I can attest that the perceived superiority of SAE (and thereby the inferiority of other varieties) persists within the beliefs of many (White) writing instructors in terms of what they consider appropriate, successful, or good academic writing. Lippi-Green (2011) uses the term Standard Language Ideology (SLI), which she defines as "[a] bias toward an abstracted, idealized, homogenous spoken language which is imposed and maintained by dominant bloc institutions and which names as its model the written language, but which is drawn primarily from the spoken language of the upper middle class" (p. 67). Significantly for the focus of this project, this bias then manifests itself in acts of subordination "which are used to legitimize the values of the mainstream [e.g., White middle and upper middle class speakers/writers] and to devalue non-conforming language varieties" (p. 69).

As Lippi-Green's (2011) phrase "acts of subordination" implies, "[i]deology carries with it connotations of the exercise of power…" (Philips, 1998, p. 213), beliefs in SLIs then may—as Curzan (2002) gets at too—influence the role writing instructors believe they are supposed to serve in the classroom. These narratives about the writing instructor as an unforgiving grader whose job it is to penalize students' for non-SAE usages are strong and can possibly influence how instructors believe they are supposed to view and treat language difference. These ideologies often seem to be simultaneously at the surface level of instructors' language beliefs—

e.g. commonsense beliefs about what is correct or wrong—but also challenging to locate due to the deep-seated convictions individual's may have about language (Silverstein, 1998). All this means that in identifying and pushing back on harmful language ideologies, writing educators need "to think carefully about kinds and degrees of explicitness, and about their locations and relations, in characterizing language ideologies" (Philips, 1998, pp. 222-223). While the shifting nature of ideologies and their deep-seated nature make them challenging to confront and identify, when talking about SLIs, it can be helpful to view them as a partial byproduct of whiteness manifested through preferences toward language-use, as SLIs encourage privileging the language of White individuals while simultaneously oppressing the varieties of non-White individuals.

This use of language ideology to position oneself racially, ethnically, and culturally is, however, not unique to SLI and whiteness. As Podesva (2016) describes, "[t]he role that language plays in constructing race and ethnicity cannot be overstated" as individuals may utilize a variety of language resources and preferences to position themselves within identity categories (p. 203). However, what is unique about how whiteness, SLI, and SAE operate together is how these ideologies are (re)produced so efficiently through *systemic* means within educational and professional spaces. Asao Inoue's (2015) concept of a "white racial habitus" is a useful starting point to begin to unpack how individual and institutional uncritical language judgements systemically foster SLIs. Inoue (2015) describes this phenomenon of whiteness relevant to judgements about language as being a part of an "assessment ecology," which acts as a political system in which shifting dynamics of power, parts, purposes, people, processes, products, and places work to produce certain outcomes (p. 16). Furthermore, Gere et al. (2021)—in their discussion of more critical language pedagogies— illustrate how this habitus connects specifically to SAE and "historically has privileged white middle- and upper-class speakers and

writers" (p. 395). In privileging one variety (SAE) that is associated with White speakers of certain social classes, this white racial habitus of assessment produces language ideologies and pedagogies that position individuals and their language ability (or perceived lack thereof) against a social construct of whiteness: a construct that limits "acceptable" linguistic varieties through racist logics (e.g., Gloria Anzaldúa's (1987) discussion of "linguistic terrorism." Yet, as previously mentioned, these constructs of whiteness are challenging to uncover as they may often seem invisible to those of us socialized to accept them as being natural, inevitable, or beneficial (Lederman & Warwick, 2018, p. 248). As such, local work within individual institutions needs to be done to help define and understand how these harmful, naturalized constructs are more individually functioning for people who, due to their positionality, may be unable/unwilling to recognize them.

Figure II.1. Relationship between Whiteness and SAE within White Habitus

SLI
The positioning of SAE as superior or preferable to other varieties through language subordination.

Whiteness
Cultural habits associated with White individuals (of which language is included).

Relationship between Whiteness and SAE within White Habitus

SAE
A language variety associated with school and professional environments and often seen as unmarked.

White Supremacy
The positioning of whiteness as neutral/natural or beneficial and the implicit or explicit enforcement of whiteness.

Figure II.1 above illustrates one conceptualization of the relationship between Whiteness, White supremacy, SAE, as well as SLI and how those build between one another a White habitus in which White individuals and SAE repeatedly reinforce one another through a continual process in which White supremacy helps elevate SAE through SLIs and SLIs do the inverse. The impetus for attempting to disrupt such a process in a local context by examining connections between race and language—with White instructors especially—exists, in particular as the "normativity" of whiteness is unevenly effective (Frankenberg, 1993, p. 6); this is to say, the effects of whiteness are more or less visible to individuals depending on their proximity to whiteness (Inoue, 2019b). As such, SLIs may operate within the practices of White teachers without them intending to be racist or cause racialized harm. In simpler terms, a program or an instructor doesn't have to try to be racist to create a racist outcome (Inoue, 2015, p. 9). To be

clear, pointing how institutions, instructors, and ourselves are enacting values of White

supremacy through language practices is "not making claims about the morality or goodness of

people or institutions" (Inoue, 2020, p. 151), rather it is necessary to do this work to illustrate

how perceptions of SAE as a neutral force have become so central to the writing habitus of FYC

and problematize our assumptions about what is good or necessary in the space of FYC. Even

inaction—through failing to adequately address the harm of SLIs— results in harm toward

students as "racial hierarchies and linguistic hierarchies are connected" (Baker-Bell, 2020, p. 2).

And, this work to address these harms by rejecting the ideologies fostered in Figure II.1, without

excusing or attempting to rationalize SLI in the classroom or elsewhere, is *linguistic justice* (pp.

7-8).

It is precisely because "racial and ethnic identities are (re)created through continuous and

repeated language use" (Alim et al., 2016), and can therefore be denied or privileged in the

writing classroom, that the intention with which individual actors within university systems—

e.g. instructors, institutions, administrations—take less critical approaches to talking about

language are irrelevant in determining how or if they are enacting White supremacist values

(Inoue, 2020). And when even the instructors of a writing course aren't critically teaching how

certain language varieties have been elevated or oppressed and how we should problematizes

notions of "appropriacy," it would seem unlikely that many of their students (particularly for

those for whom the habitus is similarly "invisible") would come to question this White racial

habitus either. These historical and ongoing mistreatments of linguistic difference—focused

often alongside racialized and nationalistic conversations—have worked to position White

supremacist ideals as neutral regarding what academic writing should look like and how

instructors should teach it, as such it is necessary to problematize these notions of how we talk

about language, for White writing instructors in particular. Given the longstanding, systemic nature of these issues, it is worth taking a moment now to unpack how the site of FYC became a place that fosters whiteness through SLIs.

2.4 The Site of FYC: Examining Intersections between Whiteness & Language Ideologies

When instructors do not consider carefully how whiteness is operating in their judgments of language, "racism is bound to happen" (Inoue, 2015, p. 18). However, as mentioned previously, identifying whiteness is a challenging process given the prevalence of White teachers, how normalized whiteness is in higher education, and in how SLIs are intertwined with the writing classroom in particular. In the context of the writing classroom, these SLIs manifest themselves in our assessments, i.e., the tools we use to evaluate writing such as rubrics and our feedback on writing, as "a set of structures in our reading and judging practices" that are historically associated with White bodies and therefore are inherently racialized and disparately affect students in the composition classroom (Inoue, 2019a, p. 374). Despite movements toward more linguistically inclusive writing pedagogies being well advocated for throughout many decades (SRTOL, 1974), writing courses and programs that emphasize the superiority of SAE are still common (Davila, 2022).

As Fairclough (1992) writes, acknowledging the multiplicity of linguistic resources in a classroom but still choosing to uncritically elevate SAE as more appropriate "is dressing up inequality as diversity" (p. 15). Frequently, these uncritical elevations of SAE are enacted by writing teachers through disparaging other language varieties as being inappropriate or wrong and by demanding users of those varieties to code-switch in saying, "That language is just a bit too informal or not quite appropriate for this classroom—but feel free to speak it at home!" Through assessment of students' writing, SAE is given a privileged position in the classroom,

often by justifying this privileging as being a pragmatic "necessity"—i.e. it is for the benefit of the student that we exclude certain language varieties (Canagarajah, 2013). In then setting up a racialized exigency by privileging SAE in the classroom that then reinforces that privileged status of SAE at the local institution and creates further exigencies for instructors to privilege SAE, instructors foster racialized and self-sustaining multidirectional colonialist projects (Gomes, 2018). By not engaging in more critical conversations about language with students, these efforts by instructors create the exigency for racialized harm, enact racialized harm, and then attempt to rationalize that racialized harm in the name of "helping" students of color

2.4.1 A Brief History of SLI in FYC: Understanding How We Got to Here

Gere et al. (2021) note how, in the writing classroom, "linguistic prejudices played a structural role in reinforcing social prejudices." Writing Studies has a history of educators dismissing concerns and choosing choosing (as it is very much a choice) not to make explicit to themselves or their students the relevance of race to the practice of writing education (Bloom, 1996). In particular, Hammond (2018) notes how educational practices of the early twentieth century and beyond enacted progressive racism, or "efforts to contain, eradicate, or rehabilitate racionational alterity by means of education and assimilationist inclusion," with the space of the English classroom serving importantly as a site of "positioning of linguistic difference as an affront to American homogeneity… [which may be viewed] "as a linguistic front for advancing white normativity and supremacy" (pp. 52-53). The effects of this kind of progressive racism within the U.S. on individuals' language ideology is evidenced throughout the years by scholars such as Gloria Anzaludúa (1987) and Lippi-Green (2011), demonstrated clearly by the national anxieties present in conversations on language education, such as those found surrounding the Oakland "Ebonics" controversy (Delpit, 2002), and proclaimed loudly by politicians and many

of their constituents through the numerous instances of and efforts to enact English-only legislation throughout the United States in response to anti-immigrant sentiments (Dayton-Wood, 2010). In the classroom, the legacy of these harmful acts continues frequently in how instructors take color-blind approaches to scholarship and pedagogy to "help" students that do little to nothing to address the troubling legacy of the field. While the outcomes of these policies and beliefs based in varying combinations of hatred, a false sense of pragmatism, and/or ignorance are numerous and extend beyond just the context of education, one of these, as Flowers (2019) writes, has been to normalize for writing instructors SLIs through presenting Writing Studies as being "an English- only enterprise" (p. 33).

One result of this lack of consideration has been to establish within the writing classroom, a "tacit language policy of unidirectional English monolingualism [that] continues to influence its theory and practice in shadowy, largely unexamined ways" (Horner & Trimbur, 2002, pp. 594-595). In the context of the FYC classroom, "English-only" and "English-monolingualism" can often be connected to "SAE-only", and further examples of the field's unwillingness to engage explicitly with the ways in which writing education practices are racialized and the assumption of English-only types of education and whiteness being neutral are numerous. For example, Clary-Lemon (2009) found in examining how scholars in the journal *College Composition and Communication* that race has been discussed using increasingly ambiguous terminology. Similarly, Hammond (2019) found explicit discussion about race typically marginalized in his review of over twenty years of scholarship published in *Assessing Writing*. Furthermore, while policy documents and disciplinary guidelines have been published by institutions such as Conference on College Composition and Communication (CCCC) that do make explicit and more meaningful connections between race and language as well as writing

and language (see Baker-Bell et al., 2020; CCCC Statement on Ebonics, 2016; CCCC Guideline on National Language Policy, 2018), some recent guidelines—such as the CCCC statement on "Preparing Teachers of College Writing" (2015)—still fail to critically interrogate language in saying that instructors of FYC should possess "linguistic knowledge: an understanding of professional genres and conventions for writing." The use of "professional" and "conventions" here goes unproblematized and are therefore falsely positioned as neutral or natural aspects of instructor knowledge and training. As Baker-Bell (2020) notes, discussions of writing utilizing ambiguous (but not really) terminology about professionalism or appropriacy often lean heavily on racialized ideas without making explicit the social-cultural factors that underlie these concepts. And if the racist values inherent within SLIs aren't being critically examined and explicitly unpacked in writing classrooms, what does that mean for how our pedagogies might be further enabling a present and a future for a white racial habitus? As Smitherman (2017) writes, "mis-educated children grow up to be mis-educated adults" (p. 6).

Critiques, however, of English-only approaches to language education aren't new. Students' Rights to Their Own Language (SRTOL) (1974), and the numerous texts it inspired, worked to make pedagogies that centered linguistic rights, student identity, and race more common in the writing classroom. However, while SRTOL has certainly been aspirational and foundational to decades of research across the fields of Writing Studies and linguistics, it may not be representative of the kind of more critical approach to language needed to identify and push back on SLIs. Although SRTOL has served and continues to serve as a touchstone for discussions about language difference in the FYC classrooms, its potential to serve as a guide for instructors to move beyond just imagined practices and into meaningful action has been critiqued (Kynard, 2013). As Gere et al. (2021) note, a reading of SRTOL that reinforces the White

supremacist language values and the anti-Black racism—present in many discussion of code-switching in classrooms (Baker-Bell, 2020)—isn't exactly impossible: "A perfectly valid response to SRTOL is for teachers to take a 'not wrong, just different' approach to language diversity in the classroom" (Gere et al., 2021, p. 393). Language diversity in this context refers to the multitude of linguistic resources students bring into their FYC, many of which may not be recognized by the instructor or student as SAE. As Shapiro (2022) notes, the goal of instructors who actually want to work toward encouraging linguistic diversity in the classrooms is not to take a neutral stance toward the topic or even *just* affirm the student's right to use that variety: "we also want to promote our students' rhetorical agency—to empower them to use language for a variety of academic, professional, civic, and personal purposes" (p. 3). As such, a document like SRTOL perhaps represents the kind of approach to Language Awareness (LA) that Fairclough (1992) describes, in summarizing the work of Hawkins (1984, pp. 171-175), that LA "takes the position that it is vital for schools to teach pupils standard English, while treating the diversity of language in the classroom as 'a potential resource of great richness', and recognising that all language varieties of languages 'have their rightful and proper place' in children's repertoires and 'each serves good purposes'" (p. 12). The problem with such an approach like LA is, however, is that even in proclaiming the values of non-SAE varieties, it still places SAE at the top of a hierarchy and—by proxy—White people through neglecting to question the "vital" nature of SAE.

Perhaps then these mixed messages that pedagogical language statements like SRTOL may be sending, the lack of linkage between language theory and language praxis (Smitherman, 2017), and periods of declining interest in explicit discussions of language within the field of Writing Studies (MacDonald, 2007) is why some teachers have found it challenging to address

systemic issues of race and language in the classroom. There seems to be a need for scholarship that works with teachers to identify, through critical forms of inquiry, their current language ideologies to consider implications for how instructors might move beyond aspirational approaches (e.g. LA approaches) and English-only approaches to more critical language pedagogies. What can be uncovered in discussions with teachers when we consider language as inextricably connected to issues of identity? How can more critical inquiries lend insights into the ways in which SAE is privileged as being a "neutral" and superior form of communication? What possibilities exist when teachers and classrooms make visible such issues of language ideology in academic writing? Even if the purpose of such investigations into instructors' language ideologies are exploratory—and not necessarily intervention based—instructors who due to privilege have not had to thoroughly consider intersections between their positionality and language ideologies still may benefit from such an act of critical inquiry and personal reflection.

As Bourdieu (1991) writes in *Language and Symbolic Power*,

> The game is over when people start wondering if the cake is worth the candle. The struggles among writers over the legitimate art of writing contribute, through their very existence, to producing both the legitimate language, defined by its distance from the 'common' language, and belief in its legitimacy (p. 58).

2.5 The Need for Further Research on White Writing Instructors' Ideologies

It is important for research examining U.S. postsecondary writing pedagogy to take a critical eye toward how the language ideologies of White teachers may encourage them to frame language diversity in their classrooms as deficit by studying how White teachers might reflect on their language ideologies to develop pedagogies that better navigate discussions of language. These kinds of project falls inline with with the work Asao Inoue (2019b) called for in his CCCC keynote speech in asking instructors to build "more radical, antiracist, and anti-White language supremacist" practices into the ways instructors teach and assess language in the writing

classroom (p. 366). Inoue's work here encouraging writing instructors to make explicit connections between language and race of course echos the calls of linguists such as Geneva Smitherman (2017), who write that this "moment calls for language arts teachers to be bold and courageous; to talk more about and teach more about language and/as race…to exert leadership in the rejection of English-only and Standard English-only policies and practices" (p. 10).

As recent scholarship has demonstrated (see Baker-Bell, 2020; Coleman, DeLong, DeVore, Gibney, & Kuhne, 2016; Elliot, 2005; Gere et al, 2021; Hammond, 2019; Inoue, 2015/2019a/2019b; Perryman-Clark, 2016), the field of Writing Studies, the FYC classroom, and higher education more broadly has frequently worked to erase the presence of people of color and minimize the importance of race on the study of discursive practices. However, in teaching writing, race and racism is always central to our work, whether or not we admit it. Racism functions in our judgments of language as teachers when our orientations toward language don't permit all of the linguistic resources of our students from being valued (Inoue, 2015, p. 26). While acknowledging the validity of language difference may be in some small way preferable to an alternative approach that solely reinforces SLIs, if instructors do not work to critically move beyond acknowledgement of the presence of white supremacist language practices in the abstract and into deep investigation into the ways SLIs are present in their pedagogies, teachers may continue to enact them through their own limited vision (Inoue, 2019a, p. 357).

Simply being aware of language difference as a concept isn't enough; educators need to build a critical awareness about language through examining and dismantling harmful language ideologies in their practices and classrooms. As Alim (2005) writes concerning practices of language subordination, "our goal should be arming [people] with the silent weapons needed for the quiet, discursive wars that are waged daily against their language and person" (p. 29). While

SRTOL and other LA pedagogies may help to empower students and acknowledge the multiplicity of linguistic resources present, a critical approach to can help provide students and the instructor with the resources "for engaging if they so wish in the long-term, multifaceted struggles in various social domains (including education) which are necessary to resolve [language problems]" (Fairclough, 1992, p. 13). The question then becomes (for those interested in instructor education), how do you support instructors in this long-term and significant project? Perhaps the more immediate question is simply, where do you even start?

2.5.1 Why White Writing Educators?: White Educators as a Focus of Inquiry

As Feagin, Vera, and Batur (2000) assert, "the key to understanding white racism is to be found not only in what Whites think of African Americans and other people of color but also in what *whites think of themselves*" (p. 5) [emphasis original]. I specifically point toward the need to study the language ideologies of White educators, as although whiteness operates within all individuals regardless of their racial identity (Lipsitz, 2018, p. 579), the effects and manifestations of white language supremacy are undoubtedly less visible to White-identifying persons (Inoue, 2019b). Choosing to focus on White instructors for this project is a significant choice based on my reading of scholarly work, my personal experiences working with instructors, and my status as a White-identifying FYC instructor. Placing the spotlight on White educators specifically can also help to avoid furthering racist harm. In multiracial groups that discuss race, White people tend to use their privilege to stay silent or engage directly in hostile acts toward Black, Indigenous people of color (BIPOC) individuals—an act that happens often in white-dominante group spaces (Amos, 2016)—or, as Omi (2001) found in surveying hundreds of organizations involved in fostering conversations/activities between various racial groups, the

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group's efforts may primarily center "the goal of substantively transforming white attitudes toward people of color" (p. 290).

While studies have sought to examine whiteness relative to White elementary and secondary educators (Amos, 2016; Crowley, 2019; Mason, 2016; McIntyre, 1997), there exists significantly little research that focuses specific inquiry on White teachers' language ideologies, whiteness, FYC writing pedagogy and intersections between the three. While this gap may in part be perhaps because language ideology often goes unconsidered in discussions of race (Alim et al., 2016), even within the field of Writing Studies, qualitative human research that focuses on White writing teachers' language ideologies is scant, despite the presence of these ideologies being of much interest to the research (Inoue, 2019). Therefore, while whiteness is part of how we judge language no matter who we are as writing instructors (Inoue, 2019a, p. 375), I want to focus my research specifically on White instructors and ways to help them reflect on their positionality and whiteness.

In my experience teaching writing classes at both secondary and postsecondary institutions, I believe too often the writing classroom is portrayed as a space where well meaning White instructors can just show up and teach "good" language because they use "good" language. What do we expect to happen when these instructors due to their racial and linguistic privilege haven't had to more deeply engage with questions of race, language, and pedagogy? What about when they haven't even had to consider critically what the implications of their construct of "good" writing are? What does the local assessment ecology of a writing program look like when these instructors make up a significant portion if not (as is often the case) the majority of instructors? How can White people problematize the efforts and assumptions of well-meaning White instructors? As White instructors may be misinformed about language and may

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have been reticent to engage with challenges concerning racial and linguistic diversity in which

they are very much implicated, it would seem beneficial to find ways to encourage White-

identifying instructors to further inform themselves, reflect on their pedagogical practices and

personal beliefs, and use their authority as instructors to better co-create spaces of critical

language exploration with their students.

2.5.2 Creating a Participatory Space for White Instructors to Interrogate their (Standard) Language Ideologies

As White, monolingual teachers, like myself, with limited understandings of race and

language attempt to engage in research to "help" or "improve practices" they may produce

further harm. Indeed, White teachers, who may or may not believe that they had the best of

intentions, have a history of harming students and their colleagues of color in misguided and

harmful attempts to "save" individuals. As Coleman et al. (2016) warn, the "grandiose vision of

pedagogical prowess [from White people] leads to the racist and patronizing interactions

burdening, excluding, and even damaging the health and lives of colleagues and students of color

alike" (p. 364). As Milner IV (2007) discusses, racial and cultural backgrounds influence how

we experience the world, what is emphasized or elided in research, and how the experiences of

others are evaluated (p. 395). All of this is to say that in attempting to do work concerning race

and language as a White monolingual person, there is a lot that I can't see at the surface level and

many opportunities for me and other White people like me to produce only self-serving research

that does nothing but paternalize and harm minoritized individuals in the name of "helping"

them.

So what should the response be from White people interested in this kind of research? As

Shapiro (2022) writes, if the status quo of a white habitus of assessment isn't the answer, "What

do we do, instead?" (p. 7). If we get rid of or try to push back at manifestations of whiteness in the form of SLIs by utilizing more linguistically diverse readings, assignments, course goals, and assessment methods, what do we then fill that now empty space on our syllabi with? While not speaking directly about White instructors, Shawna Sharipiro (also a White writing instructor) responds that in the face of such challenges, teachers are more likely to simply "tinker at the edges of their curriculum" instead of making meaningful changes (p. 13). The simple fact that such a tension seems irreconcilable shows how deeply rooted whiteness is within the space of FYC. When writing educators can recognize their current pedagogical methods and the history those methods draw on as being racist and aspects of White supremacy, but they feel unable to abandon those methods for fear of the mysterious unknown or institutional reprisal, saying that FYC is a site of ongoing colonialist practices should not be a controversial statement.

I, however, make no claims here about having answers to these tensions and questions. Like many of my White colleagues, rejection of the White habitus fills parts of me with apprehension, especially given how much such a habitus has (and continues to) privilege me in my academic career. However, making the move to foster antiracist practices in FYC should not be framed around a language of instructor comfort. It shouldn't matter whether or not instructors are comfortable talking about and navigating language critically in their own classrooms. We are already and always are sending messages to our students about language and race. As Alim, Rickford, & Ball (2016) write, "we are constantly orienting to race while at the same time denying [it]." To frame the conversation around instructors' comfort or perceived inabilities to critically examine their own language ideologies is to selfishly distract from the harm being enacted in our classrooms.

What I do offer here, based on my reading of the literature, is one possibility for White educators to have more honest and transparent conversations about these topics to help our field better understand the challenges it faces in pushing toward a more anti-racist future. Broadly speaking, the scholarship concerning FYC has been less interested in pursuing research into White instructors' perceptions of their classroom spaces and more interested in examining the effects and materials that whiteness produce (Baker-Bell, 2020; Inoue, 2015; Inoue & Poe, 2012; Poe, Inoue, & Elliot, 2018). While examining the systems and artifacts such systems produce is a necessary endeavor, it seems equally as worthwhile to investigate the beliefs and biases of, perhaps, the most influential gatekeepers of the classroom itself: the writing educator. While Gere et al. (2021) urge compositionists to move the field's antiracist efforts forward by creating publications, policies, and histories of the field through communal revisions that center social justice in a process they refer to as, "justicing," I would add to this list an additional, perhaps more locally based, "P": participation. Participating in critical discussion of both language and identity and then attempting to create a space in which to make visible the false-neutrality of SLIs and how those ideologies appear in our pedagogies seems like it could be one additional way to push the field toward more equitable ends. Although focusing on undergraduate students, Rounsaville, Milu, and Schneier (2022) found that participating in course discussions that centered more critical discussions of language and identity allowed their students to develop the skills and language necessary to do this kind of justice-oriented language work.

However, creating a "productive" space for White educators to participate in these conversations is incredibly challenging. As many other studies have found (McIntyre, 1997; DiAngelo, 2018; Levine-Rasky 2011; Milner IV, 2007), White people have a hard time talking about race. Perhaps most well-known would be DiAngelo's (2018) concept of "White fragility",

which she describes as acts such as color blindness, silence, refusal to enter group space, good/bad binary of racism, denial of connections between race and language, and other outbursts and types of behaviors that might be categorized as the kinds of harm White progressives produce believing that they (by virtue of being a "progressive") can't be enacting White supremacy (DiAngelo, 2018; Inoue, 2019). Given these challenges, further consideration of the patterns with which White people engage in conversations around race and the implications of having a White facilitator in such a space is needed.

2.5.3 Further Introspection and Examination of Researcher Positionality

As a White educator who wants to study how other White composition instructors navigate language diversity in their classrooms and help those instructors to identify and resist the ways whiteness is working in their pedagogical practices through embracing an approach of critical language awareness (CLA), my positionality is vitally relevant to this work in multiple ways. Firstly, there is the issue of my White body and the ways whiteness has shaped my experiences and continues to shape them toward seeing whiteness as neutral or natural. As such it is worth being mindful throughout this process of what remains invisible to me. Furthermore, in engaging in classroom research and just being present in that space, my body can perpetuate White supremacy (Inoue, 2019b, p. 357). This means that regardless of my intentions or goals as a researcher/instructor, my body always carries with it a history of racism and as such can very well be read as a threat or endorsement of SLIs by students and other instructors.

Given these facts, it is worth pausing to ask why I, as a White person, should even engage in this type of participatory research. Could I help other White instructors discuss and investigate these challenges even as many of them may remain invisible to me? Will my work with these teachers cause others to experience harm or an increased amount of harm? Will my efforts to

make visible and discuss with White instructors the SLIs present in our pedagogies backfire in some way? Melaku and Beeman (2020) writes about "liberal white supremacy" —or, "the tendency of White people to constantly place themselves in the superior moral position" when they engage in antiracist work for self-serving purposes that ultimately still reenact White supremacy. Given the ease with which myself and others involved in such work may fall into that kind of thinking, it is necessary for myself and the other White instructors involved such projects to continually examine our motivations for being involved in conversations around language ideologies and whiteness and how our work may actually be still centering SLIs in scholarship and practices. However, in conducting participatory work with other White instructors, my identities as White and monolingual can also be framed as an asset for enabling access into the ideologies and experiences of my participants.

There are of course further considerations needed to be voiced regarding the design of this study. In doing work like this on whiteness and language ideology, it is necessary to be mindful of how centering the experiences of White people (whose voices are almost always centered) may reproduce harm. How can this space be more than a whiteness studies space that simply just enables "a discourse of Whites talking to other Whites, those with relatively higher levels of race consciousness convincing others with race amnesia how race really matters in their lives" (Leonardo, 2014, p. 97)? Gathering together a group of White people to point fingers at one another in an effort to feel morally superior does nothing. In fact, these conversations if not carefully approached may produce further harm in encouraging a type of "race to the bottom," where as long as a person doesn't perceive themselves as being the most racist White person in the group then they believe they are okay. Perhaps most concerning for the design of projects that examine whiteness with White people are the words of Zeus Leonardo (2014); in his critique

of what he argues as being the overly white nature of whiteness studies, Leonardo asks, "How does a privileged group work through the reasons to dissolve its own advantages?" (p. 85). Concerns about the sincerity and the ends to which privileged persons engage in such work need, clearly, to be forefronted in any project such as this. As Ansley (2010) notes, "[W]hites resist an end to white supremacy; they have a stake in the system and they will fight to defend it" (p. 593). In what ways implicitly and explicitly do White people "fight" to maintain White supremacist practices in FYC pedagogies? How do White people recognize (or not) these moments in reflecting on their beliefs and practices? Furthermore, in emphasizing racial identity in studies of whiteness and language ideology, in what ways do studies such as this limit a more intersectional approach to whiteness study by "flattening"—i.e. accentuating or eliding differences and commonalities between us (Alexander & Rhodes, 2014)— participants' experiences?

As Borsheim-Black (2015) notes, discourses of whiteness circulate at all levels (individual and institutional) in English education contexts; therefore, interventions need to be made at every level to "interrupt the status quo" of whiteness in these spaces (p. 425). As best as I am able, I have outlined the exigence for working cooperatively with White teachers like myself to make visible and problematize our language ideologies. In short, the goal then in this project was for me and my fellow participants to join in a regular practice of problematizing how our pedagogies and identity as White people are potentially creating a classroom space in which SLI both enable and are enabled by a white racial habitus. In co-creating such a space, my hope was to leverage the affordances of participatory research to develop a "mutually humanizing [relationship] through dialogical encounters" with these instructors (Moreno & Rutledge, 2020, p. 779). Through engaging in such a project in such a space, we attempted together to construct what Gere et al (2021) call for in their revision of the Framework for Success in Postsecondary

Writing: a space for instructors to "reflect on language choices, practices, and identities" (p. 401), in order to reinvision our pedagogical practices and beliefs about language toward antiracist purposes.

2.6 Conclusion

If scholars studying language ideologies want their work to reach the broadest public possible, they need to think about how to educate educators to talk about language (Curzan, 2002, p. 341). As White instructors may be misinformed about language and may have been reticent to engage with challenges concerning racial and linguistic diversity in which they are very much implicated, it would seem beneficial to find ways to encourage White-identifying instructors to further inform themselves, reflect on their pedagogical practices and personal beliefs, and use their authority as instructors to better co-create spaces of critical language exploration with their students. While issues of whiteness need to be considered intersectionally—following in the footsteps of similar studies that have examined White elementary and secondary teachers and the effects of their white identities on their pedagogy (Levine-Rasky 2011; McIntyre, 1997)—I want to emphasize racial identity in working with White instructors to critically reflect on the language ideologies White instructors may possess and share through their pedagogical practices that normalize whiteness within FYC spaces. I prioritize race in this examination because of both the aforementioned gap in the scholarship at the intersection of these issues and due to how studying whiteness with White people requires an intense centering of the issue. While White people's voices and concerns are often centered in conversations of pedagogy, race, and whiteness, they are not often centered in a way that requires them to meaningfully engage in introspection, vulnerability, and action, in a way that requires them to do more than nod politely along. Inoue (2019b) justified the need for

scholarship to focus on whiteness and language ideology as it relates to white racial identity in his CCCC Chair's address.

> I have seen White people [smile at the words of their colleagues of color], then not take them, turn and go on in their White world, a world that rewards their silence and hesitation ... I stand up here today asking everyone to listen, to see, to know you as you are, to stop saying shit about injustice while doing jack shit about it. We are all needed in this project, this fight, this work, these labors. But because most in the room, in our disciplines, are White, I have to speak to them too, many of whom sit on their hands, with love in their hearts, but stillness in their bodies. Let us have tough compassion for our White colleagues. They don't have the years of anti-White language supremacy training we do. They've been paid off too many times to even recognize the bribes. Many even think they earned the bribes they take. It is their wages, or as David Roediger says, it is the "wages of whiteness." They've never lived in the same worlds we have. And it ain't all their fault. But finding fault ain't the point. Change is. Revolution. Reconciliation. Redemption (pp. 355-356).

Critical knowledge about the connections between language, identity, and power must be understood by all instructors of FYC. As Inoue (2020) says, negotiations or compromises can be useful in the classroom, but "when it comes to racism and White supremacy, compromise means you allow part of the unfair system to remain" (p. 136). If we accept the truth that language is inextricably linked to race, ethnicity, as well as class and other identities (Kynard, 2013; Lippi-Green, 2011; Smitherman, 2017), and if we accept that academic institutions have privileged certain language varieties—which, as mentioned, are linked to identity—both historically and in the present (Baker-Bell, 2020; Inoue, 2015), then finding ways to help White instructors reflect on and problematize their language ideologies seems like a worthy endeavor.

Chapter 3: Investigating Whiteness as a White Educator: Participatory Research as a Methodology of Individual and Communal Praxis

3.1 Introduction

In this chapter, I will provide an overview of the methodology and methods for my study. As a part of this, I will unpack both the theoretical framework with which I engaged in this space with instructors, the context for the institution from which participants came, information on the participants themselves and how they were recruited, and of course how I approached and enacted my data collection and analysis. While I explain the various stages of data collection and analysis throughout this chapter, I have also created the flowchart below (see Figure III.1) to more immediately illustrate how participants and myself navigated the multiple stages of this study. Within this chapter, I begin with an overview describing the methodological traditions I will be drawing on in conducting this research project, by providing a brief overview of the theory behind the methods I am using. The discussion then will continue with an examination of the specific design of this project: describing the focus groups, the coding procedures, the discussion group, the interviews, and more. This chapter then culminates with an examination of the limitations of my design.

Figure III.1. Flowchart of Data Collection Process

Group Sessions (n=9)

Group Session 1:
Project Overview +
Positionality
Discussion

Group Session 2:
Examining Course
Goals + Readings

Focus Groups (n=14)

Focus Group 1

Focus Group 2

Focus Group 3

Recruitment via
listserv +
survey

Codebook
Creation +
Recruitment
for Discussion
Group

Group Session 3:
Reading Student
Papers

Group Session 4:
Syllabi + Assessment
Methods

Group Session 5:
Responding to Student
Writing

Individual Debrief
Interviews with all
9 instructors

Revision of
Codebook

Nvivo Analysis

Member-Checking
with all instructors

Final Analysis

3.2 Research Questions

While the methods of this project required flexibility and cooperation, in order to provide guidance within which we could operate, the broad goals of this study were captured as the research questions listed below. My questions begin, as Agee (2009) suggests, with a broad guiding question—containing multiple sub questions—to serve as a starting point for inquiry. The remaining questions and sub questions then serve to focus exploration on possible findings, interventions, limitations, and implications for further research.

1. What language ideologies can be found within the expressed beliefs, practices, and materials of White-identifying FYC instructors?

    a. In what ways do White writing instructors believe their racial positionality is relevant to their pedagogical practices?
    b. What kinds of writing construct(s) do these White FYC instructors seem to privilege in their beliefs, practices, and materials?
    c. How are language ideologies manifested in these instructors' materials, beliefs, and practices?

2. How do discussions and reflections on language ideologies and their own classroom practices/materials help White instructors to interrogate connections between language ideologies and their positionality?

    a. How do these White instructors reflect together on their own identities, beliefs, and pedagogical practices within this design group?
    b. In what ways do the instructors' varied positionalities complicate notions about what it means to be a White writing instructor?
    c. What obstacles and assets exist within this participatory space for instructors to engage in these conversations about language ideology, whiteness, and writing pedagogy?

3. What kinds of participatory supports do White-identifying FYC instructors need to begin and sustain thoughtful inquiry into their positionality and pedagogy?

    a. What challenges did the group face in meaningfully recognizing our positionalities and beliefs?
    b. What recommendations can be made for other White-identifying FYC instructors and writing programs within predominantly white institutions who wish to engage in similar work?
    c. Where do we see possibilities for engaging further in examining language ideology and/or implications for studying language use relevant to the first-year composition classroom?

3.3 Overview of PAR Research Theory

Unlike other studies into language ideologies that have involved talking about language ideologies *individually* with White instructors (Davila, 2012; 2016), this study involved working together and discussing as a group our language ideologies. The collaborative nature of this study was chosen as I believed it would 1) allow me to approach my research site in an exploratory fashion, 2) implicate myself as a White teacher who is also influenced by language ideologies in my classrooms, and 3) mutually engage in more critical language discussions through reflection and exploration of our beliefs and practices.

To study these issues, I utilized a qualitative participatory approach of "intra-group" focus groups and discussion groups (Ford, 2017), as well as interviews situated within a Participatory Action Research (PAR) project (McIntyre, 2008). These participatory methods are designed to both create space for critical thinking and feeling by problematizing our ideologies. As an overview, PAR takes a central commitment to equity and social transformation that would be dismissed as too ideological by some research methods (Jordan, 2008, p. 4). PAR describes a broad range of research methodologies that challenge clear distinctions between researcher and researched by involving participants in the research process and emphasizing change and action in addition to observation and recording (Jordan, 2008). PAR is a methodology inspired by the theory of Freire (2014) and attempts to make more equitable the power-dynamics present in a researcher and researched relationship through "the process of participant-led inquiry" (Rubin, Ayala, & Zaal, 2017, p. 176). Furthermore, PAR methods are relevant to the subject matter at hand, having been used in educational contexts with White teachers to study the effects of whiteness on pedagogical beliefs and develop actionable strategies for decentering Whiteness in those spaces (Levine-Rasky, 2011; McIntyre, 1997).

A clearer understanding of exactly what a PAR project might entail can be found at an intersection between the ideas of Participation, Action, and Research, each of these terms interpreted on their own by the researcher (Lawson, Caringi, Pyles, Jurkowski, & Bozlak, 2015, p. 6). Although PAR's malleable process and increasing popularity has caused some contention concerning its open-ended nature (Jordan, 2008; Herr & Anderson, 2014), there are key tenets that underlie the PAR process and inform many PAR related endeavors:

> (a) a collective commitment to investigate an issue or problem, (b) a desire to engage in individual and/or collective action that leads to a useful solution that benefits the people involved, (c) a joint decision to engage in individual and/or collective action that leads to a useful solution that benefits people involved, and (d) the building of alliances between researchers and participants in the planning, implementation, and dissemination of the research process (McIntyre, 2008, p. 2).

Within each PAR project decisions have to be made as to how participation and possibilities for action will be enabled or not (Guy, Feldman, Cain, Leesman, & Hood, 2020), and these decisions extend to deciding which various aspects of the PAR project will be up to the researcher, the participants, or both to decide (Herr & Anderson, 2014; Lawson et al., 2015; McIntyre, 2008). As McIntyre (2008) notes, "There is no fixed formula for designing, practicing, and implementing PAR projects. Nor is there one overriding theoretical framework that underpins the PAR process. Rather, there is malleability in how PAR processes are framed and carried out" (p. 3). Given then this malleability of PAR, the number of methodologies it can incorporate, and the degree to which the researcher can choose to enable or disable participation, it should be noted that PAR is not a panacea to the problems of power-dynamics in the researcher and participant relationship (Jordan, 2008; McIntyre, 2008). Simply asserting that a methodology is PAR does not solve questions of equity or participation, especially as PAR types of research exist upon a continuum of participation that may see participants engaging more or less in the research process.

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3.3.1 Benefits and Limitations of PAR

While PAR research can be appealing to educators wanting to use their research as a way of enacting social change, this kind of "activism does not always translate neatly to the classroom" (p. 176). The cooperative benefit of PAR research while beneficial in destabilizing research/researched boundaries does require a relatively large amount of flexibility and negotiation work with participants (McIntyre, 1997). It is no surprise then that developing such cooperative spaces in PAR research is undoubtedly complex (Wyman, Marlow, Andrew, Miller, Nicholai, & Rearden, 2010). Not only due to power differences between researcher and researched that influence the roles individuals traditionally believe they are supposed to take up in spaces like this, but also because of the vulnerability and honesty required to discuss one's identity and pedagogical practices relevant to this project —e.g. racialized language ideologies.

As discussed in the literature review, in doing research on whiteness with White people, vulnerability and honesty is important, as White people have a long history of not needing to consider race (McIntosh, 1989), do collaborative work with other White people around race (DiAngelo, 2018), or address the ways in which they've benefited from systemic racism regardless of their familial history (Lipsitz, 2018). A participatory method such as PAR may work to push back on the ways in which whiteness may "invisibly" operate even within explicit studies of whiteness and encourage a deeper more meaningful investment in the project from participants—including myself. As Ahmed (2007) writes, the ways in which White bodies are often oriented within everyday spaces mean that "[W]hite bodies do not have to face their whiteness" (p. 156). As such, framing this work within an environment that demands participatory effort allows instructors to develop their knowledge on the topics together, and

encourages a collective rejection of the neutrality of whiteness may serve to provide both rich data and pedagogical development.

3.4 Context of Participants

This research project was conducted with instructors at the University of Michigan. Besides being a large, selective predominantly white institution (PWI), the University of Michigan serves a student population of a relatively high socioeconomic status. Once enrolled at Michigan, most students are required to complete a first-year writing course that they place themselves into using a directed self-placement tool. The majority of students satisfy this requirement by taking English 125—a general first-year composition course focused on academic writing; however, they may also place themselves into courses like English 124, a composition course with an emphasis on literature, English 126, a composition course with an emphasis on community work, or Writing 100, a preparatory course that does not satisfy the requirement by itself and must be paired with another course. The majority of these classes, if not the entirety depending on the semester, are taught by graduate student instructors (GSIs) or lecturers.

As the focus of this project was on the first-year composition classroom, I recruited instructors of English 124, 125, and/or 126 for this project. The participants recruited were a mixture of GSIs and lecturers at the institution. These participants came from a variety of disciplinary backgrounds as well: rhet/comp, literature, creative writing, education, comparative literature. Given this wide variety of backgrounds, the recruited participants had varying experiences with writing education, with some participants having taught for more than a decade and others only having taught for a couple semesters so far.

As previously mentioned, the PAR process is individualized to the degree that the researcher enables participants to contribute and take the lead or not, and these degrees of participation are marked upon a continuum. As Lawson et al. (2015) note, a "defining feature" of PAR is its emphasis on "methodological pluralism" (p. 2). Instead of only asking, what did I want to find out? In setting up this project, I believed an equally important question to ask here given my choice of methodology was, how can I best support these instructors in finding and investigating their language ideology related inquiries? While then the broad, framing strokes of the project were guided by myself, such as the research questions, the structure of the group, and the initial few sessions, as the researcher in a participatory project I needed to be flexible in negotiating my own interests and those of my participants which may or may not diverge from time to time (Milner IV, 2007, p. 395). This flexibility will be discussed further in both this chapter and the discussion chapter.

3.5 Data Collection Phases

The following subsections within this methodology section detail further the specifics of what these focus groups and the participatory group will look like and how the data from them will be analyzed. Starting this project with focus groups allows me both a means of recruitment for the second participatory design stage of the project and a means by which to uncover initial findings relevant to language ideologies, pedagogy, and whiteness via my coding process that will help further inform our work in the participatory design group by building local knowledge of the relevant issues. A specific schedule is also provided below (see Table III.1) to illustrate more clearly how all the components of this project will be coordinated.

Table III.1. Phases of Data Collection.

Phases of Data Collection	Brief Description of Process
1. Focus Groups	Three, 90 minute focus groups with 14 instructors, asking about their beliefs about language and classroom assessment practices.
2. Creation of Codebook	Analysis of focus group data to produce general themes and definitions to further adapt discussion group materials toward areas of participant interest present in focus groups.
3. Discussion Group	Five, 60 minute sessions over the course of five weeks with the same group of nine instructors. Used to examine and discuss various classroom materials (e.g. syllabi, student papers, assessments, etc.). Instructors filled out reflection forms at the end of each session as well.
4. Debrief Interviews	Individual check-ins with each of the nine instructors from the discussion group. Used to gather takeaways, final thoughts, and to provide another moment for transparency in the study.
5. Revision of Codebook	Reviewing of session data (transcripts and reflection forms), debrief interviews, and re-examination of focus group data to update codebook with new, condensed, and expanded themes.
6. Analysis in Nvivo, AntConc, and LancsBox	Importing of focus group data, group session data, interview data, and reflection data into Nvivo to apply codes from revised codebook. Additionally, AntConc and LancsBox (corpus analysis software) were used to help further analyze patterns in the data.
7. Member-Checking	Conducted over email/Zoom to ensure that the nine participants from the discussion group felt the analysis of their comments was fair and accurate.

3.5.1 Focus Groups

In order to better inform myself on the multiple contexts within which White instructors work at this institution and their beliefs about language prior to the more intensive ongoing group discussions, I engaged with FYC instructors to help guide my understanding of their language ideologies and pedagogical practices. Starting this project with focus groups allowed

me to conduct some initial inquiries into White instructor beliefs and practices here before

delving into the PAR-guided research inspired by similar studies (Levine-Rasky, 2000;

McIntyre, 1997). Individuals were recruited through departmental listservs (see Appendix A for

recruitment email) for instructors with a brief survey (see "Pre-Focus…" in Appendix B)

component attached to ensure that interested instructors qualify for the study. To ensure that my

sample included only instructors whom I am interested in studying, this survey component asked

instructors if they primarily racially identify as White, if they are currently teaching or have

taught English 124/5 within the last academic year, and if they would be interested in

participating in focus groups related to whiteness, writing education, and language ideologies.

Instructors who answered in the affirmative to all three questions were then recruited to these

focus groups by being asked to indicate their availability. Fourteen qualifying instructors were

then sorted into 3 focus groups for a period of approximately 90 minutes based on their stated

availability. Both with the focus groups and the later discussion group, my hope was to recruit

instructors with a variety of knowledge and pedagogical experience with FYC. Given this goal,

my initial recruitment email for the focus groups was sent out on a broad variety of departmental

listservs relevant to new and experienced instructors of FYC.

The focus groups conducted at the outset of the project were broadly concerned with

uncovering responses to questions concerning instructors' beliefs about language, their own

whiteness, and connections between the two (see Appendix C for protocol). Beliefs here can be

understood in the tangible sense as "statements teachers make about their ideas, thoughts and

knowledge that are expressed as evaluations of what 'should be done', 'should be the case' and

'is preferable'" (Basturkmen, Loewen, & Ellis, 2004, p. 244), and—as explored in my review of

the literature—beliefs do affect classroom practices (Pajares, 1992), though not always in

rational or consistent ways (Lawson et al., 2019). In order to help get at these beliefs and generate conversation, foundational research relevant to writing assessment based on Gere et al's (2021) work and Inoue and Poe's (2020) guide for writing educators will be used in addition to specific questions about their general beliefs to help the conversations focus down on explicit connections between language and race. Beyond providing data relevant to the research questions articulated above, the information gathered from these focus groups will help with two additional purposes: first, the focus groups will provide a convenient means for recruiting potential participants for the White Instructor Group. Secondly, the information gathered here, after transcribing, de-identifying, and coding via the process described in the later "Initial Coding Process" subsection, will be beneficial in allowing me to begin to glean themes and commonalities among White FYC instructors in this setting that will help inform the materials and conversations initially brought into the later group conversations as the first part of our participatory process.

3.5.2 Initial Coding Process

The transcripts from the focus groups were initially partially auto-transcribed via otter.ai, however, I additionally checked and adjusted all the transcripts for accuracy. After transcription, I imported the focus group data into Nvivo to analyze. I used a process-focused, open-coding procedure—consisting of primary codes and subcodes as needed—in both this stage of the project and in later stages of the project. As Saldaña (2013) notes, open-coding procedures are useful for exploring a research containing a wide variety of data sources and can be paired with more specific coding procedures such as process-based coding to help direct inquiries (pp. 96-100). In taking this approach, the open-coding allowed me to examine the materials and identify meaningful themes as they emerge throughout the process, but the process-based approach

encouraged me to particularly pay attention in coding to the various actions participants were

making or discussing making. These actions included behaviors/statements such as "observable

activity (e.g., reading, playing, watching TV, drinking coffee) and more general conceptual

action (e.g., struggling, negotiating, surviving, adapting)" (p. 96). I settled on this approach in

order to forefront in my codes the ways in which participants are actively or inactively working

outwardly and inwardly to reflect on and take action relevant to their language ideologies and

pedagogies, while also hopefully not limiting the focus of my coding too narrowly.

Further following the advice of Saldaña (2013), I structured my coding process into four

parts (see Table III.2). I began this process of pre-coding, in which—in-line with my open-

coding approach—I allowed myself to explore the data and mark particular moments I believed

to be meaningful or warranting further study. Although during this process I was "open" in

exploring the data, I was particularly sensitive toward any/all implications for language ideology,

pedagogy, and whiteness. While my later analysis post the discussion group was by no means

confined to what I marked during this pre-coding process, it did help me to gain a deeper

knowledge of the data set I was working with prior to engaging in the second half of the study.

Table III.2. Recursive Coding Procedure for Focus Groups[3]

Stage One: Pre-Coding	Reviewed debrief notes I took following each focus group interaction. Looked through my notes and the transcript, highlighting seemingly meaningful, significant, or memorable utterances within them and other relevant documents.
Stage Two: First Cycle	Approaching the relevant documents in an open, exploratory manner that emphasizes the importance of actions. Primarily actionable codes are generated based on issues relevant to language ideologies, whiteness, and writing pedagogy.
Stage Three: Second Cycle	Examining the codes generated in the second cycle, focused-coding is utilized to condense, revise, and expand previously generated codes into the most noteworthy codes. Testing of these codes was conducted by focusing on random 10 minute sections of transcripts to see how well the current version of the codebook captured important themes in each section. This process of examining 10 minute sections was repeated numerous times until I was satisfied with the codebook. These codes are then placed within a hierarchical tree-type framework of codes and subcodes.
Stage Four: Complete-Coding	Within this stage, the current version of the codebook was used to code the entirety of the relevant transcripts. During this process, notes were taken to help keep track of what continued to work well or not within the codebook and to begin to identify potential themes for further analysis in the data.

After developing a "completed" codebook, I then proceeded to test the codebook by applying it to various 10 minute sections of the focus groups. During this process, I took notes on how accurately or not I believed the codebook captured the themes of that 10 minute section. When I felt the codebook was insufficient at capturing the themes represented in that section, I would revise the codebook and then try again with another 10 minute section. It was during this process that I decided to supplement my own created codes with an adapted section from

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[3] As the labeling of these as linear stages may imply that I will be promptly moving onto the next stage after the prior one is complete, I include the descriptor of "Recursive" here to emphasize that this process was far from linear, needing me to repeat a single stage many times over and/or revisit previous stages to refine my codes.

McIntryre's (1997) codebook that spoke to the intergroup dynamics that may occur in participatory research projects with White teachers. This helped to identify behaviors such as "Deflection"—participants avoiding responding to questions—as well as moments in which participants engaged in "Endorsing" the thoughts, pedagogies, and ideologies of other instructors in the space. Lastly, the codebook was then applied to the entirety of the focus group transcripts.

3.5.3 Discussion Group[4]

In order to provide the discussion group with the structure it would need to stay on topic and provide participants with generative prompts for discussion, I designed a five session format in which each session focused on specific materials that either they or I were responsible for bringing in. These consisted of materials such as the student papers, assessment instruments, syllabi, and course readings. The focus groups were additionally helpful here in allowing me to further identify materials these instructors were already using in their classrooms prior to our discussion group—for example, if a certain reading was mentioned by several participants in the focus groups, I tried to bring it into conversation in our discussion group. Bringing actual classroom materials into our sessions allowed us to concretize our inquiries into language ideologies by providing us with actual student papers and pedagogical tools to interact with. This additionally allowed me to gather data on how these participants were actually responding to/reacting to language (as opposed to having this group solely function in the abstract sense of discussing beliefs about language). In structuring the sessions in this way (focusing on one or more limited number of artifacts each time), I believed that I'd be able to collect data that helps me to both identify what kinds of language ideologies were/are held by these instructors and how

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[4] See agenda for the five discussion groups in Appendix D.

those language ideologies manifest themselves in the ways instructors teach writing and approach the writing classroom.

In a moment, I will briefly outline each of the sessions and how they were designed to respond to my research questions. Prior to that, however, a brief note on the overall structure I used to facilitate each session. To begin each session, I would start by welcoming participants into the space, reiterating the agenda for the day, and sharing any necessary links for the day's conversation. Following this, we would then turn our attention toward the group's "Ethic of Care", a document we developed together that outlined our goals and intentions for the space (see Appendix E). Besides setting forward suggested practices for engaging in discussions of whiteness with White people, establishing an ethic of care allowed us to also resist urges to jump into things and be "productive." Instead, what I hoped it would do was allow for a space to share and get to know one another better, additionally forcing me as a researcher to also participate with the group instead of acting simply as an observer. To get the discussion going, I would then begin with a broad opening question relevant to the day's space; for example, "Would anyone like to share a particular challenge they've faced recently in assessing a student's paper?" After participants would begin discussing with one another, I would try to allow them to steer the conversations. Lastly, each session would end with each of us filling out the reflection form for the day's activities, writing down what challenged us in the space and further questions we had. The closing reflection forms (see Appendix F) participants filled out also acted as a way for me to gain insight during the data collection process as to how each participant's goals for the space were developing and challenges, questions, or concerns they had related to the project.

After recruiting participants from the focus groups and attempting to identify a time in which we could meet, nine participants were selected to move forward out of the fourteen that

expressed interest. Of the five that did not move forward, four of them did not respond to follow-up emails asking them to indicate a time that would work for them to participate and one withdrew prior to any of the sessions due to their schedule. The nine participants and myself scheduled five sessions to meet, each at the same time and day of the week continuing on for five weeks in the Winter 2022 semester. With the safety of participants in mind due to COVID-19—as well as the ease of recording in digital spaces—the sessions were all held over Zoom.

Prior to our first group session, I made slight adjustments to the session agendas based on comments made in the focus groups and the focus group reflections. These included actions such as me suggesting a few guidelines for us to consider in our group discussions (e.g. noting how "tensions can be productive") to hopefully encourage more substantive engagement with the material. As seen in Appendix D, the guide included multiple kinds of materials for us to interact with that allowed us to more concretely investigate the ways in which language ideologies were/are functioning in our practices. As this discussion and exploration of language ideologies dove into potentially sensitive matters concerning instructor and student identity, the starting session focused mostly on discussing how we would be interacting with one another and how (although we are all White) we are intersectional beings. Starting the group in this way followed suggested practices for engaging in discussions with White individuals, so as to anticipate and proactively respond to the kinds of resistance that are common reactions to this kind of work by White persons (Quaye, 2012, p. 116). Additionally, forefronting conversations on intersectionality at the beginning of this stage in the project allowed us as a group to complicate overly simple descriptors of ourselves as "just" being White instructors. As another effort to be flexible and respond to the needs, desires, and goals of my participants, each of the five sixty-minute sessions began and ended in the same way—revisiting our ethic of care to ground us and

explicitly state our own individual goals for the session and ending with participants (including myself) filling out a brief reflection form based on the day's experience.

Session One: The first session was designed to encourage participants to consider their own identities–beyond just thinking of themselves in this research space as just White people– and how those identities may be relevant to their pedagogies. Additionally, we used this first session to discuss both how we would navigate discussions together through co-creating an "Ethic of Care" that established some guidelines by which we would hold ourselves accountable. Lastly, we also used this session to discuss both my research questions for this project and the questions/goals they had for themselves in this space.

Session Two: The focus of the second session was on the institutionally mandated course goals they used in their writing courses, which then led us into a discussion about the types of readings represented in their courses. The purpose of discussing course goals was to gain a general idea of how closely (or not) participants believed themselves to follow the goals of the institution's writing program and how. This discussion was supported through having participants then revise the existing course goals on a common document to better represent, to them, the types of language practices they wanted to emphasize in their courses. Additionally, the conversation on readings was supported by excerpts I had chosen from several readings that participants in the focus groups had mentioned as being especially important to their classrooms.

Session Three: In session three, the conversation centered around the judgements we make about students and their identities based on their writing. To set up this conversation, participants were instructed to read two directed self-placement essays (essays students prior to the 2022 academic year wrote before entering the university to determine which writing course they should take) that I had selected. Both readings came from English 125 students of color,

although participants were not informed of this prior to the discussion. During this conversation, participants were asked to verbalize who they thought these students were, how prepared they believed these students were for writing at the university level, and to identify in the students' writing anything they found particularly interesting, enjoyable, or problematic.

Session Four: In the fourth session, our group examined our own syllabi. In doing this, we looked at each other's assignments, readings, policies, and the overall sequence of information in the syllabi. In particular, our conversations centered around how and why we structure our courses in the ways that we do, particularly keeping in mind where, when/if our desires for our syllabi conflicted with institutionally mandated components of the syllabi.

Session Five: The fifth and final session asked us to all bring in one student paper that we were struggling/had struggled to respond to. During the course of discussion, we took turns sharing our screens over Zoom and focusing on specific sentences/paragraphs we had each highlighted in our students' papers for group discussion. The conversation asked us to focus on how each of us would respond to the relevant student's writing and why.

3.5.4 Debrief Interviews[5]

The purpose of the debrief interviews were primarily twofold: 1) to allow participants an opportunity to share their thoughts relevant to the project in a context in which they were not being observed by all of their peers, and 2) to give them another chance to ask questions about the project and request further transparency. As such, these semi-structured interviews went in various directions (lasting from around 30 minutes to 40 minutes each), depending on what the participant wanted to talk or ask about.

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[5] See protocol for debrief interviews in Appendix G.

3.5.5 Updated Coding Process

After transcription of the five sessions and the nine debrief interviews, I repeated my process of testing the codebook against randomly selected 10-minute sections of the transcripts. During this stage, the codebook was condensed to aggregate similar codes together—for the purposes of simplifying the coding process. In particular in this stage, codes explicitly addressing observed language ideologies and various student constructs (e.g., the AAE-using student) were added to the codebook. These codes were then tested using the same four-step process, see Table III.2 as used in the creation of the original codebook. This helped me to create my final version of the codebook (see Appendix H)

3.5.6 Analysis + Member-Checking

In this subsection I have combined my actions of analyzing the data in Nvivo with member-checking with participants as this was an ongoing process in which participants' perceptions of my findings influenced my analysis. The data collected from the three focus groups, focus group reflection forms, five discussion groups, 45 discussion group reflection forms, and the nine debrief interviews were then imported into Nvivo, AntConc, and LancsBox for analysis. After going through the numerous rounds of this process of testing the codebook against 10-minute sections in my previous steps of creating and revising the codebook, I proceeded here in this step to analyze all of the materials with the updated codebook—taking notes on what continued to work well with the codebook and where there may be a need for further revision. After coding all of the materials, I wrote up brief summaries of my initial findings along with various excerpted quotes from participants that supported my finding and sent these materials to all nine of the discussion group participants. In sending these to participants, I asked them to please let me know—over email or in a zoom conversation—if they

would like to express their thoughts about my findings for my consideration (agreements, disagreements, or just further suggestions). After reaching out in this way, the participants responded by putting in any questions, concerns, or requests for changes into the google doc or through contacting me directly.

3.6 Navigating Researcher Position in PAR Project: Limitations and Further Thoughts

As a White educator who wants to study how other White composition instructors navigate language diversity in their classrooms and help those instructors to identify and resist the ways whiteness is working in their pedagogical practices through embracing an approach of critical language awareness, my positionality is vitally relevant to this work in multiple ways. Firstly, there is the issue of my White body and the ways whiteness has shaped my experiences and continues to shape them toward seeing whiteness as neutral or natural. As such it is worth being mindful throughout this process of what remains invisible to me. Furthermore, in engaging in classroom research and just being present in that space, my body can perpetuate White supremacy (Inoue, 2019b, p. 357). This means that regardless of my intentions or goals as a researcher/instructor, my body always carries with it a history of racism and as such can very well be read as a threat or endorsement of White supremacy by students and other instructors.

As such, it is important to consider how, or even if, this research will be able to "help" other White instructors navigate these challenges, even as the same challenges may remain invisible to me (see Melaku & Beeman, 2020). As such, it is necessary for myself and other White instructors to continually examine our motivations for being involved in the project and the ways in which our efforts may actually be still centering whiteness in our practices and in the spaces around us. In considering my positionality now, after having conducted this study, several aspects of my identity feel immediately to me more relevant than others. Mostly, the aspects of

my positionality I believe are worth drawing attention to are those that typically belong to privileged or dominant members in a classroom space. Naming these explicitly, these are my status as a cis-gender male, White person, English monolingual speaker, and middle-class upbringing, all of which are informing my notions about what "good" means in a classroom and what the role(s) of students and teachers should be in a classroom space. I name these aspects over others as, given the privileged nature of many aspects of my positionality, the classroom space has traditionally been one in which I have not had to fight to find my place or to navigate to desired outcomes for myself. The implications of these privileges for my research into how others view classroom spaces means that I am likely to take as "neutral" or "natural" dominant forces shaping classroom norms or expectations, such as those related to whiteness. While it is impossible for me to step away from my own positionality in conducting this research, I had to be mindful and actively push back at my urges to accept at face-value the "normal" or "typical" classroom models we discussed in the creation of my codes and further analysis.

One unanticipated limitation of the project to note here was the online format of all of our interactions. Due to the ongoing pandemic, all interviews, discussion groups, and focus groups were facilitated over Zoom. While this did allow for a more "comfortable" recording experience, in that participants were able to sit in their own spaces and not have additional cameras/recorders surrounding them, it did perhaps also introduce additional challenges to our interactions in the space. Besides simple tech issues or issues of accessibility (e.g. low bandwidth/bad connection, microphones that were too quiet, reliance on only automated captions), the Zoom format really only allows for one individual to speak at a time, thus encouraging attentiveness to the current speaker but perhaps also stifling potentially productive side conversations and/or discouraging more frequent interjections. While "breakout" rooms were not able to be utilized in this study,

due to breakout rooms not being able to be recorded, attempts were made by me to make the sessions more interactive, through allowing participants to interact through speaking, typing in the chat, and/or submitting responses to our reflection Google forms.

I bring up these technology challenges first here, as I believe they forced me to adapt how I originally planned to facilitate and participate in these spaces. As previously mentioned, PAR research falls upon a continuum, with researchers carefully considering how they want to balance their authority in the space. I had originally, perhaps naively, envisioned participants leading some of the conversations more, but, I believe especially given the limited functions of Zoom in allowing only one voice to be centered at a time, participants seemed throughout all of the interactions a bit reticent to direct some of the conversations. While this dynamic did shift from session to session, with participants seeming to become much more comfortable in our later sessions, I did initially need to direct questions and conversations much more explicitly than I had initially anticipated or wanted to. As I stated previously, I, perhaps selfishly, also wanted to participate and learn in this space from my colleagues as another White instructor who struggled with the same ideologies these instructors did. By having to take a more authoritative role at the beginning of our time together especially, I could feel tensions in navigating the participatory nature of the project as I had framed it for the instructors in the space. As an attempt to respond to these tensions during the course of data collection, I responded at the start of each week over email to questions participants had put in their reflection forms, uploaded resources mentioned in our discussions to the google drive, and I attempted to explicitly take a more backseat role in later sessions and wait for the participants to guide the conversation more.

3.7 Conclusion

In examining the questions of this research project and the design of my study, I understand that some people may object to my sole focus on White instructors, perhaps believing that these White instructors or readers of my project are "losing" or "missing out" on learning from the experiences of their BIPOC colleagues. However, this kind of objection is precisely the problem. The demand that BIPOC individuals spend their time and energy teaching their White colleagues, who often don't meaningfully listen anyway, assumes that antiracist work either can't be done or (even more problematically) doesn't need to be done by White people. This line of thinking is an example of White supremacy, or. "the belief [enacted both by individuals and through systems/institutions] that white people are superior in many ways to people of other races" (Saad, 2020, p. 12), in that—regardless of the justification—it positions the demanding work of investigating White supremacy (a product of White people) as being not the responsibility of White people or a project White people can just sit back on and engage with on their own time.

In further anticipation of potential critiques about only examining White instructors, I would say that multiracial, inter-group dialogues about language ideologies and whiteness can be beneficial. However, the question that must be asked in any given context is beneficial for (mostly) whom? In the context of this project, wherein you have (me) a White individual facilitating the project, an all White committee overseeing my project, and we are in the context of a predominately White institution (PWI), who has the most to learn in conversations about whiteness and language ideologies of the academy? Who will likely be asked to/feel asked to (given the aforementioned context) take on the labor of educating their colleagues? For whom will this discussion touch on experiences that are challenging or painful in the abstract sense?

For whom will it touch on experiences that are based on lived challenging or painful experiences?

Dreama G. Moon's (2016) summary of the literature on performances of whiteness and White identity in multicultural classroom discussions of race illustrates how White people in mixed race contexts often engage in behaviors of silence or refusal to participate. In these kinds of contexts White people are often far too comfortable simply sitting back, unproductively and uncritically absorbing the labor of people of color. Ijeoma Oluo (2018) recounts the numerous instances she has faced as a Black woman of majority or all White organizations asking her to use her time and her mental, emotional, and physical labor to teach, explain, and re-explain to them issues of race and racism for, ultimately, self-serving ends.

> At least once a week an organization will ask me to come talk, free of charge, to them about race. They are big fans of my work and just want to be able to have their own private conversations with me...They have read the pain in my stories, and it resonated with them enough that they wanted me to repeat it all on demand, for free. This is talk that will make them sad, make them frustrated, make them cry. But it won't make them take action. They want to feel better, but they don't want to do better" (p. 228).

I understand that some White people may feel uncomfortable being asked to reflect on their language ideologies in the context of an all White group that is attempting to spotlight those ideologies and their possible intersections with White identity. They may believe that they don't need to be in that space or that their ideologies are neutral. They may feel that due to other aspects of their positionality that, even as a White-identifying person, they can't be in enacting problematic ideologies in their pedagogies, but this is a dangerous falsehood. While intra-group White affinity group spaces can make no promises about how sincerely or to what end participants will enter the space, they are one way to assure that the group's process of trying to understand White identity and other relevant issues are not exploiting the time and labor of people of color (Ford, 2017). Additionally, such a space also helps to keep the spotlight on a

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group of individuals who have had the privilege to optionally engage with conversations about language ideologies on their own terms.

Chapter 4: Vulnerable Introspection or Performative Allyship?: Unpacking the Shifting

Language Ideologies of White Composition Instructors

4.1 Overview of Findings Chapters

The findings of this project are broken apart into two chapters. This first findings chapter

will provide further context about the participants of this project and some general descriptive

data before delving into examining both the dynamics of the group interactions and how and

where participants' language ideologies seemed to shift between group discussions and

individual settings (e.g. one-on-one interviews and reflection documents). I open my findings

with this chapter, focused on this singular theme of group dynamics and shifting ideologies, in

order to contextualize the rest of my findings in the following chapter under this challenging to

uncover spectrum of standard language ideologies (SLI)[6] to more anti-racist language beliefs that

participants expressed and moved between. While the full implications of these shifts on this

project will be unpacked in the discussion chapter, I hope here to illustrate for readers 1) how

language ideologies are not static and 2) how, for White instructors involved in conversations of

race, hyper-awareness of the presence of others and anxieties regarding the potential negative

consequences of engaging in explicit race talk can affect instructors' stated beliefs and

participation in conversations about race and their own identity.

I preface this chapter with this not to portray the beliefs quoted in this chapter as simply

performative, fake, or insincere, rather I do so to highlight the ever present tension in studying

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[6] SLI is "[a] bias toward an abstracted, idealized, homogenous spoken language which is imposed and maintained by dominant bloc institutions and which names as its model the written language, but which is drawn primarily from the spoken language of the upper middle class" (Lippi-Green, 2011, p. 67).

beliefs between identifying ideal or desired beliefs and examining how those beliefs may or may not (due to a variety of constraints) be represented in actual practice by the individual. In doing this, the findings in this chapter respond to my first and second research questions (as well as their subquestions): 1) What language ideologies can be found within the expressed beliefs, practices, and materials of White-identifying FYC instructors? 2) How do discussions and reflections on language ideologies and their own classroom practices/materials help White instructors to interrogate connections between language ideologies and their positionality?

While all of the information provided in these findings and discussion chapters has been member-checked by participants, I still want to mention the challenging nature of my attempts to accurately and holistically describe these participants' beliefs and practices. In writing about my fellow instructors, there is the impulse to be favorable in my interpretations; that is, I want to note the many urges I had to elide details that would potentially paint some/all of us in a negative light. As a White educator myself—who was simultaneously working within this project as both *the* researcher and *a* fellow participant—I felt (and still feel now) both the desire to voraciously uncover, document, and detail to readers how whiteness was working in this space, but I also felt (and still feel now)—as a participant in the space—the urge to downplay these findings out of a sense of self-serving shame: shame that our beliefs and practices could be making our classrooms a space that privilege the language varieties of our White students while devaluing the resources of our students of color. I write this here as a response to potential criticisms that I am being cold or too particular in describing our expressed beliefs and practices; however, I believe in writing the way that I do here, I am being much the opposite. In discussing whiteness and the beliefs of White educators we cannot afford to take a patronizing, self-serving approach that would only occlude how our actions *are*—no hedging here—contributing to White

supremacy in our classrooms. Rather, I believe, to quote Layla Saad (2020), "we must call a thing a thing" (p. 14). As the following findings show, White instructors—myself very much included here—must do better, and the first step in doing so is to face our failures.

4.2 Participant Info

While the findings in this chapter will draw on both the discussion and the focus groups that consisted of fourteen participants, in describing participants I will solely focus on the nine participants involved in both the focus groups and discussion group. I do so here to highlight the individuals whose beliefs contributed to the vast majority of the data I collected for this project. In doing this, I am trying to walk a fine line between sharing relevant information about these participants and protecting their anonymity. I hope the somewhat limited picture I paint here provides readers with an idea of the individuals in the room. Additionally, even though I emphasize race in this project, collecting this information allows me in this and the following chapters to complicate the backgrounds, beliefs, and identities of these individuals beyond identifying them just by their racial—White—and professional—university writing instructors— identity. These identity labels were all collected from participants—including myself—in our first session, in which I utilized a "Social Identity Wheel" activity that we were encouraged to fill out with the identities that felt most salient to us in the space.

- Gender Identities
    - 6 cis-male, 3 cis-female, 1 non-binary
- Class background growing up
    - 6 middle-class, 4 working-class
- Language Background
    - All identified English as their primary language. Eight individuals expressed varying levels of fluency in Spanish, French, Korean, Arabic, Portuguese, and/or Mandarin.
- Nationality
    - All participants identified as members of the U.S.
- (Dis)ability
    - Just under half of the group identified as neurodivergent and/or having a chronic

illnesses.
- Sexual Orientation
  - Around a third of the group identified themselves within the LGBTQIA+ spectrum. The remainder of the group identified themselves as heterosexual/straight and cis-gender.
- Disciplinary Backgrounds
  - Participants represented graduate student instructors and lecturers from a variety of disciplines, including Rhetoric and Composition, Comparative Literature, Medieval and Early Modern Studies, and English Education.
- Age
  - Median age of 31.5 years

4.3 Group Dynamics: (Dis)Engaging with White Talk

The term "White talk" in the title of this section (and my coding category) comes from Alice McIntyre's (1997) work with White secondary teachers, in which she coins the term as meaning, "talk that serves to insulate white people from examining their/our individual and collective role(s) in the perpetuation of racism" (p. 31). I use this term here alongside the label of (dis)engaging in order to examine in this chapter the ways in which the discourse participants and myself had exemplified or resisted engaging in White talk. It may or may not seem surprising to readers that focus groups and discussion groups gathered explicitly to discuss White identity and White supremacy relating to language ideologies and teaching practices could shift into White talk (essentially pushing back against the very kind of work those spaces were created to do). Even as our co-created Ethic of Care document (inspired by the work of Nel Noddings), which we returned to each session, urged us to engage in honesty, vulnerability, and explore tensions, we seemed to constantly be challenged by a sense of White politeness—i.e. portraying behaviors, thoughts, ideas that disrupt the status quo of White supremacy as impossible or harmful and acts of critically questioning one's associating with White supremacy as impolite (Okun, 2021)— and silence in the space. In the two subsections below, I've identified two themes related to how White talk appeared in this space. Both of these themes are supported with various excerpts from the focus groups, discussion groups, or interviews; additionally, both

themes are evidenced with an extended focus on a particular moment within the project.

4.3.1 Discomfort in Acknowledging Race

Perhaps the most common way that White talk appeared in the space was in the general discomfort with explicitly acknowledging race or identities heavily related to race (e.g. nationality and ethnicity) that seemed to pervade many of our conversations. This discomfort manifested itself in a number of ways, most commonly seen in the use of certain pragmatic markers immediately prior to or after explicitly acknowledging race and/or other identity labels strongly related to race—e.g. African-American English (AAE)[7].

> "Um, and her identity as a, as an African-American female wasn't what I was seeking out primarily. Um, but then when I look at what my students end up writing, I mean, what my students end up reading, it tends to be, um, not so much, not actually a very global mix, but very, um, racially and gender, a lot of racial and gender diversity."

The above excerpt from Theresa took place during an activity in which we brought in for discussion our syllabi to talk about how we chose readings to utilize in our classrooms. Notice the "ums" and multiple false starts prior to and after labeling the author as African-American and mentioning the racial and gender diversity present in their syllabi readings. Duvall, Robbins, Graham, and Divett (2014) note in their meta-analysis of the scholarship that instances of pragmatic markers like *uh* or *um*—sometimes called filler words or "hesitation markers" (Greer, 2013; House, 2013)—in a person's speech is often an indicator of "nervousness" around the subject area in discussion; they can be an indication of an individual preparing to utilize "infrequent words"—i.e. words we may not "use on a daily basis" (p. 38). Similar patterns of hesitation markers and false starts are shown involving related and additional identity labels throughout the sessions, interviews, and focus groups as well:

- **Seth:** "Uh, you know, the student was, uh, was Chinese, um…"

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[7] AAE is a language variety used by many—but not all or necessarily exclusively by—African-Americans (Smitherman, 1977).

- **Lucy:** "And I think that that's, that's also a challenge, especially as a, as a White instructor…"
- **Dexter:** "Um, mine was, uh, from a, a few years ago with a, um, a, a, a South Korean student."
- **Dagney:** "And this student is, um, [pause] fluent in African American Vernacular English[8] too."

In acknowledging these students as Chinese and South Korean—and additionally in abstracting even further in Dagney pausing her response to identify the student as just a speaker of AAE—participants demonstrated a hypersensitivity to using racial identity markers. Seth, also during the syllabus discussion, explained how he does "make a point to, to showcase authors from different backgrounds, um, different lived experiences." Dexter complicates this conversation in favorably describing the demographics of authors in his syllabus by saying he "use[s] a diversity of writers, not necessarily to talk about diversity, but to use a diversity of writers." While both Seth and Dexter are acknowledging here the importance of representation in the designing of syllabi reading lists, they are unwilling to explicitly acknowledge race in this conversation. In fact, this discussion during Session 4 provided numerous examples of this vagueness, with participants often electing to use the term "diversity," but also "variety," or simply "different" when referring to students and authors of color. A few select concordance lines that further illustrate this pattern from the group sessions are displayed below in Table IV.1

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[8] I elect to use the label *AAE* throughout this dissertation I make this choice as AAE is the terminology I used within our discussion groups, and I opted for AAE as a potentially more familiar label for participants in this project that also helped to sidestep potential deficit ideologies toward AAE through referring to it as *just* a "vernacular" like the label AAVE may imply. However, I will quote participants' references to language varieties directly using the labels they preferred within this dissertation. For a more thorough discussion about the many variances in naming concerning this language variety—e.g., AAE, AAVE, AAL, Ebonics, Black English, and more—see Bloomquist, Green, and Lanehart's (2015) *The Oxford Handbook of African American Language*.

Table IV.1. Select Concordance Lines for Diverse/Diversity

Left	Node	Right
I grew up in, um, a suburb just outside of [major city] was, um, extremely, um, like	**diverse**	and a lot of, like immigrant families.
so we got to read a lot of	**diverse**	perspectives on questions of language choice
yeah, no, that semester wasn't as	**diverse**	as I, you know, as I was imagining in the past in terms of perspectives, identities
students who are new to the idea of language	**diversity**	like a White student who has one language

In attempting to quantify my perceptions, statistical analysis of the use of the most common hesitation markers in this project (e.g. *uh*, *um*, *you know*) indicate a positive relationship between hesitation markers and explicit (racial) identifiers in our conversations; that is to say, the more we explicitly talked about identities like race using labels such as *Black* and *White*, the more we used those hesitation markers. Using *Nvivo* to calculate the Pearson correlation coefficient, a modest positive correlation was found between hesitation markers and the identity labels *Asian*, *Black*, and *White*—as shown in Table IV.2—as well as the term *Race*. Additionally, a high positive correlation was found between use of hesitation markers and *EAL*-type labels. To be clear, the table below isn't a statistical examination of the presence of racism or racist attitudes from participants toward certain identities; rather, the findings in Table IV.2 serve as a potential index of the identity labels participants felt most anxious about using or discussing in this space. With that in mind, however, discomfort in using these labels, as indicated by the presences of hesitation markers, may demonstrate that participants aren't used to explicitly discussing these identities in conversations about language. This finding may, therefore, indicate

a preference for color-blind[9] conversations about race that serve to maintain White supremacy

through dismissing explicit mention of race as

unnecessary or harmful.

Table IV.2. Pearson Analysis of Hesitation Markers and Identity Reference

Identity Reference	High (H), Moderate (M), and Low (L) Relationships Determined via Pearson Correlation Coefficient (r)[10]
EAL[11]	.81 (H)
Asian[12]	.55 (M)
White[13]	.44 (M)
Race	.42 (M)
Black[14]	.41 (M)
Diversity[15]	.36 (L)
Different[16]	.31 (L)

Perhaps this sensitivity (and the possible anxiety "incorrectly" using these labels might

cause) is why, throughout many of the group interactions, participants used the aforementioned

vague terminology. As also shown in Table IV.2 instances of *diverse* or *diversity*—e.g. "a

diversity of authors"—had a low positive correlation with the use of hesitation markers.

Similarly, use of *different*—e.g. "we have a [racially] different…base of students"—also had a

low correlation. This relationship could suggest that, although White instructors may not be

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[9]"Color-blind" refers to various framings of racial issues that minimize the importance of race in a discussion, potentially fixating on "culture" or downplaying the systemic nature of racism through appealing to neoliberal values (Bonilla-Silva & Dietrich, 2011).
[10] Calculated using the "word similarity" method (i.e., the amount of similar/different words between the two codes).
[11] Including references to EAL, ESL, International, and L2.
[12] Including references to Asia(n), Korea(n), China, and Chinese.
[13] Including references to White and Whiteness.
[14] Including references to Black and African-American.
[15] Including references to Diverse, Diversity, and Variety
[16] Including references to Different and Difference.

completely comfortable addressing these conversations about race even in abstract terms, these

instructors experienced a smaller degree of discomfort in using more vague terminology—like

diverse and *different*—to refer to students and writers of color.

Additionally, there were startling differences in the frequency with which participants

used some racial identifiers in the group setting versus the individual setting. By "group settings"

I am referring to the focus groups and group discussion sessions, and by "individual settings" I

am referring to the individual reflection forms participants filled out following each focus group

and session and the debrief interviews. Instances of *Diverse/Diversity* increased from 7 instances

in the individual settings versus 74 in the group conversations. Mentions of *Race* decreased from

40 instances in individual contexts to 15 in the group setting. Similarly, while mentions of *White*

remained relatively stable—78 individually versus 68 group—*Whiteness* decreased from 42

instances in individual setting to 5 in the group conversation. In her debrief interview, I asked

Lucy about this general pattern of avoiding racial identifiers in the group discussion, and she

responded with the following.

> Um, yeah. I'm s-... I don't know if I could point to a specific, like, an explicit avoidance. I
> mean, certainly I don't, you know, nobody was like, "Oh, well, I don't want to talk about
> it in this way or..." But, um, but the moments where race, ethnicity, cultural background
> came up, um, were, I think, more apparent and drew my attention more when they
> happened because I think there was sort of a silence around s- like, not a silence [pause] I
> don't [pause] Like [pause] I mean, I don't remember…

In Lucy's response, a general sense of discomfort is observed in response to me directly

addressing with her, in a one-on-one setting, this pattern of avoidance. Lucy agrees that she also

perceived a lack of willingness—which they frame ambiguously as perhaps just a lack of

interest—to explicitly engage race, ethnicity and cultural background, before somewhat

awkwardly ending that moment of the conversation by claiming she actually doesn't recall.

Despite Lucy failing to recall if there were avoidances around explicitly acknowledging

race, there are numerous examples of more subtle attempts to navigate race without talking about race (like participants' previously discussed usage of "diverse" or other broad labels) as well as not so subtle attempts. In Robert's debrief interview, we spent some time discussing disciplinary differences in how pedagogy in a FYC class is approached. During this conversation, Robert remarked how, now that he teaches more non-FYC courses, he's noticed demographic changes in his classes; in particular he focused in on his perception of a lack of "student athletes" in his current courses, which seems to be functioning for him in the moment as a more comfortable synonym for Black students.

> But I, I think what I, um, the thing that is making me, making me say this is that I feel like, um, just our concerns, uh, were different because, like, um, **it seems like there's a, some kind of correlation between, like, student athletes and having to, having different types of different language issues** and, like, um, versus, um, like, **I don't have student athletes anymore,** so it seems like my, um, position, you know, my kind of, I guess, **the demographic of my classes has changed, not necessarily exclusively in racial terms,** but, uh, I mean, the, the difference, I think, is that **English instructors teaching in English are more concerned about the, uh, relationship between African-American Vernacular English and kind of standard, uh, White American English, however you call it[17].**

In this excerpt, Robert refers only to "student athletes" as a demographic he no longer sees as frequently in his classes, and it is a demographic he associates with "types of different language issues." He then, however, clarifies that this change isn't just "racial" before focusing also on how instructors of FYC courses (the course he no longer teaches) have reason to be more concerned about navigating tensions between AAE and Standardized American English (SAE)— or White Mainstream English (WME)[18].

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[17] Throughout both of my findings chapters I bold portions of participants' speech. I do this to draw readers' attention to specific portions of the quote I find especially relevant to my argument, while still allowing readers to examine a more complete context for the bolded portions.

[18] Throughout these findings I more frequently use SAE as an identifier for this language variety. While SAE is connected to whiteness and White supremacy (Gere et al., 2021), through its historical and ongoing preference in colonialist pedagogical assessment practices (Hammond, 2018) and a variety of other educational and public contexts (Lippi-Green, 2011), it is a variety utilized by more than just White people. I do attempt to use WME

4.3.1.1 An Unsuccessful Attempt to Re-Center Race. Lucy's reaction to me directly addressing this discomfort wasn't unexpected and neither was Robert's attempts to synonymize non-racially explicit labels with specific racial groups. While I did make a concentrated effort to reign-in my facilitation efforts in Sessions 4 and 5—to provide all of the instructors with even more space to pursue their interests—I did intervene in the Session 4 syllabus discussion to try and address in a specific conversation the vagueness and abstraction I observed concerning references to identity and race avoidance. In this discussion, following a comment from Theresa in which she described using students' writing in her class to represent "a diversity of voices," I stepped back into the discussion in saying,

> Um, real quick though, **I'd like to return us to the ethic of care, if I may. Uh, one of the things is, uh, speaking with intention**. And so one thing that, you know, as I'm listening with intention right now, one thing that **I'm hearing is, uh, us use, um, talking about a variety of authors, talking about a diversity of authors, without necessarily naming what we mean by a variety of authors.** Um, so Lucy, for example, **you mentioned, uh, gender, 80% of, you know, male authors.** So I just, one thing I kind of wanted to put out there is you know, maybe **let's work through some of those kind of broader labels to get more specifically kind of what we mean with some of these terms.**

I do want to unpack one significant part of my comment here. It is clear in reading back through my attempted intervention that I am also engaging in many of the same patterns that I've identified in other participants' speech. While I do end this intervention in asking participants to avoid broad labels, I don't actually reference race or racial identity here at all. Instead, I use—as my example—a specific reference a previous participant made to the gender dynamics present in her syllabus readings. Additionally, as evidenced by my use of hesitation markers and in my own recollection of the event, I felt anxiety in trying to refocus the group, particularly on race, in that I didn't want my participants to think I was accusing them of being racist—ironically, hindering

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(Baker-Bell, 2020; Smitherman & Alim, 2012), however, when myself and/or participants are referring *just* to SAE-use by White people.

our efforts to directly tackle the issues of language ideologies, whiteness, and White supremacy this study hopes to examine.

Following this milquetoast attempted intervention, participants did engage more directly with identity labels in describing their syllabi and classrooms. James, in addressing his readings, emphasized the variety of registers he attempts to represent in his readings; Jennifer specified "racial diversity" as being an important part of her criteria for building a reading list for students. However, before too long participants began to engage in almost the opposite, if just as problematic, kind of behavior as the patterns of racial avoidance. In describing his shift to teaching classes other than just FYC, Seth explained that,

> Being in a position to create my own syllabus, without like, real, uh, reliance of the sort of like, bones of [FYC], it just come naturally to, to highlight authors of different racial backgrounds, different national identities, different language communities, um, different genders, et cetera, et cetera.

While Seth does specify racial and language identity as well as nationality, he ends his listing of identity considerations with "et cetera, et cetera." In this way, the "et cetera" is functioning as a catch-all label, designed to indicate that this individual is considering more than just these categories without actually making the effort to detail what identities he is attempting to privilege in his classroom and why. This discussion concluded, perhaps in part due to my lack of explicitly addressing race in my intervention, with several more participants building off of the comments of their peers in describing their efforts to include increasingly numerous yet still vague forms of diversity in their syllabi. Theresa, in responding to Jennifer's emphasis on racial identity, discusses how she doesn't consider author's racial identity, instead focusing on finding "different communities to highlight," specifically mentioning and contrasting—without actually naming race—Ann Arbor (a 70% predominantly White community) and Detroit (a 77% predominantly Black community). In closing the conversation, Lucy then picks up on Jennifer's

emphasis on race and language identity and Theresa's emphasis on regional identity to describe "you know, thinking about race, um, gender, region especially." In building off of one another, participants in this conversation utilized both vague terminology (e.g. Ann Arbor vs Detroit instead of naming race) and catch-all kinds of identity lists, often building off of the identities they heard other participants mention. The effect of this was to facilitate spaces within our discussions in which participants appeared accepting/accommodating of all possible identities, without actually having to name the specifics of those identities or how their pedagogies may have enabled greater accommodation.

4.3.2 Feeling Trapped: Complicating Connections between White Identity and Privilege

Perhaps the most subtle challenge in this space, that serves to also exemplify another aspect of White talk, is how participants at times made attempts to position whiteness and their white identity as not being a form of privilege[19]. While this type of defensive move is well documented (DiAngelo, 2018), in the context of our discussion these moves served to both insulate individuals from investigating the ways in which their identities intersected with systemic inequities but also to then serve as an out (in the group conversations) for other participants to follow suit. In particular, I want to focus on two examples of this phenomenon: first, I want to briefly examine how some participants at times shifted framing how their White identity contributed to a lack of comfortability in conversations about race from a critical frame in which they positioned this issue as something they/other White people need to address to being a problem they weren't complicit in. Secondly, and at further length, I want to explore a particular moment in our first session in which we, in doing an identity wheel activity, begin to

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[19] By privilege here, or more specifically White privilege, I am referring to the "conscious and unconscious ideas of white superiority and entitlement..reenacted across a broad array of institutions and social settings" (Ansley, 2010, p. 592).

position class as being more relevant to this space—which, I will argue, was another effort to insulate ourselves from engaging with whiteness directly.

At numerous points during our conversations, various participants expressed frustrations with how they felt limited in how they could/should respond to conversations concerning race in their classrooms and other professional environments. Typically, these frustrations were centered around how they felt tongue-tied in responding. Generally, these sources of "tongue-tiedness" were framed in one of two ways by participants: 1) as an effect of their anxiety toward wanting to help students and be anti-racist—but not knowing how, or 2) as a result of them feeling trapped in how they were "supposed" to respond in order to be (perceived as) anti-racist. The following excerpt from Theresa's comment below gets at the first kind of framing.

> And I remember when I was thinking like, how, how did I respond to this? Like, and it is a language problem 'cause it's like, how do you talk about your own population or racial populations other than your own?

Theresa's response here is indicative of a pattern observed in these sessions of participants' framing themselves (as White people) in these conversations about race as lacking the knowledge of race and/or language necessary to engage in these kinds of conversations directly with their students. In doing so, participants simultaneously highlight a gap in their training/knowledge necessary for teaching writing and position themselves in an "impossible" situation, wherein no matter how they respond it can be problematic or at least framed as problematic by peers. Dagney reflected on this perceived issue in one of her session reflections:

> There's always also this idea in my mind that because of my whiteness, I must be messing up and supporting White supremacy. While I want to recognize where/if that's happening, it's also a humbling goal to try and recognize where I'm a cog in a racist institutional machine, as it means no matter how thoughtful or careful I am about creating a class meant to be inclusive and just, I will always overlook something--perhaps something crucial. I believe that working to be increasingly inclusive is by far worth the effort, but it is sometimes disheartening to think that my whiteness could mean I'm always going to be supporting racism, whether or not I realize it.

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Here Dagney implicates herself as being a "cog" in systemic racism, but also expresses her

desire to engage in reflection over her practices and her complicity with said systems to move

toward more antiracist goals. This response is indicative of a more proactive approach to

addressing whiteness and White supremacy in academia. While Dagney's type of response was

not uncommon in our sessions, other participants did express more reactionary responses that

engaged less with the systemic nature of these issues, as seen in Theresa's response below:

> I find that some of my vocabulary ends up being just the, like, like, I- it, informed by wh-
> how I've been told to speak, you know? Like, you know, at some point, there are contexts
> where, you know, it's like, well, don't say African-American, say Black, say POC, say,
> like, blah blah blah.

> Unlike Dagney's response, Theresa's comments here focus on relatively more surface

level aspects of race: as a White person in what contexts should I use the terms Black, African-

American, POC? Besides her somewhat flippant follow-up of "blah blah blah," what is

interesting about this response is her phrasing of "how I've been told to speak." With this

inclusion, we can see Theresa positioning herself as a person without agency over her own word

choices, and—in considering the rest of the quote—as someone who may feel trapped by the

whims of people telling her how she should react to these language and pedagogy focused issues

of race.

Touching on similar themes of feeling trapped as a White person, but relating these

concerns to relevant scholarship, Dagney expressed numerous repeated concerns during the

course of our sessions about being "pathologized" during this project.

> ...thinking about how [works from scholars like Asao Inoue and Robin DiAngelo] are
> incomplete, um, in that, in particular, um, there is no way to have a coherent objection.
> And that's something that I've been grappling with. Like, h-, what happens whenever any
> sorts of questioning turns into something to be pathologized?

Dagney's reaction here gets at her frustrations with how much of the scholarship on whiteness

and anti-racist writing pedagogy seems from her perceptions to paint White people into a corner:

e.g. if you are too emotional in discussing race you are fragile, but if you are too distant than you aren't being vulnerable enough; if you talk too much you are centering yourself in the space, but if you talk too little you are using your privilege to stay silent. In doing this, Dagney presents a scenario in which it is impossible for a White person's behaviors to not be seen as contributing to White supremacy, similar to her comments reflecting on her position as a "cog" in the machine. The result of either of these sources, either feeling tongue tied in wanting to help or be perceived a certain way or them feeling trapped, is that whiteness in these moments gets framed by participants as either being less related to privilege and oppression (e.g. White privilege) or it is deemed less urgent to investigate compared to other related concerns (e.g. how is the scholarship limiting White people's perspectives?).

4.3.2.1 Emphasizing SES and "White Trash" Identity. Similar to the previous section, I want to focus on one moment in the sessions that may highlight how participants at times avoided investigating White identity as being related to privilege in academia. During our first session, we engaged briefly in an "identity wheel" activity in which participants and myself were encouraged to individually fill out a brief descriptor of the many identities we were each bringing into the space. While we discussed race, ethnicity, gender and more, our single lengthiest moment in the conversation centered on "White trash" as an identity many participants, including myself, expressed. I include a somewhat lengthy excerpt from this conversation below to demonstrate how following Dagney's initial usage of the term "White trash"—and my affirmation of the term—participants shifted from examining how whiteness in the space operates as a force of privilege to how, as "White trash," they felt oppressed by economic forces. On the following pages (see Table IV.3), I have positioned the lengthy excerpt—see left column—alongside a discussion of how the conversation shifted between

emphasizing White identity as a privilege versus couching it in conversation with socioeconomic

status (SES) as a way of potentially downplaying said privilege—see right column.

Table IV.3. Session Conversation on Class and White-Identity

Excerpt from Session 1 Conversation	Discussion
Me: Anybody else like to jump in and, um, like I said, you don't need to disclose any aspects of your identity you don't wanna bring explicitly into this space. Um, but anybody wanna share anything else they feel is relevant to you being here, your motivation for being in this space and identity you'd like to think more explicitly about as being relevant to this project on whiteness, language ideologies and writing pedagogy?	I'm attempting here to encourage participants to be vulnerable in the space by sharing aspects of their identity they find relevant while also allowing them room for privacy if there are things they do not wish to disclose. Prior to me stepping in here, participants had mentioned their identities as teachers, educators, as well as taking note of the different disciplinary backgrounds we were all a part of.
Dagney: I also I, I, this is kind of a, something that I'm still chewing on and thinking through, but I identify as White trash like as a background kind of identity.	Dagney's comment here is the first time—during this identity wheel activity—that race had been mentioned.
Me: Yeah it's um, yeah coming, coming from, from I, I don't think I've ever put that label on myself. But coming from rural Kansas, um, I, I, yeah I, I think, uh, yeah I would, if I thought about that probably more that might be an identity I'd associate with as well.	In affirming Dagney's identification by also labeling myself in similar terms, I had hoped to open up space for us to move toward a conversation on both SES and White identity (e.g. how does whiteness exist differently in upper class versus working class communities?).
Lucy: kind of following … Dagney, I also think a lot about, and I was like pausing with the, the SES question in the form. Because I was thinking how do I ex- how do I explain this? And it's sort of same thing. I grew up in, um, like what it used to be base housing for the military, and then got turned into low income housing growing up. And was in this weird borderline where one of my	Lucy here moves to focus solely on the SES portion of the White Trash label. In discussing this shift during the member-checking process, Lucy commented that this move was partially motivated by her desire to move away from the term "White Trash," which she associated with the problematic ways certain White individuals in high(er) social classes like

parents had a college degree, um, but like we cons- it was constantly like is there food in the house? (Laughs). And, um, so that's something that I think about a lot, especially coming into spaces where people are working on higher degrees, is sometimes that's not always the case. So, um, I wanted to say thank you for sharing because that also helps me to share that part of my identity.

Robert: I have something kind of that, that made me think of, which was just that thinking about like the status of being like a, whether or not you're like a first generation college student. Uh, cause like I, oh I've always asked myself this question, am I or not? Because like my mom got like her degree like as a commuter, like, like late, like in like her like 30s, like before I was born. But it's like, um, in terms of like the milieu I guess socially of like people they describe as like, uh, first generation college students, it's supposed to be I guess the assumption is that your parents having both gone to college gives you an extreme advantage at like going to college. But it's like I, I've always felt kind of in between these two experiences of like well, technically yes my parent has a college degree. Was this easy for me because of that? No, it was a completely kind of different path. So I've always kind of been confused, you know, to some extent about like in these conversations about like that sort of like the relationship of kind of generations.

Um, you know, that's something that's been kind of, uh, difficult for me to think about in terms of kind of my own, you know, answering socioeconomic status question and all of these. So like feeling, you know, kind of in between different things and like, uh, the way I think that also like not really knowing where your status fits in. And kind of a big part of my experience has been like confronted with the discourse about, um, uh, what somebody would say about the version of myself for which the question answered is yes, you are privileged or am I not? You know, it's like, you know, the question

to perform poverty/hardship. In doing so she emphasizes the real material challenges she faced growing up, even as she deflects away from the seriousness of the moment with laughter.

Here Robert builds off of Lucy's mention of having only one parent with a college degree. He comments on his mother's experiences in obtaining her degree, before contrasting what he sees as the assumptions/expectations people place on families who have a parent/parents with these degrees with his own experiences. It is in this comment that the idea of people being raised with an "advantage" comes into conversation, as well as the idea that people may be falsely assumed to have an advantage.

Robert continues here, reflecting on his experience with the activity, and the challenges with feeling between labels. It is here, beginning with him detailing his experiences of being "confronted with the discourse" that he raises the question of being privileged or not. In doing this, White-identity, low(er) SES, and first-generation student identity are being positioned as equally oppressive or advantageous factors that can almost cancel eachother out. In doing so, the idea of privilege more broadly is constructed as an absolute binary (yes, you are

it's always been kind of a complicated question about like the status of am I, am I as privileged as, you know, the discourse, um, prevailing kind of would assume or not? So I've it's been something that's kind of been confusing about this kind of thing. Um, related so to I guess the question of socioeconomic status, but also like the first generation college student thing.

Seth: Uh, yeah, I'd like to jump in. Um, first of all that was really well put [third participant]. Uh, and this is more related to I guess like the, the White trash kind of identification. Um, because what I'm thinking now is like I'm from, uh, like rural [Southern State], um, from a very, very White tow- uh, small city, uh, not even a city a town. Um, and so I, I'm still unlearning a lot of the time like my own sort of hangups, uh, with race that are so deeply internalized that I don't actively consciously even consider them. It's just like being reared, um, in this like kind of Mayberry-esque space, um, caused me not to question anything about race for a long, long time. Um, and so that feels salient.

Theresa: I had kind of a, a contrast to that, Seth. I, um, and, you know, when I, when I initially heard White trash I was thinking like more in like the economic terms. Um, and like but the, the area that I grew up in, um, a suburb just outside of [Major U.S. City] was, um, extremely, um, like diverse and a lot of like immigrant families and like, um. Like you couldn't, like there weren't two houses in a row that had, um, like, um, that would have stereotypically White families in them, like there were not. And I think that, you know, I, I lived there like my whole, um, my whole childhood, like until leaving to go to [midwest state]. And I remember thinking like encountering of people there who like, like even the school was very, um, homogeneously White, and like just very, like it was just such a, it was a shock to me. It was like a culture shock to like not

privileged, or no, you are not) that is devoid of context and intersectionality. Essentially, privilege is being framed here as a static sum of one's advantaged or oppressed identities, a sum that then follows the individual into any context.

Seth here explicitly brings the conversation back to its original starting point, focusing on both race and class, by identifying also with the label of "White trash." However, unlike other participants who solely emphasize the "Trash" part of the label in focusing on SES, he chooses to focus on the "White" part in describing his "very White town/small city." He then connects the effects of this upbringing with views on race "deeply internalized" within himself he is still having to work against.

Lastly, in this excerpt, Theresa here explicitly juggles both the racial and SES implications of the White Trash label. While she originally considered just the SES portion of the term, her response talks explicitly and implicitly about race as well. What is interesting here is that the only racial identity she explicitly states in this response is White. She uses terms like diverse, immigrant, and multiculturalism to say without saying that she grew up in a neighborhood around people of color. White-identity is very much centered implicitly in this response: for example, describing whiteness as a neutral absence of culture and thereby describing aspects of other cultures as being different from this neutral (e.g. "different foods"). Furthermore, in contrasting her response with Seth's,

have culture, you know? And that there weren't like, like a lot of different foods in the grocery stores and things.

And I, I didn't actually think of that context when we were filling out the form. But it, it shapes a lot of the way that I look at some of these conversations about, um, whiteness and the experience also of being, um, a teacher at University of Michigan. Like, like in my neighborhood growing up, like being White wasn't to be of the majority, and wasn't, um, like that's not to say not in a position of privilege, but it just wasn't the majority and I took that for granted. Um, and I feel like in a lot of ways I had an idyllic, um, um, an idyllic experience of multiculturalism in my growing up years that has like shaped my, um, yeah, like shaped my viewpoints a lot so.

her response could be read as more of a rejection of her own White privilege than the examination Seth did in describing the ways he's "deeply internalized" aspects of White supremacy. While she does address that she is not saying that growing up White in a majority non-White neighborhood does not come with privilege, an effect of her response here is to distance herself from "other" White people (aka, the White people that are a part of the problem), thus positioning herself in a positive, anti-racist light and putting other White people (including Seth) into the position of needing to do more of the self-reflective work on race and whiteness that may not be as relevant to her.

What can be seen in this exploration of a handful of minutes from our first session is that the ways in which race and class were intertwined in our conversations can both produce meaningful dialogue about intersections between race and class identity, but they can also further enable White people to avoid talking about race and their own racial privilege. This interconnection as a possible means of avoidance wasn't unique to our discussion group either; similar thoughts were expressed in the preliminary focus groups as well, with one participant (who didn't participate in the later discussion group) sharing,

> [While racial identity is important], I think literally every identity, and I would, I guess, I would especially include class identity is marked by language and so an authentic expression of your identity is going to inevitably become more and more idiosyncratic.

Comments such as these are thorny, perhaps impossibly so. There is a significant truth to them, in that class identity is important and has a huge impact on how we use/perceive language. However, emphasizing class identity *above* or *instead* of race *in* conversations about language, whiteness, and White supremacy can clearly downplay racial factors in these conversations and result in "color-blind" type approaches—e.g. race isn't relevant to these conversations as we are all human-beings—to discussing language varieties, language communities, and linguistic justice. Regardless, participatory approaches to examining these topics does allow the researcher to more readily engage participants in discussion of these very challenges by being a more flexible and participant-influenced approach to human-subjects research. This allows the researcher to more directly engage the concerns and anxieties that participants may have and encourage potentially more transparent conversations about the reasons for participating in the project: e.g., we gathered to primarily (but not solely) discuss intersections between race and language.

4.3.3 In Closing: (Dis)Engaging with White Talk

For participants in this project, a general fear/anxiety of acknowledging race and/or

acknowledging the privilege that comes from being a White, WME-using person in academia

seemed to pervade much, if not all, of our conversations. In his debrief interview, Thomas

acknowledged this discomfort in referring to a disagreement that occurred between him and

Theresa during a moment in which we were discussing student writing.

- **Thomas:** "Like, are we all too afraid of being vulnerable in …commenting on the ways in which [a student example paper] is, you know, is, is further away from SAE, right? Like, are we too afraid? … I feel that way sometimes, like in classes, less so in [this discussion group] space but especially in classes."
- **Me:** "And what, what in particular would you be afraid of?"
- **Thomas:** "… I, I, I'm afraid that if I note those differences, um, that, that will come off as, uh, uh, like cosigning them or embrace or like, um, you know, uh, furthering them, you know, uh, legitim- l- legitimizing them, right? Like acknowledging that a spectrum exists, in my mind, doesn't necessarily legitimize that, that spectrum. Or, or the kinds of inequities that result from it, right? But I, I think it's important to acknowledge [them].

Participants' efforts to engage in White talk and similar attempts to distance themselves from

whiteness and White privilege—unsurprisingly—seem to function as a way for them/us to avoid

these seemingly high stakes conversations about race. In adapting a color-blind style approach to

engaging with language diversity—as in not acknowledging clear differences in students' use of

language—participants are able to avoid the risk that may come from another person interpreting

their acknowledgment of difference as an acknowledgment and an approval of a deficit.

4.4 Individual Versus Group Language Ideologies: Shifting Ideologies and the Challenges of Discussing Language

In this section, I want to focus on two key findings: first, that participants in this space

often struggled to talk about language in specific ways. What I mean here is that, for many of

these instructors, attempts to get us to focus on specific patterns in the texts we examined often

resulted in vague comments about grammar, conventions, or vocabulary that instructors

struggled to specify further upon when prompted. Secondly, I want to use the majority of this

section to examine how the language ideologies instructors expressed seemed to shift, from what

could be described as more antiracist or critical language practices in group settings to more standard language ideologies in individual settings

4.4.1 Difficulties in Discussing Language

As mentioned, White instructors struggle greatly with knowledge about language, even in differentiating text between varieties such as AAE and SAE. As these instructors came from a variety of disciplinary backgrounds and teaching experiences, perhaps this disciplinary difference is why some participants were unfamiliar with what might be considered more entry-level knowledge about language: e.g. "Like, we can say that for instance, you know, we know that African American Vernacular English has clear grammatical patterns, right? Like, it is a, it is a, it is a, it is a language, right?" These instructors typically used abstract or prescriptive words to describe language (e.g. grammatical, correct, academic writing, (non)standard) without clarifying what those terms are referring to or using them in multiple, conflicting ways. For example, when asked about grading practices, see how Seth describes his focus on grammar:

> One thing that I do, I don't grade for grammar. I do line edit when I'm doing like, when they submit a formal paper. [I] will line edit it and like model grammar, but we talked a lot about the first few weeks like descriptive versus prescriptive grammar, and so I try not to.

There are several things worth calling attention to in this excerpt that demonstrate the vagueness with which language was discussed. Notice, for example, how he begins his response by indicating he doesn't grade for grammar (positioned here as referring to conventions), before suggesting the opposite in noting how he edits on "formal" papers. I draw attention to *formal* in the preceding sentence as this term also goes undefined. Descriptors like formal, academic, casual, polished, authentic, and more were used to characterize the writing we discussed, without often elaborating on what specifically what in the text they were characterizing with these terms and what language and/or rhetorical features those terms encompassed:

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- **Robert: "**[This student's writing] is more kind of polished in, you know, the sense that um, it obeys some kind of formal style."
- **Thomas:** "[This writing is] detached, we might say, in the sort of academic sense."

For the sake of accurately exemplifying what I am describing piecemeal so far, I'd like to include below an extended section of one group conversation in which we were discussing student papers (see Table IV.4). Here we are in the middle of discussing initial reactions to reading student papers and where, in each of the papers, the language and/or rhetorical moves we observed particularly drew our attention. I begin this example with my efforts to get participants to point and/or speak more specifically to points in these papers that they wish to discuss. While I have mostly included this text unchanged, I have bolded a few areas for emphasis—specifically emphasizing relevant descriptors of student writing.

Table IV.4. Excerpt from Session Conversation

Me: One thing I'd like for us to think about here, I'm thinking back to our conversations. I think from the very first session and thinking about theory versus practice, abstract versus concreteness, um, Dagney, I believe you used the word "concreteness", if my memory serves me right. Um, **I'm curious if, as we're responding, we might also be able to point to specific moments in [the essays we're discussing] that are kind of, you know, like supporting kind of our, you know, our generalizations about the moves these papers are making.** So if you'd like to sprinkle that in, I think that might also help us focus down as well…

Lucy: …Um, I thought, you know, when I was reading, **the reflection was really kind of the the richest moment of, you know, to develop an argument that mattered but was challenging**, as I was reading through these two was, um, **seeing how the first writer was developing purpose-driven work**, and I found that that was one that challenging for me to see how they were working towards individual learning goals. Um, whereas writer, the second writer and kind of if we go over, there's a moment where, let me see if I can find it. **What I notice about writer two is that they have these three lines that follow all the way through and that that, to me, sort of indicated, you know, a complex argument that matters where they're not just working to answer a question, to demonstrate knowledge, but rather to construct that knowledge.** And they're doing so in ways that are, you know, I think, would be a lot more observable to instructors. They've definitely, **it seems like they've been in a space where they've learned what kinds of conventions and practices um, people are going to be looking for.** But yeah, so for example, you know, **they start in the first paragraph by kind of framing it in a broader um, broader context, provide some of the summary. They're negotiating different strategies for situating their ideas in relationship to um, say [other writers'] work. And then they sort of, they shift into this discussion of strategies. And that gets carried all the way through out.**

I'm just kind of highlighting where those three lines kind of keep coming back. Um, and so I think, one of the things I was really impressed by with paper two, is how **they continue to form that argument by following like three different, three lines and weaving them throughout.** And I think for me, if I, you know, if these were two students in my class with student number one, one of the things that I'd be really excited to help them start to think about is **how we can produce complex arguments that matter**, um, by following kind of following all of **the really rich start points** that they have so that they weave together into this, into this broader conversation.

In Lucy's response, there are a few slightly "concrete" things she emphasizes: the self-reflection, the continuity with the arguments, utilizing sources in writing; however, these are all elements related to genre and/or rhetorical approaches to writing. Notice how the relatively few and brief mentions of language are much more abstract. Perhaps the only moment in this lengthy

response that points slightly more specifically toward language is when she says, "it seems like they've been in a space where they've learned what kinds of conventions and practices um, people are going to be looking for." As Davila (2016) notes, *"the term conventions*, when associated with language use, can be coded language for grammar/mechanics and is often seen as good [(i.e. SAE)]" (p. 144). As shown in Figure IV.1, *conventions* was often used alongside a number of other terms—e.g., grammar, style, genre, structure, composing, et cetera—seeming to be broadly used to indicate preferable forms and processes of writing for these participants. These conventions and practices are painted as self-apparent, in that we only know they are the ones "people" would be expecting to find. It would seem, based on the examples included so far, that these instructors feel much more comfortable or able to specifically discuss genre and rhetoric than they are language.

Figure IV.1. Collocate Network of "Conventions"

Moving to a later point in the same conversation that generated Lucy's comment, there was one point in which Dexter focused in on specific language patterns in identifying clausal patterns in a student paper he associated with Spanish speakers writing in English:

> I did a study on language patterns in, in um, second language learners from Spanish backgrounds and the cascading sentences, I, um, I, I would double down on that. I think that there's, there's a particular way Spanish speakers cascade their sentences in in English

While he and another participant incorrectly identified the AAE-using student writer as an English as another language (EAL) student, this observation by Dexter began a moment in the session in which participants became fiercely interested in the identified passage in particular. Dexter expressing his expertise in the area in having done research in a relevant area motivated the rest of the participants to then ask him a series of questions about clauses, EAL student writing, and English versus Spanish grammatical patterns.

Examining the examples of their own feedback on student papers they brought with them to our Session 5 discussion illuminates similar themes concerning mostly avoiding commenting on language in favor of focusing on features such as organization or source-use. The vast majority of the comments examined consisted of praise or critique like the following, "Good introduction of a few interrelated concepts in this paragraph," "This would be a good spot to put in some parenthetical citations like we looked at in class on Tues," or "Great way to link this paragraph back to your preceding point." This was particularly true for when the student paper utilized SAE—which may have appeared as a neutral choice to instructors, but more on that in the following findings chapter—with Lucy saying in reference to the SAE writing a student of her's produced, "the student wrote in a way that I did not feel conflicted about how to respond to language, grammar, or mechanics." When instructors did comment on language, grammar, and/or conventions, they typically commented on relatively stereotypical features: comma-usage

(instances of comma-splices in particular), passive vs active voice, switching verb tenses, and citation/formatting practices: "The grammar here throws me off a bit. We've got the passive 'is constructed' as antecedent to active tense 'introducing,' and 'presentation' is a noun vying for verb status in the mix." Much of this feedback on grammar and conventions was justified in the comments by appealing to the writer's sense of audience, with the excerpt below hinting at how this kind of appeal may stem from a lack of knowledge about how to more critically engage with language in feedback:

> I attempt to combine celebrating and describing the quality of inquiry with convention feedback couched in "audience awareness" language. I often refer students to [the writing center] guides for integrating evidence, etc. It is challenging for me to tell what is a lack of proofread/polish and what is a grammar or convention difference based on access to previous types of training, language context, or otherwise.

Perhaps a perceived lack of knowledge concerning language is why these instructors seemed most excited with this project to learn more about language and gather additional institutionally approved materials on the subject. Throughout the process, I attempted to upload resources (e.g. readings, syllabi, website hyperlinks, etc.) to a common space for our group, because accessible materials that spoke specifically about language and assessing language were the most requested resource by participants in this space. In fact, in discussing how they selected readings for their courses, instructors spoke about the influence of departmentally recommended (but not necessarily required) materials, with Jennifer saying that in forming her FYC course, she had "relied really heavily on, like, recommended … resources [from department authorities]." I include this to further illustrate how these instructors seem eager to learn and apply to their classrooms more language-specific readings and assignments—particularly those that are institutionally approved or seem credibly backed. However, it may be their perception of themselves as not knowledgeable in this area that holds them back from investigating or asking for these resources outside of a space like this discussion group; perhaps it is due to a belief that,

as an instructor of FYC, they should already know these things.

4.4.2 Shifting Language Ideologies

This next subsection examines how the expressed language ideologies of instructors

shifted depending on the context in which they participated. Shawna Shapiro (2022), in

describing types of language ideologies common in the writing classroom, refers to four broad

categories of language ideology that run the spectrum from more critical language ideologies to

ideologies that rely on uninformed, overly-prescriptive notions about language. Below I've

provided both definitions of these ideologies as well as a brief example of each from my

collected data.

- *A Deficit/Monolingualist View*: "in which language variation is seen as a problem and standardized English which is seen as superior to all other varieties" (p. 317).
    - Def/Mon Example: "it's not using your power to oppress, to, um, let a student have access to a kind of writing that's going to have them respected in the business world, you know?"

- *A Tolerance/Acceptance View*: "in which language variation is recognized as a societal reality but is not seen as relevant or valuable to schooling contexts."
    - Tol/Acc Example: "I mean, in a way it's been like eye opening to see just that you know people speaking non-standard English can still use kind of the resources of English to express really interesting ideas…. But also, I think that [SAE is] like a system and, like an audience and expectation [in academia]."

- *A Diversity/Additive View*: "in which language variation is seen as an asset, but not necessarily linked to power and oppression."
    - Div/Add Example: "I just, I tell the students, they showed up with a. range of voices they're capable of using and I want them to use my class as a way to figure out how those different voices can fit in..."

- *A Critical/Pluralist View*: "in which the language variation is understood to be linked to power and oppression, and language/literacy education is linked to social justice" (p. 317).
    - Crit/Plu Example: "Recognizing that there is no inherent superiority of any dialect of English, rather that some forms have been elevated toward particular ends is a belief I strive to emphasize in my writing classroom; making that ideology transparent works in the service of promoting student participation in the classroom…"

In then using these four categories of ideologies as codes along a spectrum from

Deficit/Monolingualist view—or what Lippi-Green (2011) would refer to as Standard Language Ideology (SLI)—constituting the ideologies that most sustain a White Habitus[20] of assessment (Inoue, 2015) to Critical/Pluralist, I examined patterns in the types of ideologies participants expressed, related to the setting in which they were expressing them. The figure below, see Figure IV.2, illustrates the frequency with which participants' responses were coded within one of those four ideology categories—Deficit/Monolingualist (Def/Mon), Tolerance/Acceptance (Tol/Acc), Diversity/Additive (Div/Add), and Critical/Pluralist (Crit/Plu)—in both group and individual settings. By "group settings," I am referring to the focus groups and group discussion sessions, and by "individual settings" I am referring to the individual reflection forms participants filled out following each focus group and session and the debrief interviews. This coding resulted in (n=77) distinct coding units that ranged in length from a few sentences to most being of a significant length—the average coded response consisting of 99 words. Individually, participants' responses were most frequently coded as Deficit/Monolingualist. In contrast, when in group discussion participants' responses were most likely to be coded as a Diversity/Additive perspective, with the Critical/Pluralist viewpoint and the Tolerance/Acceptance view also receiving a larger relative portion of the conversation compared to the individual discussions. It should be noted, however, that in both settings participants' responses were least likely to be coded as a Critical/Pluralist perspective, which may be related to participants' aforementioned discomfort in discussing language specifically.

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[20] Discussed at length in the literature review chapter, Inoue's (2015) concept of a White habitus refers to an "assessment ecology" that functions through various people and systems to promote White supremacy through SLI that reinforce the privileges of SAE as the languaging of White people.

Figure IV.2. Individual and Group Language Ideologies
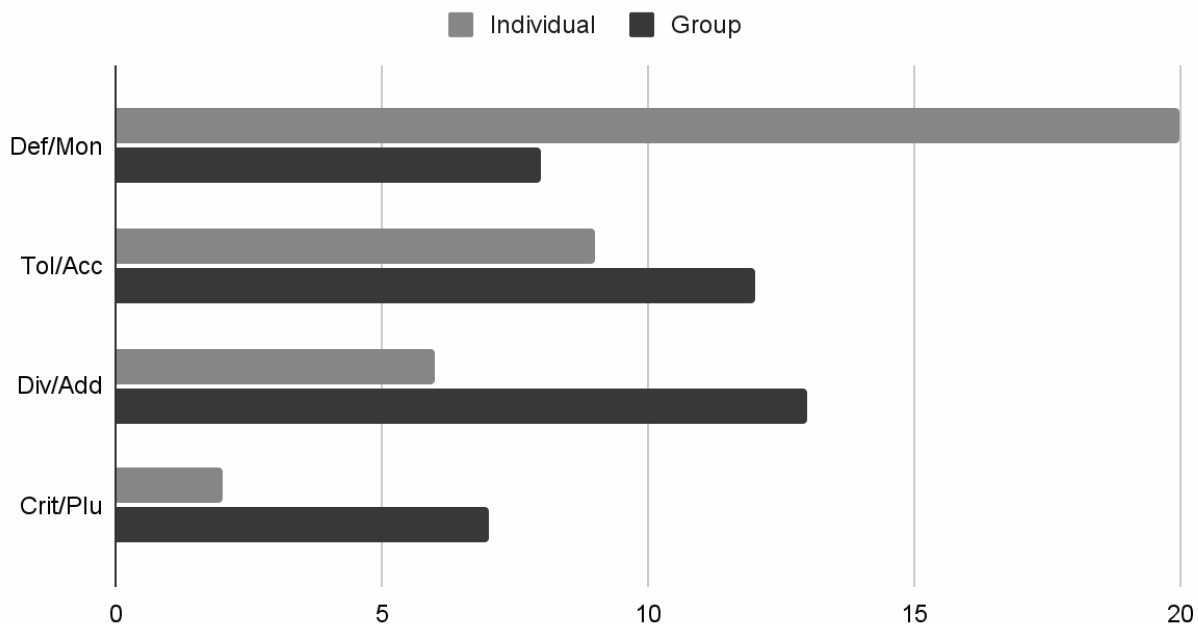
4.4.2.1 **Discussing Two Students' Writing.** To further highlight this phenomenon of shifting ideologies dependent on the setting, I want to focus on one activity that took place during our fourth session that had instructors read, rate, and discuss two actual first-year composition student papers at their institution. In this activity, I had instructors individually read and annotate two student papers written as a part of the placement process for students' first-year composition class. In these papers, students were instructed to write a brief response to a public-text concerning student experiences during the COVID-19 pandemic. Unlike the work of Davila (2012), who informs her participants of the real or fictitious racial identities of student writers in examining indexicality, my instructors weren't told any other information about these students prior to this activity, but one of the papers included a variety of features of AAE (Paper 1, written by a Black, cis-male student) and the other paper adhered closely to SAE (Paper 2,

written by a multilingual—English and Hindi—student of color) (See Appendix I and J for full versions of the papers). Before proceeding further with this comparison, while Paper 1 features code-meshing between multiple varieties that could be categorized at various points as SAE or AAE, for the sake of brevity and to make the regular references to and comparisons between the two papers less confusing for readers, I will often refer to Paper 1 as "the AAE Paper." In doing so, it is also important to note that AAE is not a monolithic variety, as there exists significant variation within the U.S. between various communities of AAE-users (Wolfram & Kohn, 2015); however, despite this variation, there are features of AAE that persist across communities of users (Spears, 2015). As such, the following findings unpack the AAE features I identified in Paper 1 and instructors' reactions to the student using those features in combination with others compared to the SAE writing of Paper 2.

One benefit of hiding the identities of student writers in asking instructors to react to papers in an activity such as this one, and my primary motivation in doing so, was to hopefully limit the White participants in this space from engaging in performative assessments[21] of the texts of racially and/or linguistically minoritized students and to identify how/if participants in this space were able to recognize non-SAE varieties by themselves. However, as Davila (2012) notes, a benefit of her design is in allowing her to explore how participants read "accent" into writing based on their own biases. Table IV.5 and Figure IV.3 below further describe these two papers in terms of their general quantifiable features. As can be seen from both the table and figure, other than Paper 1's usage of AAE and Paper 2's usage of SAE, these two papers are relatively similar and were chosen due to their comparable nature in the features outlined below.

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[21] By "performative assessment" here, I am referring to the tendency of White people in conversations about whiteness and racial justice to express opinions they believe will have them be viewed favorably and limit expressing ideas they may hold that would potentially harm their image.

Table IV.5. Descriptive Statistics of Student Papers

Descriptive Statistics	Paper 1 (AAE)	Paper 2 (SAE)	Difference
Word Tokens	1,033	1,210	-177
Word Types	385	485	-100
Type/Token Ratio (TTR)	.3727	.4008	-0.0281
Sentence Count	36	52	-16
Median Word Length + (Standard Deviation)	4.00 (2.37)	4.00 (2.54)	0 (-0.17)
Median Sentence Length + (Standard Deviation)	26.00 (13.23)	21.50 (11.72)	4.50 (1.51)
Flesch-Kincaid	12.48	11.72	0.76
Lexical Density $L_d = (N_{lex}/N)$ x100	47.63%	49.92%	-2.29%

Figure IV.3. Distribution of Parts of Speech

Distribution of Parts of Speech (as a percentage of total)
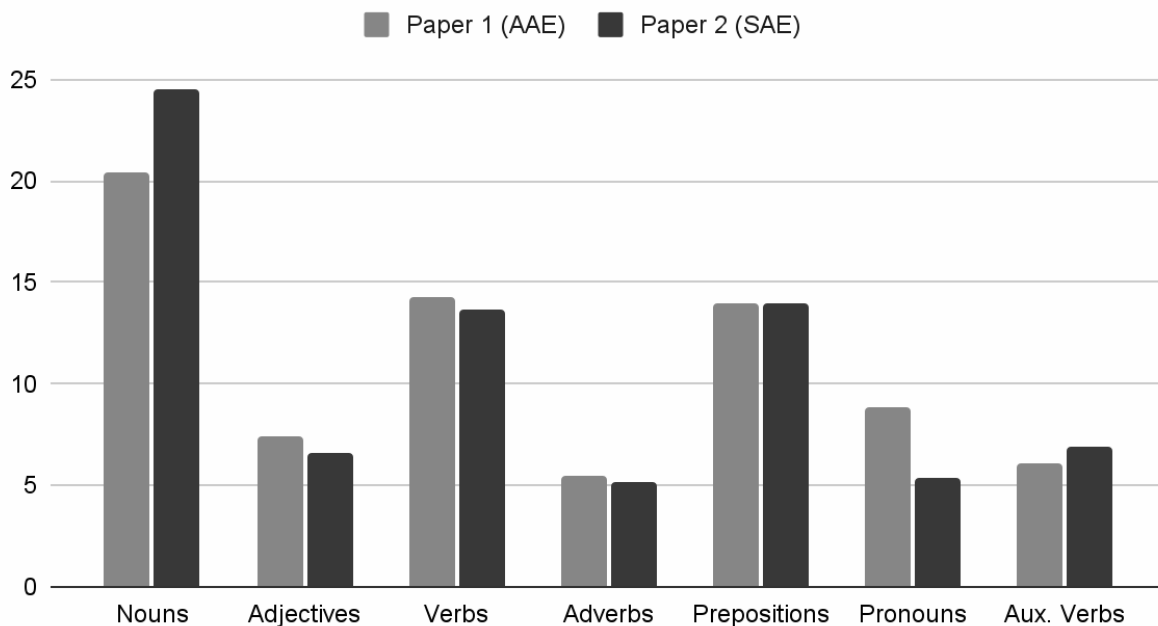
In this activity, prior to group discussions, instructors first answered several questions in a survey format: 1) How would you categorize these two papers in terms of their fulfillment of the goals of FYC? With this question, participants were able to select options that indicated both satisfied goals, only one did, or neither. 2) How prepared do you believe the writer of Paper 1/2 is for a FYC class at [this institution]? Participants responded via a 1 to 5 likert scale—with 1 indicating "Not prepared at all" to 5 indicating "Extremely prepared." Lastly, they were asked via an open response question to explain their choices. When asked to rank these papers individually prior to talking with their peers, participants ranked the SAE paper (Paper 2) higher than the paper that regularly featured instances of AAE (Paper 1) with a median score of 5 compared to 3. Additionally, 50% of the participants agreed with the statement that Paper 2 (the SAE paper) exemplified the goals of FYC but Paper 1 (the AAE paper) did not.

What is clear from looking at Table IV.6—which breaks down the individual participant rankings of the two papers—is that a majority of the participants viewed the SAE paper as being superior to the AAE, with a few participants rating both papers equally; however, it is important to note that none of the participants ranked the AAE paper higher than the SAE paper and—similarly—none of the participants agreed with the statement that Paper 1 exemplified the goals of FYC but Paper 2 did not. These findings by themselves are not surprising. The fact that most White instructors working in academia would value SAE writing more than AAE writing isn't new information. However, where things get interesting is in contrasting the individual rationales for these scores with the larger group discussion, further exemplifying how their language ideologies shifted in these contexts. Table IV.7 and IV.8 below serve to illuminate specific rhetorical and grammatical patterns of Paper 1 that serve to illustrate how and why I have identified that reading as AAE, and several of these identified features seem implicitly connected

to participants' thoughts on the paper's strengths and weaknesses—which will be examined

further shortly.

Table IV.6 Scoring of Student Papers

Participant Name	Paper 1 (AAE) Score	Paper 2 (SAE) Score
Dagney	4	4
Dexter	3	5
James	5	5
Jennifer	2	4
Lucy	3	4
Robert	4	5
Seth	3	5
Theresa	5	5
Thomas	3	4
Median Score + (Standard Deviation)	**3.00 (1.01)**	**5.00 (0.53)**

Table IV.7. Paper 1 (AAE) Notable Rhetorical Strategies

Paper 1 (AAE) Notable Rhetorical Strategies[22]

Narrative Sequencing: a rhetorical move indicative of Black communication that uses the "relating of events (real or hypothetical) to explain a point …[by] meandering away from the 'point,' [taking] the listener on episodic journeys" (Smitherman, 1977, p. 148).

Excerpt from Paper 1	**Explanation**
"During my junior year in high school when the pandemic first started rising in…we were in person for some time the same way Orozco was then as the time started to pass it seemed like classrooms would start getting smaller and smaller with kids getting quarantined to others simply opting out due to health concerns with themselves or with family. Me being a person who wanted to stay in school I would start to feel disappointed…"	This section marks a shift in paper 1, in which the writer engages in "narrative sequencing" over the course of approximately 15% of the essay to illustrate his challenging experiences in classrooms shifting from virtual to in-person formats in order to support his assertion that the essay being analyzed utilizes pathos well.

Tonal Semantics: while tonal semantics "refers to the use of voice rhythm and vocal inflection to convey meaning" in ways that are "impossible to capture in print," (Smitherman, 1977, p. 134), one feature of tonal semantics is "repetition and alliterative word-play" that can be captured in text (p. 142).

Excerpt from Paper 1	**Explanation**
"**I feel** that in many cases readings on these topics can become too statistical …**I feel** the author using a narrative to develop her purpose benefitted the reach and grasping power of the article. **I feel** this is the case because the author could have gone with the standard using facts and percentages to get the same point across….. **I feel** this is the best way to appeal to an audience like my generation due to the simple fact that we can relate to this situation and it leads us to become more interested because we can then see what this person did to get over the exact same boundary. **I feel** that one thing that will always unite people is a	All of these instances of "I feel" —used within a single paragraph—serve to center his connection to the subject matter of the article as a way of setting him up to then engage in the following paragraph in narrative sequencing. In forefronting his experiences through the repetition of "I feel," he draws the reader's attention to his humanity/subjectivity and strengthens an additional side-argument he makes throughout the paper, that the writer relates well to "us common people." Additionally, in closing out his paper and restating his position, he then returns to this device to again stress his central argument: "**I feel** this essay

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[22] Emphasis added in excerpts to highlight specific relevant features.

common threat/ tribulation.'	is highly effective at achieving its purpose…. **I feel** the essay delivered its point in an effective and interesting way."

Field Dependence: "the tendency to see 'the big picture,' to see the relationship of people and things to the whole" (Red & Webb, 2005, p. 131).

Excerpt from Paper 1	**Explanation**
"...**we can relate to this situation** and **it leads us** to become more interested because **we can then see** what this person did to get over the exact same boundary."	As Red & Webb (2005) explain, this strategy uses frequent explicit acknowledgments of the reader (e.g. we/us) to encourage reader involvement and investment in the material, in a similar style to call-response strategies.

Signifyin: "the verbal art of insult in which a speaker humorously puts down, talks about, needles—that is, signifies on—the listener" (Smitherman, 1977, p. 118).

Excerpt from Paper 1	**Explanation**
"During this article she explained how often times during Zoom classes **she would be daydreaming and many times not even paying attention because it simply did not feel like school when she had to learn from home.** This small detail is something I feel we all relate to as most of us have had to remote learn at some point over the pandemic. **We all get that sense of a lack of a learning experience** and **I like how she put this in the article to relate us common people to her a person who is already in college and toted as an A student. She does not come off as someone who is trying to be better than everyone else and that she does not feel the effects on Covid-19**."	While often uncommon in AAE-users' academic writing, signifyin can be observed at times (Red & Webb, 2005). Although, as Campbell (1994) notes, in academic writing, "signifying voices are muted, limited as they are by what they have been taught or perceive as appropriate for academic writing tasks" (p. 471). As such, in this excerpt we can see a subtle critique the writer is engaging in through responding to this university's placement-test prompt by drawing a line for himself (a common, humble person) and the reader (through the inclusion of "us") that separates them from the fake, performative people, who have unwarranted elevated opinions of themselves. Additionally, by bringing into the conversations the challenges of isolation through online learning, this critique of performativity—in pretending that everything is alright—is leveled more clearly at unempathetic school staff/faculty. The same staff/faculty that a student could imagine might be reading such an essay produced as part of his placement process.

Table IV.8. Paper 1 (AAE) Notable Patterns in Grammar

Paper 1 (AAE) Notable Patterns in Grammar[23]
Hypercorrection: The act of creating an "error" in one variety—like SAE—as a potential result of overcorrections in moving between varieties.

Excerpt from Paper 1 "As I read "the Unsettled Semester" I do feel the author appeals to my emotions and **reasons.**"	**Explanation** As Redd & Webb (2005) note, generalizations about "standard rules for plurals and possessives [in SAE]" may result in AAE-users adding a "plural -s to nouns that have irregular plural forms" (p. 30). This instance of hypercorrection may be, in part, due to how far more frequently AAE-conjugations of certain verb tenses and nouns do not include an -s, compared to their SAE counterparts (Smitherman, 1977). In this example, the writer then adds the -s in order to match the plural noun, *emotions*.
Appositive Pronoun: the placement of a pronoun alongside a clarifying noun phrase.	
Excerpt from Paper 1 "We all get that sense of a lack of a learning experience and I like how she put this in the article to relate us common people to **her a person who is already in college and toted as an A student.**"	**Explanation** While not unique to AAE, appositive pronouns appear regularly in the language of AAE-users (Craig & Grogger, 2012).
Copula Absence: the absence of the version of the verb *be*. While copula absence is not unique to AAE necessarily, it is considered a prominent feature (Sharma & Rickford, 2009).	
Excerpt from Paper 1 "I feel this essay is highly effective at achieving its purpose because it breaks down the pandemic life of a university student	**Explanation** The [_] in the excerpt indicates where someone using SAE would likely use a copula, and this example appears in the brief

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[23] Emphasis added in excerpts.

and this **[_]** something that I will be becoming in a few months."	conclusion of the writer's paper.
Double Subjects & Verbs: the repetition of the subject or verb in a sentence, of which it may replace instances of there/that that would be preferred in SAE construction (Redd & Webb, 2005, pp. 38-9).	
Excerpt from Paper 1 "Using the narrative of an actual real life college student **it** helps the audience put themselves in her shoes…" "...when the pandemic first **started rising** in March…"	**Explanation** The *it* serves as a pronoun for subject-antecedent, "Using the narrative of an actual real life college student," that immediately precedes it, and the "started rising" could be due to AAE's emphasis on specifying through verbs how an action occurred rather than when it occurred in the past tense (Nehusi, 2001, p. 93).
That **Absence:** the SAE-centric absence of *that* prior to a noun clause.	
Excerpt from Paper 1 "She explains how she feels **[_]** this new event presents a new challenge"	**Explanation** The [_] in the excerpt indicates where someone using SAE would likely insert *that*. As Palacas (2001) notes, SAE more often retains *that* more frequently than AAE when preceding a noun clause.

As previously stated, to clarify what specifically I am referring to in identifying the language in Paper 1 as AAE, I want to draw readers attention to Tables IV.7 and IV.8 above. This clarification will be especially important in a moment in examining what specifically participants focused on in critiquing/praising Paper 1. However, what is not important to focus on here necessarily is the specific categorizations of AAE features—those are more to support my assertion that this paper uses, what Davila (2016) would call "unconventional" language usage. What is important here is to document that this paper did feature unconventional usages that connect with features of AAE identified in previous scholarship. This clarification will matter in further discussion of instructors' reactions in this chapter and the later discussion and implications chapter.

In Table IV.7 above, I identify, define, and discuss multiple rhetorical strategies, and in Table IV.8 above I also identify, define, and discuss patterns in grammar used in Paper 1 that are notable characteristics of AAE. While several of the features discussed in Table IV.7 and IV.8 are not unique to AAE—e.g. appositive pronouns—the sum of this combination of identified rhetorical and grammatical patterns do indeed mark this student's writing as containing AAE features. In looking at these two Tables, particularly the rhetorical features in Table IV.7, what is clear is how these observed features in Paper 1 run counter to many of the aspects of White (i.e. WME) languaging, as argued by Inoue (2019a).

1. an unseen, naturalized, orientation to the world;
2. hyperindividualism;
3. a stance of neutrality, objectivity, and apoliticality;
4. an individualized, rational, controlled self;
5. a focus on rule-governed, contractual relationships;
6. a focus on clarity, order, and control (p. 27).

While this list is essentializing to a degree, connections between these categories and the

language used by actual writing programs to describe courses do align (Davila, 2022). In considering Paper 1, the field dependency observed would seem to push back at numbers 1, 2 and 3; the use of signifyin breaks the expectations of 3, 4, and 5; the narrative-sequencing resists 1 and 3; furthermore, the various grammatical moves in Table IV.8 could be read as running "afoul" of number 6 as well. In other words, there is a lot happening in Paper 1 that could give readers, who've been socialized to privilege SAE/WME, pause.

In keeping those AAE-marked grammatical and rhetorical aspects of Paper 1 in mind, I turn now toward Tables IV.9 and IV.10 below, which offer a summation of the individual and group comments for both papers. All of these comments are direct quotes from either participants' group conversation or the written responses in the individual reflection forms. Perusing Table IV.9, which shows the comments on the AAE paper, participants individually called out the language of the paper as feeling "rushed and informal," lacking clear structure, and falling short of their expectations for a college-level analysis. While not necessarily negatively portrayed, the hypercorrection described in Table IV.8 didn't go unnoticed. However, the instance of signifying identified in Table IV.7 above was negatively noted with Dagney commenting, "Are college students common people?" More specifically, participants appeared to focus especially in on the narrative sequencing in the paper: "I feel thrown off by … their relating to the protagonist's experience," an unsurprising reaction given the "exasperating" feeling White, WME listeners may have to this narrative style (Smitherman, 1977, p. 148). Lucy's written comment below provides an example of how some White instructors may not perceive AAE rhetorical strategies like narrative sequencing as valid forms of evidence/argument.

> …they are using their own experiences to make sense of the reading, but I don't see
> adequate evidence that they are documenting their claims or grounding their analysis in

relation to specific moments or materials from [the reading the prompt asked them to analyze].

However, in examining the group conversation on the AAE paper, those same features (narrative sequencing and reversal of genre expectations) they individually framed as failing the paper were instead elevated as being strong-points of the paper: e.g. "It sounds like a person trying to be themselves." While the narrative sequencing of the paper (e.g. the more reflective, narrative elements) and the tonal semantics (e.g. repetition/alliteration of "I feel") was heavily critiqued in the individual responses, here we see instructors situating that element of the paper as a positive: e.g. "There, there's a lot of *I* in paper one, and I appreciate that" also, "it does read some ways, more like public facing writing … [it] resonates with me as a human being as opposed to a scholar." The field dependence in the paper, through the use of we/us, was also discussed positively in the margins of our shared, non-anonymous Google Doc feedback; Dexter—commenting on a line that opens with "We all get…"—shared with the group, "This is bringing relevance to the reading and what the student and all of the people they're thinking of can take away from the experience of this text …". It wasn't just reframing their perceptions of this paper as more personal from a negative to a positive, however, rather some instructors in the group setting expressed that this essay (compared to Paper 2) was more emblematic of SAE writing, with Theresa saying, "essay one is more like Standard um, English."

Table IV.9. AAE Paper Comments

AAE Paper: Individual Reflection

- I feel thrown off by … their relating to the protagonist's experience.
- It seems like taking a writing class and learning to think differently about [their writing structure] will be helpful [to this writer].
- [This paper] struck me as rushed and informal.
- [Their writing] indicates some evidence that they are considering rhetorical strategies.. But doesn't quite get to a complex or well-supported analysis.
- An instructor reading [paper one] might want to consider strategies for supporting [this student's development of asking research questions,] creating arguments that matter, and… developing flexible strategies for complex and well supported arguments.
- Paper 1 has more evaluation/assessment.. Which I think is good… [but] there were a few places where the phrasing or punctuation left me confused.
- Paper 1 uses some terms I tell [my students] are not well received.

AAE Paper: Group Discussion

- It sounds like a person trying to be themselves and not a person trying to be what a teacher expects.
- I think that paper one did a far, I mean, at the risk of making value judgments here, a better job making personal reflection. Part of that and connecting it to an experience and making it relevant to an experience
- I think it would be easier for me to teach student one um, because I think sometimes the capacity for self-reflection is a harder thing to teach and it's one of those more things like you get in the arts where it's like you get it or you don't get it, like you can do exercises for it, but it's just harder to like, teach.
- Essay one is more like Standard um, English.
- …reading the the first paper that it does read in some ways, more like public facing writing. And someone would connect with it more on like the casual level, you know? And that it and in some ways this can be more effective…And like, I feel like that's a line that like, you know, resonates with me as a human being as opposed to a scholar
- There, there's a lot of *I* in paper one, and I appreciate that.
- [Through the use of hedging] one important academic quality that is being demonstrated in paper number one, is humility, academic humility.
- I like hope that there is a student who engages the way that writer one seems to engage with their thinking. Um, because I think that often that person is like... I feel like the writer of this text is trying to do this, and that made me feel this way towards the idea or feel this way towards the writer, and it's, I find it really permission giving

Perhaps unsurprisingly, given the aforementioned struggle to discuss language,

instructors' positive and negative comments regarding the language and grammar in Paper 1

were rather unspecific and can be interpreted as possibly contradictory in places. References

such as "the phrasing or punctuation left me confused," were about as particular as participants got in observing aspects of grammar and conventions—except when noting perceived typos (e.g. "full proof" instead of *foolproof*). As such, while I can't say without a doubt that instructors were reacting to the use of AAE grammar in calling the paper "informal" or "rushed"—specifically the instances of invariable be and/or copula absence—in referring back to Table IV.5 and Figure IV.3 that found few measurable differences between these two papers, it is challenging to eliminate the possibility. At the very least, a better understanding of the rhetorical and grammatical features of AAE would serve instructors better in navigating these conversations and explicitly discussing features of both papers they enjoyed and did not, and this would in turn assist them in problematizing the ideologies that underlie such—positive or negative—reactions.

Shifting to Table IV.10, which similarly compares the individual and group comments but on the second paper (the SAE paper), the exact opposite effect can be found. Whereas these instructors negatively framed aspects of Paper 1 (AAE paper) individually and then shifted framing those aspects more positively in the group setting, with Paper 2 (SAE paper) instructors praised it individually but became much more critical in the group discussion. Individually, instructors enjoyed what they described as "polished" writing, "well organized" structure, and use of "textual evidence to support analytical claims." One instructor wrote in praise of Paper 2's grammar, "I think that the wording of the second paper reflects some of the type of wording I teach my first year students to write in an academic style." When gathered together to discuss this paper, however, these same language features became points of criticism: "number two sounds like a person who has been well trained to sound like they think a teacher wants them to sound, and on those grounds alone, I have to, I might be a bit iconoclastic, but I like one better." Even praise directed toward Paper 2 in the group setting was often hedged with subtle critique:

"Paper two, there's a lot of poetic prose in it. There's like a wide range of vocabulary, and so I would say that generally, I like I want to say that that's kind of a good thing, but I also kind of feel a little bit neutral about it. Like, fine, that's fine."

Table IV.10 SAE Paper Comments

SAE Paper: Individual Reflection

- I think the writer seems extremely prepared in that their writing seems polished on a surface level, and it follows a recognizable structure.
- [Paper 2] was methodical, well organized, and strove for some kind of academic objectivity.
- Writer #2's purposes seem more apparent -- they establish a few key "through lines" in the first 2 paragraphs (in ways that are, for me, at least, more observable than in the sample [other paper]. For Writer #2, I can see combinations of strategies for [course goals] …For example: this writer makes use of some directly quoted material, some paraphrase, some summary, and extended discussion of Supiano's claims in ways that work towards [the] purposes of this writer.
- This isn't phrased as such in the learning goals, but the ways Writer #2 follows through on lines of inquiry (through lines, arguments established in the beginning are carried throughout) help me, the reader, to better recognize how they are creating a complex and well-supported argument in purposeful ways.
- Paper 2 incorporates more specific textual evidence to support analytical claims
- I think that the wording of the second paper reflects some of the type of wording I teach my first year students to write in an academic style

SAE Paper: Group Discussion

- Number two sounds like a person who has been well trained to sound like they think a teacher wants them to sound, and on those grounds alone, I have to, I might be a bit iconoclastic, but I like one better.
- The second paper seemed very isolated in its commentary
- [Students need to use their voice in writing] which means using first person, which means stripping away the sort of abstracted generalizations and theorizing that you see in number two.
- In paper two though, I think honestly as I was reading, this part of me felt like somebody is trying to please me as the grade giver. And so I think I had a little bit of a chip on my shoulder as I was reading
- …paper two, there's a lot of poetic prose in it. There's like a wide range of vocabulary, and so I would say that generally, I like I want to say that that's kind of a good thing, but I also kind of feel a little bit neutral about it. Like, fine, that's fine.
- [Unlike with Paper 1, I don't think Paper 2 is a student I would enjoy having in class]...there's definitely a big question mark of, is the student going to be receptive? Part of it is the lack of hedging.

While there were then a number of critiques leveled against the SAE paper in the group setting around the writer's voice—more on this next chapter—critiques of grammar were not something present in the conversations about the SAE paper. This is despite the fact that the

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paper did feature numerous unconventional usages. Throughout the SAE paper, there can be observed a number of SAE-based "errors" and inconsistencies in punctuation, citation practices, and unconventional usages of certain verbs, e.g. "Supiano appeals to the reader's empathy **to understand** that everyone is doing what they can to succeed right now" (my emphasis). Why is it then that instructors only described the language in the SAE paper as adhering to academic expectations? Why did they not seem to notice—or, at least comment on—these unconventional usages?

- **Dexter:** [The author of Paper 2] has been taught to write about what an author does and how it impacts a reader in a more abstract way than the other student. This is the preferred voice of academic writing
- **Jennifer:** [The author of Paper 2] is attentive to specific "academic" shapes/forms, locating them here within different voices quoted in the source. a sense of (well-trained?) recourse to examining the relationship between parts and meaning-making from that relationship.

William's (1981) well-known article—"The Phenomenology of Error"—discusses how when reader's approach texts expecting to find "errors," they end up finding them. But this doesn't fully answer the question of why they may have expected to find errors in one of these papers more than the other.

One response to this question could be that instructors perceived the writer of Paper 1 as being non-White, non-WME-monolingual and (falsely) perceived the writer of Paper two as the opposite and primed themselves to notice "errors" in the AAE paper that they would not have classified under such deficit labels in the SAE paper. Flores and Rosa's (2015) discussion of "monoglossic language ideologies" and "listening subjects," wherein the listener/reader's SLI are differentially affected by how they (racially) perceive the speaker/writer. While I didn't disclose any aspects of either author's identity, it could then be that the instructor perceived the author of Paper 2 as being White and the writing as WME because her writing appeared to align with features of White languaging, such as those previously mentioned habits Inoue (2019)

identified.

Just as Davila (2012) did in her study of indexicality and instructor perceptions of student writing, I too made space in this discussion for instructors to comment on identities they associated with these two student writers. While no participant in the space explicitly recognized the writing as AAE in Paper 1, several in the space did perceive the writing to be non-SAE—emphasizing class identities, linguistic identities, home-language, and (as seen in the emphasized portion of Jennifer's comment) potentially implying through contrast with themselves their perceptions of the student as not being White.

- **Robert:** I got the sense that this person was coming from a background where, um, English was not, really it's like English as we might imagine was not the predominant, like language in their home.
- **Jennifer:** [Potential misspellings in the paper] kind of like signaled to me that the writer probably hasn't had as much, um, experience like studying English in the ways that that I have but it, **that just signaled to me that I would probably be in a different discourse community than this person.**
- **Dexter:** [I think this is a] first gen student or somebody at least who isn't identifying strongly with, uh, an academic, middle class, whatever like bourgeois tradition of discourse

However, in being asked to make similar perceptions about the writer of Paper 2, participants seemed much more reticent or unable to connect that writing to specific identities. Instead, in commenting on the paper, they typically more broadly described the writer of Paper 2 as someone from perhaps a more privileged background, such as in Theresa's comment below.

Paper two, there's a line that says "Supiano wants the reader to quickly realize that even the best of the best are forced to lower their standards drastically." … I might draw from that, that maybe, this person like identifies, um, as well with like, you know, at least understanding the best of the best or being part of that.

As for why instructors' comments on the identities of this writer were much less specific, it could be—as Rubin (1995) describes—another consequence of standardized varieties of a language being positioned as "unmarked"—i.e. neutral, such as myths about unaccented English. In being socialized to perceive SAE/WME as neutral, the "social and political prestige" of the

variety—and its connections to various racial, class, and geographic identities—is seen as just being normal (p. 6). This false normalization could have been further exacerbated by participant's (falsely) perceiving the writer of Paper 2 as also being racially, culturally, and linguistically similar to themselves.

Individually, it would seem that instructors here valued their perception of a clear rhetorical purpose and organization—through the appearance of academic objectivity as opposed to the narrative sequencing—and "polish" (i.e. adherence to SAE grammatical patterns). As a group, however, instructors seemed to value much more greatly writing that experimented more rhetorically, as well as writers engaging in what these White instructors perceived as being more authentic expressions of voice and language—more on participant perceptions of "authenticity" of voice in the second findings chapter. However, in being asked to connect these writers to their perceptions of various identities, the responses from instructors indicate that the specific critiques and praise found in their shifting ideologies could be, in part, due to how the patterns observed in these papers that they then associated with specific class, linguistic, and racial identities may have primed the instructors to to more and less readily perceive "errors" in both of these texts.

4.4.3 In Closing: Individual Versus Group Language Ideologies

Given the variety of disciplinary backgrounds represented both in this project and by instructors of FYC classes at large, as well as the longstanding separation of fields such as Rhetoric & Composition and Linguistics (Gere et al, 2021), the finding in this section that these instructors struggled to talk about language specifically is perhaps unsurprising. Carrying greater implications for the validity of this project then is the second finding: instructors expressed different language ideologies in individual settings than they did in group settings. The question

is then, of course, which—if either—of these expressed opinions is actually representative of these participants' beliefs? Unfortunately, that isn't an easy question to answer and there really are three initial ways we could begin to consider these differences:

- 1) Participants, in discussing these texts as a group, pushed each other to believe and express language ideologies that were more open to a diversity of language varieties not typically accepted within academia.
- 2) Participants, in being aware of the context in which they were participating, expressed ideologies in the group setting they believed would be more accepted and would therefore position them in a more positive light in front of their peers.
- 3) Participants, appreciating and at times even enjoying the rhetorical (but not necessarily grammatical) patterns of non-SAE varieties, felt pressured to still reinforce SLI due to their perceptions of their purpose/responsibility to the institution and its students.

Alas, there is evidence from participants to support all of these interpretations. In support of the idea that participants in group setting challenged one another and pushed each other to be more receptive of anti-racist language ideologies, we have statements such as Seth's reflection following the Session 3 student paper activity; Seth originally rated the AAE paper a 3 and the SAE paper a 5:

> I knew I had a preference for one over the other, but I had trouble articulating what it was that distinguished them. Hearing from other folks was highly informative. By the end of our session, my preference had flipped!

However, there are also a number of comments in reflection forms that indicate that performativity may have had a large effect on what people decided to (or to not) express in the group moments. The following quote from Dagney is from the same Session 3 reflection form as Seth's response:

> The conversations are good, and I find myself thinking about the context (i.e., careful about what I'm saying particularly because I impulsively want to show my most non-oppressive ideas).

Lastly, it is impossible to rule out option three mentioned above. As will be explored in the second findings chapter—in discussing "Tensions in Assessment" and pedagogies participants saw as being incompatible with the "real world"—several participants commented

on what they saw as their duty, in an imperfect world, to solely reinforce SAE, in giving non-SAE-using students access to the power and prestige of SAE—see Elbow (1999) for similar arguments. While honesty of participation is not something this project is able to measure, it does seem possible that it could be a combination of these effects played into how/why participants' ideologies shifted between settings. Further implications of this shift will be examined in the discussion chapter. In the following chapter, however, additional findings related to participants' perceptions of "authentic" student identities and how participants framed language pedagogies into idealistic versus compatible with the "real-world" categories will be examined.

Chapter 5: "Like, that's not what you're supposed to sound like": Appropriacy, Authenticity, and (Anti)Racist Writing Pedagogy

5. 1 Overview of Findings

The first finding chapter in this project examined how instructors (dis)engaged in White talk, as well as the ways in which they expressed and shifted certain language ideologies. Throughout the previous findings chapter, I noted how instructors struggled to talk specifically about language in their pedagogies and in examining student writing. This findings chapter will elaborate on related themes by first examining instructor reactions to student writing and their labeling of student voices as authentic or performative. Additionally, this chapter will then segue into a discussion of where and how these instructors deemed language pedagogies as either "idealistic" or compatible with the real world.

The findings in this chapter illustrate how White instructors amplify the voices of students calling for more SLI-based pedagogies in possibly creating an assessment ecology within classrooms that enforces types of appropriacy arguments in encouraging students to code-switch between language varieties based on genre conventions, resulting in constraining and harmful stereotypes about how "authentic" or performative students —particularly students of color—sound. While instructors may use "negotiation" strategies—such as co-creating rubrics with students—as a means of attempting to overcome these assessment challenges as more, the results of these negotiations may be that their co-created efforts simply reproduce standards that reinforce a White habitus of assessment. The findings in this chapter respond to my first and third research questions (as well as their subquestions): 1) What language ideologies can be

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found within the expressed beliefs, practices, and materials of White-identifying FYC instructors? 3) What kinds of participatory supports do White-identifying FYC instructors need to begin and sustain thoughtful inquiry into their positionality and pedagogy?

5.2 Authentic, Performative, and Neutral Voice: Genre as an Appropriacy Argument

In this section I will focus on two findings: 1) how instructors discussed authenticity vs performativity when it came to analyzing "voice" in student writing; in particular, I want to examine the connection between these determinations of authenticity and how instructors perceived students racial, ethnic, and linguistic identity. 2) Secondly, I will examine the ways in which instructors here discussed utilizing narrative-heavy genres (e.g. literacy narratives) in both assigned readings and assigned writing assignments as a way of bringing/allowing linguistic diversity in the writing classroom; however, in doing so, I will discuss how such actions may enforce types of "appropriacy arguments" that encourage students to code-switch language varieties and establish (in)appropriate contexts for non-SAE language varieties.

5.2.1 Authentic, Performative, and Neutral Student Voices

In our session conversations about student writing, the subject of student "voice" came up numerous times. In fact, "voice" was a topic of conversation that explicitly appeared in every discussion group session, as well as one of the focus groups and several of the interviews. The concept of voice in writing is often inconsistently utilized, but it can be defined here as, "the amalgamative effect of the use of discursive and non-discursive features language users choose, deliberately or otherwise, from socially available yet ever-changing repertoires…" (Matsuda, 2001). In using this definition in her own research, Tardy (2012) demonstrates how the scholarship differentiates between "individual" and "social" voice, whereas individual voice emphasizes "personal style" and social voice refers to "the socially situated dimensions of voice

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related to discourse and genre" (p. 65). In defining voice in such a way, the writer's identity becomes not just a static, disembodied aspect of the text, rather it gains "interpersonal meaning that is negotiated through the interaction among the writer and the reader mediated by the text" (Matsuda, 2015, p. 145). In other words, the attributed qualities of the writer's voice get, in part, filtered through the reader's own perceptions and biases of various social groups and identities they assign to the writing and/or the author. This understanding of voice aligns with scholarship concerning "authenticity" in language. As Bucholtz and Hall (2005) note, the concept of authenticity—or, "what sorts of language and language users count as 'genuine' for a given purpose"—has historically been a contentious issue in scholarship, but they discuss how the determination of authenticity is not "an inherent essence, but…a social process played out in discourse" (p. 601). This is to say, how an individual's language is read as authentic or not is determined by the dominant cultural context in which the individual is being evaluated[24]. In building off of this understanding of authenticity, Reyes (2016) provides an example in discussing the "forever foreigner" and "model minority" stereotypes that Asian Americans face in the United States—often causing their speech in English to be read by White individuals as accented, in comparison to the listener's "unaccented" English, or otherwise less proficient.

In examining how voice was explicitly and implicitly discussed in this project—similar to the previous chapter, in which I discussed how participants at times used synonyms for discussing student of color (e.g. diverse, student-athlete, etc.)— voice seemed to often be framed by participants as an individual voice during discussion. This is to say, participants were reluctant to connect aspects of voice explicitly to broader social groups even as they evaluated

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[24] In exemplifying this phenomenon, Bucholtz and Hall (2005) cite and discuss the work of Bailey (2000), who discusses how U.S. racial paradigms cause tensions between many Dominican Americans' identities as Hispanic and/or Black.

the authenticity of the voice; however, upon further analysis these references actually seem to be discussing social voice, particularly in referencing a student's use of a non-SAE variety:"I like [the paper with AAE] better. It sounds like a person trying to be themselves and not a person trying to be what a teacher expects." Participants typically referenced voice in these comments on non-SAE varieties, such as Dagney's comment here noting the "rhythm"—i.e. the use of alliteration through tonal semantics—of a student's voice: "It seems to me that there's some other things in [paper with AAE] that struck me as kind of rhythmic, [his] voice." In contrast, participants seemed more critical of voice in student's writing they believed to be adhering to SAE and academic genre expectations in a manner that they perceived as too unoriginal or teacher-pleasing. In examining one paper written in SAE by a multilingual—English and Hindi—student of color, Dagney commented on on such a paper in saying, "In [this paper], I think honestly as I was reading, this part of me felt like somebody is trying to please me as the grade giver, and so I think I had a little bit of a chip on my shoulder as I was reading that…". Other descriptors used in discussing this student's voice were "isolated" and "detached," as well as a perception of a lack of the student lacking humility, with Theresa saying "there's definitely a big question mark of, is this student going to be receptive?" James, similarly, expressed the idea of SAE-voice as performativity in reflecting on his classroom goals:

> Like these language expectations, you can't actually ask a student like you... we, we, we could easily, and I do have qualms about you know. Do I want to tell my students you've gotta sound like a journal article? I want to tell my students, I want you to sound like yourself.

In these comments, we can see how—even though they are referring to these students individually and not always explicitly drawing connects between what they are noticing in the writing and the social contexts of the genre and language variety—participants make frequent reference to how or how not the writing upsets the genre and language expectations of academic

writing and frequently do so through explicitly or implicitly evoking a social concept of voice. In doing so, they also additionally conflate voice, SAE, and academic genres (e.g. "a journal article") together, implicitly asserting that engaging in an academic genre means always using SAE.

In taking a more thorough approach to examining how voice was portrayed in our sessions, I want to examine here what possible language and rhetorical features participants' associated with voice in our discussions. In order to do so most directly, I return to two examples discussed in the previous findings chapter: the two student papers (one paper written in AAE and the other in SAE) completed as a part of the students' placement process. To summarize the relevant connections to voice from that conversation, the instructors associated Paper 1 (the AAE paper) with a more pleasing, authentic voice. However, the voice in Paper 2 (the SAE paper) was described as overly formal and impersonal. In conducting this analysis, I rely on a rubric from Zhao (2012) that articulates a construct of voice to provide "a systematic way of examining the construction and realization of voice in academic written discourse through the use of both linguistic- and discourse-level elements" (p. 203). This construct expands on Hyland's (2008) well-utilized framework on "disciplinary voice." I chose this construct of voice as it builds off of Hyland's well-utilized, multi-part definition of voice that accounts for both individual and group (i.e.g, disciplinary) voice through examining stance and engagement features; this helps to both identify in the text how the student writers' position their "voice" through features such as hedges, boosters, attitude markers, and authorial self-mention (i.e. stance), but it also accounts for how voice may be seen by readers when the author engages with their audience through personal asides, shared knowledge, directives, and other features (i.e.,

engagement). This construct of voice, therefore, is measured as an amalgamation of the various features below in Table V.1 (AAE paper) and Table V.2 (SAE paper).

Table V.1. Analysis of Voice in Paper 1 (AAE)

Paper 1 (AAE) Analysis of Voice				
Feature of Voice	**Overall Frequency**	**Overall Percentage of Text**	**High (H), Moderate (M), and Low (L) Relationships— Determined via Pearson correlation coefficient (*r*)**	
Attitude Markers	6	1.12%	-	-
Authorial self-mention	29	1.14%	x Reader reference	.46 (M)
Boosters	26	3.4%	-	-
Central point articulation	8	16.92%	x Personal aside	.53 (M)
Directives	0	0%	-	-
Hedges	17	2.28%	x Central point art.	.51 (M)
Personal aside	4	28.25%	-	-
Reader reference	8	1.94%	-	-
Rhetorical questions	0	0%	-	-
Shared knowledge	3	3.77%	x Reader reference	.51 (M)

Table V.2. Analysis of Voice in Paper 2 (SAE)

Paper 2 (SAE) Analysis of Voice				
Feature of Voice	Overall Frequency	Overall Percentage of Text	High (H), Moderate (M), and Low (L) Relationships—Determined via Pearson correlation coefficient (r)	
Attitude Markers	14	1.66%	-	-
Authorial self-mention	2	0.28%	x Directives	.44 (M)
Boosters	18	1.88%	-	-
Central point articulation	11	19.80%		
Directives	1	0.80%	-	-
Hedges	17	1.29%	-	-
Personal aside	0	0%	-	-
Reader reference	2	0.15%	-	-
Rhetorical questions	2	1.33%	-	-
Shared knowledge	6	16.21%	x Rhetorical questions	-.20 (L)

Immediately apparent in contrasting Table V.1 with Table V.2 is the relative absence and decreased frequency of certain aspects of voice in Paper 2 (SAE) that are in Paper 1 (AAE). In particular, the AAE paper demonstrates instances of "Authorial self-mention" and "Personal aside" that are not present in the SAE paper. This is likely due in part to the rhetorical methods utilized in the AAE paper that are highly connected to AAE as a variety—see Table IV.7 in the previous chapter for additional details. Both the rhetorical moves of "narrative sequencing" and "field dependence" observed in the AAE paper would help contribute to the more frequent coding of authorial self-mention and personal aside in Paper 1 compared to Paper 2. In particular, the moderate positive correlation— $r=.46$ —found between authorial self-mention and reader reference could have been an especially effective pattern of field dependence for these instructors by positioning both the author and the reader as united in their opinions: "We all get that sense of a lack of a learning experience and I like how she put this in the article…" Additionally, the author of Paper 1's overlapping approach—as evidenced by the greater number of moderate correlations in Paper 1 compared to Paper 2—to using aspects of voice may also have increased instructors' perceptions of the presence of voice in the paper. What is interesting, however, was that even though the SAE paper did feature numerous aspects of voice—including a few such as the use of "Rhetorical questions" that the AAE paper did not utilize—participants found the voice in the SAE paper to be less pleasing or even present in the paper.

Attempting to understand how the findings in Table V.1 and V.2 might be supported or disproved by the instructors' comments, I turn now toward briefly examining instructors' relevant written comments on our shared version of these two papers. Table V.3 and V.4 below provide a brief sample of a few comments, aligned with the excerpt the participant was

commenting on, and how I coded that section of the student's paper in terms of voice features. Participants' comments seem to support the findings from Table V.1 and V.2 above. In examining Paper 1, these instructors appreciated the connections between the central point articulation, authorial self-mention, and reader reference that the author displayed—see Dexter and Jennifer's comments in Table V.3. It was perhaps through this intersection of voice features that participants perceived this author's writing to be not just more personable, but also more effective in connecting the writer's life to the thesis—with Dexter writing that this move, "bring[s] relevance to the reading." While Thomas's comment speaks toward slightly negatively evaluated aspects of this author's voice—i.e. the more frequent use of boosters in Paper 1 (26) versus Paper 2 (18)—in associating the use of "will always" with "non-academic discourse," the negative effects of these boosters may have been offset partially for participants by this author's use of authorial self-reference as a hedging tool, in his repeated use of "I feel" to qualify his arguments—with Dagney saying in our discussion, "There, there's a lot of *I* in paper one, and I appreciate that."

The excerpts and comments relevant to Paper 2 (SAE)—see Table V.4—tell a different story regarding these instructors' thoughts on voice in writing. The one positive comment included here from Thomas, which was actually the only positive comment related to voice instructors made on the paper, speaks to this writer's use of attitude markers to set up her counterargument. However, the remainder of the comments instructors made about voice on Paper 2 spoke instead to what features of voice they perceived to be lacking from this writing. Dagney, in rewriting the sentence for the student, attempts to inject reader references into the student's writing. Similarly, Dexter expresses disinterest in the "objectivity" of the writer,

indicating a preference for authorial self-mention and personal asides, with Thomas sharing in the discussion that "[this writing is] detached, we might say, in the sort of academic sense."

Table V.3. Paper 1 (AAE) Comments on Voice

Paper 1 (AAE) Comments on Voice		
Coded Features of Voice	**Excerpt Participant Commented On**	**Participant Written Comment**
Central point, Shared knowledge, Authorial self-mention, Attitude marker, Reader reference, Hedge	"We all get that sense of a lack of a learning experience and I like how she put this in the article to relate us common people to her a person who is already in college and toted as an A student"	**Dexter:** "This is bringing relevance to the reading and what the student and all of the people they're thinking of can take away from the experience of this text (which is similar in point to what #2 does in the comment I noted, but this is interpersonal while the other is more abstracted/textual)."
Authorial self-mention, Hedge, Booster	"I feel that one thing that will always unite people is a common threat/ tribulation."	**Thomas:** "I think this kind of boosting—'will always'—is emblematic of 'non-academic' discourse"
Hedge, Personal Aside, Booster, Authorial self-mention	"I feel this essay is highly effective at achieving its purpose because it breaks down the pandemic life of a university student and this something that I will be becoming in a few months."	**Jennifer:** "Here this writer is engaging a so-what, a mattering that is situated in their life, their specific moment of transition. This priority seems to guide the writing, and isn't separate, to me, from the questions [FYC] students are directed to - around purpose and how (through what strategy) the purpose of X text is achieved"

Table V.4. Paper 2 (SAE) Comments on Voice

Paper 2 (SAE) Comments on Voice		
Coded Features of Voice	**Excerpt Participant Commented On**	**Participant Written Comment**
Booster, Shared knowledge	"When work is all one thinks about, it becomes impossible to take their mind off of it."	**Dagney:** "Formality of 'one' and 'their' as mixed subject/possessive pronoun--compare to 'When all you think about is work, it becomes impossible to take your mind off it.'"
Central point, Shared knowledge, Attitude marker	"When a student's work ethic begins to drop, it is only natural for them to feel as if they are alone and that they are a failure. However, by seeing a top student like Orozco…"	**Thomas:** "I think this countering is doing a lot to build cohesion here."
Central point, Booster, Attitude marker	"She reminds the readers that if even these top minds are losing faith, then it must be representative of everyone; college students failing in these adverse times is absolutely normal. Constantly modifying every aspect of one's life is sure to bring out a great deal of anxiety."	**Dexter:** "Essentially the same point that [Paper 1] emphasizes, but with no surface-level personal investment (if they are invested, it is conveyed through the discussion of others' experiences)."

Notably, the White instructors' positive reactions to authorial self-mention and personal aside elements of voice present in Paper 1 are inline with previous examinations of instructors' enjoyment of AAE rhetorical features—but not necessarily grammatical features (Smitherman, 1994). While quantitatively analyzing features associated with voice and engagement is useful, "qualitative assessment of how such voice elements [are] used to successfully create an amalgamative effect on the reader is viewed as more appropriate for capturing voice in text than a simple frequency-based measure of voice" (Zhao & Wu, 2022, p. 2). As such, I move here to examine further how, through our discussions, participants' comments evoked the concept of voice in a way that seemed particularly associated for them with students of color and non-SAE varieties.

While the majority of mentions of voice in the project discussed it in a social context, connecting aspects of voice to how or how not they perceived the voice to disrupt academic norms, what is more interesting is that every mention of social voice by participants was also connected to non-SAE usage. Taking a close look at these instructors' comments on social voice provides further evidence of how voice in these conversations was related to students' language varieties, particularly seeming to be associated by these participants with non-SAE varieties.

- **Dagney:** When it comes to grammar like I agree, **I love sort of created grammar.** But then I, I'm and I'm questioning why I do this but whenever it's something like **if I can't understand the grammar then sometimes I think I will think of that as error, which I like I also feel conflicted about that right.** Like well why am I thinking about this error? **It might be somebody's voice that it's just not familiar to me.**
- **Focus Group Participant:** I try not to comment on things like run on sentences or fragments, definitely nothing about punctuation or spelling. **I try instead to describe the student's voice to them, however it's coming up and that might sometimes like have a criticism buried in it** of like, "Oh, I think you're saying this, but i'm not exactly sure" **to get them thinking about like, "Oh, maybe I like shove too much in here," but I try to avoid framing that as rules that are coming in from the outside**, so that that often means that i'm just like not talking about. yeah like how things are organized or expressed, really.

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- **Dexter:** I mean, Smitherman and Young are, are, are amazing texts. And the, the one challenge I always have with, especially with, with Vershawn Young's writing is then **students who don't have underprivileged dialects as their first dialect begin to look at it and see that they could work themselves and, like, "I can get my real voice into writing, too."** And it sort of, like, **misses the critical anti-racist point of it by assuming that, like, my casual White speak, um, incorporated into a text will be responded to in the same way that Vershawn's, uh, you know, super sassy queer Black man, uh, voice, uh, comes in.**

In these three quotes from Dagney, the focus group, and Dexter, we can see how non-SAE varieties— "created grammars" and "super sassy queer Black man…voice"—are linked with instances of a more authentic/real voice while SAE seems to be positioned in a more neutral light. Examining Dagney's quote first, we can see how "created grammar"—which thereby positions SAE voice as natural/neutral—is associated with varieties that would be unfamiliar to this White, WME-using instructor. In the excerpt from the second focus group, they contrast voice with the grammar and conventions (of presumably SAE), while also indicating how "outside" forces may dictate when "too much" of a student's voice enters their writing. Along similar lines, Dexter's quote about Young's writing positions two categories for voice in writing: "real voice"—which seems to be connected for him with racist and homophobic injustice and oppression—and WME—or "casual White speak." While participants did appreciate non-SAE aspects of voice (e.g. the features of voice identified in this section connected to rhetorical patterns in AAE), this appreciation may have its limits. The implications of the focus group participant's "too much" voice comment, combined with Dagney and Dexter's depiction of voice, position SAE/WME as a neutral form of voice—or, even the absence of voice. Therefore, there may be times when replacing "too much" of a student's (non-SAE) voice with SAE can render the writing more suitable to academic readers at large—more on this in a later section examining idealistic vs "real world" pedagogies. Lastly, while Dexter does make a critical connection between language, and systemic power and oppression—in noting how AAE will be

responded to more negatively than WME in academic settings —he does implicitly position

White students, who may primarily utilize WME, as not necessarily having aspects of their voice

and language varieties they should investigate and understand as socially constructed.

Overall, much of the conversation that centered around non-SAE voice coincided with

language ideologies of Tolerance/Acceptance—in that instructors would tolerate most non-SAE

voices—or a Diversity/Additive view—in that instructors wanted to encourage students to use

whatever varieties they possess without having more substantial conversations about privilege

and oppression. James's comment below demonstrates a combination of these two approaches—

leaning more toward the Diversity/Additive perspective—while also still illustrating why such an

approach to voice is insufficient.

> To the extent that I address this explicitly in my teaching, I just, I tell the students they
> showed up with a range of voices they're capable of using, and I want them to use my
> class as a way to figure out how those different voices can fit in. How those voices can
> have a meaning here at the [University].

James here seems to be well aware that some voices will be accepted within his institution,

implicitly arguing that others will not. In identifying instances of non-SAE as real, authentic, or

more pleasing, while positioning SAE-use as either performative or neutral, White instructors

may put students of color in a position where their voice is deemed inauthentic if written in a

variety the instructor doesn't perceive as resisting traditional (aka White supremacist) academic

language expectations, while simultaneously positioning White students language as not socially

situated and not worth critically investigating. Furthermore, in not addressing more critically

with students and themselves how the amalgamation of features associated with voice may be

perceived differentially (e.g. hedges versus boosters), they are further obscuring for all students

how their "voice" might be heard in the academy—favoring instead pedagogies that position

students' voices as being just individual, but belie their connections to social groups that may or

may not have historically been accepted within academia.

5.2.1.1 Narrative as a Means of Constraining Language Varieties. In examining other texts included in their syllabi and our group conversations, uncritical depictions of voice weren't the only way that writers of color and non-SAE varieties were constrained. Analyzing the most recent FYC syllabi of the nine instructors for how discussions of language diversity/(in)justice were included, seven of the nine syllabi explicitly (through policies and/or assigned readings) address questions of linguistic diversity and justice in their classrooms. However, of those seven, there are very few readings represented in their syllabi that are written in non-SAE varieties. The most common approach it would seem, from the readings assigned, would be the inclusion of meta-texts that address the ideas of language diversity and justice in academia, while still only utilizing SAE. Anne Curzan's (2009) essay, "Says Who?: Teaching and Questioning the Rules of Grammar" is the most common example of this kind of reading—with six of the participants assigning this essay or her similar (2014b) TED talk, "What Makes a Word Real?"—as one focus group participant exemplifies below in describing their inclusion of a single text on language diversity in their FYC syllabus.

> I often used at least a text to thematize… the reality of language diversity and also engaged in critical thinking about it and and what it where it leaves us as a class that's learning how to write for college…and I think the text I use most often is "Says Who?..." by Anne Curzan.

While both of these popularly utilized Curzan texts provide accessible entry points for students to begin to question connections between language and power—if they haven't already—it should be noted that neither of these texts make any explicit mention of race. The closest either of these texts come to discussing race is in the following excerpt from Curzan's (2009) article:

> If we want to talk about **social justice** and **diversity** in our classrooms, we need to talk about language. It is as pressing an issue as any other we could possibly

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address….Teachers in composition and literature classrooms often state that they want to address **issues of power** and **social justice** as part of discussions of literature, writing, and **culture**. Language may work as well as or better than any other topic to put those issues on the table. **Who says what is correct? Who gets discriminated against? Why do we all acquiesce in such decisions?** (p. 877) [emphasis added].

Perhaps one reason this text is popular for White instructors—once again, myself included as I use both of these Curzan texts most semesters I teach FYC—is because they avoid acknowledging race explicitly, implying it through "culture," "social justice" and "diversity." This avoidance becomes even more apparent by the lack of addressing who the "Who" is in the questions of "Who says what is correct?" and "Who gets discriminated against?" as well as who the "we" is in the question of "Why do we all acquiesce…?" As such, texts like Curzan (2009; 2014b) may be a way for White instructors to talk about issues of language and power together but to also keep the identity aspect of that conversation ambiguous enough that they don't have to directly engage race. In using such texts, students and their instructors then can choose to read race into these texts or—if they, like most White people, are used to not having to think about race in their day-to-day lives—they can choose to ignore the racial implications.

In further examining the readings instructors assigned, specifically for the few instances of how/when non-SAE varieties did appear, our conversations about representations of linguistic diversity in FYC courses during our fourth session provides interesting examples about how conversations about language and identity—and particularly the select readings that used/exemplified non-SAE language varieties—may have been limited to certain genres. In these conversations, it became clear that these instructors were using narrative-heavy genres often to emphasize language diversity, such as literacy narratives. These findings align with Horton's (2021) examination of instructor perceptions of "non-standard" varieties that similarly found some instructors associated non-SAE varieties with "expression[s] of individuality" and not necessarily academic communication (p. 48). In both the readings assigned and assignments

given in my participants' classes, *narrative* seems to be a focal point for these instructors attempting to bridge conversations between representations of race and identity in language. Now, viewed in isolation—and optimistically— this isn't necessarily a bad thing. The instructors here, including myself, discussed using narrative-based readings such as Amy Tan's (1990) "Mother Tongue" or Gloria Anzaldúa's (1987) "How to Tame a Wild Tongue" to address issues of linguistic (in)justice and relate to students how language is a part of one's (racial) identity. However, further analysis of these instructors' syllabi problematizes this connection between conversations about language diversity, identity, and narratives.

First, by far the most common unit assignment participants' paired discussions of language and identity with was a literacy narrative project. Barring a few instance, such as one instructors utilization of an article by Kevin Roozen (2015) "Writing is Linked to Identity" during an annotated bibliography project, the vast majority of readings that explicitly discussed connections between identity were assigned during projects that required students to write some form of a literacy narrative. These readings on identity and language, however, did not typically utilize non-SAE varieties—being similar to the Curzan article (2009) and video (2014b) discussed previously. In fact, the majority of instructors examined in this project did not assign any readings that utilized non-SAE varieties. Of those that did, the readings they assigned that utilized non-SAE varieties tended to appear early on in their syllabi, typically within the first three weeks (e.g. Young's (2010) "Should Writers Use They Own English?"). However, after this initial early appearance, readings that featured non-SAE varieties were typically not utilized again. In looking closer, in the articles assigned that significantly featured non-SAE varieties, the non-SAE usage was often couched in a meta-commentary about language written in SAE—see, for example, Amy Tan's (1990) "Mother Tongue" that uses SAE to discuss her mother's usage

of what others had labeled "broken English." Additionally, the most frequent appearances of non-SAE varieties in syllabi addressed internet or texting speak, often seeming to prefer White, valley girl-esque varieties (e.g. Jessica Bennett's (2015) "OMG! The Hyperbole of Internet Speak").

I highlight the context in which non-SAE representations appear, as the issue then isn't *just* one of frequency necessarily; rather it is also the very limited context in which that representation of non-SAE varieties happens that could be framed as a subtle kind of appropriacy argument. By appropriacy argument here, I am referring to the frequently made, racist assertion that some language varieties are "appropriate" for certain contexts (e.g. at home) but inappropriate for others (e.g. at work). In only showcasing non-SAE varieties then in the genre of a narrative and in the context of an argument about linguistic justice, it is easy to see how students may take up the message that those are the only contexts in which these varieties are suitable within academic discourse. Dexter's response here below provides one example of this kind of genre-based appropriacy argument around the subject of use of first-person as an element of student voice.

> I'm dealing with [FYC] students who are learning about how to integrate voice into their writing for the first time, which means using first person, which means stripping away the sort of abstracted generalizations and theorizing … **Um, but then, you know, there are contexts in which [first-person is] not what the genre calls for. And so being able to teach them to do the other thing and then talking about how that leads to something different in terms of writing or what you can express differently**, or what um, even what kind of ideas you generate when writing, when you shift between those different kinds of genres, right?

We can see here how Dexter very explicitly references that at times, based on the genre, use of first-person—which is connected for him in this excerpt with the concept of voice—isn't necessarily perceived as genre-appropriate and therefore should be adapted through code-switching. Noting language patterns (e.g. the presence or absence of first-person pronouns)

within genres for students can help students to interrogate language norms in writing; however, in solely framing this conversation on pronouns around the subject of appropriacy and voice—which, as discussed in the previous section was often used in conversation to indicate writing that fell outside of SAE, academic conventions—this comment neglects to connect those genre norms to questions of power, privilege, and oppression. The implications of this then are that students may simply learn these genre-rules of (in)appropriacy without critically questioning them in regards to their broader implications for language varieties. This may perhaps encourage those students who utilize more stigmatized, non-SAE varieties that feature rhetorical moves that utilize *I* more frequently—e.g. AAE's narrative sequencing—to both believe they have to more carefully consider the genres in which they express their voices and that they also should code-switch to more appropriate "voices" as the genre demands.

This pattern of representations of non-SAE varieties and writers of color being limited to mostly narrative-based genres did not go unnoticed by participants. In describing her syllabus to the group, Jennifer walked us through her reading list with the following statement: "I've been starting with the literacy narrative unit, which looking at my syllabus, is the unit with the most racial diversity of authors. Um, which I'm not satisfied with, um, but is the case." In analyzing the syllabi participants brought with them to this discussion, the findings continue to support the idea that White instructors may present instances of language diversity in very limited contexts, if they address them at all. As such, instructors may be unintentionally presenting for their students the idea that non-SAE usage should/must be limited to specific genres in favor of SAE—a variety whose primary users don't need to make such considerations.

5.2.2 In Closing: Authentic, Performative, and Neutral Voice

In closing this section that examined both discussion of student voice as well as the genre

contexts within which instructors framed non-SAE usage, it should be noted that White

instructors may view a student's voice/use of non-SAE as authentic, but they may still not view

it favorably: "Yeah, like, this is non-standard but it is, um, uh, ve- you know, very intelligent and

very kind of, the ideas are very interesting." This has implications, to be discussed further in both

the following section as well as the discussion chapter for how instructors may grapple with their

perception of a student's voice in grading, but—perhaps most importantly—it demonstrates that

students of color who utilize non-SAE varieties may be stuck in a "damned if you do, damned if

you don't" situation in FYC. If they use SAE varieties in responding to writing tasks, their voice

may be read as inauthentic or framed negatively as being just as an attempt to give the teacher

what they want. But, if they utilize non-SAE varieties and voice outside of the "appropriate"

genres—as evidenced by the instructor's quote above as well as the discussion of individual

language ideologies in the previous findings chapter—their writing may be read as too informal

and incompatible with academic purposes and academic genres.

These findings bring to mind Bartholomae's (1986) essay on "Inventing the University,"

which describes the process by which students must engage in various degrees of performativity

when learning to write in academia.

> When students are writing for a teacher, writing becomes more problematic than it is for
> the students who are describing baseball to a Martian. The students, in effect, have to
> assume privilege without having any. And since students assume privilege by locating
> themselves within the discourse of a particular community-within a set of specifically
> acceptable gestures and commonplaces-learning, at least as it is defined in the liberal arts
> curriculum, becomes more a matter of imitation or parody than a matter of invention and
> discovery (pp. 10-11).

But, as the goals of instructors and institutions may shift to appear more accommodating of

linguistic diversity, so too do the kinds of performativity expected. Instructors want to see

"authentic voices" engaging in SAE or non-SAE varieties, potentially using their reading of the

students' race/ethnicity (judged by how close they view the writing to SAE) as a guide for

helping determine authenticity. But, these issues may be compounded when, in reading non-SAE writing, a lack of knowledge concerning those varieties may mean that instructors only consider certain features over others to be authentic as opposed to an error (e.g., rhetorical versus grammatical features). Placed in such a situation, students then have to invent what they perceive to be SAE academic writing, or they must invent a construct of "language diversity" (appropriately aligning with how their instructor may perceive their identities) that will be acceptable to their (White) instructor. In placing students in such a situation, is it any surprise that students may be reticent to view certain attempts at creating more linguistically inclusive classrooms as less than inviting (Bean et al., 2003)? While the findings in this section uncovered how instructors discuss voice and the genre-dependent nature of "appropriate" non-SAE usage, the following section will examine instructors' reactions to and justifications for these pedagogical choices in the wider context of the university system.

5.3 Idealistic versus Real World Pedagogies: Sustaining the White Habitus to Satisfy "Grumpy Chemistry Professors"

Throughout the conversations, instructors regularly positioned specific pedagogical strategies (e.g. grading contracts) or more general writing pedagogy concepts (e.g. SRTOL) as either being compatible with "the real world" or being only possible in a more "ideal" world. This section will explore both which kinds of pedagogies these instructors determined were more or less likely to function in real/ideal spaces as well as explore the implicit "why?" in those distinctions by analyzing their responses. In doing so, this section examines two key findings: 1) instructors here most frequently espoused anxieties/concerns about assessment functioning in the real world when discussing more anti-racist practices and expressing more critical language ideologies. Attempts to overcome these tensions in using institutionally suggested anti-racist

assessment practices (e.g. grading contracts) often resulted in instructors describing negotiation strategies they use in their assessments that may result in students reproducing a White habitus of assessment themselves—a possibility instructors seem well aware of. 2) In attempting to balance the needs of what they perceive as the real world versus the ideal world, instructors may elevate the voices of students calling for SAE-based correction and instruction—frequently portrayed by them as EAL students who are either Chinese or Korean—to justify SLI approaches to those student groups, while portraying the "correction" of Black and AAE-using students as an more ethically challenging engagement.

5.3.1 Tensions in Assessment

One area in particular where distinctions between real world and ideal world compatibility came up most frequently was in conversations around assessment. While we explicitly examined each other's grading practices (e.g. contracts, rubrics, heuristics, etc.) in session four and the focus groups, assessment came up frequently in all of our group interactions—indicating that this was an area of particular interest/concern for instructors. In particular regarding these concerns about assessment, there seemed to be a great deal of anxiety about how to assess writing in an anti-racist/linguistically just manner. In coding for "Tensions in Assessment," which I defined as "instructors acknowledging tension, anxieties, and/or insecurities they feel in assessing student writing," these tensions occurred most frequently during moments in which instructors were also expressing more accepting or critical language ideologies—i.e., ideologies that opened up space for language diversity and/or connected power and oppression to the topic of language assessment.

Figure V.1. Occurrences of "Tensions in Assessment" with Language Ideologies

Overlapping Occurrences of "Tensions in Assessment" with Language Ideologies
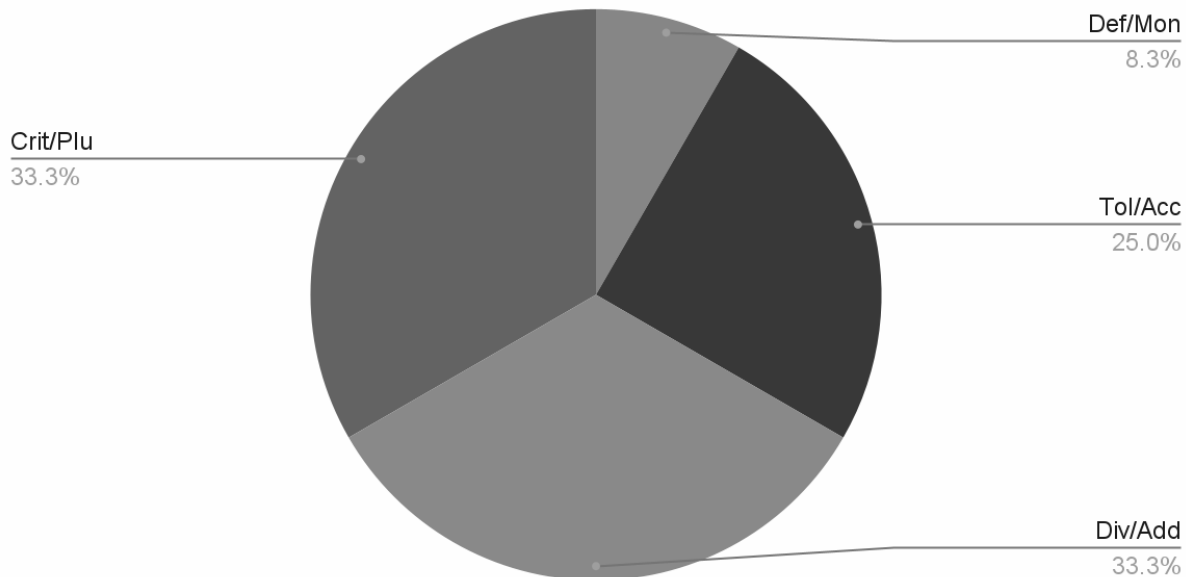
Figure V.1 above illustrates how in expressing SLI, instructors indicated relatively few concerns about their assessment practices; however, in expressing more open language ideologies, instructors demonstrated progressively more tensions they perceived in the assessment process. The below excerpt from Dagney demonstrates how instructors grappled with where and how to engage in comments—and especially—corrections in trying to embrace more linguistically just pedagogies.

> I remember that I assigned Anne Curzan's "Says Who?" at the beginning of the semester, and so she talked about like, "Who's to say that there's a right way to do these things?" However, at the same time I'm like a little conflicted again, because I realized that when there's, when there's what I believe to be a spelling error, I will write the word spelled how I think it would be correctly…. I just sort of write what I think is the correct, and I don't mark papers like with red pen, I use green pen So I don't generally mark things like cross something out like this is wrong, so I hope that students are taking the idea that, "Oh Okay, this is something maybe I can think about he offered here," but students could

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look at what I wrote [and think,] "Oh, this is what the teacher wrote, so this must be a correction."

These tensions between embracing more linguistically just pedagogies and what instructors perceived to be their role and responsibility in preparing students for college writing came to a head during a moment in our final group session, in which we were bringing in and discussing examples of feedback on language we had given on students' papers. An excerpt of this conversation is shown—in the left column—and commented on—in the right column—at length below (see Table V.5).

Table V.5. Tensions in Assessment Examination

Excerpt from Session 5 Conversation	Discussion
Dagney: Uh, I'm absolutely having an existential crisis right now. Um, and that is because... uh, so I'm, I'm thinking about, like, other decisions due to the skin color and judges. ….And I would write something like that, um, specifically to, like, pose it as I, as an individual, this is my reading experience. Like, this is where, you know, I stumbled and so it's possible that other people could conceptually stumble, and so maybe this would be a good place to reword it.	Dagney here is responding to an activity in which we were all currently looking at Dexter's feedback on a student paper, wherein he had responded to a student's request for language-focused feedback. Dagney notes the crisis she is perceiving and connects our conversation about assessment of language to systemic racism in the judicial system.
Um, so that said, it seems to me that anytime we're ever referencing some kind of, like, a collective clarity or whatever through conventions, it seems to me that all conventions are going to be entangled with, um, colonization. And so, like, just thinking about that, anytime, it seems to me that anytime we say anything about grammar or whatever, there's some element of colonization there.	Here Dagney makes an unambiguous assertion in connecting the work of writing teachers with colonization, showing how—for her—assessment of writing is inextricably bound up with historic and ongoing systemic racism. In so doing, she implicitly presents a question for our group to take up: Is it even possible to imagine an assessment that isn't an act of colonization?
And I think that, for me, like the question is, to what extent? And that then becomes some other kind of, um, complex concept in like, well, how do I want to try to, um, be, I don't know, open to other ways of, of people using language, but at the same time to have these ideas of like, well, what if the student is literally asking for that? Even if it's colonization, what if the student is asking for their language to be colonized? Um, so yeah, just having an existential crisis over here and that's the situation.	In nuancing her initial assertion, Dagney here begins to position the relationship between assessment and colonization as not entirely overlapping; furthermore, she begin to complicate the conversation further by positioning the instructor as a potentially unwilling but compelled participant in colonization in positing the question of "what if the student is asking for their language to be colonized?" What is particularly noteworthy in Dagney's entire response is how she positions resisting or engaging in this colonization as the responsibility and choice of the instructor—as opposed to the more "cog in the machine" approach to White supremacy she discussed in the previous findings chapter. Dexter here responds in picking up on the themes of colonization

Dexter: When I was at [previous institution], thinking about that, and especially in terms of a colon conversation, I was having this conversation. And, and I had... there, there's a huge, um, Native American Indigenous school or high school is at the, in the, in the same town. And so we... but we very rarely got, um, people, a lot of, lot of Lakota Sioux, um, were in town, but not there. And I had one person who identified with, with Lakota history in one of my classes one time.

And I made a point about grammar and colonization, and he laughed and he said it was, it was awesome. It was like a, like a poetic moment. He's like, "I didn't say you were better 'cause you had a fire extinguisher. I just asked you to hand it to me 'cause my boots are on fire."

Theresa: I love that analogy, Dexter, and the, and, and, and, you know, that highlights the toolness of, of these conventions, right? And I think that... you know, I worry sometimes, especially in the, um, you know, the secondary school world, they talk about like, maybe we just shouldn't teach any grammar conventions at all. And it's like, that would be literally depriving students of a tool, right? Um, a tool that's that, that many people in power have access to and, like... and, you know, is it, it...

I feel like, you know, it could be a tool of colonization or not, you know. And, like, empowering, um... like, part of

and student/instructor participation and complicity in the process by detailing his experiences with an Indigenous student.

Here Dexter's narrative centers his initial response, similar to Dagney's reaction, to an Indigenous student describing his academic language resources in crisis: "my boots are on fire," while positioning responding to this fire (i.e. giving the student the SAE language resources—the fire extinguisher), as a beneficial move that can save the student from their crisis.

In beginning her response, Theresa both explicitly endorses this "boots on fire" analogy and engages in a more familiar language analogy by connecting language resources with tools (e.g. Delpit, 2010; Elbow, 1999)—wherein students need access to specific language tools to do specific jobs. This interpretation of Dexter's story was something Dexter, in his debrief interview, later expressed discomfort with. However, in making this move in the conversation, our discussion further shifts from Dagney's initial point of instructors needing to internally reflect on and consider their complicity in colonization to resist White supremacist systems, to a more action-centric argument that instructors need to consider the immediate needs of their actual students and their responsibilities to them.

In continuing her response, Theresa presents multiple pathways for SAE-centric assessment: it can be an act of colonization, but

empowerment is, like, giving that student the tool and not beating them over the head with it, right? Like, use it to put out the fire in your boots….I, I think I feel very strongly about, um, like, being very aware that there are certain ways that are, that writing is... and, you know, the English is used, written, spoken in various, um, domains and contexts. And, like, the more, the more tools one has to navigate those different contexts, the more access to the world one has, you know.

it doesn't have to be. The difference for her, as discussed here, seems to be related to the instructor's intentions and enactment: do they give them the tool or beat them over the head with it? In closing her response, she further emphasizes the toolbox approach to writing pedagogy—a diversity/additive approach that disconnects language resources from power/oppression—that she sees as helping students respond to different contexts.

I highlight a small portion of this much longer conversation during our final session to demonstrate two "camps" instructors seemed to sit in—and occasionally move between—during our discussions. In one camp, were instructors like Dagney who viewed assessment and writing pedagogy as inextricably linked with White supremacy and colonization. As such, any efforts to grade or provide feedback on work becomes moments for instructor introspection and transparency with students about the racist nature of SAE-only academic language expectations. In the other camp were instructors like Theresa who did not necessarily disagree with the rationale behind the colonization argument, but argued instead that there was a more pressing need to give students the language resources to navigate the academy. In so doing, assessment and SAE-based correction is positioned as a kind of unfortunate, necessary evil that is too large for any one instructor or student to significantly affect.

In giving both Dagney and Theresa opportunities to further clarify their thoughts on the matter in the debrief interviews, Theresa portrayed this pedagogical disagreement as a consequence of an unfortunate world where distinctions must be drawn between idealistic versus practical pedagogies.

> Um, so, like, [a pedagogy that emphasizes linguistic diversity] sounds great at the academic level, and I agree with sort of the principle of it, but, um, like, **the shame is that, that only really works in this ideal world where, like, outside of the academic classroom, all Englishes are treated equally, right?** …Like the act of empowerment is giving them **the tools of power**, you know? …. But **it's not using your power to oppress, to, um, let a student have access to a kind of writing that's going to have them respected in the business world, you know?** And theoretically, like, it, the world shouldn't be that way. But, like, practically, like I want my students to have access to what they want to do. And unfortunately, having, um, **access to standard English and, and academic forms of writing is one of the ways to access power.**

Theresa's follow-up response here further positions the options of instructors and students as limited in responding to the White habitus of assessment—in that, both the instructor and student must work within set roles in the confines of an unjust and unstoppable system. Dagney, in her

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debrief interview, expressed similar sentiments about the unrelenting nature of the White habitus, albeit in considering possibilities to work both inside and outside of the system to affect change.

> I think we live in a world where we're told, um, we're told that we need to interrogate… our privilege, and we need to interrogate our power, and, like, I'm on board with that, but at the same time, **what happens whenever we try to cut out our foundation?** And if we really take a hard look at what we're doing, if we're really willing to look at how **everything we do is entangled with colonization, I think that's very destabilizing.** And I think that that, for me, too, that makes me wanna be like, "No, no, no, no! I'm doing good work, and I'm helping students, like, you know, live in the world in a practical way."...Like, we are complicit, we're part of the problem, and we're trying to do good. ….**But I think the challenge, I think one of the, one of the challenges, for me, is, like, how do we hold them both? How do we hold ourselves accountable, and recognize our complicitness, and try to change it from the inside?**

Dagney's positioning of the White habitus as the "foundation" of writing pedagogy and the "destabilizing" nature that comes from questioning said foundation and our complicity with it, further evidences this ongoing differentiation of idealistic and real world pedagogical responses to White supremacist language practices. The question that remains, that Dagney struggles with in her response, is what would you replace that foundation with if it were to be removed? Perhaps further evidencing Dagney's claims about the inextricable connections between language pedagogy, colonization, and White supremacy is that such a question is challenging to answer, and potential solutions—as demonstrated by the group conversations— may be deemed by White instructors—who have substantially benefited from such a foundation—as too idealistic and not able to function in actual, real world classrooms or their wider university systems.

5.3.2 Instructor Perceptions of the Ethics of "Correcting" EAL and AAE-Using Students

A theme that ran through many of the responses in the previous section was students— particularly EAL students—requesting SAE-based corrections on their work, often causing instructors anxiety about how to navigate tensions between a student's self-reported needs and instructors' efforts to be more linguistically just. In this section, I want to talk more specifically

about how instructors expressed concerns about preparing students for writing beyond FYC. In doing so, I want to highlight a few patterns observed in how the instructors I worked with in this project often positioned themselves as resistors to SLI, but resistors who were also without a choice when it came to addressing the deficits they perceived—or they believed others might perceive—in EAL students' writing, particularly Korean and Chinese students. As such, I want to illuminate a tension between how instructors in this space who desired to engage in anti-racist assessment practices positioned themselves in a kind of dual-role in the academy: the resistor of academic language norms and SLI—particularly when explicitly discussing Black, AAE-using students—but also a gatekeeper for EAL students' language varieties. As such, I hope to articulate how instructors engaged here in selective endorsement of the White habitus, directly amplifying EAL students' expressed concerns about language barriers in the academy while simultaneously more frequently resisting (or at least expressing concerns about) endorsing such concerns to and about AAE-using students. Lastly, in briefly showcasing comments from two instructors on their actual students' papers—one an AAE-using student's paper and one a Chinese, EAL student's—I aim to illustrate how increased knowledge about the language, grammar, and rhetorical patterns of non-SAE varieties might help White instructors more productively and consistently engage in linguistically just feedback practices with all of their linguistically marginalized students.

The instructors in this project clearly had concerns about how to address the needs of their EAL students. In fact, in asking participants to bring with them to our last session "a student paper that makes/made you feel conflicted about how to respond to the students' use of language, grammar, or conventions," four of the seven papers discussed were from EAL

students.[25] Generally speaking when instructors expressed anxieties about how their students'

language would be perceived, they fixated on future— "real world" as opposed to idyllic—

contexts: concerns about employment or—more frequently—concerns about their students'

abilities to succeed in their coursework:

- **James:** "I worry about what happens to them if they sound like themselves and someone else in the academy is like, what are you, what are you doing? Like, that's not what you're supposed to sound like."
- **Robert:** "We are kind of living in a world where we have to cope with the fact that people are going to say that my Chinese student's, you know, language is bad."

These concerns about EAL students language were most frequently portrayed by the instructors

as initially coming from the EAL students themselves:

> I talked about a specific student of theirs who was like, "No, I really want the feedback on like my grammar and my mechanics more so than the content, because my anxiety is whether my English is coming across the way I want my English to come across."

James's comment here above, in reflecting during his debrief interview on a group conversation

we had earlier, portrays the EAL student in question as anxious about their language and humbly

coming to the instructor in wanting them to engage in SAE-based correction on their writing.

    While the narrative of a respectful EAL student politely disagreeing with the instructor's

policy on language-based feedback—and requesting SAE-based corrections on their writing—

wasn't uncommonly shared by participants in our sessions, relatively often participants painted

these students in a more assertive, demanding light: "Like, I don't think that this student, um, was

thinking that he was insufficient in his language and communication. He was a pretty arrogant

dude, um, but he definitely was uncertain about his English…." In fact, in coding for "Student

Opposition"—a code that attempted to identify themes of instructors discussing instances of

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[25] Of the remaining three, one was written in WME (the instructor struggled more with how to respond to the racially charged subject-matter of the paper) and two prominently featured instances of AAE—narrative sequencing, copula absence, and the verb conjugation of the third person present— "It **get** really tough in the trenches when teammates [_] not being coachable" (my emphasis).

students expressing resistance to more linguistically just pedagogies—the students discussed in these codes were often—78% of the time—mentioned as being EAL. During a conversation in our second session, in which we were discussing an "assimilationist view of language" pedagogy, Lucy addressed this tension that many in the group seemed to perceive between their desires as instructors to engage in more linguistically just pedagogies—and explain that rationale to their students—and EAL students who they perceived to not be receptive to their reasoning.

> Sometimes I wonder, especially for students who, um, you know, rightfully say, like, "No. I, I came to school. I want to learn what the... rules are of academic writing. I want to succeed in this way. Stop trying to tell me that I can write however I want." Um, I sometimes wonder if, if [readings on linguistic diversity] do more harm than good, um, even with really careful kind of framing of ... They're hopeful and problematic.

Lucy's comments here carry with them this recurring tension between idealistic and real world pedagogies in connecting success with mastery of SAE and—by implication—pedagogies that focus on linguistic diversity with improper preparation for students' future needs. The combative tone that Lucy expresses through the voice of her EAL student— "Stop trying to tell me…"— works to make the well-intentioned nature of engaging in more critical language pedagogies seem naive and even dangerous to EAL students, and Lucy ending her comment by noting the "hopeful and problematic" nature of such pedagogies conveys a defeatist attitude about the compatibilities of such pedagogies for EAL students' needs.

The comments from instructors above are not necessarily surprising, as they demonstrate a historical pattern in writing classrooms of viewing "the problem of [EAL] writing essentially as the problem of negative transfer," in that EAL students' L1 language is framed as existing solely as a harmful influence on the student's SAE grammar and rhetoric (Matsuda, 1997, p. 46). Lucy deferring to the demands of her—hypothetical in the example above—EAL student is emblematic of a pattern of comments within this project that responded to this "negative transfer" framing by connecting SLI pedagogies with saving these students from future language

discrimination by reluctantly and preemptively discriminating against their writing in the context

of FYC. Robert's comments below provide another specific example of this trend.

> I, you know **it's mostly East Asian students** who you know speak English as a second language [as EAL students in my classes]....I had a student, I think first term last year in the fall term **from China**, and **he had very I mean extremely creative, and i'm not even saying this euphemistically, like uses of language**, and, like the ways that he put words together…and **it was intelligible to me, you know as a reader because I could kind of put together and see what he was trying to say**, and you know what is kind of the ideas that were kind of shining through work, and so it was kind of the you know with regard to kind of correcting this, you know kind of the **the like non standard English aspects of it** ….**You know if I didn't correct like his kind of English writing style …he would like go on as a horrible English writer, you know, for his entire life.**

Fixating on East Asian students—and a Chinese student more specifically—Robert here justifies

his approach to correcting an EAL student in a previous class as helping said student avoid a

future of being "a horrible English writer…for his entire life." While he hedges his praise a fair

bit in describing the writing as just "kind of put together" and intelligible (to him), he does seem

to perhaps more sincerely praise the creativity of how the student languaged. But, unlike the

praise that certain aspects of the AAE student paper received regarding how it broke from

academic languaging norms, this student's language was still deemed wanting. Comments such

as these—that rationalize language-based discrimination in FYC as a mercy compared to the

discrimination they may face at the hands of future employers or professors—position White,

FYC instructors as a type of reluctant White savior, simultaneously allowing instructors to

engage in discriminatory practices while also absolving them of any guilt they may feel due to

the act—as they are purely reacting to the impossible to resist demands of either the institution

and/or the EAL student themself.

The existence of this persistent tension in this project concerning how White instructors

should navigate potentially competing crossroads between their efforts at more anti-racist,

linguistically just pedagogies and potential resistance to those pedagogies by EAL students or

their future language gatekeepers didn't go unrecognized in this space. In fact, Lucy made

explicit reference to this tension in the outset of this project, during the initial focus groups, in

the excerpt included below:

> **Especially with international students, I very much have a stronger aversion to the promise that we're going to focus on linguistic curiosity and descriptive approaches, rather than prescriptive approaches.** And that's something over the past year I've been thinking about a lot, especially in just how much work and how much, how much money you know [second language (L2)] English speakers spend….So that's you know that's a lot **they've been told, like by institutional structures, "if you do these things, if you learn these forms in this correct way, you will be successful and you will be good at English,"** and I think that that's something that's really hard….I think I sort of in the past, especially in my first couple years of teaching, would kind of come in and be like, **"But those things don't matter" and that's really that's saying you know all this money all this time, all this tutoring that you spent to get here, the things that made you successful don't matter.** And I think that that's that's also a challenge, **especially as a, as a White instructor** to sort of come in and say you know, "Yes language is diverse. We're not going to focus on and reinforce you know standardizing language systems," but also to recognize that there, there are people really, their, their success has been bankrolled by standardizing systems…So how do we, **how do we engage with practices and genres of power without reinforcing those systems?**

Lucy closes her statement by asking a really challenging question, imbued with concerns about

not just pedagogy and what the institution sees as her responsibility as a FYC instructor but also

intersections between capitalism and SLI. While a response to her closing question here—as

supported by the findings in this project—is perhaps best saved for the discussion chapter of this

project, I do want to note how this response further evidences my assertion that White instructors

view linguistically just pedagogies in a much different light when it comes to EAL students then

when compared to other student demographics.

To further explain what I am referring to here with my use of "different light," I want to

contrast the comments about EAL students with the participants' discussions of Black, AAE-

using students. In doing so I want to briefly highlight how instructors positioned themselves as

needing to resist academic language norms and SLI-type pedagogies more frequently when

discussing Black, AAE-using students, as opposed to their approach to EAL students—which

seemed to often justify their enactments of SLI through solely viewing EAL students' existing

linguistic resources through the lens of negative transfer. Robert's comment below, reflecting on

his experiences with the group during his debrief interview, helps to initially get at how

instructors often both flattened EAL students into just the categories of Chinese or Korean and

fundamentally differentiated the ethics of engaging in SLIs with those students from Black

students.

> I can kind of succ- you know, succinctly say, you know, **Chinese and Korean students versus, are we talking about those, that population or are we talking about Black students?** … like, English as a second language, I think, um, is, like, a big kind of cultural difference. And there's just a lot of, um, I think, differences in the way we deal with that because it's, like, the ethics of, **I think that we can approach [teaching English as another language] as teaching somebody a language more, like, kind of ethically. But obviously, like, kind of African-American Vernacular English speakers speak English, um, you know, natively.**

The ethics of engaging or not in providing SAE-based guidance is presented above by Robert as

dependent on the linguistic identity of the student. Furthermore, a line is implicitly drawn

concerning what constitutes a "real" version of English, with SAE/WME and AAE on one side

and other Englishes—particularly those spoken by Chinese and Korean students—on the other.

There are numerous examples of instructors in these sessions expressing hesitation at

"correcting" the writing of AAE-using students in ways they don't extend to EAL students.

Compare below (see Table V.6) an excerpt from Dagney discussing her process of giving

feedback on an AAE-using student's paper in her class and Seth's actual summative feedback on

a Chinese, EAL student's paper he taught in a past semester (emphasis added):

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Table V.6. Examination of Participant Feedback Styles

Dagney's Verbal Response to Group: I felt a bit convicted, like, these things that I'm noting as errors, **could this be part of African-American Vernacular English?** …. So **I felt, um, concerned that maybe I was marking things more towards Standard English**... I just wondered like, if the student's using this consistently, it seems to be a flag that maybe there's not, **maybe it's just not a standard form, but maybe it's not wrong**.
Seth's Written Comment to Student: You will notice that **I made many revisions into the body of your document directly.** Most of these relate to verb tense … Other edits are more concerned with grammar (comma use, subject-verb agreement, and sentence structure, mostly), so please look those over when you have the chance. **Practice makes perfect! Now more than ever, since you're surrounded by Chinese except in class, it's important to keep writing and reading in English,** to keep those muscles strong.

While Dagney does express concerns about engaging in direct commentary about

perceived "errors" in her student's paper, both in the comment above and in a meta-commentary

she provided that annotates her feedback on this student's paper, she does make a number of

comments on the student's punctuation and conjugation—identifying comma splices and shifting

verb tenses—and word choice. There are two comments in particular critiquing the semantics of

the student's use of *arise* and *implore*, whose usage could be interpreted as "high talk"—or a

rhetorical move in AAE to engage in "ornate diction and exceedingly formal syntax" (Redd &

Webb, 2005, p. 48). This section from the student's paper is shown below.

> By imploring this method of argumentation, Lopez interweaves logos and pathos; the
> logos of his argument derived in the facts and argumentation support – as well as the
> validity of his counter points – and the pathos of his argument taking shape of the
> skepticism that his argument arises within the reader.

> Seth, however,—in both his student-facing feedback and his commentary on the

feedback—expressed far fewer reservations about engaging in direct critique of his EAL

student's punctuation and grammar. His comment in Table V.6 above demonstrates how he

made direct changes to the student's paper, and, while the student in question did well on the

assignment, Seth's feedback—written entirely in a summative comment, as no marginal

comments were used—seems almost exclusively focused on what he sees as departures in the

student's writing from SAE norms. Below is one of two sections Seth highlighted—but did not

comment directly on—in his student's analysis of the (2019) film, *Knives Out*.

> But for the audience, from God's perspective, we have known that Harlan was injected
> morphine accidentally by Marta. But, as a famous successful person, Harlan didn't get
> angry or panic about this after he realized the injection and still joked about how he could
> write a novel about murdering people using morphine.

Identifiable in this excerpt are non-SAE usages of verb tenses—"we have known that Harlan

was"—a potential clausal issue as well as one of compositional semantics— "after he realized

the injection"—as well as an (SAE-centric) absence of a preposition—Harlan was injected [_]

morphine." While Seth does provide his student with knowledge about genre conventions and

SAE usage, by informing the student that narratives—in SAE, but he doesn't explicitly name

this—tend to be discussed "with the present tense," further knowledge about non-SAE varieties

and EAL writing would be helpful for him and the student; this knowledge would allow them to

talk about the student's grammar in a way that doesn't result in Seth as the instructor

"correcting" the potential verb tense issues in the paper himself and the student having seemingly

confirmed for them their language deficit.

In walking the discussion group through this Chinese EAL student's paper, Seth talked

about his perceptions of how "cultural" differences may have influenced how he and his student

understood the purpose of this assignment differently.

> He didn't understand what I was asking for. Um, it's not as much like a, like a linguistic
> so much as like a cultural, um, thing.… Um, and so I think that was at play in what my
> student ultimately produced for what was supposed to be, um, like, a textual analysis or
> rhetorical analysis, um, it was more like a movie review**…**

Notice here how Seth inadvertently divorces the student's culture from their language— "it's not

as much like a, like a linguistic so much as like a cultural, um, thing" — thus separating, for him,

the act of critiquing language in this student's text from critiquing their culture. However, this separation cannot so easily be made. As Wei, Zhang, and Zhang (2020) note, differences in genre conventions and expectations (e.g. what constitutes an analysis versus a review?) are a frequent source of "interferences across languages and cultures," particularly for Chinese EAL students writing in English (p. 4). However—as they found in their study of the metacognitive awareness of Chinese students' perceptions of the rhetorical differences between their Chinese and English writing— "positive correlations" can be found between increases in metacognitive awareness about cultural rhetorics and EAL student performance in SAE writing. In other words, being able as an instructor to talk with EAL students specifically about culturally-specific patterns in language, grammar, and rhetoric helps these students to "self-recognize or self-evaluate whether the knowledge used in the L1 is transferable or not" (p. 12), and these conversations and knowledge would also be just as important for teachers of non-EAL, linguistically minoritized students. However, in this particular instance, in having such an awareness of EAL writing for himself and demonstrating that awareness through less deficit-centric conversations with this student, Seth might have been better equipped to discuss with the student the several "errors" noted in the his highlighted excerpt, such as how commonly "wrong prepositions" or no prepositions are used by Chinese EAL students when writing in English (Liu, 2011, p. 1063), and the challenges of navigating the clausal complexity present in English that is less pronounced in Chinese (p. 1064).

Figure V.2. Transfer of Student Knowledge

Explicit Mentions of Transfer for AAE and EAL students

AAE ■ EAL

[Bar chart showing Negative Transfer, Neutral Transfer, and Positive Transfer for AAE and EAL students. For Negative Transfer, AAE ≈ 3 and EAL = 15. For Neutral Transfer, AAE ≈ 2 and EAL ≈ 3. For Positive Transfer, AAE ≈ 6 and EAL ≈ 1. X-axis ranges from 0 to 15.]
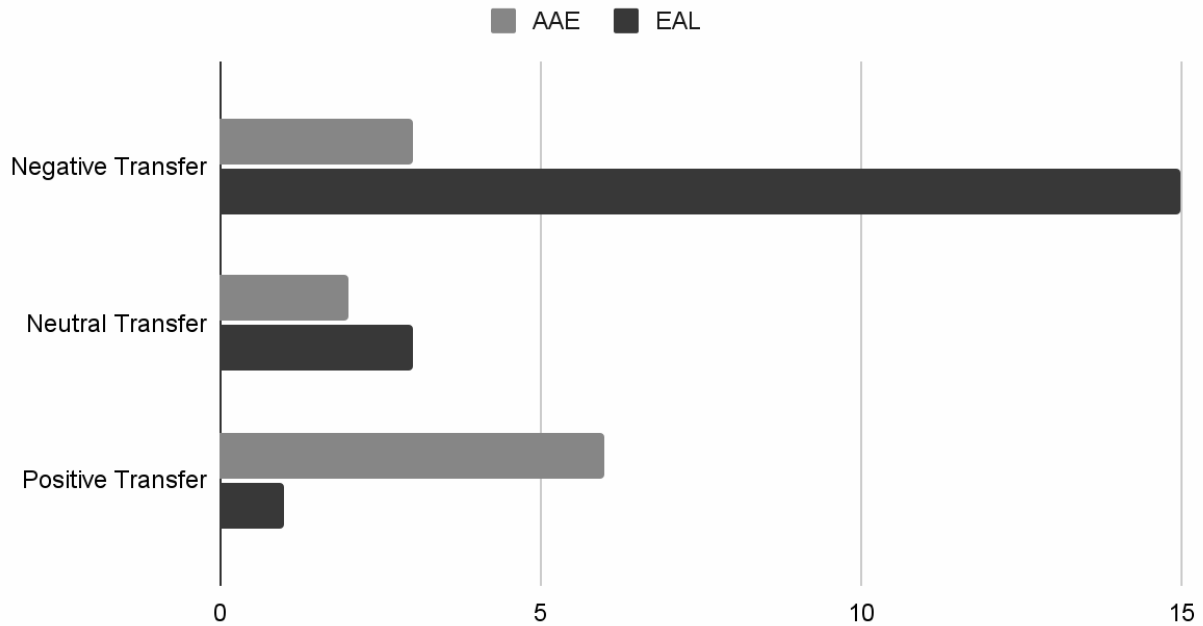
To further discuss how instructors may have viewed the impetus for "correcting" AAE-using and EAL students differently, Figure V.2 above compares how instructors in this space positioned EAL and AAE-using students' grammatical and rhetorical skills as aspects of negative (i..e harmful), neutral (i.e. non-problematic), or positive (i.e. beneficial) to students' success in SAE writing. The excerpts (n=31)—ranging from a single clause to multiple sentences and averaging 75 words each—coded for this chart are *only* illustrative of the instances in which instructors *explicitly connected* AAE or an EAL student/EAL language variety to an aspect of transfer. In other words, a good number of *mostly* negative and some neutral or positive comments regarding non-SAE language varieties—such as those examined in the previous chapter that instructors made about a paper featuring aspects of AAE, without them recognizing the text as AAE though—were not included here.

Unsurprisingly, given the discussion so far in this section, transfer of EAL students'

grammatical and rhetorical skills were almost entirely framed as negative or neutral aspects of transfer. Overwhelmingly, these negative transfer EAL comments were linked with grammar—$r=.97$—specifically semantics and syntax: "like my comment was often, 'I'm just confused. I have no idea what you're saying.' The, the structure of the sentence was, you know, like grammar mistakes happen, right?" However, there were also some comments expressing concerns about the negative transfer of rhetorical skills for EAL students: "I think that in, in the Chinese education system, there is some, some sort of premium placed on, like, um, the sort of like recitation model or... rather than like making the argument, um, from receiving material" While AAE-knowledge was much more often linked explicitly to aspects of positive transfer, these positively viewed instances were often framed in a manner that slightly emphasized rhetoric—$r=.86$— more than grammar—$r=.74$— such as Dexter discussing Geneva Smitherman's ability to code-mesh between AAE and SAE and break academic genre expectations in more effectively engaging her audience. While there were positive transfer sentiments expressed about EAL students, these were focused *entirely* on EAL students' existing meta-language for talking about language—$r=1$—viewed as positive as it would facilitate instructor's teaching EAL students to more quickly adapt to SAE, academic expectations:

> He also, as, as as many students from, from South Korea and, and China and Japan, like, did English as a foreign language training, which means that he had a lot of grammatical meta language that he could build on.

> While AAE-writing—particularly rhetorical patterns—may have less often been

portrayed by the group as negative transfer, increasing this awareness about language resources would not just be beneficial for instructors and their EAL students. In being better prepared to identify potential instances of AAE rhetorical or grammatical patterns, Dagney might have been better able to engage in feedback and conversation with her student with less hesitation, as together they'd be more able to explicitly discuss how both of them (the instructor, with

knowledge of SAE, and the student, with knowledge of both AAE and SAE) might approach the specific rhetorical situation the paper is responding to based on their backgrounds. However, instructors engaging in such conversations about language to increase students' meta-awareness of their resources must also be careful to not flatten students' and their writing into "static" frameworks that remove agency and oversimplify the origins of their linguistic resources into just cultural categories (Matsuda, 1997). In other words, instructors need the language to not just talk about broad rhetorical and grammatical patterns that persist across and within various student demographics, but they also need the introspection and transparency necessary to reflect on their own practices and have conversations with students about their unique writing as individuals.

Participants often seemed to suggest SLI-motivated pedagogical practices for EAL students as being ethically acceptable, if not the right thing to do, as these students were believed to have come to the instructors' U.S. institution, in part, for that specific purpose. Engaging in similar pedagogical practices with Black, AAE-using students, however, was deemed less necessary and often unethical or (at least) much more ethically challenging of an issue. While further reasons for why the instructors involved in this project may have shared such views will be examined in the discussion chapter, one potential reason for this difference in approach could be due to a hyper awareness on their part about the historical and ongoing racist treatment of AAE in FYC and Black students in PWIs. Instructors in this space may have perceived tensions between Black students, White instructors, and writing pedagogy as particularly fraught —as Robert's comments below suggest:

> I guess, my impression [from our group conversations] was that, um, other White instructors had a lot of Black students, and that is the thing that is, um, maybe tha- like, **that kind of racial relationship is what is, like, something that really concerns people about, like, kind of having, having, having to deal with language.**

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Despite Black students making up fewer than 5% of students on these instructors' campus—compared to the almost 15% international student population—instructors more frequently discussed AAE and Black students than any other language variety and minoritized student demographic. In fact, mentions of Black students and AAE were almost three times as frequent as mentions of EAL/English as a second language (ESL)/International students—44 explicit instances versus 15.

Additionally, in commenting on EAL students—as shown in Table 4.2 in my first findings chapter—instructors much more frequently utilized hesitation markers, which could be taken as an indication of their anxieties about discussing EAL students and/or their knowledge of EAL-relevant terminology (Duvall et al., 2014). Lastly, and perhaps most relevant to this discussion, participants also often positioned SLI and other racist teaching practices as being particularly connected to anti-Black teaching practices, but not necessarily as relevant to anti-EAL or anti-Asian student practices, as shown in Dexter's comment below.

> I'm always into thinking about the, the dominance of monolingualism …. Um, and I think that there's a lot of really cool overlap happening between, like, the sort of multilingual, translanguaging, translingual things, and, uh, and anti-racism work happening, specifically, um, anti- anti-Black racism.

While then instructors seem to be expressing a great deal of interest in *potentially* reflecting on, problematizing, and adapting their teaching practices in response to systemic anti-Black racism, it would seem that the same degree of attention and importance has not necessarily been given by these instructors to other student groups—specifically EAL students—who also experience racist, linguistic prejudices in their FYC classrooms.

5.3.3 Negotiation and Self-Assessment as a Means of Resolving Assessment Tensions

As previously mentioned in the introduction to this section on assessment, instructors felt a tremendous degree of anxiety over how to assess student writing, particularly how to assess

non-SAE writing as a White, WME-using instructor.

- **Focus Group Participant:** "...assessment is probably the hardest thing to think about."
- **Jennifer:** "I end every sort of chapter of assessment feeling sort of ill."
- **Focus Group Participant:** "It's always been a like huge source of anxiety for me."

While in this space we were often addressing questions and concerns about assessment head on, in describing their actual practices and producing assessment materials (e.g. syllabi policies, rubrics, et cetera) for group discussion, a pattern of subtly distancing oneself from the authority/responsibility of assessment could be observed. James's explanation of their approach to assessing audience and voice below serves as an example:

> My perception is that what I tell students is, um, you know, you're telling me who your audience is. I want you to pick the tone and the register that you think is gonna work that audience…**as long as you give me a good explanation for whatever voice you have chosen, I'm signing off on it.**

James's response above positions students in his classroom as having agency over several aspects of the language they use in their writing—tone, register, voice—as long as they can justify those choices to the instructor in terms of their audience.

As an approach to more equitable assessment, co-creating rubrics, negotiating grading contracts, written reflections of self-assessment and other forms of cooperative assessment can be an incredibly helpful asset in the writing classroom for creating a space where students can investigate, utilize, and create writing that resists a White habitus of assessment (Inoue, 2015). Furthermore, having students reflect on their rhetorical strategies—as seen in James's response—can also help students gain a deeper appreciation of the rhetorical situation they are responding to. However in this brief section on negotiation and self-assessment, I want to focus on what I see as exemplified in the bolded portion of James's response above: the careful moves instructors make to qualify these acts of negotiation and self-assessment that may—in actuality—serve to undermine their initial, anti-racist intentions of engaging in negotiated forms

of assessment in favor of creating SAE-centric assessments. I do this to highlight what I see as a well-intentioned yet insufficient response to these tensions of assessing writing across language varieties and the anxieties instructors may feel about assessment and their authority. In doing this work here, I hope to set up an exigence for a conversation about potentially more thoroughly designed strategies for engaging in linguistically just assessment and research implications in my discussion chapter.

In describing their approaches to cooperative forms of assessment, instructors often pointed out their own subjectivity and biases as potential readers/graders as being a motivating reason for them to engage in cooperative assessments. See, for example, Dagney's statement below.

> Upon what, personally, am I, assessing them and I was thinking about the ideas of **subjectivity in authority**. And that's something I try to emphasize. My, **this is my own subjective view of your text** and I tried to position myself as like, "Okay, I was selected to be an instructor at this university for a reason, because **I have some experience. However, that doesn't make me necessarily any more knowledgeable** about what we're doing than anybody else." Which me, **I have to play it loosely. There could be all sorts of responses from that, but I think I try to emphasize their authority.**

Again, shown in the response above, a fine line is walked between instructor-subjectivity versus expertise, however, Dagney's closing qualification that she has to "play it loosely" as "there could be all sorts of responses" is indicative that—when push comes to shove—the instructor's preferences/biases will win out over the student every time. Authority over assessment, in this way, becomes a game in which students are expected to suggest criteria that their instructor likely already agrees with and has in mind.

Interrogating how the instances of self-assessment—often described by the instructors as the act of students writing a cover-letter of sorts on their assignments justifying a specific grade or their efforts more generally—were typically framed provides further credence to this argument, as it also seemed to serve as less of a tool of student empowerment and more of a way

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for instructors to attempt to avoid directly themselves engaging in SAE-based corrections or more critically respond to students' language choices. Thomas's statement below describes his approach, and I've additionally (in Table V.7) included a portion of the self-assessment rubric he refers to below the excerpt as well.

> What I'm doing is sort of a hybrid between self assessments and you know, an assess assessment by me ….I have students go through the rubric, self-assess and then they you know they advocate for a letter grade for themselves in about a 500 word or so mini essay. Last semester I had students do that, and that was their only, basically their letter grade.

Table V.7. Portion of Student Self-Assessment Rubric

Academic writing assignment expectation	Expectations for an "A" grade
Organization and coherence: Structure of ideas and evidence, from introduction to conclusion, offers rhetorical progression and clarity for readers. Writer offers evidence of relationship between statements or ideas, such as through transitions and reformulations.	Writer shows attention to order as development; e.g., student's introduction and development includes clear moves to lead readers from topics to examples to inferences to how ideas connect
Engagement with conventions: Writer follows usage standards and discourse conventions, including presentation of observations, other research, citation practices, and format.	Student's syntax, citations, spelling, punctuation, and format follow academic conventions appropriate for the assignment/audience

Examining Table V.7 first, while SAE is not invoked by name, the broad references to "clarity for readers" and "structure" potentially imply a limited set of rhetorical and grammatical languaging options for the students, similar to how Davila (2022) argued that unexplained terminology around clarity, organization, conventions and more in writing course descriptions can enable White supremacist language practices. Furthermore, in the "Engagement with conventions" section, "usage standards and discourse conventions" as well as "academic conventions appropriate for the assignment/audience" very much enforce on the student an SLI mindset. While, in his comment included above in the block quote, Thomas does gesture toward

his general openness and acceptance of however students choose to self-assess—"I had students [self-assess], and that was their only, basically their letter grade"—given the constraints within which the rubric puts them, is there room here for students to even consider that their non-SAE language varieties are worth anything in this assessment? Placed in such a predicament of self-assessment, students must then engage in a performative task of critically evaluating their own work—likely producing inequities as the more confident students, who feel more at home in academia due to their race, gender, and language varieties, inflate their work compared to their peers who do not feel the same way.

Examining a syllabi policy on "Linguistic Curiosity" from Lucy provides further examples of how framing conversations around language diversity, inclusion, and (in)justice around concepts such as negotiation and cooperation can be well-intentioned yet still potentially problematic. It should be noted that this policy was adapted by Lucy from a departmentally issued suggested policy that she had come across during her instructor training the prior year. Portions of this statement are presented below (see Table 5.8), with relevant excerpts emphasized by me.

Table V.8. Syllabi Policy on "Linguistic Curiosity"

You should know that: There is no "one" English: **The dialects and variety of englishes that are used by various language users are linguistically equal** in that they are all grammatically systematic and rule-governed. Standard Written Academic English (SWAE) … is the convention in most academic communities. **Although its 'rules' and grammar is not inherently 'better' or intrinsically more valuable, it is one of the varieties of written english in the U.S. that has social and economic value, thus making our ability to purposefully negotiate this variety of english useful.**

Notions of "grammar" and "error" are socially constructed, meaning they often have to have more to do with the reader's preference and with vague notions of usage 'correctness.'Therefore, **we won't worry too much in this course about honing in on mechanical or grammatical "errors" Rather, we will consider whether writers negotiate conventional mechanics and usage in rhetorically effective ways for the audiences, situations, and purposes for which they are composing.** When I read your papers, **I might draw attention to interesting negotiations of SWAE usage and provide feedback grammar conventions,** but the majority of my feedback and my assessment of your work will focus on the legibility of your ideas, **only attending to usage or grammar when it substantially impacts reader's ability to ascertain your intentions or purposes.**

The language of "negotiation" appears at several points in Lucy's policy above. While not referring explicitly to negotiation as an assessment strategy, this policy does highlight the tensions between cooperative forms of quantifying the "value" of language (i.e. assessment) and the White habitus of the university. While emphasizing throughout this policy the false elevation of SAE above other varieties and the validity of multiple "englishes," throughout this policy Lucy re-centers the White habitus, and therefore legitimizes SAE's elevated status in the assessment of her classroom: "Although its 'rules' and grammar is not inherently 'better' or intrinsically more valuable, it is one of the varieties of written english in the U.S. that has social and economic value, thus making our ability to purposefully negotiate this variety of english useful." The emphasis on SAE being one variety with "social and economic value," thus implying there are language varieties that neither have social nor economic value, is rather problematic as well. Potentially implying that marginalized varieties such as AAE don't have social or economic value is a demonstrably false statement. Baker-Bell (2020) highlights how

"Black linguistic appropriation" is commonly utilized in commercials, products, music and other areas of entertainment/marketing aimed at White audiences to financially successful (and greatly problematic) ends (pp 12-14). As such, utilizing a policy such as this as a foundation for engaging in cooperative assessment with students will undoubtedly forefront SAE-centric concerns, regardless of who—the instructor or the student—is voicing them.

I do want to emphasize that I am not insinuating that instructors shouldn't have more authority over their classroom policies than their students; I also am not attempting to insinuate here that it is hypocritical in any way for instructors to claim this authority even as they point out that they have biases and use cooperative forms of assessment as an attempt to overcome said biases. Rather, what I am attempting to illustrate here is that including cooperative assessments is not a guarantee on its own of a more equitable, linguistically just classroom. Negotiation only works if all parties involved are equitably informed about the stakes of the negotiation and are adequately equipped to identify and resist problematic language ideologies. Asao Inoue, in particular his (2015) discussion of anti-racist assessment ecologies and grading contracts, was by far the most explicitly cited scholar in our conversations. His pedagogies concerning grading contracts and cooperative assessments were undoubtedly influential on these participants' pedagogies; however, simply lifting pedagogical devices (e.g. a grading contract) for use in a classroom, devoid from the anti-racist, anti-White habitus framework within which it was created is not a solution to these assessment tensions. Furthermore, recent scholarship has called certain enactments of these tools into question concerning their purported anti-racist benefits (Craig, 2021), thus illustrating the importance for teachers to actually understand how to properly contextualize these tools in their classrooms.

As discussed in the first findings chapter, instructors in this project often struggled to talk

about language specifically—often favoring using vague, SAE-centric terms like "polish" or

"academic" to describe qualities of writing. I remind readers of this as regardless of how well

instructors may initially frame these cooperative assessment activities, if they aren't also

engaging in critical conversations about both language and White supremacist language norms in

academic writing, their students will likely respond to these cooperative attempts by further

justifying their own language oppression—see Dagney's comment below.

> What I've noticed the most in my classes, at least, … when it comes to the assessments, what the students often want to see on the rubric often does reflect some standard ideas of language.

In examining the document Dagney created for negotiating rubrics with students, she structures

the conversation around healthy work/life balance, writing as a form of general self-expression,

and genre expectations. What isn't included in this guide to negotiation, however, is an explicit

acknowledgement of language's connection to racial identity and the systemic language

oppression this act of negotiation will help her and her students push back on. There are nods to

these themes in several places of her document—"Our previous readings share a theme of

envisioning 'School as a generative place' more so than 'school as a place of assimilation.'" as

well as her mention in the document of one of her "former students, a nonbinary person of color,

…[who] felt they needed to 'prove themself into existence' which has continued to resonate with

[her] to this day." However, other than these broad gestures toward connections between

language and racial identity and academia as a site of assimilation into (unnamed) White

supremacy, the document is notably silent. As argued here, if White instructors want to engage in

cooperative assessments—and assuming they want those cooperative assessments to resist SLI

and the White habitus—we can't allow our pedagogies and ourselves to falter in naming White

supremacy in these negotiations.

5.3.4 In Closing: Idealistic vs Real-World Pedagogies

In closing this section of my findings, I want to highlight a statement from Dexter during the focus groups that helped inspire this particular section, thereby illustrating an intersection of several of the findings discussed in this chapter.

> I make a comment you know if I see something that sort of deviates, and I sort of like trying to like clamp down on the like, "There's there's like the standard way," but I say things like, "A lot of my colleagues across the curriculum really hate this thing" … and then I describe it out. …being like you know, "This is sort of a deviation from a normal day again and you're a grumpy chemistry professor." If you have to write something for [that grumpy professor] they're going to really crab about this, because it's their shtick.

Participants in this project positioned themselves in numerous, often shifting ways relative to SLI and more anti-racist practices; however, the findings in this chapter attempted to portray the often counterproductive ways in which instructors responded to perceived tensions in their assessment practices by justifying and reproducing a White habitus of assessment for students. In shedding light on how these instructors navigated "ideal" and "real-world" pedagogies—and differentially applied them to various students groups such as EAL and AAE students—I aimed to illustrate how selectively utilizing anti-racist assessment practices, such as negotiated grading contracts, fail to adequately respond to the White habitus that surrounds these classroom spaces. In the following discussion chapter, I will pick up on both the pedagogical and research implications of both my findings chapters and attempt to address more specifically where I see room for re-thinking the ways in which instructors and scholars engage in conversations about language diversity, linguistic justice, and their intersections with whiteness.

Chapter 6: The Challenges of Confronting White Supremacist Language Ideologies: Possibilities for Creating more Critical Language Spaces in First-Year Composition

6.1 Framing for Discussion Chapter

The goal of this dissertation was to investigate the ways in which White instructors expressed language ideologies through their stated beliefs and pedagogical practices. In conducting this project, and finding results relevant to the methodological complexities of studying not just beliefs such as language ideologies, but also the beliefs of White people about racialized topics, numerous takeaways for further research and—more immediately—pedagogical practices surface. The subsections below attempt to offer readers a few pathways forward for considering the multiple, intersecting findings from this study. However, as investigating the ways in which systemic racism and White supremacy function together is an ever-evolving task, readers will find that even in speaking toward the implications of this research, further questions are unearthed.

Before we go further, however, I do want to address a *slight*—okay, maybe a bit more than slight— shift in tone readers may sense at certain points in this chapter. Through the majority of this project till now, I've tried to maintain a certain degree of "objectivity" in describing my work and its findings. I did this out of both a sense of academic expectations (i.e. what I must do to complete this dissertation process) and as a means for forefronting the findings here as applicable to more than just myself, the nine other White instructor participants, and our PWI. As this is a discussion chapter though, and as no research is objective, I want to step forward a bit more clearly. In doing so, readers may notice throughout this chapter shifting

registers, less reliance on formal (APA) citations—although still present—a more antagonistic voice present through a lack of hedging/more frequent boosting, reader reference, rhetorical questions, and (occasional) "foul" language that some readers may find slightly unconventional. I see this rhetorical rejiggering as aiding my work here in a few ways: 1) similar to my efforts to engage in participatory methods with this project, it further destabilizes the role of researcher in human-research as only being for objective outsiders—which, to be clear, I was not in this project and made little effort to be; 2) it allows me to much more directly speak to matters of race and White supremacy to White readers in particular, who may be hesitant—for many of the reasons examined in the previous chapters—to consider these findings as relevant to them personally.

However, most importantly, I alter my style here to confront challenges presented by the key findings of this project, how instructors' ideologies seemed to shift and how work toward anti-racism was consistently undermined, and the implications of those findings on further discussion of classroom practices. Bettina Love (2019), in discussing anti-racist pedagogies, identifies three general categories of commitment toward this work that people have, wherein a third of individuals are in complete opposition to anti-racist work, another third could be convinced of its importance, and the remaining third are already engaged in various forms of anti-racist action. Her point in generalizing about these groups is to encourage listeners to focus attention on the one-third of individuals who just need a little push or guidance to engage in anti-racism. This is what I initially set out to do with this project. But, at least as this study found when it comes to language ideologies, things are a bit more complex: the instructors (including myself) involved in this study constantly undermined efforts through surface-level efforts or justifications for opposing more inclusive pedagogies. We consistently talked around race and

around White supremacy in ways that, even as someone whose primary focus here was to anticipate and navigate these tensions, I couldn't recognize in the moment of the sessions as a White person who has been socialized to accept certain language ideologies. As such, I take this more assertive stance here to avoid unnecessarily wishy-washy language in discussing these findings, and I also do so to avoid giving myself and White readers who are trying to engage in linguistic justice within their classrooms too much credit. Biases are not easy to uproot, and our own must constantly be accounted for. While it is easy, as a White reader especially, to imagine oneself as a part of the one-third of individuals who are allin on the work of linguistic justice, as this study showed, this isn't always the case. We can be passionate about linguistic justice in certain genres, certain environments, and for certain students, but it is all too easy for us to rationalize away this work when deemed inconvenient or incompatible for whatever reason. Given this, I would encourage you, the reader, to reflect on how your preferences for academic writing respond to these occasional shifts in this chapter. How would you, in keeping in mind the findings of this project, react to a student using language as I do here? How might you more critically engage in conversation, whether you like, dislike, or feel ambivalent about this, with a student writing in such a way in FYC? Perhaps most importantly, how might your reactions to this shift be connected to your reading of me as a White, WME-using, academically educated individual? In other words, if I hadn't demonstrated in the past chapters that I was a White, WME-using, academically educated person, would you "allow" me to do these things now?

In the sections below, I will address both the methodological implications of this project and the need for greater training of instructors, particularly White, WME monolingual instructors, to talk about language and White supremacist language norms with students. In doing so, I will extend and recast the pedagogical challenges identified by Aull (2023) that

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interfere with efforts for FYC to become a place of more critical language inquiry. It is my hope

that my efforts will illustrate for readers how the challenges of teaching and studying FYC are

not just ones of instructors often being unable to talk about language specifically; rather, the

greatest challenge to FYC becoming a space of more critical language awareness is instructors'

inability or unwillingness[26] to explicitly, persistently, and specifically explore—both for

themselves and with their students—how "traditional" academic language ideologies are

connected to White supremacy. In concluding this discussion, I will then move in the following

chapter to suggest pedagogical practices and lines of research inquiry for engaging explicitly,

persistently, and specifically with White Supremacist Language Ideologies—a term defined and

discussed in the following section.

6.2 The Need for Greater Training of (White) Instructors to Talk about Language

In summarizing both pedagogical and scholarly trends within the field of writing studies

regarding language-focused approaches to FYC instruction, Aull (2023) identifies three major

challenges regarding how language has (or has not) been considered:

- "the water-we're-swimming-in challenge"
    - Due to a "rampant" degree of miseducation about language, students—and their instructors—may enter FYC with overly prescriptive notions about how language

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[26] As a point of clarification around the labels of unwilling and unable/an inability, I see these at times (but not always) overlapping for writing instructors wanting to engage in efforts toward linguistic justice. While inability to engage in more critical language work may come from a variety of institutional constraints (e.g., mandated materials for FYC, specific course goals, course descriptions, et cetera), it also (as evidenced by the findings in this work) can be a self-imposed, "learned helplessness" type of inability that White instructors may deploy to avoid having to do more critical work around language and race. Well discussed in the literature review chapter, these types of defensive moves White people may make to avoid having to do challenging work around race, while still wanting to appear anti-racist, are well documented. While I will certainly discuss implications in this chapter and the next for those with authority over the local writing ecology (e.g., writing program directors) to help instructors whose inabilities stem from institutional constraints to do more work around linguistic justice, many of my comments here are directed at instructors who are either unwilling to do this work as it doesn't seem relevant/of significant importance to FYC or instructors who have created for themselves a self-imposed inability to do this work (e.g., "I just don't know enough about these things" or "But what about when they have to apply for a job!"). I see these two groups of instructors (those that don't try at all or those that limit/qualify/excuse their efforts significantly) as needing the same degree of explicitness in discussion around the importance of these topics and guidance in their enactments.

should or does work. This creates both resistance to more critical approaches and opportunities for significant miscommunication about language diversity.

- "the baby-out-with-the-bathwater challenge"
  - Due to well-intentioned but naive approaches to FYC, instructors may entirely remove conversations about language from classrooms in an effort to avoid presenting their classrooms as sites for "error-hunting." While this may seem like an effective approach for encouraging students to experiment with their language varieties, in neglecting to more critically examine specific language varieties and features, instructors leave unaddressed the ways SLI are still working within the space and larger institution and avoid helping students gain more knowledge about language.
- "the in-theory-but-not-assessment challenge"
  - Due to instructors wanting to make their classrooms spaces for language diversity, but not knowing "how to support it during assessment," they may fail to enact consistent pedagogical practices that support their initial, inclusive aims. Students may then walk away from the course after being subjected to hypocritical or confusing assessment practices and believing that non-SAE varieties are only appropriate for specific classrooms, home-use, or just in an idyllic world.

Each of these three challenges echoes moments from this study, as my findings support these three challenges as being particularly relevant for the instructors examined in this project. However, my study focused solely on White instructors as a way to forefront how language ideologies and pedagogical challenges may be connected to White identity. As such, in the following section I suggest several additional/reworked challenges to Aull's (2023) list above, pertaining specifically to how whiteness works in conjunction with the above identified challenges to enable White Supremacist Language Ideologies within FYC and academia more broadly.

6.3 White Supremacist Language Ideologies: Theorizing Intersections between Whiteness and Beliefs about Language

In using the term White Supremacist Language Ideologies (WSLI), I am emphasizing the understated—in much of writing studies—racist ideologies of whiteness in Lippi-Green's (2011) SLI, Shapiro's (2022) deficit/monolingualist language ideologies, and similar ideologies that explicitly or implicitly elevate SAE as better or more appropriate than non-SAE varieties,

including those pedagogies that acknowledge the "problematic" nature of these ideologies but still justify these uncritical approaches through defeatist attitudes about the possibilities of non-SAE varieties in the "real world" (see Elbow, 1999).

In moving to define WSLI, it is helpful to turn toward Flores and Rosa's (2015) depiction of "monoglossic language ideologies," which refer to the ways in which White speakers and listeners position SAE-monolingualism as a "normative" goal, as opposed to "discrete linguistic practices," for the purposes of oppression. What they mean by this is that an individual's status as SAE-fluent is a target that White supremacist systems and individuals constantly shift and redefine to justify the linguistic deficits that White individuals perceive in people of color (pp. 151-152), highlighting how the racial positionality of audience can affect perceptions of language (Spears, 2015; Wolfram & Schilling-Estes, 2006). As such, Flores and Rosa assert that SAE is a "cultural emblem" that makes "seeking to identify [its] specific linguistic practices…a futile effort" (p. 152). I agree with their theorization of (White) individuals' perceptions of non-SAE varieties through Miyako Inoue's (2006) examination of "listening subjects"—or the ways in which listeners perceive certain, non-existent characteristics of a speaker's language based on their own biases about how the speaker should sound —as helping emphasize the deficit perceptions White individuals can have about people of color's use of SAE. However, I would argue that there are identifiable features of SAE and that there is a danger in denying such an argument. In citing studies that have identified general patterns within forms of SAE and attempted to decenter its status as a "neutral" point of comparison for other varieties (Aull, 2020; Davila, 2016; Inoue, 2019a/b; Milroy & Milroy, 2012), to define SAE as a variety—or rather, *the* variety of English—without *any* identifiable features would be to further its status and its rhetorical and grammatical characteristics as natural, aracialized, and/or disconnected from

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culture. In other words, if we say SAE doesn't have "real" features, we further neutralize

enactments of those features and thus harm other varieties through contrastive-type rhetorics that

position SAE as neutral (e.g., copula inclusion is seen as normal but copula absence/deletion is

different and a sign of AAE).

The broad categories we use to label language varieties (SAE and AAE, for example) are

imperfect and "flatten" differences within groups of individuals (Alexander & Rhodes, 2014).

Furthermore, the ways in which distinctions are made between affirming a variety as a language

or dialect can be political and subjective. However, to solely identify SAE as an amorphous

White supremacist tool, devoid of any connections to actual language practices, would be to

depoliticize writing pedagogies and assessments that, purposefully or inattentively, privilege

those features associated with SAE, as long as SAE-normativity isn't an explicitly stated goal.

The result of such an understanding of SAE, if applied to FYC, would be to make whiteness and

White supremacy, through using language pedagogy as a proxy, further invisible (Lipsitz, 2018).

Given these challenges, I propose a definition of WSLI relevant to WME-supremacy with

attention to several challenges. This definition attempts to both include the ways in which

(White) listeners and systems perceptions shift for the purposes of oppression, while still making

space for connecting those ideologies to particular language practices. I explicitly label these

ideologies and practices then as being White supremacist, as these ideologies—regardless of the

individual's intentions in enacting them—result in the stratification and hierarchization of

varieties of English and—by proxy—racialized bodies. This is done through the privileging and

attempted aracialization of a language variety frequently associated with White speakers/writers

that, by design, simultaneously marks other varieties of English as non-standard, especially those

associated with people of color, and thus positions those varieties as being less able or

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appropriate for navigating multiple contexts. WSLI then can be understood as the ways in which

prescriptive language ideologies—e.g. beliefs about what is (in)correct, (in)appropriate, and/or

(un)natural in language—combine with whiteness in order to uncritically elevate SAE to the

multiple and conflicting-role of being both superior to other varieties but also racially, culturally,

and politically neutral—in that the White users are beyond having to question, think about, or

critique their own language patterns as being connected in any way to White identity. This, in

turn, combines with (White) FYC instructors'—and the general (White) population's more

broadly—frequent inability to critically interrogate language norms in allowing

listeners/speakers and readers/writers to identify, overlook, or imagine "errors" within an

individual's language based on their perception of the individual's race and proximity to

whiteness (Davila, 2012; 2016).

In exemplifying this phenomenon with previously discussed examples from the findings

chapters, think about how instructors disparately perceived errors in student essays (the first

written in AAE and the second in SAE), in not noticing SAE-centric abnormalities in the SAE

paper. Consider how Dagney expressed concerns regarding creating classroom assessments that

would allow her BIPOC students critically consider how they wanted to express themselves in

the language varieties they chose to employ but didn't express the same concerns regarding her

White students (thus creating an environment in which White students' language, and their

decisions to utilize certain varieties, are portrayed as neutral). Or, think about how various

pedagogical philosophies or policies (e.g., Theresa's "tools of power" approach or Lucy's policy

on linguistic curiosity) were unambiguous and direct in imaging the limitations of non-SAE

varieties in contexts outside of academia, even as they didn't necessarily extend the same degree

of critique in considering the potential limitations of SAE outside of the classroom.

To move beyond just this broad definition of WSLI—in preparing to identify possible pathways forward—similar to how Lippi-Green (2011) unpacked specific methods of language subordination through which language ideologies are enacted, I turn toward exemplifying more specifically how WSLI are enacted. Similar to other work that has attempted to categorize manifestations of whiteness in specific contexts—e.g., McIntyre's (1997) "White Talk" or DiAngelo's (2018) "White Fragility" construct—there are patterns through which WSLI are enacted in writing pedagogy, categorized and exemplified below with quotes from participants of this project.

- **Minimization of connection between language and racial identity and aracilization of White individuals—and therefore White individuals' languaging as well.**
  - Language is affected by all facets of our identity. Yes, more "diverse" student populations may face additional challenges that "other" students don't face, but why emphasize race more than others?
    - "[While racial identity is important], I think literally every identity, and I would, I guess, I would especially include class identity is marked by language."
    - "I don't have student athletes anymore, so … the demographic of my classes has changed, not necessarily exclusively in racial terms…"
- **Occlusion and diffusion of responsibility for addressing White supremacy.**
  - Let's come together to create a more "equitable" assessment/policy, but I am not going to explicitly name the inequitable, systemic forces we are working against. This will also help shield me from any critiques of my assessments being biased, as I just did what the students wanted me to do.
    - "…when it comes to the assessments, what the students often want to see on the rubric often does reflect some standard ideas of language."
    - "…what if the student is literally asking for that? Even if it's colonization, what if the student is asking for their language to be colonized?"
- **Self/White-centered idealistic versus "real world" distinction.**
  - I, and everyone important I know, only use SAE in professional environments. It doesn't matter how limited my perspective is based on my positionality and linguistic, disciplinary, or cultural knowledge; I'm just going to assume that my understanding of the "real world" is universal.
    - "[a pedagogy that emphasizes linguistic diversity] sounds great at the academic level, and I agree with sort of the principle of it, but, um, like, the shame is that, that only really works in this ideal world where, like, outside of the academic classroom, all Englishes are treated equally, right?"

- ■ "We are kind of living in a world where we have to cope with the fact that people are going to say that my Chinese student's, you know, language is bad."
- ● **White, SAE-centric construct of linguistic diversity.**
  - ○ Perform the right kinds of "difference" (e.g. rhetorical and not grammatical) and on my terms (e.g., in narrative genres but not others). Also, to hedge just a bit further, these options may not apply to you if you are an EAL student.
    - ■ "Especially with international students, I very much have a stronger aversion to the promise that we're going to focus on linguistic curiosity and descriptive approaches, rather than prescriptive approaches."
    - ■ "It seems like taking a writing class and learning to think differently about [their AAE writing structure] will be helpful [to this writer]."

These patterns will be detailed further in the various "challenges" subsections of this chapter to synthesize more clearly how they functioned together in the findings of this project. However, this conceptualization of WSLI and the supporting data this project surfaced complicates current theorizations of language ideologies and whiteness through illustrating how these ideologies may shift in response to how instructors perceive rhetorical and grammatical deviations from SAE and academic genre norms based on their perceptions of students' racial and linguistic identities, through investigating how their expressed and enacted ideologies would shift potentially in response to the individual or group settings of the conversations (based on how they hoped to be perceived), and through assumptions they made concerning both the language/writing skills students would need to be successful and the future audiences/contexts their students would need to navigate.

As discussed in my review of the literature in Chapter 2, "a belief system is a constantly evolving structure that covers a domain of knowledge and is activated, depending on the context, to interpret incoming information" (Lawson et al., 2019, p. 230). In other words, individuals hold many, potentially contradictory, interconnected beliefs that get differentially activated based on their current situation (e.g., an individual believing that people "need to pull themselves up by their bootstraps" in the face of adversity but asking for help when they themselves face an issue).

These contradictions though may not necessarily come from a place of hypocrisy, rather beliefs may fail to be followed due to constraints (e.g., an individual supporting the environmental benefits of public transportation but still driving their own car due to a lack of public transportation in their city). I remind readers of this literature as not all constraints are equally challenging to overcome for writing instructors (Mao & Crostwaite, 2019).

We can't ignore how our positions as instructors and the prevalence of FYC as a required course depends to a certain degree on deficit language ideologies: i.e., writing is a process that students need to improve upon. While how "improvement" is/should be specifically defined is certainly a complex issue, it is perhaps broadly understood in a FYC classroom as helping students to prepare for future writing contexts (potentially both in and outside of academia). However, as has been argued in this dissertation and in much of the research I have cited, the way this understanding of FYC gets enacted (e.g., assignment prompts, assessments, placement mechanisms, course goals, et cetera) has historically been (and often still is) shaped primarily by a White racial habitus that determines the languaging and bodies deemed most preferable and most in need of remediation. As such, our beliefs and efforts toward more linguistically inclusive or anti-racist pedagogies may get filtered through this need to prepare students for future writing contexts that places significant constraints on us by solely imagining our students' futures as dependent on SAE.

Consider the many tensions instructors in this project mentioned between wanting to engage in more linguistically just practices and preparing students for future writing challenges. Whether it was the "tools of power" approach, linguistic justice not being relevant to EAL students, or the need to satisfy "Grumpy chemistry professors" there are a number of constraints that undermine our enactments of linguistic justice. As should be pointed out, the ways in which

"linguistic justice" and "preparation for future writing challenges" were placed so frequently in tension with one another (as though the more you work toward linguistic justice the less adequately you prepare your students) is an example of how central this White racial habitus is to our language ideologies and pedagogical practices. And, this is why you can have instructors who can justify for themselves engaging in practices of language subordination while still viewing that work as being anti-racist.

So, instructors may generally acknowledge the hand that White supremacy has played in shaping expectations for writing in academia, but our efforts to work against those expectations may be limited in multiple ways due in part to our failure to realize and reconcile our numerous, potentially contradictory, beliefs toward linguistically just purposes. While more specific suggestions for classroom/program practices will come in the following chapter, it is important to mention how a lack of knowledge concerning language and a wider variety of global Englishes, combined with White instructors potential inability to discuss race, may play a part in enforcing these expectations. If an instructor is unwilling/unable to talk about language and race, how can enact more linguistically inclusive pedagogies? They simply can't. In being unable to more concertedly address language and race in the space of FYC, but still wanting to be more linguistically inclusive, instructors don't just replicate existing power structures (i.e. White supremacy), but they may actually hinder more meaningful justice work through the camouflage of "cosmetic diversity"—or diversity efforts that only make campuses/classrooms initially appear more diverse without actually supporting minoritized individuals (Ford & Patterson, 2019; Hoffman & Mitchell, 2016): A single reading or two to represent "language diversity," negotiating a rubric without discussing why that negotiation matters, a policy on linguistic inclusion that still elevates SAE above other varieties, all of these are examples of how typical

anti-racist classroom efforts (more inclusive readings lists, cooperative assessments, syllabi emphasizing DEIJ) can be (un)intentionally co-opted toward maintaining a status quo of White language supremacy.

In now turning to build off of Aull (2023) by investigating additional challenges associated with White teachers and/or whiteness, I aim to address how WSLI, and the specific patterns of WSLI I unpacked, show up in FYC based on my findings.

6.3.1 The "Reluctant" White Savior Challenge

This challenge refers to how White instructors may justify engaging in WSLI as a detestable but necessary duty to adequately prepare their students for the world beyond their classrooms. I want to address this challenge first as it seems to be particularly prevalent. It is prevalent not just in data collected for this project, but in (anecdotally) the many conversations I've had with instructors about linguistic justice, anti-racist writing assessment and language diversity. While this pattern of behavior is not unique to just White instructors, it takes on a more sinister meaning when embodied by a White instructor, given the field's and the United State's aforementioned—and ongoing—history of White people engaging in colonization and oppression through pedagogy for the "betterment" of people of color—i.e. White supremacy (Elliot, 2005; Hammond, 2018; Moos, 2021). By indulging in the line of thinking that non-SAE-using students can only be saved from future language oppression if their language is oppressed now by a "well-meaning" White instructor, instructors enact a grotesque caricature of the possibilities for language discussions in FYC through encouraging their students to actually be less curious and less critical about language and writing.

This attitude toward writing pedagogy comes from a belief that maintaining a racist system—through disparately punishing students via grades or just the exclusion of non-SAE—

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will help overcome said system. Furthermore, teaching in this way attempts to divorce structural racism from conversation by placing the burden on individuals to alter their "different" languaging and rewarding the (White) teacher for "successfully" preparing the student for their bright future that will now most assuredly be free from linguistic racism. If the sarcasm wasn't obvious enough, know that that attitude is bullshit. Is a Black student using SAE going to always be perceived as using SAE? Or, will that student's words still be filtered through the racial biases of the White listening subject (Flores & Rosa, 2015)? Is learning how to write a beautifully crafted SAE adherent cover letter going to help every student get their dream job (the go-to justification many instructors use for only valuing SAE)? Or, are those whose names and/or employment history are read as not White going to continue to be disproportionately rejected (Adamovic, 2022)? What about in conversation though? Surely a respectable command of SAE in spoken language will make the difference for our EAL students, even if their accent is read as "foreign," right? Well, no. Even in utilizing SAE, they will still be read as less capable and less intelligent than their "unaccented" peers (Hosoda & Stone-Romero, 2010).

I haven't even touched yet the other ridiculous foundations on which this argument is built: the idea that linguistically marginalized students are blissfully unaware of their linguistic marginalization. To speak directly within this paragraph to White readers: Do we really think people of color and non-SAE speakers don't already know how White, WME-using people and systems react to their language? Do we believe that we are opening these students' eyes to a world of racism that only we—as *White* instructors—could make visible to them? While, as a White instructor myself, I can't comment through personal experience on how aware or not people of color generally are about racist language practices and expectations, from just the briefest bit of research it would seem like *perhaps* many already know (see Alim & Smitherman,

2012; Anzaldúa, 1987; Baker-Bell, 2020; Baldwin, 1979; Canagarajah, 2013; Inoue, 2019, 2021; Kynard, 2013; Lyiscott, 2014; Matsuda, 2006; Moon, 2016; Perryman-Clark, 2016; Rosa, 2019; Smitherman, 1977; Smitherman, 2017; Tan, 1990; Young, 2010 + many, *many*, many others). If any of that, or the previous paragraph, describes your approach to writing pedagogy, once again there is a certain term that encapsulates that worldview and those types of pedagogies: *White supremacy*.

As the findings of this project support, EAL students' perceived "needs" may be particularly vulnerable to this line of thinking. As Lucy's comment—discussing the the intersections between capitalism and SLI that EAL students face in being put through a gauntlet of racist language ideologies in language classrooms and tests—illustrates, some EAL students may enter into FYC with extraordinarily deficit perspectives of their English and White instructors may very well uncritically respond to those concerns and amplify this harmful exigence: creating a self-sustaining cycle of educational and capitalist systems positioning EAL students as inherently needing remediation, EAL students perceiving a deficit in their language, writing instructors validating that perception, and then generalizations thus being created about the needs of all EAL students in FYC, justifying those systems of remediation. The problem here, besides this negative framing of students' Englishes, is that these dehumanizing assumptions instructors make about what EAL students' need and want just aren't true. Casanave (2017) notes how so much of the scholarship around EAL students predominantly assumes that the "primary goal" for EAL students' in writing classrooms is "native or near-native linguistic competence" (p. 141). However, as Ferris and Roberts (2001) found in their examination of EAL students' desires for feedback, a significant portion (24%) of EAL students she surveyed did not want their instructors to prioritize grammar feedback on their writing, instead wanting them to

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focus on their rhetorical moves and overall arguments. While the findings here showed that instructors also engaged in SLI regarding AAE-usage when they didn't perceive the text to be AAE, when they were aware of the possibility that the non-SAE usage could be an instance of AAE, they were more likely to consider the possibility that their perception of an "error" was culturally biased: e.g. "maybe it's just not a standard form, but maybe it's not wrong." However, although I am making a distinction here between *instructor* perceptions of how to respond to various linguistically marginalized populations, it should be noted that EAL students aren't unique in their desire to embrace more holistic feedback practices. In speaking to work done in an HBCU context regarding Black rhetorics and language, Faison (2022) similarly found that "students wanted their writing to be graded for what it said, the way it said it, and how well it said what it said…[not] mechanics" (p. 275).

As for why instructors here may seem more inclined to acts of linguistic White saviorism when addressing their EAL students, it could very well be related to an even more significant lack of knowledge about how to talk about language with EAL students—compared to a relative lack of knowledge about AAE. While, as the findings here showed, instructors generally struggled to talk about language and grammar beyond generalizations about writing sounding "academic," "professional," or "non-standard," this lack of knowledge may be especially present regarding EAL student language varieties. As the findings in Table IV.2 showed, instructors most frequently utilized hesitation markers (at a high correlation) when using EAL terms—e.g. EAL, L2, ESL, et cetera. As hesitation markers can be indicators of anxiety about engaging in certain sensitive or unfamiliar topics and/or words, this finding could be interpreted as an indication of instructors' unfamiliarity with EAL scholarship and pedagogies more broadly. As for why this unfamiliarity with EAL students may exist for instructors, Matsuda (2003)—in

detailing 20th century history of ESL education in U.S. postsecondary education—describes a gradual disinterest in EAL studies within the field of composition/writing studies around the 1950s, due to the growing field of ESL studies and number of ESL specialists. While specialization in ESL studies then allowed for greater focus on ESL-relevant issues within that more niche field, an effect of this separation is that very few current composition instructors have the knowledge necessary to effectively—or even accurately—engage in EAL topics.

As observed throughout my findings, SAE-centric assessments and ideologies treat non-SAE-using students (particularly those identified as EAL) as individuals "failing" at language and it therefore being an instructor's duty to save these students from a life of being "a horrible English writer [for their] entire life." As instructors may not have the language to talk about language—or, better yet, apply that language in talking about broad cultural patterns that present themselves through grammar and rhetoric in writing—they have to instead focus on what they can speak to: how closely or not the student's language is to their own.

This expands upon Aull's (2023) "baby-with-the-bathwater" challenge, in that, as found in this project, instructors just often didn't talk about language in FYC unless to critique EAL students and non-SAE varieties. While some of the coursework participants discussed using in their classrooms had their students explore how they used language and how language is linked to identity, these tasks were often framed in a diversity/additive ideological perspective: e.g. "I tell the students they showed up with a range of voices they're capable of using, and I want them to use my class as a way to figure out how those different voices can fit in." What both this avoidance of language and this uncritical and generic praising of language diversity creates then is an environment in which linguistic justice can be written-off as an endeavor only suitable for

idyllic contexts, thus furthering arguments about the necessities of preemptively discriminating against EAL students and other non-SAE-using students.

This finding is significant as even scholarship on linguistic justice and discrimination draws on assumptions and deficit perspectives about EAL students needs, often by—just as participants in this project did—positioning the ethics of correcting EAL students in a different light than the ethics of "correcting" other "real" Englishes, as shown in Horton's (2021) problematizing of one instructor's comments about AAE, Chicano English, and Southern English that Horton pushes back on while simultaneously devaluing EAL English varieties:

> This instructor's comparison of students who are first language speakers of 'non-standard' varieties of English to second language learners of English further highlights the instructor's view of 'non-standard' varieties as deficient, at least at the academic level, and as something to be remedied (p. 49).

While I may disagree with Theresa's assertion of students needing "the tools of power" that SAE provides, I cannot argue against the "real world" versus "idyllic" line that her perspective draws if the alternative is teacher's shallowly praising and avoiding commenting on students' language varieties or differentially positioning linguistic justice and linguistic discrimination as beneficial for some minoritized linguistic groups but not others. As Shapiro (2022) argues, "This tension between pragmatism (i.e., what students need for today) and progressivism (i.e., what the world needs for a more just tomorrow) puts many educators in an ideological bind" (p. 4). Our response to this challenge cannot be to double-down on WSLI nor should it be to ignore the very subject-matter of our field: language. While "tools of power" arguments offer defeatist perspectives on linguistic diversity in writing pedagogy under the guise of distributing power to oppressed populations, actually trying to equitably distribute power would be giving all students the language and permission in university spaces to push back on WSLI.

6.3.2 The "Do We Have to Talk about Race to Be Anti-Racist?" Challenge

Yes. The answer to the titular question in this subsection is, "yes." You can keep reading for the specifics if you'd like, but—in short—you cannot engage in anti-racism without confronting the reality that although race is a social construct, so many systems have been built around these constructs for the purpose of oppression. As such, this challenge refers to the ways in which White instructors attempted to decontextualize anti-racist, linguistically just pedagogies and pedagogical tools from their anti-racist and linguistically just foundations in order to elide conversations about race and White supremacy with their students and make these methods more palatable for them as White instructors. In examining this challenge, I want to specifically draw connections from my findings about how instructors negotiated assessments as a method of responding to their anxieties about assessing student writing, as well as discuss potential implications for how their language ideologies seemed to shift between individual and group conversations. In doing so, I illustrate here how instructors who utilize anti-racist teaching practices but avoid explicitly addressing race with students set themselves up to reproduce a White habitus of assessment.

As noted in my first findings chapter, instructors in this space struggled to explicitly acknowledge race, particularly in group settings. In comparing individual settings versus group settings, mentions of *race* fell over 250% (40 to 15), *whiteness* fell over 800% (42 to 5), while more "comfortable" terms (see Table 4.2 in findings) like *diverse* rose over 1,000% (7 to 74). From these findings, it would seem that instructors were anxious to talk about race explicitly when in front of more than just a single peer (i.e. me, in an interview). I believe this connects to how instructors' language ideologies also seemed to shift between settings—moving from more deficit views in individual settings to more critical views on language in group conversations

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(see Figure V.2 in first findings chapter). In concluding that section of my findings, I hypothesized three broad (potentially overlapping) possibilities for why these ideologies seemed to shift, stated again below.

- 1) Participants, in discussing these texts as a group, pushed each other to believe and express language ideologies that were more open to a diversity of language varieties not typically accepted within academia.
- 2) Participants, in being aware of the context in which they were participating, expressed ideologies in the group setting they believed would be more accepted and would therefore position them in a more positive light in front of their peers.
- 3) Participants, appreciating and at times even enjoying the rhetorical (but not necessarily grammatical) patterns of non-SAE varieties, felt pressured to still reinforce SLI due to their perceptions of their purpose/responsibility to the institution and its students.

Given the potential inverse relationship present in comparing the group and individual language ideologies with the group and individual explicit mentions of race, it is hard to discount my second possibility here: instructors simply asserted opinions about race and language in the group setting they believed would be least risky for them to express in front of their peers and did so drawing on the least amount of explicit race talk as possible.

While I am not dismissing that possibility as being a major/primary motive for participants, I would like to—in considering how these instructors did attempt to engage in cooperative assessment practices and conversations about linguistic diversity in their classrooms as evidenced by their FYC materials—complicate such an easy answer to the challenging question of why the contents of our conversations seemed to vacillate so much between eliding and emphasizing connections between race, language, and pedagogical practice. To do so, I return briefly to the scholarship on teacher beliefs.

In examining the belief systems of educators, Lawson et al. (2019) discuss how teachers' "constantly evolving" belief systems may house contradictory beliefs that get "activated, depending on the context, to interpret incoming information" (p. 230). In other words, it is entirely possible for FYC instructors to hold contradictory language ideologies that only get

expressed based on the specific context they are in or the situation they are responding to. This could be why, as shown in my findings and discussed in the previous discussion chapter subsection, teachers may engage in disparate practices regarding certain student populations—such as portraying the ethics of "correcting" AAE-users in a completely different light than the ethics of "correcting" EAL students. Furthermore, Phipps & Borg (2009) found that beliefs grounded in teachers' actual personal experiences may have been more likely to exert more influence on their practices in grammar and language classrooms. Conversely, when instructors didn't have first-hand knowledge of something to support a pedagogy they may have wanted to enact—such as anti-racist assessment—they were less likely to be able to actually enact that in practice: e.g. "It is challenging for me to tell what is a lack of proofread/polish and what is a grammar or convention difference based on access to previous types of training, language context, or otherwise." Additionally, even if an instructor has a belief they want to enact in their classrooms— as Mao & Crosthwaite (2019) show—even the perception of institutional constraints may prevent them from doing so, as shown in James's comment below:

> How do we decide what our goals are for our classroom? …What [does the English department stand] for? Because it would be easier to fit [diversity, equity, and inclusion] in if you understood what it was supposed to fit into….We'll talk a big game about wanting more voices in the academy, but also all we really do is duplicate whatever it is we feel authorized to sound like.

In other words, the work of more critical language pedagogies being perceived as too complicated for instructors to enact within their institution— "What [does the English department stand] for?"— or being something instructors don't have personal experience with— "all we really do is duplicate whatever it is we feel authorized to sound like"—may be in part why White instructors—such as those seen in Davila's (2012) study —often choose instead to make deficit connections between race and language when examining student papers.

While it may be tempting—for me, as a White instructor especially— to lay the "blame"

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for this lack of follow through entirely on institutional policies and a lack of departmental guidance, as Inoue (2015) notes, a White habitus of assessment is partially made up and sustained by the "people" within these systems as well—instructors included. As Aull (2023) identifies through noting the challenges instructors face in enacting desires for linguistic justice consistently through their assessment practices, instructors often don't know how to translate their ideal practices of antiracism into actual assessment. Regardless of the source for this lack of knowledge, a big reason for this challenge may be because White instructors are prioritizing their own comfort over their students' rights to their language varieties by not being willing to engage their students in explicit conversations about race and their—as well as academia's more broadly—connections to White supremacy. While this is troubling on its own, this lack of transparency becomes more so disturbing when present within classrooms/institutions that heavily rely on student and instructor cooperative, negotiated forms of assessment, as most of the instructors in this project did.

A perfect example of why I connect and problematize these shifting beliefs expressed through language ideologies to the act of decontextualizing anti-racist pedagogies can be seen in Dagney's responses throughout the findings chapters. Dagney, more so than many, constantly encouraged us to consider how White supremacy was tied to our pedagogical practices, particularly through her comments in individual settings. Through both her comments about her position as a "cog" in a machine of White supremacy requiring constant introspection and her disagreement with Theresa about how inextricably linked assessment is with colonization, she fore fronted in many of her comments the kinds of reflexive practices useful for White instructors who want to consider the implications of their own whiteness. However, as I examined in my second findings chapter, her guidelines for negotiating assessments with her

students do not explicitly share this same level of critical inquiry into whiteness, and because of this failure to follow through in framing the act of cooperative assessment as a response to the White habitus for her students, her efforts to negotiate assessments—in her own words—haven't completely worked: "What I've noticed the most in my classes, at least, … when it comes to the assessments, what the students often want to see on the rubric often does reflect some standard ideas of language."

In short, instructors cannot take tools/practices meant for responding to racist practices in academia and expect them to do anything at all if they aren't always being transparent with students about why those tools are needed in the first place. Just as instructors' language ideologies shifted when moving into different contexts—e.g. between discussing AAE and EAL students and individual and group sessions—students expressed beliefs will also shift. Sure, without naming the White habitus you may be able to get students onboard with ideas about language diversity in a shallow diversity/additive ideological perspective—garnering uncritical reactions, particularly from linguistically privileged students, such as Dexter's point about "students who don't have underprivileged dialects" missing the anti-racist nature of these conversations in sometimes believing that their "casual White speak" faces the same degree of linguistic oppression as varieties like AAE. However, in moving students from talking about how an author utilizes a non-SAE variety in a class reading to attempting to co-create assessments with you, what do you think will happen? What previously held beliefs regarding language diversity in readings will be seen by them as (in)compatible in this assessment discussion? How might a White teacher's hesitation to address White supremacy in a PWI classroom's assessment be read by students as an endorsement of White supremacy? In such a situation, White, WME-using students will likely fail to recognize and push back on WSLI in

these conversations, thus meaning that any anti-racist efforts in those negotiations will more than likely not fall onto the non-SAE-using—likely students of color—in the classroom. Anti-racism is not a checklist and discussions of WSLI cannot be a one-off conversation with our students. White, WME-using instructors' bodies and language will *always* be read by students as an endorsement of WSLI unless otherwise meaningfully and continually pushed back on (see Inoue, 2019b). Just as we return throughout the semester to assess students' knowledge of concepts critical to our classrooms, so too must we throughout the semester return to explicit conversations with our students to identify WSLI in our classrooms and move to correct them.

6.3.3 The "Appropriate" Inclusion of Non-SAE Challenge

While code-switching pedagogies—more aptly labeled by Lu and Horner (2013) as "code segregation" pedagogies (p. 599)—based on how (in)appropriate certain varieties are in certain contexts (e.g. work and school) may be written off by portions of research in and outside of writing studies as obviously problematic to varying degrees (Flores & Rosa, 2015; Young, 2010), it is still a practice often enacted and justified by White teachers as necessary for their non-SAE-using students of color to successfully navigate the world (Daniels, 2018). Seriously, just banish the words in/appropriate from your language vocabulary and—if you are a White, WME-using individual—try to empathize for a moment with the students whose instructors patronizingly tell them that their language variety *both* has value—you know, like at their home—*but that variety just doesn't work here or anywhere that "really matters*:" a pretty hypocritical position to take, right? However, in examining both how participants assigned genres as well as how they discussed voice, echoes of code-switching-types of appropriacy arguments surfaced, in often more subtle but equally problematic ways. As such, this section examines the challenges related to how instructors often implicitly positioned for students non-

SAE varieties as being limited through voice, genre, and grammar (but not necessarily rhetoric) to certain contexts, in ways that SAE was not. In making this connection, I aim to show how White instructors may, through their biases toward WSLI, both encourage deficit mindsets in their students about non-SAE varieties and encourage SAE-using students to be less critical and curious about the ways in which they language.

> I think that, you know, one, one of the catches about writing studies is that writing studies is expected to provide guidance. We're expected to provide authoritative guidelines for how to use language and what's appropriate in communication, what's appropriate in rhetoric. Um, but I think a lot of us are also uncomfortable with that.

> James's comments above, from his debrief interview, gets both at how themes concerning language appropriacy were explicitly present at times in our discussions but also how instructors—particularly those with some background in writing studies—were to varying degrees aware of the racist-ends to which appropriacy arguments are used: "Um, but I think a lot of us are also uncomfortable with that." While some instructors, e.g. Theresa's comments about "tools of power," framed conversations about appropriacy around a a code-switching, additive perspective— "the more tools one has to navigate those different contexts, the more access to the world one has"—I argue that far more frequently instructors more subtly engaged in appropriacy arguments regarding non-SAE through genre and voice constraints. To illustrate how this pattern appeared across my data, I highlight a few observations noted in my findings chapters.

- Although readings, policies, and assignments discussing language diversity were present in most instructors' classes, they were often infrequently utilized, typically only appearing once, early on in the course.
    - Readings about language diversity most commonly were written in only SAE/WME.
    - Instances of non-SAE varieties in readings were most often only included as examples of non-SAE inserted into SAE readings.
- Participants seemed to associate "voice" with non-SAE varieties.
    - While the presence of "voice" was often appreciated by participants, there were contexts in which participants felt a writer's voice coming through was inappropriate for the genre/audience.

In examining these findings together, these findings show a pattern of participants connecting voice to non-SAE varieties and preference for those "voices" to appear most explicitly in personal genres (e.g. literacy narratives) as an effective tool of rhetorical engagement. While I defined "voice" in my analysis of the data as an amalgamation of specific features (e.g. rhetorical questions, hedging, etc.) more often than not "voice" is a deeply flawed linguistic concept (Shapiro, 2022, p. 306) and an ambiguous rhetorical device (Elbow, 1994). Anecdotally, I have never known any two writing instructors to have the same understanding of voice, and yet we still often include it as a rubric category and a central aspect of one's writing development—e.g. "You have to find your voice!"—why? As Shapiro (2022) suggests, a more critical approach to language should work less to subject students to the idea of authenticity in voice and instead emphasize linguistic knowledge and rhetorical effects of different language choices (p. 306). In other words, if *voice* in your classroom means students varying sentence lengths, utilizing personal anecdotes, inclusion/exclusion of certain pronouns, or having a high average syllable count, at the very least make those metrics transparent for students. I can't promise your interpretation won't be enacting WSLI and needing further problematizing, but at the very least you'd be actually clarifying for your students your standards.

My findings support these assertions that voice is inconsistently utilized by instructors, but what they also show is that—in the contexts of the narrative-style essays they examined—there were identifiable features of voice such as authorial self-mention that participants did appreciate. This suggests that in breaking down the concept of voice, particularly as it is perceived to be aligned specifically/solely with non-SAE varieties, instructors and students might identify opportunities for more critically engaging (as Shapiro suggested) with voice to the benefit of their writing. This is significantly important as—according to Eckert (2003)—

individual's perceptions of authenticity in voice and language are subject to significant biases. In determining a voice (i.e. often signifying non-SAE by participants in this project) as real or authentic, instructors may force non-SAE using students in their classrooms to perform language difference in undefined as well as potentially stereotypical and harmful ways: e.g. "Vershawn [Young's], uh, you know, super sassy queer Black man, uh, voice." Instead of relying on our—unexplainable to students—variety of biases to help us determine when/if a voice sounds "authentic" in writing, we can instead talk with students more directly about what aspects of their writing we appreciate and (in turn) we can more easily identify what specific features of any given student's writing may be triggering our own internalized biases—both in favoring or disliking the student's writing.

However, this is where I need to complicate these suggestions further. As discussed in the findings, participants not only seemed to connect voice to non-SAE writing, but they also seemed to connect *positive* aspects of voice in non-SAE writing both with certain, more personal genres and rhetorical—but not linguistic—SAE-centric difference. In one activity discussing the students' essays, I had instructors examine two papers—one in AAE and the other in SAE. I noted in my first findings chapter how instructors were critical of the AAE paper in individual settings but seemed to view the paper much more positively in our group conversations. While I discussed this in my findings as potentially being related to how White talk was working in individual versus group language ideologies, I do want to draw another distinction here as well. In returning to Table IV.9 in the first findings chapter, readers may have noticed how instructors' perceptions of rhetorical features associated with the AAE paper (see Table IV.7) shifted from negative to positive between the two settings. However, what readers may have also observed was how the same shift was *not* noted in participants' discussing the grammatical features of

AAE present in that paper. Individually, participants described the paper as "rushed and informal" and "us[ing] some terms [they] tell [their students] are not well received." When in our group, however, instructors did not seem interested in commenting on any aspect of grammar regarding the AAE paper.

While this lack of commenting could be attributed as a consequence of their general lack of knowledge regarding how to talk about language, something I explored in depth in my findings, in examining Table IV.10—a sampling of their individual versus group comments on the SAE paper—readers can see that participants didn't seem to have an issue expressing individually or in the group attitudes about the grammar in the SAE paper, even if the observations were relatively shallow: "[The SAE paper] sounds like a person who has been well trained to sound like they think a teacher wants them to sound…" As reiterated in my "Do we really have to talk about race…?" challenge, I identified a few possibilities as to why participants' ideologies may have shifted between contexts. Regardless, however, of whether it was a combination of all of these suggested possibilities or simply participants wanting to be more perceived as anti-racist or genuinely changing their beliefs about language, avoiding commenting on the grammar of the AAE paper in the group setting while not doing the same for the SAE paper to me indicates a preference for rhetorical non-SAE features but not grammatical. While the instructors here indicated appreciation of the narrative-sequencing and field dependency as a group, they did not extend the same appreciation (genuine or performative) to the grammar, which they only described in negative terms individually. As such, I would argue that instructors are implicitly, through selectively commenting, making another kind of appropriacy argument: positioning rhetorical features of a variety like AAE as appropriate (at least in the context observed) but grammatical features of AAE as never appropriate.

While then participants had positive perceptions of various features of voice, aligning with rhetorical methods of AAE that have been shown in previous studies to be appreciated by instructors more so than grammatical features (Smitherman, 1994), these positive aspects of voice also seemed very limited to "personal" writing: e.g. "This is bringing relevance to the reading and what the student and all of the people they're thinking of can take away from the experience of this text…." These personal, narrative assignments often required students to share through story-telling a moment or series of moments related to the theme in question. Frequently these assignments were literacy narratives that often positioned students' purpose as reflecting on their (implicitly deficit or at least lacking) current languaging and the language expectations of the academy. Besides potentially fostering anxieties in students about the need to perform difference (i.e. non-SAE) in these writing tasks, as discussed in the findings these assignments (along with readings on language diversity) were placed at the very beginning of the semester and whose themes on language diversity were not returned to in the rest of the course schedule. As such, while these assignments may be efforts by instructors to frame their courses at the beginning of the semester as a place for linguistic curiosity and diversity, by only explicitly engaging in opportunities for students to reflect on (their) language identities and experience conversations about language diversity through exclusively narrative-based texts, contained in one unit of the course, the effect of these assignments may be the opposite of what instructors intended: students believe the only appropriate place for their voice and their non-SAE varieties is in narratives and reflections, not "traditional" academic genres.

In response to arguments supporting code-switching as a tool for racially and linguistically minoritized communities to navigate White supremacist systems, Baker-Bell (2022) in a talk at University of Connecticut said that all appropriacy arguments do "is [show]

students how to be on the frontlines of white supremacist language practices that will reinforce their oppression." Even if an instructor attempts to take a diversity/additive approach to framing appropriacy arguments with their non-SAE-using students—as opposed to a deficit or monoglossic ideology—the additive approach still "places the brunt of the responsibility on [non-SAE-using] students to mimic the linguistic practices of the white speaking subject while reifying the white listening subject's racialization of these students' linguistic practices" (Flores & Rosa, 2015, p. 156). Furthermore, as Alim and Smitherman (2012) discuss, Barack Obama's careful navigation of code-switching in the run-up to his first presidential election didn't protect him from racist attacks directed toward him via insults about his language. Captured on video, his casual interaction with a Black restaurant employee, in saying, "Nah, we straight" (illustrating stigmatized pronunciations as well as slang associated with AAE and copula absence) was used as an attack on his intellect and character. In other words, regardless of whether the instructor insists on a deficit or diversity perspective, non-SAE-using students are still framed as needing to catch up to their White, WME-using peers, and the White, WME-using students' language practices are seen as aracialized and appropriate in all contexts/genres. Given the histories of our institutions and the ways in which White supremacy is so intertwined within them, if writing teachers start drawing *any* lines of appropriacy around which varieties are acceptable/unacceptable in their classrooms, every instance of non-SAE language will be justified as deficit and every instance of SAE language will be perceived as neutral or beneficial.

The significant amount of language misinformation, characterized by Aull (2023) as "the water we're swimming in challenge," students, instructors, and institutions possess and validate will not go away if instructors don't more critically interrogate how their language biases are functioning within amorphous concepts such as voice or genres such as the narratives to enact

WSLI. The challenge of "appropriate" presentations of non-SAE is not just one of representation (although that is, as evidenced by this project, additionally a significant aspect) but also one of context. If all we do is present to our students, even in "positive" ways, non-SAE varieties and/or language diversity as being applicable to certain genres/audiences—while not doing the same with SAE—what other lesson can we expect our students to take away from our classes? How can we believe that our students—particularly our non-SAE-using students—will buy for a minute our grandiose, but frustratingly vague and limited, gestures toward language diversity? In considering these challenges, writing instructors then have two broad directions into which they can take there language pedagogies: they can implicitly or explicitly craft courses based on WSLI, which will further reinforce for many students the idea that their language(s) are unwelcome and seen as incapable of producing meaningful thoughts by gatekeepers, or instructors can acknowledge with their students the realities of how White supremacy is so intertwined with our educational and professional systems while still refusing to make our classrooms spaces that justify those evils as good, okay, or even necessary. In turning to one final challenge for discussion here, I move to examine the methodological challenges in studying White instructors' language ideologies, particularly those defined as WSLI.

6.4 The Methodological Challenges in Studying White Instructors and WSLI

As discussed in my review of the literature, studying teacher beliefs is a challenging endeavor, in part due to the inconsistency with which beliefs may be held, expressed, or practiced (Lawson et al., 2019). This challenge is exponentially increased when trying to study beliefs related to race with White individuals, who—for the variety of reasons discussed in this project—may be reticent or unable to accurately express their thoughts on relevant matters (Lipsitz, 2018; McIntyre, 1997). While I foresaw a number of these challenges and designed the

project in such a way that I thought would help address, at least partially, some of these challenges—in including both individual and group conversations, spoken and written moments for sharing, and transparent guidelines for the space we co-created—I perhaps naively overestimated the degree to which we'd be able to explicitly address connections between language ideologies and race. While in the other subsections I offered extensions/recraftings of Aull's (2023) challenges, here I want to offer challenges of my own creation to offer insights based on my findings about how (un)successfully we as a group of White instructors were able to work together on this project. In doing this, I hope to briefly highlight a few patterns relevant to others who wish, through both scholarly research or pedagogical/professional development, facilitate conversations about WSLI with White instructors. Furthermore, I aim to follow the advice of Howell, Navickas, Shapiro, Shapiro, and Watson (2020) through approaching these challenges or failures by trying to be "radically honest" about our shortcomings as a group.

6.4.1 Politeness and Performativity in Conversations

As referenced throughout my findings, in noting the shifting language ideologies and challenges of addressing race explicitly, we struggled as a group to continually, directly engage with the subject-matter of this study—often seeming to use "politeness" as an excuse for our silence, avoidance, or performativity. Jennifer, in her debrief interview, addressed this challenge specifically.

> I think that I would often, we would close and I would be like, "Was I being really indirect every time I answered? Was I, or like, were we being really polite and not really touching the thing that was uncomfortable or whatever?" I guess I was just curious, like how my, um, maybe inseparable from whiteness, social anxieties or sort of like performativity worries, um, mapped onto, um, dynamics that are sort of coded in, or like part of White speech, White interaction.

While our ethic of care attempted to get us to speak/listen with intention and embrace discomfort in the space as one indicator of growth, participants needed more frequent reminders of these

goals—not just once at the beginning of each session. Jennifer's consideration of how intertwined these urges to engage in politeness and performativity are with whiteness demonstrates, I believe, the need for more hands-on facilitation in these conversations.

The benefits of a White racial affinity group is that, unlike in multiracial group conversations, White people can't depend on their peers of color to lead the conversations. However, the drawback of a White affinity space is that, as we all have been socialized to avoid talking about race at all costs and are anxious about saying the "wrong" thing, we may engage far too frequently in surface-level observations in prioritizing our own comfort. While I wanted to keep our discussions open-enough for participants to pursue their own interests, while still scaffolding conversations and providing topics/materials for each session to steer us in the right direction, I as the facilitator should have pushed past my own White-sense of politeness in trying to steer us explicitly and directly into tensions, disagreements, and moments where silence would not be an option. One method for doing this could have been to explicitly bring in instances of our individual comments (e.g. comments on the reflection forms) that seemed to conflict with what participants were sharing in the group's space. This could have been, in the discussion of the student essays for example, a way to have individuals face directly the ways in which their beliefs/ideologies were differentially being expressed and steered us toward a conversation where we unpack why that may be the case (e.g. Was it performativity in the group space?).

However, Dagney's comments below illustrate how facilitating a more assertive, tension-producing space with White instructors might require additional, careful framing—so as not to simply reproduce those same patterns of silence and performativity.

> I'm afraid that the, um, the hesitation to address the complexity of [White supremacy and anti-racist pedagogies] and our complicity in it, I'm afraid that that might be causing a lotta people who are not already, not already in these conversations to be hesitant about participating in these conversations, and maybe that, that that, uh, not reckoning with

these complex things might be making people not wanna participate in the kind of wonderful conversations that we were having.

In other words, facilitators working within White affinity groups or conversations about race with White people might benefit from considering how to model the complexity of these conversations, instead of either allowing White instructors to engage in solely "feel-good" moments of sharing or barreling toward creating moments of tension that may oversimplify responses to the challenges of White supremacy as having simple, singular right/wrong answers (that the White people in the space may then expect to have spoon-fed to them). At the very least, *explicitly* acknowledging and addressing White supremacy in academia can serve as a starting point for conversations—we can't do anything about a problem if we just pretend it isn't there! While there clearly are wrong responses to the exigence of White supremacy in FYC—e.g. WSLI—and while the comfort of White people is not something that should be prioritized or even considered in crafting spaces for these conversations, in learning from the mistakes of this project, it may be helpful to consider at the outset of these conversations how to model the messiness of these conversations to encourage greater vulnerability from participants.

6.4.2 A Lack of Intellectual Humility and Shared Disciplinary Backgrounds

Another challenge in this space related to the disciplinary differences and overlaps between us, which—very quickly—made us realize we needed to be much more careful about framing the pedagogical beliefs we thought would be common amongst us (e.g. language diversity is an asset in FYC) and just how we were all approaching the subject-matter of the discussion (e.g. How are we even each defining terms like *language diversity*?). I link this challenge of our lack of a common disciplinary background to the challenge of maintaining intellectual humility, as I believe that often our moments of disagreement, confusion, and tension were located in each of our beliefs that our disciplines had prepared us for the "right" way to

teach writing and think about intersections between race and writing pedagogy. To illustrate this phenomenon, I highlight below an excerpt from our first session—in which I was inviting participants to ask me questions about how I designed the project and suggest paths forward— where Seth made visible for me how my disciplinary assumptions and nationality were causing me to very narrowly consider what *race* could mean in our space.

> **Seth:** I feel like there's, uh, some impulse like when you're dealing with American students to, to like transfer the, the sort of like, um, cultural categories that we have in the American context of the present, and apply them kind of wholesale to other sorts of, of context where race is very different, um, or, or gender or sexuality or whatever else. Um, and so like I, I just named down here as an example, uh, like whenever I teach Borges my students are, are pretty quick to like think about him like within this like trajectory of Latinx, um, like, like writers or, or Latinx, um, like, uh, literature. Uh, and, you know, it doesn't really account for the fact that he's like a White Argentine. Um, (laughs) and it's, it's difficult to like navigate that sort of, uh, tension in the classroom. **Um, but I'm just wondering like how, and in your own methodology, um, are you thinking about materials and how race might, might graft onto, um, that problem?**
>
> **Andrew:** Yeah. So once again just sake of transparency, um, a lot of this project is focused on the first year composition space, which is a uniquely U.S. kind of centric class. Um, but you were bringing up some really interesting questions that honestly I don't have an answer for at this moment. Um [pause], but (laughs) they are making me yeah no. I mean cause I have, I, as I've never taught a [literature class like yours], uh, most of the texts I assign are very U.S.-centric, which isn't necessarily a good thing. Um [pause], but yeah no I think that's a, a fantastic question. I think exploring the limitations, um, or kind of the U.S. kind of constructs of race, the limitations of that. And I think that would be something very much Seth that I hope you, uh, continue to think about and help us to continue to think about in this space as well.

If it isn't apparent from the multiple "ums" and pauses present in my response, I felt put on the spot by Seth's insightful question. In preparing for this project, I hadn't even thought of the fact that my understanding of race for this project and the discussions of race in the materials I brought in were all centered around U.S. contexts (e.g. the educational system, cultural events, the language varieties we were interacting with, et cetera). This was, without a doubt, a kind of an "Oh, shit" moment for me. While I did first respond by noting how this study does focus solely on FYC, which is a uniquely U.S. type of writing course, and I do admit to the group that I

didn't have an answer to the question Seth asked, I very much sidestepped Seth's desire for a more global interrogation of race by putting the onus on him to be the one to bring that angle to our conversations.

There is no doubt in my mind that my efforts to deflect in answering the question were connected to both my desire to save face in the space—after all, it was our first session, and I wanted to make a "good" impression—and a desire to reject Seth's disciplinary approach to discussing race in favor of my own, U.S.-centric approach. While participatory research doesn't necessarily imply a completely equitable dynamic between the researcher and participants, I do feel like I failed in this moment to check the limits of my own disciplinary knowledge and approach Seth's question with a greater degree of humility. I, however, don't believe I was alone in feeling these humility-related and disciplinary tensions. I say this not to downplay my own faults in the space, but rather to speak more broadly about this combination of forces as a potentially methodological problem for researchers who want to discuss WSLI—and language ideologies more broadly—with White individuals.

Throughout the sessions and in the reflection forms, participants made mention of this disciplinary gap, often relating this gap to a moment of frustration, confusion, and/or inaccessibility that—as seen in James and Lucy's comments below—was portrayed through disbelief and/or skepticism about the merits of alternative approaches.

- **Dexter:** I am wondering about how to navigate name dropping and things like that because I think many of us are coming from different disciplinary spaces…?
- **Seth:** I haven't written anything on the document, um, this, uh, sort of conversation…is like already I'm realizing like outside of my wheelhouse. Um, I'm noticing that you all have like, like, uh, ideas kind of formed about, about how this protocol should work. Um, and I'm just realizing that I, I don't necessarily engage the same sorts of questions.

- **James:** [Inoue and Poe's (2020)] ideas [about anti-racist writing assessment] are couched in highly disciplinary and privileged terminology. I suspect that, if they were translated into a less-disciplinary expression, they might just seem like common sense.

- **Lucy:** More than one person said, "I don't include course goals or we don't really approach them. I don't see them as useful for what we're, what we're doing in class. They're not meaningful for students. They're not accessible." And you know, uh, first I was like, "What? How?"

Given these challenges, facilitators and researchers in all or majority-White spaces might encourage participants to identify their own disciplinary-based assumptions and expertise, while still acknowledging that anti-racist practices require examining issues of systemic racism from every angle. Even though we returned to our co-created "Ethic of Care" to forefront the need to check disciplinary assumptions and participate with intellectual humility, it still wasn't enough. While this study was limited in time, taking place across limited sections of two semesters, *persistently* engaging and negotiating the challenges that appeared in this space together helped us begin to address this disciplinary challenge, even if it was still a challenge we didn't always overcome due to my lack of skills in facilitating. I don't, however, want to suggest here that all scholarly perspectives on White supremacy in academic language practices are equally relevant. Rather, what I am suggesting is that, unlike me, facilitators get participants to analyze and discuss how these racist norms function within all of our disciplines and classrooms in overlapping but unique ways as well. Running into disciplinary boundaries will be unavoidable, even if all participants identify under the same discipline, as English departments are wide-ranging intellectual spaces. However, in facilitating a conversation about language ideologies and pedagogical practices with something that needs to be explicitly and clearly addressed like White Supremacy, we have to find ways to bridge these gaps and acknowledge our own limitations in knowledge.

6.4.3 Othering and Distancing of White Supremacy from Oneself

While not completely dissimilar from the challenge of dealing with performativity in these kinds of spaces or from the challenge of disciplinary boundaries and humility, I differentiate this challenge from those aforementioned due to how it shifts the focus off of White individuals within the group to other—more "problematic"—White people and allows individuals to comfortably/falsely rest themselves under the label of "not *too* racist" instead of "anti-racist." With this challenge I am referring to the moves White people make to connect "worse" examples of White supremacy to other White individuals/groups in order to make their biases feel less significant and/or not in need of reflection and action. Although this is similar in nature to DiAngelo's (2018) critique of the "good/bad binary" that White people view racism through—wherein good people are not racist and bad people are, therefore, as good people themselves they can't be racist—this functions in a more nuanced, but to equal ends, way through individuals not appearing to naively position themselves as perfect and completely not-racist—a move that would be easy to disprove—but rather downplaying those aspects of oneself through fore fronting a need to critically examine other White people.

I include, below, an extended comment from one of Dagney's reflection forms to illustrate first how others in this space perceived this challenge as well.

> I don't mean to be an asshole, but I feel like I'm taking away knowledge about how instructors--myself included--are necessarily invested in talking ourselves into the innocuousness of our assessment practices…. I think there's also a danger of writing teachers--as anyone--working to absolve themselves of participation in systems of colonization. Very few people want to admit complicity in injustice because it would undermine our self-image as essentially good people doing good in the world. But I think the truth is, we are ALL complicit in injustice (though to varying degrees responsible and accountable) because injustice is baked into the literal and figurative currencies of our society. Recognizing that nothing is neutral (e.g., "we're just giving students tools; that's all" presumes the neutrality of tools and providing certain tools above others) doesn't necessarily devolve into the notion that our work is pointless or harmful or any other zero-sum conclusion.

In this response, Dagney is calling out moments in our conversations in which instructors made moves to avoid problematizing their own assessment practices in order to maintain the false narrative that our pedagogies cannot have racist effects and that we, as teachers, can't be necessarily influenced by racist biases. She's not wrong. Her inclusion of herself—through the repetition of *we* and the boosting with "ALL"—shows how she is working in this comment to push against the challenges this subsection speaks to. I don't disagree with this take. However, in making a strong assertion, such as "we are ALL complicit in injustice"—albeit to "varying degrees"—I do have to wonder how such generalizing statements can actually work to do the opposite of what I think Dagney is intending here. White supremacy is, as this dissertation and so many other texts have argued, built into the systems within which we assess and teach writing. In pointing the blame everywhere and at everyone, can specific pedagogical beliefs and practices that foster such White supremacist language norms (e.g. WSLI, single standard assessments, negative L1 transfer, etc.) get lost in broader generalizations about practices?

James, in his comment below, similarly to Dagney expressed dissatisfaction with how, at times, he perceived people in the space to be trying to assure themselves of their good intentions and anti-racist practices.

> I think for me, it was sometimes a little tough to figure out what the entry point like where my entry point was gonna be in the conversation. Um, for me, um, we had the, we had the norms that we, the discussion that we established at the beginning, um, but it still struck me occasionally as though people were trying to one up each other with their sensitivity….it came across as a bit more like humble brag (laughs). At times [it] was a little off-putting for me and made a little tough [at] times to engage. Um, so I felt like, um, at times the stories that people shared seemed a little bit more like trying to preemptively defend themselves from criticism. Um, that, that, that was the thing that held me back…

James, potentially viewing moves such as Dagney's above as "defensive," highlights an interesting tension in spaces such White affinity discussion/research groups. In such a space, Dagney's gestures toward connecting every person and every system with White supremacy can

be read as uncritical, performative, and defensive, in absolving individuals of their personal

responsibility in such systems as all are implicated and allowing her to avoid critiquing actual

practices. However, James's reaction to his perceptions of others, in being almost entirely silent

in our first few sessions as he struggled to find an entry point, can also be easily problematized

as being similar in nature to how White people—particularly White, cis-men—may avoid

contributing to discussions of race from positions of skepticism about the worthiness of such

engagements.

Both of these reactions to this space—being skeptical about the authenticity of

participants' engagement and the possibilities for challenging, not just self-validating

introspection—speak to the need for facilitators, researchers, and teachers in such spaces to work

specifically to help participants identify their individual, actual practices, beliefs, concerns,

materials, et cetera, that can help ground these conversations away from general—but not

untrue—statements about how intertwined White supremacy is in U.S. education and hopefully

preempt such conversations from devolving into self-congratulatory one-upmanship about which

White person is the most anti-racist.

Chapter 7: Implications for Pedagogy, Further Research and Activism

7.1 Suggestions for Pedagogical Practice

Anne Curzan (2014a), in summarizing views on prescriptivist and descriptivist stances on language change, talks about how "prescriptive grammar rules do matter" and should not be discounted by language scholars as "silly" (p. 173). She highlights how being able to utilize SAE can be extraordinarily important for non-SAE/WME speakers/writers and a topic of deep, personal investment for many overly-prescriptivist, SAE-using individuals. As she notes, for non-SAE/WME writers in particular, "the stakes are very real" (p.173). In closing her argument, Curzan calls for "linguistically informed prescriptivism"—explicitly, throughout this text, broadening binary good/bad understandings of prescriptivism and descriptivism, ala Cameron's (2012) *verbal hygiene*. In doing so, Curzan (2014a) envisions pedagogical environments, such as FYC, that work to find ways of "recogniz[ing] the value of a standard variety and help[ing] people master it without denigrating nonstandard varieties…." (p. 173).

I want to be clear here that while I agree with her assertion that the stakes of these conversations are high and very personal for many people—and that the binary of good/bad present in much of prescriptivist versus descriptivist conversations needs complicating—I believe her assertion that writing instructors should help students "master [SAE] without denigrating nonstandard varieties" frames these issue in ways that too generously gives instructors and institutions and easy "out" for their failures to create more anti-racist, linguistically inclusive classrooms. Similar to how SRTOL can be misinterpreted toward discriminatory ends (Gere et al., 2021), emphasizing that the foremost purpose of the writing

classroom is to enforce SAE can be interpreted as a tolerance/acceptance language ideology (Shapiro, 2022)—in which linguistic diversity is determined to be less/not relevant in academic contexts. Furthermore, limiting our ambitions to *just* not "denigrating nonstandard varieties" (Curzan, 2014a, p. 173) in the classroom would seem to be an insufficient approach to enacting the kind of linguistic justice that scholars such as April Baker-Bell (2020) have been calling for.

This approach additionally erases the possibility of contexts, inside and outside of academia and "professional" settings, in which non-SAE varieties aid individuals' many purposes. As Baker-Bell et al. (2020) remind us, regarding Black Language specifically,

> teachers STOP telling Black students that they have to "learn standard English to be successful because that's just the way it is in the real world." No, that's not just the way it is; that's anti-Black linguistic racism. Do we use this same fallacious, racist rhetoric with white students? Will using White Mainstream English prevent Black students from being judged and treated unfairly based solely on the color of their skin? Make it make sense

In other words, we need ways of talking about language with students that both give students and ourselves ways of critically—e.g.. though non-deficit terminology—investigating language *and* critically—e.g. through reflecting on our own writing goals and language ideologies—push us to interrogate how WSLI have shaped their lives and question what we believe students have to learn in our classrooms. In portraying the stakes of these conversations solely as relating to either non-SAE writers facing discrimination for their writing or hyper-prescriptivist feeling unfairly dismissed, Curzan (2014a) speaks around the elephant in the room: White supremacy as a tool of oppression. What is the cause of non-SAE writers' varieties being stigmatized? Who, both historically and now, has been able to take up the position of language prescriptivist? How are both of those questions interconnected? As Lu and Horner (2013) write, elevating SAE through a "tools of power" approach while also not explicitly acknowledging how White supremacy makes that elevation seem necessary to so many falsely claims "that students' language is the primary reason for their subordinate social, academic, and economic status, despite the plethora of

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evidence demonstrating that language difference serves primarily as a proxy to justify racial and ethnic prejudice" (p. 598).

Writing classrooms shouldn't be spaces where instructors *explicitly* preach the value of a standard variety. Students will likely already pick up on our valuing of SAE through how those in academia language and through how they've seen so many people explicitly or implicitly preach that same message, in not just every classroom but every setting/system they've interacted in (Lippi-Green, 2011). Why would they need us to further elevate SAE as a reminder of its privileged status in our classrooms? What is it we think they've forgotten? And, if we don't think it is a lesson they've forgotten, why do we feel the need to hedge our—already often mediocre at best—attempts at linguistic justice with a further qualification? Critical approaches to linguistic justice need to do more than justify the privileged status of SAE while still not denying the reality that one result of such approaches might be that a number of our non-SAE-using students may want to use the language tools we teach in our classrooms to position their writing more closely to SAE.

To state things more clearly, I believe the issue here is one of a lack of explicit framing and intent unpacked for our students: Are we framing FYC (or other writing spaces) for our students as being a site for linguistic assimilation or linguistic exploration? And, are we intending for our feedback, assignments, readings, et cetera to be used by students to *only* model what they must compose or to also provide diverse examples and tools for that exploration? As Faison (2022) says, "if a student's linguistic and rhetorical practices do not fit the white discourse habits by which they are often measured, then change the tool by which they are measured, along with the standards through which instructors can measure them" (p. 276). The difference between the approaches outlined in the questions above is that the instructor isn't

expecting students to adhere to SAE-norms and critically evaluates their own practices to create

strategies for fostering a space through specific conversations about language that encourages

students to question such norms. This is, obviously, much easier said than done. However, the

ensuing messiness, doubt, and challenges we as instructors may face in shifting toward this kind

of pedagogy is the point. The kind of work we need to do and the kind of questions we must ask

ourselves to help shift toward pedagogies of linguistic justice will help model for our students

the exact kinds of work and questions we want them to be conducting and considering.

We need pedagogies that can respond to this crisis of White supremacist language norms,

enabled by corporate and university testing tools, language misinformation, and the historical

space of FYC itself that don't further enable this crisis by only giving students the language to

talk about language *without also* framing for them the actual stakes of these conversations—e.g.

perpetuation of White supremacist language norms. In providing this to students and working

ourselves both within our departments and in other institutional spaces, we can then allow them

to decide how they want to language in and beyond our classrooms. In their (2020) essay, "This

Ain't Another Statement! This is a DEMAND for Black Linguistic Justice!" Baker-Bell,

Williams-Farrier, Jackson, Johnson, Kynard, and McMurtry identify five demands, each

supplemented with additional sub-demands, concerning how writing teachers, administrators,

and other individuals in positions of authority need to respond to anti-Black (linguistic) violence.

Those demands speak specifically to how to address White supremacy in the writing classroom,

and I believe these demands taken together with the findings of this project demonstrate the need

for pedagogies of Critical Language Awareness (CLA) situated within an anti-White habitus

framework that makes both specific language investigation and curiosities possible while placing

those pedagogical conversations explicitly for students and educators as being a response to White supremacy—specifically WSLI—in and beyond academia.

CLA generally refers to a pedagogical approach that attempts to foster an awareness of the social and political implications that language varieties have and allow students to identify, understand, and navigate language-related (and therefore also racialized) power dynamics present in the various systems that certain groups use to maintain control (Alim, 2005). As such, this would seem to be a well-established approach to enacting one form of linguistic justice within the classroom, particularly in considering the specific aims of this project to investigate whiteness in writing pedagogy. In defining CLA, Gere et al. (2021) make the connection between language, whiteness, and white racial habitus specifically.

> *Critical language awareness* is the ability to reflect on the language expectations in a given context or of a given audience and make thoughtful, informed language choices. This awareness is based on an understanding of how language is systemic, varied, and continually changing. It also acknowledges that Standardized English has been codified as the language variety of formal, educated contexts through a standardization process that historically has privileged white middle- and upper-class speakers and writers (p. 395).

While Gere et al. (2021) urge compositionists to move the field's antiracist efforts forward by creating publications, policies, and histories of the field through communal revisions that center CLA and social justice in a process they refer to as, "justicing," pedagogies like CLA that attempt to explicitly examine language ideologies are not a new approach to the writing classroom. Clark and Ivanič (1999) note, "The concept 'Critical Language Awareness' grew out of two developments in the 1980s in Britain: the Language Awareness movement and Critical Discourse Analysis (CDA) as an approach to the study of language" (p. 63). And, as Wallace (2018) describes, continued efforts to push educators toward more language-informed approaches only grew in popularity in the 1990's, as educators sought to inject into

conversations of language awareness a "sharper socio-political relevance" to the material (p.

132).

With any CLA pedagogical approach, "Awareness needs to be turned into action" (Janks & Ivanič, 1992, p. 305). An instructor simply increasing their awareness or reflecting on their language biases isn't enough by itself; those important and ongoing processes need to result in pedagogical action. However, as Shapiro (2022) notes, "scholarly conversation that promotes radical thinking about language often becomes much more pragmatic when it turns to questions about writing pedagogy" (p. 10). In other words, instructors enacting CLA-approaches need to be mindful of challenges such as Aull's (2023) "in theory but not assessment," which lead to instructors' efforts to engage in linguistic justice through critical language practices failing at these moments of "practical" tension. However, there are numerous resources to help instructors carry out these intentions in their practices: Clark and Ivanič (1999) assert three "pedagogical principles" that are important to all sites of academic CLA-based inquiries: socially situated within the departments to which the members belong, available not just to those for whom English is another language, and based on a critical questioning approach to language (p. 66). Gere et al. (2021) additionally suggest classroom actions—and model policy revisions as well— that may include practices such as reading and analyzing diverse language varieties, reflecting on language choices and identity, and examining language change and grammars. Shapiro (2022) provides numerous classroom examples of CLA activities throughout her text—especially in "Part III"— that could be easily adapted for a variety of FYC classrooms. Inoue and Poe (2020) have created a concise guide for reflecting on and making changes to assessment practices and course materials to push back on the White habitus. Baker-Bell et al. (2020) provide numerous examples of re-shaping classroom practices and policies in response to anti-Black (linguistic)

racism. Furthermore, Aull (2020) demonstrates numerous patterns in undergraduate student writing, utilizing accessible language terminology in describing said patterns, that instructors and students can take up in investigating how they and their institution language, and Aull (2023) also demonstrates specific strategies (e.g. course policies and discussing registers) for forefronting connections to language in writing courses.

While then the "how to" of designing CLA-based pedagogical materials may be unfamiliar, challenging, and a bit scary for instructors, there are numerous "practical" resources—such as those identified above—to assist in this process. While an emphasis on CLA may greatly change how some instructors need to approach their classrooms, making the move to foster explicit practices that connect race and language through critical practices in FYC should not be framed around a language of instructor comfort. It shouldn't matter whether or not instructors are comfortable talking about and navigating language critically in their own classrooms. We are already and always are sending messages to our students about language and race. As Alim et al. (2016) write, "we are constantly orienting to race while at the same time denying [it]." To frame the conversation around instructors' comfort or perceived inabilities to critically examine their own language ideologies is to falsely envision our current classrooms as neutral spaces while selfishly distracting from the White supremacy being enacted therein.

7.2.1 An Example of CLA

As Gere et al. (2021) write, "there is a need for language-level study to play a more central role in writing education, shaping instruction, assessment, and—crucially—policy" (p. 391). CLA approaches to writing pedagogy can be one beneficial response to this need, particularly in working to explicitly, persistently, and specifically address the problems of WSLI in FYC—and academia more broadly. As Weaver (2020) found, instructors need to frequently

address harmful language ideologies to keep them from dominating classroom spaces. In failing to do so, instructors enactments of CLA may result in minor "tinker[ing] at the edges of their curriculum without truly changing the core of what they do" (Shapiro, 2022, pp. 12-13)—such as how instructors in this project utilized negotiated forms of assessment often without adequately supporting those conversations.

Below, I briefly walk through one example (see Figure VII.1) of how to enact CLA-based responses to WSLI, specifically connecting how this project might push back on the four manifestations of WSLI that I identified in the previous chapter—minimization of connection between language and race, occlusion and diffusion of responsibility for addressing White supremacy, self/White-centered idealistic versus "real world" distinction, and White/SAE-centric constructs of linguistic diversity. Specifically, I do so in the creation of a unit on "voice" in writing, a frequently used, problematic term I discussed in my findings. I offer this not as a perfect example or a model of what CLA and pushing back on WSLI *must* look like. Rather, I— as an instructor who has struggled to adapt his pedagogies in more linguistically just ways—offer this as a model for others to critique and build off of in further improvements. Below I will very briefly walk through how I see it pushing back on the aforementioned common enactments of WSLI in a FYC classroom.

- *Naming White supremacy and how it works through language in academia, explicitly using the term White supremacy.*
    - Throughout the unit I have explicitly named White supremacy in linking oppressive language practices with racist motivations and systems. I do this to avoid minimizing connections between language and race, in particular connections to be drawn between SAE and whiteness. This is especially present in my definition of "Academic" Writing, which I situate as SAE that has been falsely elevated for the purposes of White supremacy. In doing so explicitly at the start of the course, I want to make it clear (in no uncertain terms) what conversations about language diversity and oppression really are about. While this component also helps avoid the "occlusion and diffusion of responsibility"

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enactment of WSLI, I do also see the following aspects of this assignment engaging that issue as well.

- *Confronting WSLI throughout the course in developing the syllabus, the reading list, in presenting to students from the first to the last day through each assessment, and in the course goals themselves.*
    - All throughout the project (in both presenting terminology, the act of assessment, and the schedule itself) attempted to keep critical examinations of language ideologies and subordination present in all of the discussions and through a variety of genres (i.e. not just narratives students read or compose). Even on days such as the class in which we discuss multimodality and the "Visualization of Corpus Data," I include in that discussion an examination of how in presenting language data we need to be mindful of how we portray language users/communities. In doing this, I am attempting to push back on the notion that class discussions/activities can either engage in conversations about language diversity *or* practice relevant writing practices. In this way, I hope to illustrate how labeling conversations on language diversity as not being relevant to "the real world" is a false statement.

- *Identifying and sharing the language to talk specifically about language and all varieties with non-deficit terminology.*
    - Besides framing this unit around a genre that critically investigates language practices (corpus analysis), I wanted to ensure that in addressing the concept of voice—and all the ambiguous and, at times, problematic concepts people associate with it—that the information I was presenting was helping students to specifically articulate how they were identifying voice. In doing so, it may provide students with the specifics necessary to push back on language misinformation that circulates from terminological miscommunications between individuals. Specifically by allowing students to pursue analyses of materials of their own choosing to unpack this challenging to define term, I aim to help students more descriptively understand voice and enable them to explore and enact broader constructs of linguistic diversity (beyond the typical patterns identified in this project).

Figure VII.1. Corpus Analysis Unit and CLA Example

A Corpus Analysis of Voice: **Overview of Unit**

This unit will explore the concept of "voice" in academic writing—yours and/or others. To do so we will primarily be relying on a method of analysis referred to as "Corpus Analysis." As such, you will spend this unit both building and examining collections of yours or others writing to examine and compare how voice may differ between individuals, between Englishes, between genres, between disciplines, and between other areas of interest to you. You will have a chance to investigate—qualitatively and quantitatively—your questions about language and "voice" specifically in writing. Below I am providing you with both important terminology—which we will introduce throughout this unit—as well as the prompt, assessment tool, and schedule itself.

A Note on "Academic" Writing in this Class

As discussed on our first day, language is a part of our identity and the ways we language can be linked to race, class, gender, (dis)ability, sexuality, and every other aspect of who we are. With that in mind, writing described as "academic," "professional," or even "good" in a U.S. college context typically refers to a language variety called Standardized American English (SAE). This is a variety associated with White, typically middle and upper-class, individuals. While SAE is often thought of as "correct" writing, this is a false notion. SAE is not more or less grammatically correct, appropriate, beneficial, capable, et cetera than other language varieties.

- The notion that SAE is superior to other varieties—such as African-American English— is a function of White supremacy.
- The idea that only SAE is acceptable within academic or professional spaces, an idea you have been both explicitly and implicitly told, is also an example of White supremacy.
- There are many systems and individuals (e.g. standardized tests, classroom policies, workplace norms and hiring practices, professors/teachers) that will insist upon the superiority of SAE—without often being able to talk about any aspect of language specifically or justify these assertions—and attempt to impose consequences on those who they perceive not to be utilizing SAE. This is another example of White supremacy.

Regardless of how you feel about the statements above right now, as we explore language this semester, I want you to investigate how and where your beliefs about language—how it does/should function or what language practices are important/necessary—align with or differentiate themselves from perspectives like those in the sub-points above. To help with this, we will often talk about *prescriptive* and *descriptive* ways of approaching conversations about language.

Broadly speaking, *prescriptivism* can be understood as rule-enforcing ways of looking at language (e.g. This is right/wrong or correct/incorrect); *descriptivism*, however, refers to the act of describing language, in non-deficit terms (e.g. This author uses double-negation in their writing). While prescriptivist notions about language are often problematic, they can actually also be used for inclusive purposes (e.g. insistence on gender-neutral language in job titles such as *firefighter* instead of *fireman*). With that in mind, one language prescription I have for this space is that *we will not penalize each other in this space for choosing to use or move-between SAE and non-SAE varieties of English in any assignment*. Additionally, I hope that we will all understand that just as we each may language differently, we each may also have different goals for ourselves and our languaging in being in this space.

Whatever your goals for yourself and your writing is in this space, know that one goal I have for each of us is that we push back on the plethora of—often racist, classist, xenophobic—language misinformation that circulates both in public discourse and in writing classrooms themselves. In doing so, I hope this generates for us more informed, non-deficit ways to talk about our own and others' writing—i.e. critical *descriptive* ways.

Important Unit Terminology

Voice - as a concept in writing, voice can be very challenging to define and is often used in ambiguous ways. As such, our definition of voice will be supplemented with specific features of voice we will be examining in this unit. With that in mind, voice can be broadly defined as, "the amalgamative effect of the use of discursive and non-discursive features language users choose, deliberately or otherwise, from socially available yet ever-changing repertoires…" (Matsuda, 2001).
- *Features of Voice* - While this list may seem overwhelming, we will gradually over this course of this unit further define each of these terms, see additional examples of each feature, and practice identifying them for your project.
  - Attitude Markers - terms used in language to express the author's attitude about certain topics.
    - *Regretfully*, I had to turn down the invitation.
  - Authorial self-mention - direct acknowledgment of the author (i.e. you in your writing!).
    - As *I* have argued throughout this text,...
  - Boosters - ways of accentuating statements (i.e. "boosting" them)
    - Ex: I *really* like that movie!
  - Central point articulation - the reiteration of the "central point" (e.g. main argument) of the writing.
    - Ex: Restating your thesis in concluding.

- ○ Directives - order/commands/calls-to-action that writers give to their readers.
    - ■ As my study shows, *people must lobby their congressperson for increased access to…*
- ○ Hedges - ways of qualifying statements to downplay some aspect.
    - ■ Ex: In *a few* cases, studies found that…
- ○ Personal aside - using personal, anecdotal evidence to supplement a point or provide further relevance to the topic at hand.
    - ■ People need to reduce their water consumption, *something I have done through limiting my showertime*, in order to preserve our water supplies for the future.
- ○ Reader reference - direct acknowledgement of the reader.
    - ■ Ex: Have *you* ever been in a situation where…?
- ○ Rhetorical questions - a question that doesn't expect an answer, instead used in writing as a way to set-up or transition to a point.
    - ■ Ex: *Why is it that bees are disappearing more frequently?* According to Anderson (2020), bees may be disappearing because…
- ○ Shared knowledge - knowledge/perspectives/experiences the author assumes they and the reader(s) share in common.
    - ■ *We all know* how hard it can be to follow a healthy diet.

Corpus Analysis - As you may have guessed from the word *corpus*, a corpus simply refers to a body of texts. As such, a corpus analysis is an analysis of the presence (or absence) of certain terminology and language patterns within a given "body of texts." The most common method of conducting a corpus analysis is through the use of specific software and digital corpora—the plural of corpus!—to help facilitate the speed of the analysis. In compiling a corpus, people typically choose to focus on a specific category of texts that all share one or more similar themes (e.g. a corpus of undergraduate writing within the English department of one university, a corpus of tweets from a specific population and time period, a corpus of scripts from a certain television show, et cetera). Corpora can even be created, after transcribing, of spoken language as well!

What corpora can be really helpful in analyzing is questions about the presence or absence of certain word (e.g. How often are first-person pronouns used in this academic field?), the contexts in which certain terms/phrases appear, (e.g. What kinds of words typically appear near expletives in this corpus of social media posts?), and you can even compare across corpora if you'd like (e.g. What statistically significant differences in word frequencies can I find between these two corpora of speakers of different language varieties?). These are just a few suggestions to get you started, as there is so much about language you can investigate with this method.

- ● *Corpus Terminology*
    - ○ Representivity - this refers to how (and how not) representative a corpus is to your area of interest. The more representative your corpus is, the more accurately your corpus will be able to address your research questions. If, for example, you were

interested in the communication patterns of undergraduate students on *Instagram* at a particular university, you would want to build your corpus out of *that* community's Instagram posts and not one out of Instagram users more broadly.

- ○ Word Frequency - this refers to how (in)frequent certain terms are in a corpus.
- ○ Word Types/Tokens - *tokens* refers to the word count of an entire corpus; *types* refers to the number of different words in a corpus.
  - ■ Ex: The sentence, "I was late because I was asleep." has 7 word tokens but only 5 word types (repetition of *I* and *was*).
- ○ Collocates - refers to the words more likely to appear around a target term.
- ○ Concordance - refers to the contexts in which specific terms appear, allowing one to see not just the frequency of the word but how it is used.

Assignment Prompt

Corpus Analysis of Voice in Writing

In this unit, we are going to construct and then analyze a corpus of texts that are representative of how voice is used in either your writing or a specific community. As a part of this project, we will also engage in multimodal writing through constructing visual representations of our data in order to present an argument about what writing looks like in the corpora we examine. We will spend time together unpacking what corpora are and the kinds of language questions they can be helpful in answering.

As you move forward with this project, you will need to think carefully about how to select or create a corpus and the implications of such a choice for your project. I have provided you all with multiple options below depending on the kinds of texts/communities you want to explore in your corpus. It is important to remember that the arguments we end up presenting must be evidenced in the data from our corpora.

Additionally, as a part of this project, you will be required to present your initial visualization of your data (i.e. two tables and/or graphs) to a small group of your classmates. Each individual will be given 15 minutes to present to your small group (peer-review style), and your classmates will provide you with their initial impressions of your data.

Selecting a Corpus

MICUSP, MICASE, COCA[27]*, NGRAMS* are just a few of the preexisting corpora you can use to analyze others' writing. However, if you would like to build your own corpus (one that would be of appropriate scope for the length of time we have for this project) to analyze your own writing or have more control over what goes into the corpus, you can use the free software *AntConc* or *LancsBox*. Take your time in selecting a corpus. As you consider the kinds of questions you are interested in answering in this project, spend some time looking at each of these corpora to see what is possible. You may have questions you are curious about that are too large to be answered in the scope of this project; looking to see what these corpora can offer may help you to consider the limitations and craft a stronger project.

Project Proposal

1. Based on our conversations this semester and in this unit in particular, what language interests do you have that you feel may be relevant to this project?
   a. In what ways might you connect those interests to the concept of voice?
2. Please phrase the interest(s) you identified above as a specific research question or questions.
3. Based on the research question(s) you created in your previous response, will you be choosing a pre-existing corpus or will you need to create your own?
   a. *[If choosing a pre-existing corpus]* Which corpus will you choose? How is this corpus representative of individuals relevant to the research questions you've identified?
   b. *[If creating your own corpus with AntConc/LancsBox]* What texts will you use to build your corpus and how will you ethically obtain them? How will these texts be representative of individuals relevant to the research questions you've identified?
4. What specific words or phrases will you be searching for in your corpus? Please make a list of them here.
   a. Why are you focusing on these words or phrases?

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[27] Requires registering (free and takes only a few minutes). Also gives access to other corpora like the Wikipedia corpus, Movie corpus, and others. You are limited to 50 searches in a 24 hour period.

b. How will those words or phrases help you identify the features of voice from this unit?

5. Which two language categories (Overall word frequencies, Word collocates, Word concordance Word usage over time, Comparing/Contrasting word usage by specific subgroup or genre) will you be focusing examining voice with in this project?

a. How do these connect back to your research question(s)?

6. Which four features of voice (Attitude Markers, Authorial self-mention, Boosters, Central point articulation, Directives, Hedges, Personal aside, Reader reference, Rhetorical questions, Shared knowledge) will you be focusing on in this project?

a. What steps will you take to ensure the accuracy of your identification of these features? For example, if you are interested in rhetorical questions as a feature of voice, how will you determine if a question in your corpus is rhetorical or not?

7. What questions or concerns do you have about completing this project?

Assessment

Requirements (Yes/No)[28]
1. Completed the project proposal and attended your conference with me to discuss the proposal.
2. Analysis is between 1,600 and 2,000 words in length.
3. Your introduction provides the reader with a research question(s) that is relevant to your corpus and the topic of voice.
    a. Additionally, your corpus is representative of the population you are studying and can therefore respond to the research question appropriately.
4. Analysis examines voice and language by focusing on at least *two* of the following corpora categories and *four* of the following voice categories.
    a. Corpora Categories
        i. Overall word frequencies
        ii. Word collocates
        iii. Word concordance
        iv. Word usage over time
        v. Comparing/Contrasting word usage by specific subgroups or genres.

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[28] Projects that do not achieve a "Yes" for ALL of the criteria here will be sent back to the student for revision and resubmission. In order to pass the course, you must successfully complete this assignment (and have received notification from me of your success) by our last class meeting.

      b. Voice Categories
          i. Attitude Markers
          ii. Authorial self-mention
          iii. Boosters
          iv. Central point articulation
          v. Directives
          vi. Hedges
          vii. Personal aside
          viii. Reader reference
          ix. Rhetorical questions
          x. Shared knowledge

5. At least two tables or graphs
   a. These two tables and/or graphs should help present your findings from your corpus by presenting data relevant to the features of voice and corpora categories you chose to center in response to the previous requirement.
6. At least three credible sources
   a. Everyone will cite…
      i. Our classroom text to explain what a corpus is and how you considered representivity.
      ii. any corpora you use in your project—if you created your own and used *Antconc/LancsBox*, then be sure to cite *Antconc/LancsBox*.
      iii. You will also need a text to explain any information about the community your corpus is drawing language from and who they are. This can be a peer-reviewed or non-peer-reviewed source.
   b. Additional sources, if needed, are used to support your assertions.
7. Your visual representations of your data (tables or graphs) are adequately presented and unpacked for the reader, in terms of explaining what these visuals mean for your research question(s).
   a. Analysis utilizes voice and corpora terminology to help further unpack the context and implications of these figures.
   b. Your two visualizations utilize at least two different forms (e.g. word cloud and double-tree).
8. The findings of your research speak to how voice is represented in your corpus and makes connections to implications those findings have for conversations about linguistic justice.

Unit Schedule

Language as Identity and Voice as a Contextual Practice	
Today's Tasks	● What language communities are we members of? ● What does the concept of "voice" mean to you as a member of those communities?
Readings	● Gloria Anzaldua - How to Tame a Wild Tongue ● [Viewed in class] Jamila Lyiscott - 3 Ways to Speak English
Today's Terms	● Prescriptivism/Descriptivism ● Voice ● Standardized American English/White Mainstream English

Defining Corpus Analysis	
Today's Tasks	● What is a corpus? ● What are the common features/terminology of the corpus analysis genre?
Readings	● Randi Reppen - Building a Corpus: What are the key considerations? ● [Example of corpus analysis] Laura Aull - Linguistic Markers of Stance in Early and Advanced Academic Writing
Today's Terms	See chapter excerpts from *Routledge Handbook of Corpus Linguistics* for more info. ● Corpus (Analysis) ● Word Types/Tokens ● Word Frequencies, Collocates, Concordance ● Representivity

Designing research questions and parameters for a corpus	

Today's Tasks	● How can you be sure you are "accurately" and through a non-deficit lens representing a community of language users you do or don't belong to?
	  ○ What might corpus "representivity" mean in this context?
	  ○ How can we complicate representivity, especially in thinking about analyzing language communities we may not belong to?
	● In what ways, both currently and historically, has language subordination been used as a tool of oppression and White supremacy?

Readings	● Rosina Lippi-Green - Language Subordination Chapter [From *English with an Accent*:...] ● Baker-Bell *Linguistic Justice: Black Language, Literacy, Identity, and Pedagogy* (pages 11-28 & 63-71).
Today's Terms	● Language Subordination ● Black Language/English, African-American English

No Class Today: Conferences with Me Instead	
Today's Tasks	● Submit your project proposal ahead of your conference. ● Come prepared to talk about your proposal, especially any challenges you are facing!
Readings	● None
Today's Terms	● None

Finding "Voice" in Corpora	
Today's Tasks	● How can we search for features of voice in a corpus? ○ When can we rely on keyword searches? ○ When do we need to take a closer look at the context in which certain features of voice appear?
Readings	● None today; instead, focus on *beginning* to build your corpus prior to class.
Today's Terms	● Unpacking features of voice

Examining Voice between Writers and English Varieties	
Today's Tasks	● Where do you see examples of language subordination in Lo's text? ○ How is language being used as a proxy for race in these examples? ● What is code-meshing, and why does Young argue for it as a response to code-switching? ○ How does code-meshing complicate our analysis of voice, and how can we make room to envision multiple "voices"

	for authors across language varieties and genres?
Readings	- Vershawn Young - Should Writers Use They Own English? - Adrienne Lo "'Suddenly Faced with a Chinese Village'" [From *Raciolinguistics: How Language Shapes Our Ideas about Race*]
Today's Terms	Code-meshing and Code-switching

Visualization of Corpus Data	
Today's Tasks	- How can we visualize corpus data? - How can we present our (in-progress) language data with a non-deficit mindset?
Readings	Roberts et al. - Visualization Approaches for Corpus Linguistics: Towards Visual Integration of Data-Driven Learning
Today's Terms	- Multimodality - Double-Tree - Concordance Plot - Word Clouds + More tables/figures!

Small Group Discussions of Your Data	
Today's Tasks	Presentations of Corpus Data
Readings	None
Today's Terms	Global versus Local Feedback

Submitting your Corpus Analysis	
Today's Tasks	Submit your final (for now!) corpus analysis.
Readings	None
Today's Terms	None

7.3 If All You Have Is a Hammer…

If all you have is a hammer, everything looks like a nail. If all you can talk about is how close or distant writing seems to you from SAE, all you are going to find in examining and assessing grammar and language is problems, deficits, and (in)appropriateness in your students' writing. On the flip-side, if all you can do as an instructor is offer the space of your classroom as a site for students to explore their language varieties *without also* helping them build the language necessary to pushback on WSLI in and outside of your classroom, all your students are going to find is that language diversity only works under "ideal" circumstances. As Hilberg (2022) notes, as more linguistically just approaches to writing pedagogy gain traction, critics may decry these efforts as feel-good attempts conducted by naive teachers that inadequately prepare students for future, more demanding, writing contexts (p. 207)—i.e. the "everyone nowadays gets a participation trophy" argument. This argument, in no uncertain terms, is bullshit. Engaging students in CLA approaches to discussing writing is in fact much more demanding and requires significantly greater intellectual work than simply identifying—broadly, inconsistently, and often inaccurately—whether and how a student's text is SAE or not.

In fact, it is intellectual laziness and pedagogical neglect on the part of White, WME-using writing teachers to avoid more critical approaches in favor of WSLI, as these require no investment whatsoever from these teachers in furthering their own training and knowledge of language. Instructors of FYC must be better prepared to explicitly address language with their students. As a course with historical and ongoing foundations in White supremacy, through years of the purposeful and inattentive privileging of SAE/WME, conducted primarily by White instructors, stopping the harm done to non-SAE-using students, who are primarily students of color, will take more than just "good" intentions. The most direct way of addressing this is through top-down models, in which WPAs encourage training, assessment methods, and certain

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syllabi/reading list criteria for FYC courses. As Mosher (2022) identifies, "training in the understanding of linguistic diversity" is rather infrequent in higher education (p. 170). As a result of this lack of training and anxieties about "incorrectly" engaging in linguistic justice and anti-racist efforts in their classrooms, the White instructors in this project were particularly interested in institutionally approved materials relevant to these concepts. When these instructors did perceive their department to be approving of certain materials—e.g. the Anne Curzan (2009; 2014b) texts—they seemed far more likely to make these texts foundational to their courses.

I push here for top-down, proactive measures as solely reactive and individualistic approaches to language diversity—i.e. "How do I address language diversity and deficit language ideologies with my current students this semester?"—are insufficient on their own, especially in PWIs. As Hilberg (2022) explains,

> …in addition to taking the usual measures to get to know our students at the beginning of a new semester, we need to be conscious of the students who will never set foot in our classrooms because they are systematically excluded (p. 208).

PWIs in particular cannot afford to continue to foster exclusion through a lack of proactively challenging and changing linguistic norms within their universities, departments, and individual classrooms. At the same time, however, we cannot assume that the simple presence of faculty of color and a majority racially and/or linguistically minoritized student population indicates the absence of WSLI. Linguistic oppression in academic settings is not just a problem in PWIs, as "minority-serving institutions also perpetuate linguistic racism … [in] certain policies and practices" as well (Faison, 2022, p. 272). Once again, the White habitus—that works to both assimilate students already in the space and exclude or remove those it can't-–is something that WPAs in all institutions and other leaders within relevant departments are best equipped to handle in meaningful, systemic ways.

One goal of a dissertation is to use data to answer research questions that contribute to implications and suggested practices; however, I have found and argued here that White, WME-using individuals like myself struggle with basic conversations about race and language. Why then should anyone listen to my suggestions? This isn't a pity-party by the way, I am genuinely asking the question, "Why should anyone listen to my suggestions for top-down changes?" I do genuinely believe that all instructors of FYC and their students would benefit from a CLA-approach to teaching. I believe the findings of this project that did focus only on White instructors, still speaks to broader problems with writing instruction across institutions and instructor demographics. However, just as I wanted to use my whiteness as a part of my methodology and method in this project, so to do I think I can use it here in speaking directly again to what I think White, WME-using instructors can do in their spaces to make their institutions more inclusive of linguistic diversity. Below are a few suggestions I have specifically for White instructors who want to help their institutions push back on WSLI. Specifically, these suggestions are based both on my experiences, in this project and many other spaces, talking about writing pedagogy with White instructors and from the suggestions/feedback I solicited from my participants throughout the project.

7.3.1 Ways I Think White-identifying Instructors Should Contribute

7.3.1.1 Name White Supremacy in your Institutions. I said this explicitly in the last subsection, but I will say it again here to make sure you heard me the first hundred times. Use your White privilege, and cis-male privilege if applicable, to name in meetings, classrooms, and other spaces White supremacy for what it is. Don't allow conversations about language "diversity" to abstract away from why these conversations need to happen in the first place. It is all too easy and occurs all too frequently that White individuals, particularly in PWIs, write off

their peers' of color naming of systemic racism as them being too "sensitive" (i.e. not wanting to put up with racist practices). Don't allow yourself to support such dismissals through your silence. Speak up in support of your colleagues of color and name oppressive language practices for the White supremacy that they are.

7.3.1.2 Be Vulnerable in Reckoning with the Ways Whiteness Works in your Pedagogies. Perfectionism or—perhaps better stated—a desire for the appearance of perfectionism is an aspect of White supremacy culture (Okun, 2021). For some White instructors, this may appear through them believing that if they can't incorporate language diversity work perfectly, then they shouldn't at all; it may be justified by them in believing that any attempt to engage with race is just too much of a personal "risk" to mess up—another example of White privilege seen in how we often think of ourselves as aracial and not bringing race into spaces unless we mention it explicitly. Push back against this by instead making *informed* attempts in your classroom based on the specific ways you see WSLI operating in your institutions. This is one of the things I attempted to model by including my "Voice" assignment in Appendix I; it isn't a perfect assignment—none ever are—but it is a starting point to complicate the racist ways in which I saw voice being used by instructors in my department.

7.3.1.3 Lead (White) Colleagues in Discussions and Examinations of Whiteness/WSLI. The idea that White people can only learn to not be racist by having a person of color tell them how is a learned helplessness that White people deploy to avoid having to think about race at all. I'm not, however, saying that White people shouldn't seek out conversations about race in multiracial settings or create spaces themselves for instructors of all racial and ethnic identities to participate. If that is an environment you'd find helpful, you can, for example, go to one of the likely many events your institution holds on DEIJ-topics—events

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many White people tend to avoid and think of as optional. You can't, however, use a lack of individuals of color in your department—or their lack of wanting to teach another White person how not to be racist—as an excuse to write off this work as impossible or unnecessary. There is a reason PWIs are PWIs. At the same time…

7.3.1.4 Shut the Fuck up Every Once in Awhile in Discussions About Race and Language. Winans (2010) talks about "racial literacy" as involving "critically examining and continually questioning how race and racism informs beliefs, interpretive frameworks, practices, cultures, and institutions" (p. 477). This is the kind of curious, reflective, and humble approach needed to take up my previous three recommendations for White instructors. If, however, you are wondering where the line should sit, from my perspective, between speaking and listening, let me provide a few broad examples to illustrate unproductive dialogue: You disagree with the need for language diversity; you believe students need to write "good" English; you feel kids these days are snowflakes; you feel bad about how your past pedagogies may have caused harm and want someone to forgive you; you feel attacked for being White/cis-male/monolingual/[insert other "oppressed" identity here]; you want someone to only give you a list of "practical" (i.e. things you can do in under 10 minutes) steps to ensure your class is not racist; you are upset that a colleague of Color didn't want to lead an unpaid 3-hour workshop on racism you volunteered them for; you feel the need to keep talking in a conversation about race until you've assured everyone you are totally not racist and therefore not a part of the problem. You feel students must learn language rules before they can break them. Please. Just. Shut. The. Fuck. Up[29].

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[29] If any of the examples in this subsection seem not relevant to the "well-educated" people of academia, please also shut the fuck up. These are just a few very common examples/statements I've heard from multiple instructors.

7.3.1.5 Be Uncomfortable, Sit with it, and Name for Yourself why <u>You</u> Are

Uncomfortable. Discomfort and tension are a sign of growth for privileged persons. They are an indicator that your previously assumed universal truths about language and pedagogy, what is (in)correct, and what is necessary in FYC are being complicated. Don't shy away from these feelings and don't act defensively. Instead, identify what you are feeling and name—as specifically as you can to yourself (i.e. don't try to force someone else to do this work for you)— what is making you uncomfortable and why. Is it that you are uncomfortable because the information being presented is inaccurate and actually harmful to you or others? *Or*, are *you* uncomfortable because the information being presented is highlighting how limited, personal, and biased *your* experiences and knowledge may be?

   7.3.1.6 Read. Seriously, if you care about anything in this dissertation but you haven't read texts speaking to race and/or the writing classroom (see Inoue, 2015; 2021; Inoue, Poe, Elliot 2018; Olou, 2018; Saad, 2020;) take a moment to inform yourself a bit before running to a colleague of color to help you fix your racism. Furthermore, read texts on language, as well as language and race in particular, to better inform yourself about ways to talk about language in non-deficit ways (see Alim & Smitherman, 2012; Alim, Rickford, & Ball, 2016; Aull, 2020; Baker-Bell, 2020; Cameron, 2012; Clements & Portray, 2021; Curzan, 2014a; Do & Rowan, 2022; Lippi-Green, 2011; Shapiro, 2022; Smitherman, 1977).

7.3.2 Ways Departments and Instructors Can Contribute

   This list of suggestions for White instructors is not exhaustive or even sufficient. However, what I hope the totality of this dissertation has done is illustrate how FYC is facing a crisis of White supremacist language ideologies that is being, in part, facilitated by instructors' inability to more critically discuss language with their students. Just as it wasn't enough for

instructors in this study to utilize anti-racist assessment tools without actually explicitly engaging with race, it also isn't enough for our FYC classrooms to engage with language diversity in ways that don't allow us to move beyond shallow valorizations. We need a *both/and* approach in moving forward that interrogates specific language practices and frames the exigence for those conversations as responding to White supremacist norms in academia. To do this, we need these changes to be both facilitated by those with the power to make top-down, programmatic changes and with the cooperation of instructors in those spaces, particularly White instructors who are typically reticent to engage in such endeavors.

Individual instructors can make a big impact on the students within their classrooms, but they can't control how those students get placed into their classroom, the course goals they are expected to master, the textbooks they may be required to use, or the writing requirements and classrooms their students experience afterwards. While adding a course goal or department-wide policy conveying the importance of language diversity and non-deficit language discussions is a start, it is not enough. Some may be justifiably uncomfortable with increased departmental oversight, especially contingently employed instructors and/or instructors of color working within predominantly White departments—after all, is a White, WME-monolingual WPA the best person to tell instructors of color and/or non-SAE-using instructors how to better engage with language diversity? I'm not going to try and dismiss or downplay these concerns here. I also don't want to hand-wave away these potential tensions by gesturing here to pointless platitudes about how these things will need to be ongoing conversations in the department, in which all parties are heard, respected, [insert third overused, meaningless attempt-at-humanizing buzzword here] during—presumably unpaid—meetings and working groups.

As I explained in my methods chapter, a part of the reason this study focused on only White instructors was because that is who I am—a White instructor of writing—and it is a set of identities I can speak to through both scholarship and personal experience. Now, I am not saying that people can't speak across racial, professional, gender, (dis)ability, and a whole host of other identity categories in research or otherwise, rather I want to point out here how in enacting top-down changes, those making said changes need to remind themselves of the limits of their own personal experiences and how those connect to their implicit assumptions about what a writing class should do. Regardless of how you—the reader—identify, as you are reading a dissertation, you are likely in a position in which you—just like me—have to some degree bought into WSLI and been rewarded for that buy-in. You may not want to put that "White supremacist" label on those ideologies you've uptaken, but I can assure you the icky-ness you may feel now doesn't make it any less true. However, if you are also White, your language has —as Flores and Rosa's (2015) discussion of the "white listening subject" reminds us—been rewarded further because you are perceived as White. As such, White, WME-using individuals—once again, me included—cannot understand in any *directly personal* way how the stakes of these conversations exist outside of our own classrooms, departments, and institutions. It is entirely possible for us, White, WME-using, instructors to pick up and put down our efforts at linguistic diversity when stepping into and away from our professional lives.

Therefore, as writing programs are best designed when they take the local ecology into account (Inoue, 2015), and because I am a White, WME-using individual—and individuals who look and language like me have been making the very policies/suggestions that have resulted in these very problems of White supremacy—I am reluctant to suggest specific actions to departments universally. However, departments and instructors interested in finding areas of

better addressing language diversity, tailored to their local needs, may benefit from looking in the following areas and at the following suggestions for advice on how to consider the implications of this project's findings:

- *Assessment policies* - Does your institution have basic, yet flexible standards around how to assess language in FYC in non-deficit terms? How might your institution craft such a policy that encourages students to both utilize their language varieties and engage in critical—non-penalizing—examinations of how their varieties overlap with or differentiate themselves from White supremacist academic language norms? How might those assessments also encourage students to push back on said norms through building a meta-language to talk about language?
    - *Negotiated Assessments*: If engaging in assessment negotiations/co-creations with students, you as an instructor need to be assertive about questioning the role of grammar and conventions in assessment. Help your students to push back on their initial assumptions (i.e., standard language ideologies) about what assessment standards here have to look like.
    - *Responding to Writing*: In providing feedback, don't ignore conversations about language. Ask students via feedback to reflect on their adherence to/distancing from certain "expected" usages in academia. If that feels too open-ended, have students write reflections on how they approached languaging in the assignment. Do they feel their writing is SAE or not? Why? Track for yourself, as much as you can, the kinds of language students use that you feel pressured to respond to in prescriptive ways. Where does this pressure come from and why?
- *Course descriptions* - See the work of Davila (2022) for additional suggestions/patterns to avoid, but also consider the following questions: Do the descriptions of your institution's writing courses foster, right from the beginning, connections to language and identity and linguistic curiosity? Where, in either the naming of the courses themselves or

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their descriptions, do you see undefined terminology such as *basic*, *academic*, *professional*, et cetera, describing writing that could further encourage WSLI in both students and instructors?

- ○ *Course Descriptions/Policies*: If you don't have control over the course description, think about how you might push back on or further elaborate on the topic of language in your policies. See the example assignment discussed earlier in this chapter for one suggestion to use in your own classroom.

- ○ *Initial Framing of Course*: Talk about prescriptive and descriptive ways of discussing writing in your first class. Emphasize the connections between writing, language, and identity in this first class through bringing in relevant examples of language diversity or asking students to think about how their languaging is connected to their background.

- ● *Course goals* - Do your institution's goals for **all** writing courses speak directly to valuing language diversity and define that valuing as encouraging students to utilize their Englishes in their writing as they would like? Do these goals also include critical engagement with language by both the student and the instructor?

  - ○ *Content of Goals*: How do these goals embrace or pushback on SLIs? If the content of these goals is seemingly ambiguous around language (e.g., "students will learn how to use language appropriately in academic settings"), where is their room to define and complicate what a term like *appropriately* means in that class.

  - ○ *Language in Goals*: Furthermore, consider the verbs used in any language-centric goals. How can we move away from prescriptivist-orientations in these descriptions (e.g., "Students will learn how **to utilize** writing in an academic context") to a more descriptivist implication (e.g., "Students will learn how **to explore/analyze** writing in an academic context"). Additionally, consider how the language of these goals may encourage SLIs through limiting students' imagination of audiences for their writing: e.g., "Students will learn how to

explore/analyze writing **in an academic context**" to "Students will learn how to explore/analyze writing **in a variety of contexts**."

- *Writing course requirements* - Does your institution have hierarchical structures for FYC? In other words, are certain writers (e.g. EAL students) regulated to remedial classes that function as a way of uncritically assimilating student language to SAE-norms? Does your institution force (multiple) courses onto certain students—either through specific requirements or a culture of coercion—but not others? Why?
  - *International/Multilingual Students*: How are International and EAL students treated as individuals or as one homogenous group by writing requirements? In other words, what deficit assumptions are made explicitly/implicitly about the entirety of these extremely diverse student populations?
  - *WAC*: While preparing your students to face "grumpy chemistry professors" may be a concern, how is the FYC sequence (or broader writing ecology) enabling these professors' proclivities or pushing them to think about writing more critically? Instead of waiting for students to encounter these individuals, how might writing departments be more proactive and address these conversations about writing head-on with other departments?
- *Instructor training* - What are the basic competencies your institution demands of its instructors regarding language diversity and linguistic knowledge? If you don't know the answer here—or if the answer is "not much"—where can you see room for bringing those conversations into training in mandatory ways? Efforts to train instructors about language diversity and critical language practices cannot be positioned as "optional" training/knowledge. How can institutional procedures/policies regarding training be re-written to reflect these needs?
  - *Foundational Skill*: Instructors need to know how to talk about connections between race and language in the writing classroom and the language ideologies that facilitate more or less critical conversations. If writing is a rhetorical act and a

personal process, instructors should be able to articulate to students how language within their classroom is situated within that conversation. People don't need to be perfect at this (hence the next subpoint), but they need to be able to significantly address these conversations with students.

- *Professional/Continuing Development*: Instructors should be provided praxis-based opportunities to build on their knowledge about language diversity specific to their institution's student population. Providing others/ourselves with knowledge about how to adapt/continue to revise our classroom materials will help instructors to actually enact this work, as opposed to *just* more vague suggestions/policies. This work needs to be both pro- and reactive: anticipating the needs of instructors and student populations and reacting to needs the community of instructors and students express.

- *Placement procedures* - How do students end up in your class? What are the potentially hierarchical mechanisms in place that sort students into "prepared" and "unprepared" categories, and how do those mechanisms create additional challenges for confronting deficit views on language unique to the students who were "advanced to" or "demoted to" your class?

  - *Placement as Punishment*: If your institution utilizes placement procedures for writing courses, are those placement tools used to help guide students or gatekeep? In what ways is the tool creating disparate impacts on student populations? While the distinction between guidance and gatekeeping may seem slight, the framing of its purpose for students and instructors sends a strong message about the purpose of FYC itself—to enable student writers to improve in a setting most conducive for them or to stop unworthy students from advancing?

  - *Self-placement*: While methods of self-placement are far from perfect or the only potential response to more equitable placement procedures, they at present are a generally effective and locally controlled option. They additionally can be crafted

to help provide programs and instructors with useful information about how students see their strengths and weaknesses as writers. How might your institution enable student choice to certain degrees in this process?

- **Reading list requirements** - Does your institution have a process for reviewing reading lists to help emphasize greater diversity—specifically racial and linguistic—in the readings students will encounter? Does it also take into account how genres potentially overlap with the presentation of various language varieties and authors' identities and make steps to avoid implicitly making appropriacy arguments?
  - *Author Positionality*: What is *enough* representation? What *counts* as diversifying a reading list? "So, I can't teach anything by *White men*?" These are the wrong kinds of questions to ask, as they are unnecessarily inflammatory and centering the implicit question of, "What is good enough?" Reading lists should feature a wide diversity (race, ethnicity, gender, age, and more) of authors and should be updated in FYC regularly to provide more timely advice and content for students. As you explore/revise your list, consider whose identities and what topics are being included or excluded and what your rationale is for that (see next subpoint).
  - *A Reading's Purpose*: When reflecting on the inclusion of a reading, think about your purpose for that inclusion and any patterns in your/the department's pedagogy around the relevant author identities or topics. For example, are all or the majority of the readings from author's of color in your class used to talk about race? Do you not bring up race when discussing texts from White authors? Why not? Are all of your examples of academic writing written in SAE? If you include non-SAE readings, are they all the same genre? The act of diversifying your reading list shouldn't be about counting identities and adding up numbers; rather, it should be about reflecting on the culture of inclusion and exclusion your readings create and how your own, the department's, the institution's, and/or the field's biases are at play.

- *Assignment/Activity Design* - Think about your assignments and daily activities/workshops. How frequently do they involve students talking about, reflecting on, or analyzing the language they and others use in a descriptivist way? How can you create assignments that will help students to engage with writing beyond discussing just rhetoric or broad writing strategies? Essentially, are discussions with your students around language only ever prescriptive without further discussion (e.g., "Don't do that" or "Fix word choice here")? If so, how can we have a more interesting conversation?
    - *Encourage General Awareness of Language*: Help students to build a consistent meta-awareness about the language they use in their daily life across a variety of contexts. Assign them projects in which they have to reflect on, bring in to class, and otherwise study their own writing or the (ethically sourced) writing of individuals they know or aspire to write like. When having them compare their language to others, avoid deficit-focused, contrastive approaches (e.g., "Compare your writing to an expert's and discuss how *you need to improve*"). Additionally, utilize public corpora (COCA, MICASE/MICUSP) or free corpora tools (Antconc, LancsBox) in assignments or guided class activities to help students acknowledge the diversity of writing/language preferences.
    - *Help Students Talk Specifically about Language and Power*: In helping students unpack terminology relevant to writing and language, work with students to build a class "dictionary" of terms. Have them watch Curzan's (2014b) video, discussing what makes words "real" and how words are defined in dictionaries, and build one over the semester with students that contains terminology important to the course. Besides providing yourself and students with a common vocabulary for the course, the meta-conversations that arise from deciding which terms to choose and how to define them will help to destabilize notions about language prescriptions being objective. You can also pull in and analyze examples of SLIs from marketing materials discussing grammar-checkers, AI writing tools, or style

guides. Help them consider how these tools and guides both "help" people adapt their writing and contribute to people perceiving their language as subpar. Bring in examples of intersections between politics and language (e.g., California's Proposition 227, the Oakland Ebonics Controversy, U.S. Native American Boarding Schools, English-only/Official English legislation) to show how language discrimination is used as a proxy for other forms of discrimination as well.

This type of top-down approach, besides assisting in ensuring more consistent ideological presentations of language diversity in FYC, can also be useful in addressing the significant investment in time/resources that contingently employed instructors—who teach a significant portion of FYC—may not have. With that said, what matters in the end is what is actually happening in the classroom. Revising policies, reading lists, course goals, course descriptions, et cetera is easy compared to the actual labor needed to have these conversations in the classroom. As such, we can't be complacent with efforts at cosmetic diversity. This is an opportunity for departmental authorities to step-up (if they aren't already) and provide further resources and training on these topics, and it is an opportunity for FYC instructors to do better for their linguistically marginalized students.

7.4 A Brief Conclusion

The goals of this project were numerous, but perhaps most important to me was to use this work to identify moments of tension between instructors' beliefs and stated practices and—in doing so—identify opportunities for better understanding how whiteness and White supremacy can function through writing pedagogy. While the findings of this project have responded to both the concerns of theory and praxis my research questions proposed, there are, of course, further avenues of research that my findings helped illuminate.

Moving beyond my dissertation and looking toward further research, I want to continue to pursue qualitative and mixed-methods research concerning how issues of race and language intersect and inform one another. I specifically want to examine through institutional records, classroom observations, analyses of pedagogical materials, and human-subjects research how the patterns of language ideologies identified in my previous research may map onto student outcomes in writing courses depending on instructor positionality. In expanding the work of scholars such as Davila (2012, 2016, 2022), how might a specific focus on whiteness and WSLI generate further data considering not just what instructors language ideologies may be but how they may differentially enact those ideologies depending on their perception of the students' needs (e.g., AAE-using versus EAL students)? Considering the examinations of similar language ideologies in an HBCU context (Faison, 2022), in what ways can we study how WSLI may exist and manifest across instructor (racial) positionality?

Of course I'd also like to expand my investigations beyond simply examining a handful of instructors within a writing program and only their materials. In building on research into writing assessment, writing programs, and White habitus assessment ecologies (Inoue, 2015), I'd also like to pursue questions of racialized and linguistic disparate impacts in relevant departmental policies and conduct further participatory research examining how instructor training may aid in the development of policies and practices that may be more conducive to fostering an environment of linguistic justice. This focus would extend to examining the potential for (mis)alignments between students' writing skills and goals and the expectations or enactments of courses like FYC and other, more upper-level, writing contexts. How are the goals of these courses imaging the current and future needs of their student writers? What writing constructs, and by proxy students, are being privileged through readings, assignments, and

assessments? In what ways can we identify opportunities for increased scaffolding for students as they then move between FYC and more disciplinary writing contexts?

Beyond just identifying additional areas for improvement, I'd also like to pursue more proactive work, motivated by my continued interest in PAR. One avenue for follow-up here would be to enact forms of design-based research (DBR) to help translate the findings from this project into action in a manner that considers the many pitfalls that occur between theory and practice in other methods (DBR Collective, 2003; Sandoval, 2014). As the Design-Based Research Collective (2003) notes, "[DBR] methods focus on designing and exploring the whole range of designed innovations: artifacts as well as less concrete aspects such as activity structures, institutions, scaffolds, and curricula" (pp. 5-6). This sort of implementation of DBR within participatory frameworks (typically referred to as Participatory Design Research) is often used "to disrupt or create new roles and relations to achieve transformative ends" (Bang & Vossoughi, 2016, p. 173).

In seeking additional research with implications for both theory and practice, and in considering how assessment was one of the major sources of tension/problems instructors faced, I'd also like to take up calls from researchers such as Franz et al. (2022), who have called for instructors to engage in more culturally sustaining feedback practices on student writing that takes into account racially and linguistically marginalized students rhetorical and linguistic decisions. I am currently examining a large collection of instructor comments on student writing to connect language ideologies to markers of metadiscourse—or, the ways writers signal to readers how to navigate a text using particular units of discourse— through picking up questions concerning critical language practices in the writing classroom that I posed in this project. I see work in the area of feedback as also being especially needed to further consider how institutional

efforts toward linguistic justice and anti-racist practices may discount and flatten the experiences and identities of EAL students and international students, while still also too narrowly constraining other linguistically marginalized populations. In building off scholarship on "listening subjects" (Flores and Rosa, 2015), or how individuals' racial and linguistic identities affect how they perceive the propriety of other's languaging, how do instructors and the EAL students themselves frame their impetus for being in a writing classroom? What types of "errors" (see Lippi-Green, 2011; Milroy & Milroy, 2012) do instructors and EAL students perceive in EAL writing? How do these perceptions of error contribute to how instructors may view the ethics of teaching writing to EAL students in a unique light?

In short, there are many avenues further exploration of WSLI could take my research, even in just concentrating on the context of FYC. Far too often in higher education, linguistic identity isn't considered under broader efforts toward diversity, equity, inclusion, and justice (DEIJ). Additionally, far too often efforts toward DEIJ are viewed as optional or not the responsibility of various privileged demographics. Assuming you've determinedly stuck with it and read through this dissertation (if so, congrats and my condolences), you likely can infer that this is not a stance I agree with. Given that so many institutions of higher education in the U.S. are primarily composed of White students, staff, and faculty, I want to address this stance one more time here directly with White readers. Specifically, I want to include here a, mostly unedited, reflection I wrote during the training I mentioned in the first few pages of this text that inspired this dissertation project. For a bit of context, I wrote this reflection following a tumultuous moment in the training, involving several White educators refusing to participate in conversations about anti-racist pedagogy, whiteness, and linguistic justice due to them not seeing the value of the work or relevance to the writing classroom. I originally wrote this text to help

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me gather my own thoughts on the events and how I wanted to respond to the members of the White affinity group. However, I want to share it here in concluding this dissertation to illustrate—from my own perspective, without having to cite forty other individuals—the impetus for instructors, particularly those whose bodies and languaging may be read by students as an implicit endorsement of White supremacy, for using FYC as a site for racial and linguistic justice.

7.4.1 A Closing Reflection: Why do we have to talk about race and racism in learning how to teach writing?

Why do White people have to talk about race and racism in learning how to teach? Why can't we simply agree to treat each other and our students with respect and leave it at that. To be frank, and as many people here may already know, this line of colorblind thinking comes from a place of privilege; it comes from whiteness. People like us have the privilege to take colorblind approaches to teaching that further myths of meritocracy in the classroom because our proximity to whiteness enables us to falsely distance ourselves from systems of racism and their unjust outcomes, even as that distancing furthers said racism. Only by carefully exposing ourselves, our actions, and the systems around us to the work of justice can we begin to understand how deeply rooted inequality is in education and take on some of the responsibility for changing that in and beyond our classrooms.

Now, when we talk about race we will inevitably produce discomfort for ourselves and, if not facilitated carefully, for others. This is particularly true for us as White people talking about race from a place of privilege. However, the assured presence of discomfort is not an excuse to come into a conversation on race with a blank check to cause harm. Given then the challenges of navigating comfort, particularly comfort for White people that results in maintaining White

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supremacy, and discomfort, I do want us to take a minute to complicate the role of discomfort in our conversations away from just being something that is bad or is to be avoided, especially for us as White people.

In conversations on race, there can be a rush to shut down discomfort: to silence thoughts and conversations that produce discomforting notions about the ways in which we all—as people determined by this institution to be qualified to be current/future writing educators, regardless of how we choose to identify or how others may identify us— are complicit in perpetuating White supremacy. As we reflect on moments of tension of discomfort we may have experienced in conversations such as this one, I ask us to consider the following: in what ways does avoiding these conversations due to our own discomfort allow us to avoid doing the work of dismantling White supremacy? Do we view reflecting on our proximities to whiteness and our roles in enabling White supremacy to be work that comes secondary to the "practical skills" of preparing to teach writing? Do we see this identity work as additional and optional for us—work that is to be done by other people, you know, the people who have more at stake in these conversations? These are tough questions; and yet, they are just some of the questions we need to ask ourselves in doing this work.

So, why do we need to talk about race and racism in learning how to teach? It is because doing this work is inextricably connected to the work of teaching. There is no practical teaching workbook that exists that can do this work for you. There is no set of lesson plans/curricula that can do this without you also investing yourself in this work. As White people whose privilege has afforded us the ability to opt in or out of these conversations for all of our lives, this is scary. However, each of us is capable of doing this challenging work, and I am confident that each of us wants to create an amazing and caring space for our students. So, I ask that as an educator you

engage in these challenging efforts as we all continue to do the work of naming and addressing

White supremacy in the writing classroom.

Recruitment Email

Hello all,

I am conducting research for my dissertation concerning the language ideologies—or beliefs about language usage—of first-year composition writing instructors who identify as White. This study focuses solely on White-identifying instructors (defined further in the interest form linked below) in order to have White people critically examine their own language ideologies in a space that interrogates questions of White-identity and White supremacy. While White people's voices and concerns are often centered in conversations of pedagogy, race, and whiteness, this project hopes to explore beliefs and pedagogies in a way that requires participants to meaningfully engage in introspection and vulnerability around issues related to their White identity and pedagogy.

For this stage of the project, I am seeking White-identifying writing instructors who either currently or within the 2020-2021 academic year have taught [First-Year Composition] for focus groups. These focus groups will discuss the language ideologies White instructors utilize and navigate in their classrooms. **Participation will take approximately 90 minutes over Zoom, and individuals will be compensated with a $40 Visa card.** If you are interested in participating, please fill out the interest form linked here.

If you have any questions or concerns, please let me know.
Andrew Moos
amoos@umich.edu

Appendix B

Qualifying Survey for Project

1. Racial identity is both internally and externally created and imposed (e.g. How do I identify? How do others identify me?). "White racial identity" in this study refers to 1) individuals who identify themselves as White and 2) who do not personally consider themselves to be biracial or multiracial. Based on that two-part definition and in the context of this project, do you identify as White?

   a. Yes/ No/ Other [Please Explain]

2. Are you currently teaching English 124, English 125, and/or English 126 or have taught English 124, 125, and/or 126 within the 2020-2021 academic year?

   a. Yes/ No

3. Would you be interested in participating in a 90-minute focus group over Zoom with approximately five to seven other participants to talk about White-identity, language ideologies, and writing education?

   a. Yes/ No

Appendix C

Focus Group Protocol

1. What are some of the most important writing practices for students to focus on in a first-year composition course?
2. What are some of the least important writing practices for students to focus on in a first-year composition course?
3. How do you assess writing in your first-year composition classes?
4. How do you define grammar and conventions in your class?
   a. Are grammar and conventions a part of your assessments? If so, how and to what degree? If not, why?
5. As instructors, how do you think about language diversity in the writing classroom?
   a. How have you been trained to think about language diversity?
   b. How prepared do you feel to navigate with your students conversations about power and oppression as they relate to issues of race and language diversity?

[Present "Foundational Beliefs" below for instructors to read]
1. What is your reaction to these foundational statements?
   a. [Participants are given here 3-5 minutes to reflect on statements and submit freewriting samples through google forms. After the 3-5 minutes, we will discuss their reactions.]
2. Are there examples from your classrooms of lessons, assignments, and/or assessments that in some way respond to some of the ideas present in these identified foundations?
3. What kinds of support would help you to better understand how your pedagogical practices might be revised in light of the ideals present in these foundations?

Foundational Beliefs [30]
- Language is an essential part of identity, and language diversity must be part of how we understand diversity more broadly. ... A privileged variety of language such as Standardized English is one dialect among many, often easier to identify in writing than in speech, which

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[30] Adapted from Gere et al. (2021). Communal Justicing: Writing Assessment and the Case for Critical Language Awareness. *College Composition and Communication, 72*(3), 384-412 and Inoue, A. & Poe, M. (2020). How to Stop Harming Students: An Ecological Guide to Antiracist Writing Assessment, *Composition Studies, 48*(3).

has been elevated for social, political, and economic reasons; it is not inherently superior to other dialects.

- What we think of as "good writing" is socially, culturally, and historically constructed by groups of people with particular language habits; thus, the assessment of language is political.
- While standardization of written language carries benefits—including mutual comprehensibility across contexts and large geographical areas—it also introduces hazards and hierarchies, often privileging the language practices of those already privileged.
- All writing and style conventions, composing processes, argument structures, and genre conventions are shaped by White supremacy and legacies of oppression and trauma to BIPOC (Black Indigenous People of Color).

Appendix D

White Instructor Language Ideologies Discussion Group Agenda

Session One	Exploring Positionalities and Group Dynamics
Materials	- Social Identity Wheel Activity - Project Research Questions and Codebook

Activities	Welcome (3 minutes)
	    ● Overview of session
	Creation of Ethic of Care (12 minutes)
	    ● Using a summary of Okun reading as a starting point, Diangelo's advice for navigating White fragility (p. 141), and Layla Saad's description of "Circle Group" dynamics, we will talk about how we might develop guidelines for discussion as a group. This will be a continuing conversation that we will revisit throughout our time together.
	Social Identity Wheel Activity (15 minutes)
	    ● This activity will ask us to consider our identities that we think about most often and how our identities affect how we are entering the space as more than just White people.
	        ○ We will be given time to fill out our "wheels" individually. The form has labels such as "gender, ethnicity, religion, age, (dis)ability, et cetera, as well as "other identities" for us to label. We will fill out the wheel with the identities we feel are most significant to us individually in this space (that we are willing to explicitly label ourselves with in this space).
	        ○ After filling these out, we will discuss with one another our responses to the wheel activity.
	            ■ 1. Identities you think about most often
	            ■ 2. Identities you think about least often
	            ■ 3. Your own identities you would like to learn more about
	            ■ 4. Identities that have the strongest effect on how you perceive yourself

	■ 5. Identities that have the greatest effect on how others perceive you
	Reviewing Project Research Questions (20 minutes)
	● As group participation and honesty is important to this project, I want to share here the main research questions this project is interrogating with the group. This will be a way of starting a conversation about what specific aspects of language ideology they may be curious about that we can bring into our sessions for discussion.
	   ○ What questions do you all have? What is missing from these questions?
	● Additionally, I will share with you all the in-progress codebook that I created from their focus groups. I will ask that you feel free to annotate the codebook, ask questions about the codes, and make suggestions of your own.
	   ○ If you wish, I will encourage you to continue to make annotations and suggestions via the Google Doc on the codebook between sessions 1 and 2.
	Review Google Drive (5 minutes)
	● Familiarize ourselves with how to navigate and upload materials here.
	Reflection on Session (5 minutes)
	● This closing activity will utilize the reflection form included and ask us to reflect on what we learned and found challenging in the day's session.

Session Two	Exploring depictions of "Good" and "Bad" writing in FYC at UofM
Materials	● Course goals for UofM FYC; Excerpts from Curzan, Strunk & White, and Truss
Activities	*Revisiting Ethic of Care* (10 minutes) ● *Have everyone verbalize one thing they want to center for themselves in the session's discussions from the ethic of care.* *Describing "Successful" and "Unsuccessful" Constructs of Writing for FYC* ● (10 minutes) Start by reading the course goals for UofM FYC (English 125). Brainstorm features of writing that we associate with successful and unsuccessful FYC papers. Anytime we find ourselves

using language-focused or racialized terms like *grammar*, *conventions*, *genre*, *appropriacy*, *readiness*, *preparedness*, et cetera, in our explanations, let's be sure to stop and unpack those terms as a group.
- ○ What does "good" or "successful" writing look like in FYC?
- ○ What does "bad" or "unsuccessful" writing look like?
- ○ How do our understandings of "good" and "bad" writing map onto the goals for FYC?
- ○ How are these constructs of "good" or "bad" writing reinforced or pushed back on in our classrooms?
- ○ For what reasons do we believe it's important to reward or push back on these constructs?
- (15 minutes) Examine excerpts from the sources listed below to identify both the kinds of policies/statements/attitudes toward writing they want to enact in their classrooms and those they don't.
- ○ Curzan, "Says Who? Teaching and Questioning the Rules of Grammar"
- ○ Michigan's, "FYC Course Goals"
- ○ Strunk & White, "Elements of Style"
- ○ Lamott - "Shitty First Drafts"
- (15 minutes) Working together, let's outline the features of a revised student-facing policy statement/course goals that summarizes the ideas we discussed in the previous questions. As we work here together, feel free to voice areas of agreement and disagreement.
- ○ How does our document mirror or differ from the course goals from FYC at UofM? Why do we think there is overlap or disagreement?

Reflection on Session (5 minutes)
- This closing activity will utilize the reflection form included in my original prospectus that asks individuals to reflect on what they learned and found challenging in the day's session.

Session Three	Exploring Language Ideologies in Common Student Papers
Materials	● Two student papers from FYC selected in advance by me for all of us to read. Participants should

	briefly read these ahead of time and make notes of any parts of the text that they find interesting, troubling, or otherwise worth discussing as a group. If you want further guidance, consider marking sections of the paper you would comment on (for whatever reason) in your feedback to the student. ○ Paper 1 ○ Paper 2
Activities	*Revisiting Ethic of Care* ● *Have everyone verbalize one thing they want to center for themselves in the session's discussions from the ethic of care.* *Student Paper Activity: Paper 1 Paper 2* ● Comment directly onto the google doc as you wish. Individually, review your responses to the two pieces and answer the following questions for both papers USING THIS GOOGLE FORM 　　○ What in particular did you find to be impressive or troubling about the language, grammar, and/or conventions used in these papers? 　　● How would you categorize these two papers in terms of their fulfillment of the goals of FYC? 　　● Judging just on this paper, how prepared or not do you feel these students are for FYC? Looking at these two papers, what can you say about who you think the students who wrote these are? [Give as examples] Respond to any of the categories below in describing this student. ● Racial identity ● Gender identity ● Ethnicity ● Age ● Language identity ● Socioeconomic status ● (Dis)ability status ● Sexuality ● Religious Affiliation ● Political Affiliation

	● Other salient categories ● As a group, discuss our reactions to these two papers (including our responses to the above questions). *Reflection on Session* ● This closing activity will ask individuals to reflect on what they learned and found challenging in the day's session.

Session Four	Exploring Language Ideologies in Classroom Policies/Materials
Materials	1. Individual Instructors' Syllabi/Schedules 2. Bring in their most recent/relevant assessment instrument (rubric, heuristic, guidelines, grading contract, etc.) that they use in FYC.

Activities	*Revisiting Ethic of Care*
	● *Have everyone verbalize one thing they want to center for themselves in the session's discussions from the ethic of care.*
	Analysis of Class Materials
	Upload your syllabi/schedule to the group google drive. After looking over your syllabus/schedule, we'll discuss the following questions.
	1. What genres of writing are represented by your major assignments?
	    a. Why these genres?
	    b. What specific knowledge of writing and language do you hope students gain/sustain from writing these genres?
	2. What genres of writing are represented by your readings?
	    a. Why these genres?
	    b. What specific knowledge of writing and language do you hope students gain/sustain from reading these genres?

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3. Looking at your class schedule, what topics related to language, conventions, grammar, style, voice, et cetera do you teach?
   a. Why these topics?
   b. What specific knowledge of writing and language do you hope students gain/sustain from writing these topics?
4. Looking over your assessment instrument, what aspects of writing are you valuing?
   a. Why these aspects?
   b. How do the aspects of writing valued by your assessment instrument align with or deviate from what you discussed as being valued by your genres of writing, reading, and class topics?
5. Considering everything we talked about today, how do you feel about how your class positions language diversity?
6. What (if any) ideas should we all keep in mind if we were to consider revising the documents we brought with us today?

Reflection on Session
- This closing activity will utilize the reflection form included in my original prospectus that asks individuals to reflect on what they learned and found challenging in the day's session.
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Session Five	Exploring Language Ideologies in Responding to Student Writing
Materials	1. Bring in a student paper that makes/made you feel conflicted about how to respond to the students' use of language, grammar, or conventions. a. Highlight specific sections of the paper in which you struggled to respond or assess the student's work.
Activities	*Revisiting Ethic of Care* - *Have everyone verbalize one thing they want to center for themselves in the session's discussions from the ethic of care.* *Group Think Aloud Activity*

	• Upload your annotated paper to the group google drive. Have each individual briefly explain the student paper they brought in.
	    ○ What assignment was this paper created for?
	    ○ What can they tell us about the student who wrote this paper?
	    ○ How did they respond to this paper?
	        ■ E.g. What grade did it receive? Did they mostly praise or critique it?
	    ○ Why did they select this paper to bring in today?
	• Display for the group the highlighted portions of each paper (one paper at a time).
	    ○ If this was a student in our class, how would we respond to this student about these highlighted sections?
	        ■ What terms would we use to characterize the language in the highlighted sections (e.g. "good/bad" or something more descriptive)? Why?
	        ■ What would we want to draw the student's attention to in these sections, and what would we tell them to do/ask them about? Why?
	        ■ What is our overall impression of the student from this paper?
	
	Reflection on Session
	• This closing activity will utilize the reflection form included in my original prospectus that asks individuals to reflect on what they learned and found challenging in the day's session.

Appendix E

Discussion Group Ethic of Care

- Be open and willing to learn
- Speak your truth and let others speak theirs
- Trust that everyone is doing their best
- Confidentiality - what's said here stays, but the learning goes.
- Speak with intention: noting what has relevance to the conversation in the moment.
- Listen with attention: respectful of the learning process for all members of the group.
- Tend to the well-being of the circle: remaining aware of the impact of our contributions.
  - Check villainization of groups/belief systems, keeping in mind that we may have affiliations with those groups and belief systems
  - Checking in, honoring contributions externally and internally
  - Naming "what I'm hearing is…" as a way to engage something specific from another's contribution - in order to to clarify / enact care
- Tensions can be productive and should be safely explored in this space. We don't have to get all of us to come to total agreement.
- Avoid "confessional framework" while still creating space for honesty and understanding. Our purpose here isn't to espouse all of the racialized harm we may have enacted as White educators in order to seek forgiveness/absolution/ or permission to leave these things behind.
- Intellectual humility (Sensoy and DiAngelo 2014): Remembering the participatory nature of the discussions and that we are in a learning space rather than foreclosing inquiry
  - Remembering to check tacit assumptions about disciplinary-specific (or other community-specific) educational practice/knowledge/beliefs, and that we are coming to this space from different angles / spaces
- Speak from experience when possible (theory is good but so is experience/praxis)
- Being aware that we are all coming from different angles and perspectives and that is a good thing.
- If we make reference to particular concepts/readings, share a link.

Appendix F

Session Reflection Form

Name:	Date:

Coming into this session, I was excited to talk about...

After finishing this session, I feel I am taking away knowledge about…

Overall, I felt participating in today's session for me was…

1 – Very difficult
2 – Difficult
3 – Neutral
4 – Easy
5 – Very easy

Please explain your 1-5 selection above.

I have questions/feel confused about...

Appendix G
Debrief Interview Protocol

1. Tell me about your experience in the discussion group these past few weeks?

    a. [Probe] What was your most memorable experience related to this group?

2. Can you identify for me a particularly challenging experience you had in this group?

3. Can you identify for me a moment of "success" or "breakthrough" related to this group?

4. How did this experience encourage you to think about whiteness and your identity as it relates to the ways in which you teach writing?

    a. [Probe] Has your approach to thinking about teaching writing changed at all because of your experience with this group?

5. How supported did you feel by this group?

    a. [Probe] Was there any moment where you felt lost or like you didn't know what to do next?

6. Are you planning on building on what you've learned about in this group?

7. What questions and concerns do you still have related to whiteness and beliefs about language?

    a. [Probe] What is something you want to know more about?

8. What further supports do you think you will need to continue to engage in the kind of pedagogical work we conducted in this group?

9. What suggestions would you have to improve future iterations of this kind of project?

    a. [Probe] What could be improved upon to better help White instructors think about intersections between whiteness and language beliefs in their writing pedagogies?

10. Is there a pseudonym you would prefer for me to use when referring to you in my dissertation?

Appendix H

Select Items from Codebook

Name	Description
(Dis)engaging with White Talk and Peers: These codes, based in part on the work of McIntyre (1997), illustrate how individuals and the group consider their own White identity and interact with one another.	
Acknowledgement of White Identity	This code indicates explicit consideration of how one's or others White identity may be relevant to the topic at hand.
Anxiety about Acknowledging Race	This code indicates participants' anxieties about explicitly discussing race with their peers or their students, indicated through explicit talk about these anxieties and/or the use of filler words/phrases prior to mentioning race.
Calling Out	This code signifies a participant calling out the ideas of another as being potentially problematic.

Deflection	This code signifies a participant attempting to decenter whiteness, white-supremacy, and/or white identity from being the topic of discussion, or engaging in other types of behaviors (e.g. silence or disruption) that make such discussions challenging for others to participate in. This can also include avoiding challenging conversations by not honestly sharing their individual reflections with the group.
Endorsing	This code signifies a participant endorsing the pedagogical beliefs and/or practices of another instructor.
Other White People	This code indicates participants framing a binary of White people as good/bad, typically to indicate themselves as being a "good" White person.
Questioning or Probing ideas and others	This code signifies participants questioning the statement/beliefs of their peers through direct or rhetorical questions.
Race Avoidance	This code signifies participants avoiding using racial identifiers in describing specific student groups and/or avoiding speaking directly about race when relevant.
Racial Identifier	These codes refer to participants making explicit mention of a racial identity category OR a label (e.g. AAE, EAL) highly associated with race. The identifiers included in this code are as follows: AAE, Asian, Black (including African-American), China, Chinese, Diverse & Variety (but only when seeming to refer

	to race, e.g. "My class is more diverse this year, but last year it was mostly White students"), EAL, Korea(n), White.
Filler Word or False Start	This code refers to the use of filler words (e.g. uh/um), filler phrases (e.g. you know), false starts, and extended pauses in a single participant's response.
Language Ideologies: These codes indicate references to specific beliefs about language: how it should or does function or instructor preferences for the existence or absences of certain features.	
A Critical or Pluralist View	"Language variation is understood to be linked to power and oppression, and language/ literacy education is linked to social justice" (Shapiro, 2022, p. 317).
A Diversity or Additive View	"Language variation is seen as an asset, but not necessarily linked to power and oppression" (Shapiro, 2022, p. 317).
A Tolerance or Acceptance View	"Language variation is recognized as a societal reality but is not seen as relevant or valuable to schooling contexts" (Shapiro, 2022, p. 317).

A Deficit/Monolingual View	"in which language variation is seen as a problem and standardized English which is seen as superior to all other varieties" (Shapiro, 2022, p. 317).
Aesthetic beauty of language (e.g. what sounds most pleasant or interesting)	This code indicates aspects of language that participants find pleasing or most interesting.
Non-SAE as students' real "voice"	This code indicates references to non-SAE varieties as being more true, authentic, natural, or aesthetically pleasing.
Practicality of language (e.g. effective language, communication facilitation)	This code indicates aspects of language that participants find practical or effective for communication.
SAE as Academic Language	This code indicates participants associating SAE with academic writing/language.

	Obstacles toward more equitable writing pedagogy: These codes illustrate instructors' perceptions as to the challenges of engaging in more equitable/antiracist writing pedagogies that center issues of language diversity.
Anxieties about perceived consequences of allowing non-standard	This code indicates an instructor's concerns about future harm/challenges/obstacles a student may face if they aren't in a writing class that solely/predominately values SAE.
Authenticity of Engaging in Language Diversity Conversations	This code indicates a participant indicating that there is no need to address language diversity issues or that language diversity issues aren't significant enough or relevant enough to need to be given the time needed to move beyond shallow engagement in their classroom. This includes instructors' beliefs about language diversity not being an appropriate subject for FYC to focus on due to the scope of the course. .
Disciplinary boundaries or differences	This code indicates moments in discussion when assumptions about common knowledge or texts were shown to be disciplinary-based, resulting in miscommunication and/or othering of certain participants.
Ignorance of Choice	This code indicates instructors' desires to engage in more equitable writing pedagogies clashing with their perception of themselves as being inadequately knowledgeable (e.g. "I want to do something, but I just don't know how").

Inadequate Institutional Support	This code indicates instructors' perception that a lack of support from the institution (financial support, class structure, program structure, etc.) makes it challenging or impossible to engage in more equitable writing pedagogies.
Perceived as Racist	This code indicates participants talking about being afraid of being vulnerable, holding back their honest opinions, or otherwise discussing how their anxieties of being labeled "racist" or "harmful" limits their participation in certain spaces and conversations.
Resistor without a choice	This code indicates instructors valuing language diversity in their spaces, but "reluctantly" teaching SAE from the position that other instructors, employers, etc. will not be resistors to standard language ideologies like them.
Student Opposition	This code indicates an instructor's perceptions that students do not want to participate in a class that considers language diversity and/or do not consider the course of FYC worth their full attention.
Theory to Practice	This code indicates instructors' perceived inability to translate ideas they learned through scholarship into practice within their own classrooms even though they want to implement them.

Perception of Classroom Identities: These codes indicate the kinds of student and teacher constructs instructors most immediately identified and the behaviors, attitudes, and abilities they associate with each of these constructs.	
AAE Student	This code indicates references participants made to the construct of the AAE student.
EAL Student	This code indicates references participants made to the construct of the EAL student.
Othered Student	This code indicates references participants make to students they broadly identify as not adhering to SAE, but without making a specific estimation about what variety they are using.
SAE Student	This code indicates references participants made to the construct of the SAE student.
Purposes of FYC: These codes indicate how instructors formed the reason for instructor, student, or the institution to be invested in the space of FYC as well as what these actors should be involved with in these spaces.	
The Institution's Purpose	This code indicates how instructor's framed the goals, responsibilities, and purposes of the institution.

The Instructor's Purpose	This code indicates how instructor's framed the goals, responsibilities, and purposes of the instructor.
The Student's Purpose	This code indicates how instructor's framed the goals, responsibilities, and purposes of the student.
Responding to Students and their Writing: These codes indicate references to specific classroom practices for assessing and providing feedback on students' writing.	
Facilitation of Students' Writing	This code indicates instances in which the instructor indicated a desire to foster an aspect of students they deemed beneficial.
Instructor-Driven Assessment	This code indicates references to assessment methods that only consider the instructor's opinion in assessing the relevant text.
Remediation of Students	This code indicates instances in which the instructor pathologizes a student's writing and indicates need for correction.

Student Self-Assessment	These codes indicate assessments that to some degree encourage students to assess their own writing to determine their grade
Negotiation	This code indicates instructors and students co-creating assessment tools together.
Reflection	This code indicates the use of student reflections to help the instructor gain insight into the student's opinion of how they performed on the assignment.
Tensions in Assessment	This code indicates instructors acknowledging tension, anxieties, and/or insecurities they feel in assessing student writing.
Transfer: These codes indicate participants' references to skills or "errors" that they perceive to transfer into student's SAE writing from the students' other language varieties.	
Negative Transfer	This code indicates transfer the instructors framed as harmful or "error"-inducing.
Neutral Transfer	This code indicates transfer the instructors framed as neither good nor bad (aka "neutral").

Positive Transfer	This code indicates transfer the instructors framed as being beneficial to the student's (SAE) writing.
Writing Construct: These codes signify the construct of writing that instructors present to students in first-year writing.	
Assigned Genres	This code indicates the genres of writing assigned (either to read or write) to students.
Higher-Order Construct Values	Valuing of more global issues within the writing construct (e.g. organization, rhetorical situation, etc.).
Student Voice	This code indicates instructors mentioning the significance of hearing/seeing a student's voice in their writing.
Technical Skills	Valuing knowledge of specific grammar or conventions.
Unimportant Skills	This code indicates constructs of writing/aspects of writing instruction that they don't value or want to prioritize in the writing classroom.

Appendix I

Paper 1: AAE Student Paper

"The Unsettled Semester" is the thoughts and story of a young college student named Jessica Orozco who is facing the challenges of transitioning from in person learning to remote numerous times at The Ohio State University. She explains to us how before the Covid-19 pandemic she had a structure that boosted her efficiency for turning in assignments on time to staying on top of all her work. Although for in person this was a complete and full proof strategy that worked for her time and time again until the pandemic came into play it started to take a toll on her productivity levels and even made her feel distant from the university lifestyle and culture that she was used to. She explains how she feels this new event presents a new challenge that us as college students need to tackle head on. During this article she explained how often times during Zoom classes she would be daydreaming and many times not even paying attention because it simply did not feel like school when she had to learn from home. This small detail is something I feel we all relate to as most of us have had to remote learn at some point over the pandemic. We all get that sense of a lack of a learning experience and I like how she put this in the article to relate us common people to her a person who is already in college and toted as an A student. She does not come off as someone who is trying to be better than everyone else and that she does not feel the effects on Covid-19. I feel that in many cases readings on these topics can become too statistical and we have a hard time getting an actual understanding of what is happening.

I feel the author using a narrative to develop her purpose benefitted the reach and grasping power of the article. I feel this is the case because the author could have gone with the standard using facts and percentages to get the same point across, but this would have been boring and nonetheless meaningless to understand. Using the narrative of an actual real life college student it helps the audience put themselves in her shoes and think of life as her because we have all been in that exact position going through the pandemic. I feel this is the best way to appeal to an audience like my generation due to the simple fact that we can relate to this situation and it leads us to become more interested because we can then see what this person did to get over the exact same boundary. I feel that one thing that will always unite people is a common threat/ tribulation. Many times, in history it is shown that people will always come together when they have a common obstacle in front of them that they cannot get through by themselves. This is what the article proves with everyone in the world going through Covid-19 we all can relate in some way to this occurrence.

As I read "the Unsettled Semester" I do feel the author appeals to my emotions and reasons. During my junior year in high school when the pandemic first started rising in March there was a constant battle of, we may be coming back to we will be staying home until eventually they decided we would ultimately be done with the school year, this was an emotional roller coaster because it was something we never experienced before we did not know what to expect. Then

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throughout the summer with conditions getting better then worse and going back and forth we never knew what to expect. When we finally came back to school, we were in person for some time the same way Orozco was then as the time started to pass it seemed like classrooms would start getting smaller and smaller with kids getting quarantined to others simply opting out due to health concerns with themselves or with family. Me being a person who wanted to stay in school I would start to feel disappointed because it was taking away from the school experience and often made it feel more stressful then in previous years. Ultimately with conditions getting so bad the whole school was shut down and sent into remote learning. While online I felt disconnected and honestly unmotivated to do any sort of work for school. Before school felt like it was a challenge, but I did enjoy it. Online it started to feel more of a burden and less mandatory, it started to seem like there was no point for doing anything. Seeing Orozco feel the same way it made me feel like I was not the only person having these emotions of laziness and anxiety. Reading this made me feel like I was not alone. Another point that may go unnoticed is the teachers and them having to adapt to new methods as well. Orozco in her predicament explains how her teacher Ross would have to change her learning plans and her whole classroom demeaner due to the number of students falling and falling. This is another obstacle because these are people that are also going through the pandemic and even though the focus of the article was the students outlook on remote learning this also takes a toll on teachers and their usual teaching methods. Many times, the teachers have to come up with completely new strategies to get students to understand what is happening in class. Even though it is not their fault they can see productivity starting to drop due to the fact that they cannot connect with students on a more personal and deeper level.

I feel this essay is highly effective at achieving its purpose because it breaks down the pandemic life of a university student and this something that I will be becoming in a few months. I feel the essay delivered its point in an effective and interesting way. She breaks down her life and thoughts in an understandable way. She comes off as very relatable and, in a position, where I can see myself in very soon.

Appendix J

Paper 2: SAE Student Paper

When news broke that the world would be shutting down last March, it was initially thought of as a simple 2-week vacation, giving the nation's top minds some time to understand what was going on. The novelty of the break wore off quickly; a year into the pandemic, and the world is losing its collective mind. In "The Unsettled Semester," Beckie Supiano explores the strife of college student Jessica Orozco, a previous high school valedictorian, who finds her work ethic crumbling and her confidence plummeting. The author successfully wields a narrative rather than statistics to reveal that during the pandemic, being a good student is no longer enough; through narrative, Supiano seeks to persuade the reader to be more forgiving towards themself in such an unforgiving world.

The high standards we hold for ourselves must be abolished, as just being book smart in the times dominated by Covid-19 is inadequate. When Supiano introduces the protagonist, she explains "Orozco is a good student" as someone who is always organized and on top of all of her classes (Supiano 1). This characteristic of hers is immediately juxtaposed with Orozco declaring "'Honestly, with this semester, I just say: Like, whatever,' she says. 'I just do what I can.'" The essay was published in a weekly publication about American colleges, her audience being mainly college students. Connecting the section about Orozco's prior success to her current failures was no mistake. Supiano wants the reader to quickly realize that even the best of the best are forced to lower their standards drastically. When a student's work ethic begins to drop, it is only natural for them to feel as if they are alone and that they are a failure. However, by seeing a top student like Orozco, who they might feel is on a similar or even higher level of intelligence, going through the same struggles, they may begin to rationalize their behavior as the correct course of action, and they may begin to accept it more. Supiano appeals to the reader's empathy to understand that everyone is doing what they can to succeed right now. It may not be to the same level as what they could have done back when they were able to destress by being with other people, by separating their school work with their self worth, and by enjoying college to the fullest. Supiano reminds the reader that this is okay.

It may seem that adaptability is the key to success in times of adversity, but constantly adapting can bring out the fear and the hopelessness in life. As the author describes Orozco's only in person class, she explains that its teacher, Felecia Ross, had to continuously adapt to the course's growing number of students attending virtually only; to justify moving the class online only,

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Ross ponders, "Why take a health risk to teach two students?" (5). The rhetorical question serves as a reminder of how everyone is affected by the pandemic. When a deadly virus has overtaken the world, activities that are not entirely necessary, such as teaching in person rather than over Zoom, become collateral damage in the quest for comfort. Supiano details all of the changes Ross implemented in the course, from using a microphone, to speaking more towards her computer than her audience, to eventually switching to a virtual setting. The rhetorical question justifies her actions, but it also serves to illustrate the growing unease and doubt resulting from constant change, serving as a reminder to students that this is the normal course of action and that even people in positions of power have lost hope. Supiano connects this to her protagonist, explaining that as the students sanitized their work environment, "Orozco would find herself thinking about her chair. It's upholstered, so it's hard to wipe down effectively. Maybe, she'd think, there are virus particles in the fabric. 'What if the particles are seeping into my clothes?'" (6-7). This rhetorical question parallels that of her instructor's, as both women fear that by going to class, they are exposing themselves to Covid-19. Ross's inquiry serves to emphasize the doubt stemming from adaptation, while Orozco's serves to emphasize the fear. Supiano includes these quotes for her audience, college students, to remind them that they are not alone in having these emotions; an accomplished professor and a previously straight-A student both have a swelling sense of hopelessness. She reminds the readers that if even these top minds are losing faith, then it must be representative of everyone; college students failing in these adverse times is absolutely normal. Constantly modifying every aspect of one's life is sure to bring out a great deal of anxiety.

The pandemic has upturned the world, and with no breaks and no leisure, many find that their personal lives and work lives have blended to uncomfortable levels. When describing Orozco's life before and after Covid hit, Supiano says "Before the pandemic, trips home gave Orozco a change of pace, a chance to relax and stop thinking about her classes. But now, she found, her college and personal lives had blurred together" (8). This juxtaposition in plain words reveals the sense of defeat Orozco finds dominating her life. What once served as a palette cleanser has been eliminated for the student, as trips home are not only unnecessary but dangerous. When work is all a student can think about, it begins to define them, and if they find themself performing worse and worse than they did before, back when they enjoyed life a bit more, it begins to be hard to forgive. This is a situation many college students find themselves in these days, with those who continue to follow pandemic restrictions and who continue to be responsible being the ones to suffer the most. It is a bleak feeling, to be doing everything right yet to be facing anguish because of it. When work is all one thinks about, it becomes impossible to take their mind off of it. As Supiano describes a time when Orozco visited some friends, she writes, "They ended up complaining about their classes. At least, Orozco says, there's some comfort to be had in venting" (12). There is no way to escape schoolwork when it is all that students have to think about. When Orozco finally saw some friends, it was all any of them had to think about. By validating the complaining with 'At least there's some comfort in venting,' a sad excuse for this

behavior, it's clear to see that she is not pleased with herself. She feels hopeless, along with every single one of her friends, due to the fact that there is no escape from what stresses her out.

By writing "The Unsettled Semester" as a narrative rather than as a list of facts, Supiano exposes the actuality that in times of misery, being a high-achieving student is no longer sufficient, and due to this, everyone should be more forgiving towards themselves. She wrote a narrative about a struggling student because her story is one every college student can relate to in the Covid-19 pandemic. The narrative outlines Orozco's skirmish like listening to a friend ranting about college life, one that every reader can relate to. After all, at least there is some comfort in venting.

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