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Clarifying the Multiple Dimensions of Monolingualism: Keeping Our Sights on Language Politics

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Abstract: While we in composition studies may have grown more sensitive to and welcoming of cultural and linguistic differences in the classroom, we remain far from united in pursuits to combat explicitly in our pedagogies the politics of standardized English. To move toward linguistic justice, we call for unified intention and action across our field to explicitly combat the very monolingualist ideologies so many of us, no matter our good intentions, uphold and perpetuate in our classrooms and institutions. One issue preventing unified approaches in contesting monolingualist ideologies, as we see it, is that we do not forefront in our minds and our practices the material consequences of monolingualist ideology, nor have we come to a holistic consensus on the monolingualism paradigm. With this article, we hope to clarify just what it is we're rejecting when we contest monolingualism, and, in so doing, be better prepared to combat more explicitly the harms of linguistic hierarchies.

During the spring 2016 semester, Missy's department at City College of New York, CUNY embraced her request to propose a new course outcome for the first-year composition curriculum that reflected current disciplinary theories for better attending to linguistic diversity. Missy, excited at the opportunity and determined to craft an outcome that would endure, sought the expertise of scholars participating in a Transnational Writing Group on Facebook. She asked for feedback from the group and offered one option of an outcome to consider: "Acknowledge your and others' range of linguistic differences as resources, and draw on those resources to develop rhetorical sensibility."

While all responses from the group were helpful, one made her pause. Ligia Mihut shared the following outcome that her department at Barry University includes in its first-year-writing curriculum: "Students recognize the extent to which cultural standards, institutional practices, and values oppress, marginalize, alienate, or create/enhance privilege and power." Missy was at once refreshed by the explicitness of this outcome and hesitant to move forward with it, or some version of it, as the outcome she proposed at City College. Fully endorsing the notions captured in the outcome and believing wholeheartedly that City College should be an institution leading the pursuit to approach linguistic diversity with utmost care, Missy pondered over her hesitance. She questioned whether her department and institution were ready for such explicit stances on the oppressive nature of standardized English. And she suspected her version of the outcome, which focused more on honoring diversity and honing rhetorical sensibility, would be more welcome and still a worthy step in the right direction, albeit modest and, admittedly, not fully capturing what the field has long known about the oppressive role of standardized English.

We believe that this discrepancy—what Missy felt was truly needed and just given her pedagogical position to explicitly combat standard language ideologies versus what she believed was feasible given the dominance of English monolingualism that persists at City College and across US higher education—is representative of the current state of composition studies when it comes to dealing with the politics of linguistic diversity. While we in composition studies may have grown more sensitive to and welcoming of cultural and linguistic differences in the classroom, we remain far from united in pursuits to combat explicitly in our pedagogies the politics of standardized English. We struggle to detach from the powers of standard language ideology, so deeply engrained within our discipline and professional identities. While most writing teachers would readily agree that standardized English (hereafter *SE)[1] will "create/enhance privilege and power," many may still be more reluctant to proclaim and denounce how standard language ideology serves to "oppress, marginalize, alienate."

We miss out on important opportunities to combat monolingualist ideology when we focus only on cultivating in

students a "rhetorical sensibility" and on fostering attitudes whereby students see "linguistic differences as resources," as did Missy's initial version of a course outcome. Inviting and celebrating language varieties is useful in confronting assumptions about tacit English-only policies (Horner and Trimbur) and in deconstructing the myth of linguistic homogeneity (Matsuda "Myth"). However, we hope to emphasize that inviting and including language differences in the classroom and in writing, in and of itself, is far from sufficient. On its own, over decades of use, inviting writing differences into composition classrooms might begin to dismantle and quiet the harms caused by monolingualist ideologies. While a steady pace toward adjusting centuries-long ideologies and rhetorical expectations is in order, if we are to have any real hope of combating the harms of linguistic hierarchies, we must further address students' and *our* unchecked affinities for *SE, as well as our complicity with the material harms caused by our profession's perpetuation of standard language ideology. Thus, to the extent that inviting language differences is the best vehicle in the field to unite the front against monolingualism, a focus on language difference in our research and teaching needs to be preceded by more explicit attention to how standardized languages have historically suppressed linguistic varieties and oppressed their users.

Said simply, we believe we need to do more than acknowledge, invite, and honor the linguistic diversity in our classrooms; we must do more than help students understand how language works and how to negotiate their own interests and languages alongside standardized varieties and conventions. We must also, together and at last, confront the field's distancing from, indeed resistance to, facing the material harms caused by the very monolingualist ideologies so many of us, no matter our good intentions, uphold and perpetuate in our classrooms and institutions. To move toward linguistic justice, we call for unified intention and action across our field to explicitly combat what we see as multiple facets of monolingualism. One issue preventing unified approaches in contesting monolingualist ideologies, as we see it, is that we do not forefront in our minds and our practices the material consequences of monolingualist ideology, nor have we come to a holistic consensus on the concept of monolingualism. With this article, we hope to clarify just what it is we're rejecting when we combat the monolingual paradigm, and, in so doing, be better prepared to combat more explicitly the harms of linguistic hierarchies.

In what follows, we first synthesize decades' worth of scholarship that illustrates the harms caused by monolingualist ideology. Then, we parse out distinctions across four competing definitions of English monolingualism, which helps us not only to highlight monolingualism's distinguishable strands but also to reveal that some uptakes of monolingualism may lead us to stray too far from attending to its material consequences, which harm speakers and writers and tarnish the ethical goals of our work as literacy and language professionals. Indeed, as we show, the uses and meanings of monolingualism are multiple and have thus not always been consistently or fully considered in composition scholarship. Following our discussion of monolingualism and its multiple dimensions, we conclude with practical classroom and administrative applications, including a proposed learning outcome that instructors and WPAs might consider adopting in order to work more explicitly against the harmful consequences of *SE in and beyond the composition classroom.

Keeping Our Sights on Material Consequences

We believe that building solidarity in tackling monolingualist ideologies is necessary as we move forward with teaching and research in today's linguistically diverse classrooms and communities. Monolingualism is an ideological paradigm that restricts and actively works against language difference in multifaceted ways, as we'll unpack further. However, before revealing the various strands of monolingualism we must all attend to, it is critical that we recall some of what we have learned in composition studies about the many material consequences they create. Monolingualism is an ideology of many violences at the micro- and macro-levels. At its worst, it can lead (and has historically led) to a silencing and even eradication of languages and varieties as well as brutal penalization of speakers of non-preferred languages. At their best, though still oppressive, monolingualist ideologies "devalue other languages and language varieties and by extension their speakers" (Richardson 109); monolingualist ideologies privilege a "linear, container-bound approach to writing" and overlook the power non-privileged genres and modes may afford speakers of other languages and varieties (Gonzalez; see also Shapiro).

In the US, monolingualism has served the project of colonization and nation building, helping to identify the look and character of US insiderness and, hence, outsiderness, indicating divisions along lines of nation, race, and class (Canagarajah "Clarifying"; Horner "Introduction"; Horner and Trimbur; Lyons; Mangelsdorf; Pratt "Arts"; Trimbur; Villanueva). As Ellen Cushman puts it, "The primacy of English in composition studies and classrooms at its very heart maintains an imperialist legacy that dehumanizes everyone in different and differing ways" (236). In its insistence on a particular *kind* of English, monolingualism has complied with "the project of racism" (Winant 40; Inoue), working to continually marginalize and recolonize non-White, non-standard English speakers, marking their languages as deficient, their differences as error and incompetence (Lu "Redefining"; Richardson). Moreover, the varieties of English language learners and of non-standard English speakers are treated as "evidence of [their]

alienation" (Canagarajah, *Translingual Practice* 22). Bodies typically attached to the dominant variety are assigned capital that users of other varieties are not, and since "so many people who speak non-standard forms of 'English' or languages other than 'English' are not white, these manifestations of the standard language ideology, for some, serve as coded expressions of racism" (Mangelsdorf 117).

And, as we know, systemic forces of oppression result in significant socioeconomic inequalities—language oppression is merely one force within this system. While the affordances of standard language and literacy are often touted, "language in and of itself provides no guarantee of socioeconomic advancement, operating instead in contingent relation to a host of other factors such as race, ethnicity, gender, class, and age in determining one's economic position" (Horner and Trimbur 618; see also Street; Graff; Auerbach). Monolingualism reflects and manifests a range of microlevel aggressions in addition to broader values, policies, and practices that emerge from and reinforce systemic linguistic oppression, affecting everyone beyond the most elite groups and especially targeting already vulnerable communities.

English monolingualism as a colonizing force has, further, worked to suppress languages and their associated cultural identities (Cushman; Lyons; Powell; Richardson). Monolingualism defines and then subordinates the linguistic other, an other who faces ostracization, who is falsely promised full initiation through assimilation, and who pays for that insiderness with aspects of a prior cultural and social identity (Rodriguez; Lu "Living-English"). Since monolingual orientations deem dominant varieties as the privileged (and sometimes the only permissible) language, they "can potentially limit the range of languages that can be used in a place in social interactions," which further "gives justification for a community to exert its own language on others sharing its place" (Canagarajah, *Translingual Practice* 21). Speakers of other varieties are marked as lesser citizens—less patriotic, less literate, and less legitimate. Indeed, "Language, literacy, and citizenship are viewed as interdependent: to be literate is to know the language, and to know the language is requisite to citizenship" (Horner, "Introduction" 1). Speakers of other varieties are, furthermore, assigned all responsibility for acquiring the so-called "shared" dominant variety and thus carry a much fuller burden for communication (Lippi-Green 72-74) and for clarifying meaning (rather than communication being negotiated equally across interlocutors). Thus, speakers of other varieties are often also deemed as less intelligent, less authentic, less competent, less qualified—"a certain hegemonic conception of what it means to be a thinking and acceptable American emerges" (Richardson 97).

As such, monolingualism has stolen from us the symphonic repertoire available for communicators when we open our minds to resources beyond the narrowest English and the identities that lay claim to it. As Marilyn Cooper writes, "... we need to realize that monolingualism does not improve but rather debilitates language and deprives humans of the resources that enable them to make meanings flexibly in response to ever-changing conditions" (238).

While some of the political consequences of monolingualist ideologies remain hidden within and are perpetuated by traditional practices and beliefs, there are plenty of material consequences that plainly affect, control, and manipulate people in their lived and embodied realities. For instance, as Min-Zhan Lu exposed in her influential "Living-English Work," some international English language learners have gone so far as to surgically alter their tongue structures in hopes of "sounding" more fluent in English. Like many of the students who find their way to US college composition, individuals like those referenced by Lu do so for material purposes; they "want to gain competence in the knowledge, codes, and discourses that will allow them to compete in emerging global economies" (Canagarajah and Jerskey 473). Beyond seemingly individual drive to "fit" with neoliberal currents,{2} policy has also played a more explicit role in moving bodies and suppressing language differences. Legislation at the state level has worked to sustain monolingualism and stamp out language difference, particularly impacting bilingual programs and (thus) multilingual students in public school settings, such as California's Proposition 227 or Arizona's Proposition 203 (Mangelsdorf), not to mention the wider English-Only and official English movements that have waxed and waned in the US for decades.

Monolingualism further plays a role in defining what kind of immigrants, documented and undocumented, have access to the protections and services of the state, especially given the power of English literacy in "documentary society" (see Vieira). There is also "the dilemma of highly educated, rhetorically developed multilingual writers whose literacy and language practices become frozen, shut down, or held in place" in the US (Lorimer Leonard, "Traveling" 30), such as the individual whose degree and professional experience don't hold the same capital within its borders. Here we're thinking of trained professionals who, upon immigration to the US, find that their degrees and experience are undervalued and they are forced, instead, to take on unskilled labor or invest redundant time and money into earning the US-equivalent of their home degrees (Lorimer Leonard examines this phenomenon in *Writing on the Move*). As it affects speakers of World Englishes both within and beyond the United States (Kachru), monolingualism has permeated educational institutions to shape experiences of belonging, access, and legitimacy. Canagarajah's *Geopolitics of Academic Writing*, for instance, points out the degree to which power relations have skewed sharing and ethos in the academic knowledge economy, arguing that: "The English language thus becomes a very effective

vehicle for spreading center values globally and for providing Western institutions access to the periphery" (40). The spread of English globally has thus had material consequences for the bodies and lived realities of English speakers around the world who have sought English as a path to securing material advantages enjoyed in the West, where English's privilege has helped to sustain its beneficiaries' social and economic power.

In US higher education institutions, various gatekeeping measures regularly occur under tacit monolingual policies. Multilingual students, for instance, are regularly siloed in ESL versions of courses, with or without students' wishes or approval, and typically without critical consideration of how such practices may perpetuate monolingualist ideologies (Matsuda "The Myth"; Shuck "Combating"). Such siloing problematically relieves mainstream composition teachers of their responsibility to gain knowledge and strategies needed to support any and all students enrolled in their courses, no matter students' language backgrounds and exposure to or prior experiences with *SE. Further, students with more dominant language varieties are sheltered from the realities of linguistic diversity, thereby missing out on opportunities to develop more complex cross-language and cross-variety communicative strategies. When English, and only one kind of English, is permitted in the composition classroom, it reifies the social hierarchy, privileges mainstream students, and "denies an increasing number of multilingual students the opportunity to develop as assets and to use strategically the full range of their linguistic and discursive resources to accomplish their communicative goals" (Mangelsdorf 198). As Paul Kei Matsuda has demonstrated, "the myth of linguistic homogeneity" and a "policy of containment" thrive in composition ("Myth") and drive the division of labor between composition and second language writing ("Composition Studies"), resulting in the labeling of linguistically diverse groups (nonnative speaker, international student, basic writer, ESL, ELL). While many composition professionals understand these labels as "at times benign and even useful," they "can also be problematic, misleading, even politically noxious" (Horner and Trimbur 617).

In fact, every aspect of the WPA architecture is prone to influence from monolingualism in ways that inadvertently harm students. As noted by Christine Tardy, language is "suppressed rather than recognized and valued" when we use "strategies such as filtering out language minority students in admissions, ignoring language difference in the classroom, referring language minority students to the writing center, or placing students into remedial writing courses or special sections for second language writers" (636). Student assessment in our field and classrooms is also inextricably tied to monolingualism (Dryer) and is also deeply connected to race and language varieties. For instance, Asao Inoue's *Antiracist Writing Assessment Ecologies: Teaching and Assessing Writing for a Socially Just Future* addresses language politics in the writing classroom with respect to race, noting the ecologies wherein students of color and multilingual students are disproportionately subject to remedial courses and failure as results of systemic inequity (6). In all of these ways, the small, day-to-day tasks of our work as literacy professionals are subject to and influenced by the ambient pervasion (and perversion) of monolingual ideology.

These monolingual interruptions of ethical writing instruction have material consequences for students, as well. Let us not overlook the extra layers of financial and academic liabilities linguistically diverse students face in higher education, which can result in academic probation, loss of financial scholarships, or eventual expulsion (Shuck "Combating"). When students are not equally welcomed within academic institutions, those deemed "other" are confronted with increased time and cost constraints (e.g., inflated tuition and exam expenses for international students; increased tuition dollars spent on non-credit bearing courses for so-called basic writers or ELLs; tutoring services, or required attendance at the institution's affiliated language institute). This is all in addition to the immeasurable affective weight non-mainstream students face when working against a system that's not designed for, yet actively recruits and ineffectively accommodates them (particularly in areas of mentorship, when we take into account poor faculty diversity). As duly noted by Mary Louise Pratt in "Building a New Public Idea about Language," "The lived reality of multilingualism and the imperatives of global relations both fly in the face of monolingualist language policies, while those policies inflict needless social and psychic violence on vulnerable populations" (111). Given our realization through political language scholarship that difference is the norm rather than the exception, monolingualism's violence is certain to affect all but the narrowest population of our students; we find this unacceptable.

These inconvenient truths must not be buried under pragmatic claims about what we've long done, what students say they want, what we're trained to do; rather, it is essential that our pedagogies are designed to address the material harms our literacy work can cause. The linguistic injustice we describe above reflects scholarship going back at least 50 years in our discipline; we can no longer deny them as reality, professing only the advantages provided by our upholding monolingualist ideologies in our classrooms and through our curriculum. With this history in mind, we turn next to parsing out the intertwined, yet distinguishable, strands of the monolingual concept. Our hope is that clarifying the material harms caused by monolingualism, as well as the various facets of monolingualism, will help to push our research and teaching to reunite under a shared pursuit to address the full politics of our role in today's racialized and socially hierarchized literacy economy.

Combating Monolingualism in Composition Studies

Arguably, the most multifaceted discussion of the concept of *monolingualism* by composition scholars comes in a chapter published in the 2007 collection *Rethinking English in Schools: Toward a New Constructive Stage and Account*, where Bruce Horner and Min-Zhan Lu describe monolingualism as involving multiple ideological and curricular gestures. Their overview acknowledges the ways in which monolingualism may conceptually be understood as "ideologies linking reified notions of language and national identity, or in terms of the 'globalization' of a monolithic, uniform English as an international language of communication" (141), which highlights the values of authenticity and ownership inherent in monolingualist thinking. They present monolingual ideologies as further resulting in standardized ideals by way of a "tacit policy of 'English Only': [wherein] only reading and writing practices in English are recognized, and only a limited, 'educated' set of practices with English are accepted as legitimate." Applied, they explain, this ideology leads to curriculum that ultimately "fails to recognize the actual heterogeneity of language practices within as well as outside the USA and UK and denies the heterogeneity of practices within English itself." Finally, Horner and Lu also understand monolingualism as involving the false assumption that English, or any other language, is to be "treated as a fixed entity" capable of being segregated or at least quieted when needed.

Rarely has monolingualism been articulated in such a fully dimensional fashion, encompassing the many discrete and overlapping ways in which it is taken up across our scholarship (for another excellent and comprehensive discussion of monolingualist ideologies, their histories, and effects, see Canagarajah, *Translingual Practice*). While examinations of monolingualism have surfaced for decades in disciplinary conversations within and beyond composition studies,{3} our close reading of many key texts from translingualism (most recently) as well as significant works addressing language politics from SRTOL, basic writing, second language writing, and other pre-translingual scholarship helped us to identify subtle but important differences in monolingualism's definition and role, depending on a given author's purpose.

Based on our analysis of explicit discussions of combating monolingualism, we name and describe here four interconnected versions of monolingualist ideology:

- Monolingualism as Standard Language Ideology
- Monolingualism as Tacit English-Only Policies
- Monolingualism as the Myth of Linguistic Homogeneity
- Monolingualism as the Myth of Linguistic Uniformity, Stability, and Separateness

In order to elaborate on these interconnected facets of monolingualism, in this section we mesh together key passages from selected texts by scholars who have been central to discussions of language difference in college composition, including Suresh Canagarajah, Bruce Horner, Min-Zhan Lu, Paul Kei Matsuda, John Trimbur, and more. While it is beyond the constraints of this project to review all scholarship addressing the monolingual concept, we attempt to illustrate with our synthesized sampling from composition studies how a more fully-dimensional disciplinary understanding of monolingualism is needed to help advocate for an increasingly politically and materially conscious movement against linguistic oppression in our classrooms and scholarship to come. In naming its strands, we call for all composition scholars, not just those already working in the realm of linguistic politics, to engage more explicitly in combating a holistic monolingualism.

Monolingualism as Standard Language Ideology

The politics of standardized English permeate our field's scholarly history and classroom practices, with *Monolingualism as Standard Language Ideology* working to exclude, segregate, track, and define students upon the notion that non-standard language practices are deficient and inappropriate for public, academic, and official purposes. *Monolingualism as Standard Language Ideology* "[expects] writers' conformity with a putatively uniform, universal set of notational and syntactic conventions that we name Standard Written English (or alternatively, Edited American English)" (Horner et al. 306). This uptake of monolingualist ideology requires an imagined set of inherently correct codes, flattening English to an arbitrary, stable, and unified standard; it "teaches language users to assume and demand that others accept as correct and conform to a single set of practices with language" (312). Under this ideology, any non-standard English language use is understood as ignorance, inability, or error, representing deviance from the norm.

The CCCC resolution on "Students' Right to Their Own Language" (hereafter *SRTOL*), published originally in 1974, was instrumental in revealing the problems with and social consequences of privileging *SE at the expense of other languages and dialects. Applying research insights from applied linguistics and sociolinguistics to composition studies, *SRTOL* cites the 1972 CCCC Executive Committee's Resolution to advocate not only for "students' right to

their own patterns and varieties of language—the dialects of their nurture or whatever dialects in which they find their own identity and style;" it declared that the standard American English dialect was itself a myth and that "the claim that any one dialect is unacceptable amounts to an attempt of one social group to exert its dominance over another" (qtd. in "Students' Right" 2-3). The *SRTOL* resolution pressed teachers to respect language diversity, emphasizing the harms caused by privileging one kind of English over others. While the term "monolingualism" is not used in the *SRTOL* resolution, its purpose was unquestionably dedicated to combating what the field later understands as *Monolingualism as Standard Language Ideology*. In the decades following *SRTOL*, there are a litany of voices from scholars of color who have toiled to describe and theorize the violence of *SE and its impact on identity, economy, and success (see especially the work of Gilyard, Lyons, Smitherman, Villanueva, Young).

Our uncritical acceptance of the myth of a standard variety and the assumption of its superiority is based in what linguists have defined as standard language ideology. Definitions of standard language ideology forefront its function as a tool for social stratification. As defined by Lesley Milroy, standard language ideology is "the belief that there is one and only one correct spoken form of the language, modelled on a single correct written form" (174). As James Milroy and Lesley Milroy have shown, the standardization process diffuses the selected privileged variety, maintains its supremacy by codifying and prescribing it. The subordination of all other dialects follows, as the standard variety then dictates all others as non-standard and, hence, sub-standard. Another oft-cited expert of standard language ideology is Rosina Lippi-Green, who emphasizes the ways these belief systems go unchecked, leaving them invisible and assumed to be commonsensical. Lippi-Green defines standard language ideology as "a bias toward an abstract, idealized homogenous language, which is imposed and maintained by dominant institutions and which has as its model the written language, but which is drawn primarily from the spoken language of the upper middle class" (67).

We find it important, as do Milroy and Lippi-Green, to highlight the ways that standard language ideology serves also as a racist belief system, what Robert Phillipson calls linguicism, or what Victor Villanueva and others have referred to in the context of academia as part of the "new" racism. Laura Greenfield drives this home in her article, "The 'Standard English' Fairy Tale: A Rhetorical Analysis of Racist Pedagogies and Commonplace Assumptions about Language Diversity." She explains that language discrimination is rooted in racism, and so when we treat Standardized English as the preferred variety in our classrooms, we're perpetuating racism and its legacy. Scholarship from compositionists such as Inoue, Smitherman, Villanueva, and Young has long supported such interpretations, as has a larger compilation of research outside our discipline.{4}

Classrooms operating under this ideology seek to move students from a place of difference to a place of homogeneity—what Horner and Trimbur refer to as "unidirectional monolingualism" whereby *SE is the language toward which all should aim. *SE, as one variety of English dialect, has been "endowed with more prestige than others," and despite decades of scholarship from scholars of color offering testament, we in composition have yet to collectively recognize that teaching students to privilege *SE over their other varieties "involves their acceptance of a new—and possibly strange or hostile—set of cultural values" ("Students' Right" 6). Some teachers have attempted to straddle the line by describing *SE as merely a different version of English that students can use to achieve their academic and professional goals while maintaining "home" languages for more personal purposes, but as Young points out in his opening to *Other People's English*, this approach reflects a "racial compromise" (6) and "a vestige of legalized racial segregation" that "becomes a strategy not only to teach Standard English but to negotiate racism" (9). Young reminds us that we cannot excise the problem of race in the university by maintaining distinctions of "appropriateness" for languages according to designated spheres of use. We can, of course, no more standardize language than we can standardize identity.

Academic and public practices that seek to maintain standard language covertly (and sometimes overtly) privilege mainstream, middle- and upper-middle class, white, native-English speakers who are more likely to be already accustomed to and experienced with *SE discourse. Through *Monolingualism as Standard Language Ideology*, we imagine an "ideal speaker" who is "thought to be a monolingual native speaker of a prestige variety of English" and who is "evaluated according to a narrow canon of rules" (Shuck, "Combating" 59). This standard (as it is reified and invoked by individuals, institutions, and governments in various local moments) is used to define insiders and outsiders with respect to class membership, social status, and national identity. While this version of monolingualism is the oldest to be revealed and contested in our discipline, we question whether some contemporary treatments of language difference have left it behind, to the detriment of better mitigating the harms of monolingualism.

Monolingualism as Tacit English-Only Policies

Within composition studies, *Monolingualism as Tacit English-Only Policies*, the second of four strands of monolingualist ideology we review here, has shaped how we discuss language differences in our scholarship and how we treat them in our classrooms. In their important 2002 article, "English Only and US College Composition," Horner and Trimbur pressed the field to confront the tacit "unidirectional monolingualism" guiding our practices and

policies. They traced our field's favoring of English-Only education back to the cutting of classic languages from the curriculum in the late-nineteenth and early-twentieth centuries, a move that "purifies the social identity of US Americans as English speakers, privileges the use of language as written English, and then charts the pedagogical and curricular development of language as one that points inexorably toward mastery of written English" (607). Supporting this unidirectional language learning, students and scholars are expected only to read and write in English for other readers and writers of English (Horner "Introduction"; Horner and Trimbur).

This dimension of monolingualism reflects global power relations, uncovers and emphasizes a tacit national policy in the US concerning the dominance of the English language, and defines particular codes of English as those toward which all users should strive. *Monolingualism as Tacit English-Only Policies* privileges not just one dialect in one context, but one language—English—as ideal for most contexts, including educational purposes, official cross-cultural communications, and even matters of national interest and security (Wible). It further upholds English as the fitting *lingua franca*, owing to the belief that the standardized variety of English is "more efficient as a shared resource for meaning-making by everyone at the global level" (Canagarajah, *Translingual Practice* 24). On a national and policy level, this ideology interprets linguistic diversity as a social problem, resting strictly in the hands of immigrants whose linguistic deficit must be addressed; their struggles to efficiently acquire fluency in the preferred language and dialect is often read as stubborn resistance and individual failure rather than "evidence of the limitations of the monolingualism of US culture" (Horner and Trimbur 617). In this way, *Monolingualism as Tacit English-Only Policies* is unidirectional as well: it suppresses and silences other languages, varieties, and experiences, and "reveal[s] a preference for a certain type of 'naturalization' of immigrants and an ideal type of assimilated African American and other 'minority' American groups" (Richardson 97).

On an international level, *Monolingualism as Tacit English-Only Policies* assumes English is both geographically defined and authorized by native speakers. This aspect of monolingualism is thus based on "a center-periphery model" (Richardson 97); is a form of "Anglo-Saxon hegemony in [US] linguistic memory" (Trimbur 584); and is rooted in "nation-state formation" as well as "colonization and imperialism" (Canagarajah, *Translingual Practice* 20). Overseas, Standardized British and Standardized American English are often preferred over other local varieties of English in official settings (Canagarajah, "The Place" 588). Multilingual scholars within and outside of the US face increased challenges as they work to apply the versions of *SE that will grant their research acceptance into Western publication venues. For multilingual writers from nations where English is not the dominant language, English is an obstacle in the way of legitimacy, not to mention limitations in electricity, library resources, mentors, etc. (see Canagarajah, *Geopolitics* and the many works of Mary Jane Curry and Theresa M. Lillis, among others). Further, in Lu's "Living English Work," she helps us understand the struggle for English acquisition in "'developing' countries as intricately informed by what we in 'developed' countries do and do not do when addressing our own and our students' ambivalence toward English-only rulings" (606).

English-Only ideologies and practices ignore global contexts of languaging, writing, and instruction (see Kachru; Canagarajah "The Place"; Aya Matsuda; Phillipson; and Pennycook). While some followers of English-Only are merely unaware of the complex history and contemporary practices of global English use, more extreme English-Only advocates have seen English as an epistemically superior language that is better suited for rationality and knowledge-making than other languages. *Monolingualism as Tacit English-Only Policies* has thus been a colonizing activity, invested in keeping English tied to territory (particularly in the US), sustaining legitimacy of national identity, and working to preserve English as the language of global power while suppressing all others. From this perspective, the consensus over English as the *lingua franca* reifies its value as the language of economic and social globalization and denies the local realities in which English language users with varied and intersectional identities shift English through their adaptations of it.

Monolingualism as Tacit English-Only Policies manifests in classroom practices through assessment, rubrics, textbooks and assigned reading, assignment sheets, and more. In both passive and active choices to preserve *Monolingualism as Tacit English-Only Policies*, multilingual students and their language uses are understood as deficient, with home languages posing as obstacles to English language learning, which can result in "students losing their heritage languages and diverse repertoires they bring with them" (Canagarajah, "Clarifying" 426). As Trimbur further clarifies in his 2006 article, "Linguistic Memory and the Politics of US English," in college courses we rarely refer to non-English texts, and the use of languages other than English "has remained largely invisible, both conceptually and programmatically" (585). When we *do* acknowledge the diverse language repertoires our students bring, under this monolingual ideology some might assume "that learning multiple codes simultaneously is difficult" and thus not appropriate or even possible in our classrooms (Canagarajah, "Clarifying" 425). Such teachers may reason, then, that as the language of power, English is better suited for use in classrooms. *Monolingualism as Tacit English-Only Policies* may lead us to assume that both English and *SE are what all students want, and we thus have a habit of "giving in uncritically to this desire" (Canagarajah, "Clarifying" 426).

Whether consciously or not, teacher-scholars who succumb to *Monolingualism as Tacit English-Only Policies* flatten and obscure language difference and deny linguistic inequality (including among English varieties). *Monolingualism as Tacit English-Only Policies*, like its counterparts, harms many writers through material consequences such as those described above. Yet for most of us, our disciplinary work remains deeply entrenched in its devices through our complicity at the levels of classroom, institution, and scholarship.

Monolingualism as the Myth of Linguistic Homogeneity

Addressing another vein of monolingualism, Matsuda has pointed out that in composition studies, we problematically assume linguistic homogeneity in our scholarship and our classrooms. *Monolingualism as the Myth of Linguistic Homogeneity* shares with the previous dimensions of monolingualism the primacy and privilege of particular varieties of English, and it further assumes that students enter our classrooms already native English speakers, readers, and writers. Indeed, the myth of linguistic homogeneity, revealed by Matsuda, directly extends the type of tacit English-Only monolingualism that Trimbur traces within US college composition. Matsuda explains that "the dominant discourse ... not only has accepted English Only as an ideal but it already assumes the state of English-only, in which students are native English speakers by default" ("Myth" 637). Though our students' linguistic diversity has increased, Matsuda points out, our "dominant image" of our students' language use has not expanded, and we thus tailor our pedagogical approaches with this image in mind. If we had accepted unidirectional monolingualism and actually had a multilingual image in mind, Matsuda convincingly argues, "all composition teachers would have been expected to learn how to teach the dominant variety of English to students who come from different language backgrounds." This has clearly not been the case in our field. In other words, even the standard language ideology that's central to our monolingual practices has remained resistant to the reality of a linguistically diverse composition classroom. We are, by and large, prepared to teach just one variety of English through methods and practices designed only with linguistically homogenous English-speaking students in mind.

Historically, higher education institutions have worked to uncritically "contain" and correct linguistic differences, evident in the problematic division of labor between ESL composition, mainstream composition, and even basic writing (see Matsuda "Myth," "Composition Studies," and "Basic Writing"). Globalization, the expansion of World Englishes, and the integration of subsequent generations in immigrant families have resulted in increasingly plentiful variations in English use, making it more difficult for containment practices to effectively divert students from mainstream classrooms. Despite the increasing regularity of multilingual and non-standard language users, this monolingual ideology presumes that prior gatekeeping and tracking methods—such as placement exams and essays—continue to maintain the composition classroom as a space for native, and thus "legitimate," English speakers. The imagined homogeneity preserves the *de facto* logic described above—that the composition classroom is a place for English speakers to read and write for other English speakers. Under *Monolingualism as the Myth of Linguistic Homogeneity*, and the practices that help maintain it, ELLs and international students may be represented at best as rare and different, or worse, as illegitimate outsiders who haven't yet earned a seat in mainstream composition, contrary to evidence that these students and their language practices are increasingly the norm (Matsuda "Myth", see also Arnold).

As is evident in the three facets of monolingualism thus far interrogated, in composition studies, discussions of combating monolingualism are rooted in social power and conflict, calling not only for increased awareness of linguistic diversity but for "a radical shift from composition's tacit policy of monolingualism to an explicit policy that embraces multilingual, cross-language writing as the norm for our teaching and research" (Horner, "Introduction" 3).

Monolingualism as the Myth of Linguistic Uniformity, Stability, Separateness

Moving from the politics of language and language users to focus on how languages work (and have historically worked) in the world, *Monolingualism as The Myth of Linguistic Uniformity, Stability, and Separateness* imagines languages as whole and static codes with inherent structures that have been and will always be internal to a given language and its use. In short, this facet of monolingualist ideology "treat[s] languages and language practices as discrete, uniform, and stable" (Horner et al. 307). It assumes that we "have separate competences for separately labeled languages" and that "one language detrimentally 'interferes' with the learning and use of another" (Canagarajah, *Translingual Practice* 6). From this myth's perspective, "the boundaries separating one language from another are imagined as fixed" (Horner and Trimbur 614) and "a bilingual person's competence is ... simply the sum of two discrete monolingual competences added together" (Canagarajah, "Toward" 591). While more complicated orientations understand that languages emerge, shift, and blend with one another upon the tides of fluctuation and variation in users and uses, this dimension of monolingualism defines differences as deficiencies, interprets the mixing of linguistic repertoires as a defiling of purity, and values above all else the chimera of what can only be an imagined whole.

Like other versions of monolingualism, *The Myth of Linguistic Uniformity, Stability, and Separateness* is unidirectional in its demands—that is, it places all responsibility on the non-English or non-standard English speaker to conform rather than placing equally on all parties the demand for versatility across languages, or, the "communicative burden" (Lippi-Green 73-74). It further takes on an "accommodationist" perspective which "assumes that each codified set of language practices is appropriate only to a specific, discrete, assigned social sphere: 'home' language, 'street' language, 'academic' language, 'business' language, 'written' language (aka the 'grapholect'), and so on" (Horner et al. 306). Resulting from these perspectives, "language becomes separated and systematized from other environmental forces. We lose the notion that languages are mobile, heterogeneous, and hybrid resources that combine with other semiotic resources to make meaning in context" (Canagarajah, *Translingual Practice* 23).

Canagarajah has highlighted the need to move beyond versions of multilingualism that "[perceive] the relationship between languages in an additive manner (i.e., combination of separate languages)," preferring instead a translingual perspective that "addresses the synergy, treating languages as always in contact and mutually influencing each other, with emergent meanings and grammars" ("Negotiating" 41). For Canagarajah and other translingual scholars working against this aspect of monolingualism, the idea of synergy is quintessential to evolving our understanding of the relationship among languages "which generates new grammars and meanings," as opposed to monolingualism's portrayal of "multiple languages enjoying their separate identity and structure even in contact" ("Clarifying" 419). Under translingualism, "the monolingual orientation is turned upside down, shifting the emphasis from sharedness to diversity, grammar to practices, and cognition to embodiment" (420). Bruce Horner and Laura Tetreault similarly urge this recognition of linguistic synergy, as we come to understand languages and language users as "internally diverse, interpenetrating, and fluid both in character and in relation to other languages and to social identities, which are likewise understood as multiple and fluid—the always emerging products of practices" (15). Thus, *The Myth of Linguistic Uniformity, Stability, and Separateness* resists acknowledging the situatedness of language uses and the linguistic fluidity inherent to drawing on cross-language repertoires.

We find it necessary to distinguish among these competing ideologies underpinning the broad concept of monolingualism since, collectively, they are fundamental to understanding what belief systems we're up against when we address linguistic difference in composition today. In essence, these strands of monolingualism help us question our normalized practices by asking: Why do we privilege, invite, and asses only Standardized English? Why do we privilege, invite, and assess only English to the exclusion of other world languages? Why are our pedagogies designed in ways that assume and strive for linguistic homogeneity? Why do we see language as uniform, stable, and separate, rather than dynamic, fluid, and synergistic? And, undergirding each of these questions, we'd add, should be, "How do our responses work to harm language communities?" and "What can we do to change that?" In clarifying the differences between and overlaps across these four distinct strands, we can begin to better understand how and why teacher-scholars invested in language politics may work in diverse ways to transform and transgress monolingualism in our classrooms, our administration, and our research.

The Problem with Incomprehensive Treatment of Monolingualisms

Collectively, scholars in composition have taken to task the political ramifications of monolingualist policies in our institutions as harmful to English language learners, basic writing students, and those whose English practices do not reflect the imagined community indexed in standard English. However, we argue that as scholarship combating monolingualism moves forward, it is crucial to ensure that all facets of monolingualism are accounted for and included. Given the different dimensions of monolingualism we've laid out, the importance of treating all facets of monolingualism holistically becomes clearer. Consider, for example, what happens when we do not attend explicitly to *Monolingualism as Standard Language Ideology* as integral to the monolingualist ideologies we aim to combat. A scholar addressing just the final three monolingualist ideologies discussed here might focus her energies on these three intertwined objectives:

1. invite and honor language difference in her classroom, encouraging code-meshed texts that feature a fuller range of students' linguistic repertoires (thus working against *Monolingualism as Tacit English-Only Policy*);
2. acknowledge the linguistic diversity in her classroom and work to train university faculty, including herself, to gain practical knowledge on how to better support linguistically diverse students (thus working against *Monolingualism as the Myth of Homogeneity*);
3. encourage students to engage their own and others' language varieties and communication practices as dynamic, fluid, and synergistic, while also training faculty across the curriculum to also understand and treat language as such (thus working against *Monolingualism as the Myth of Linguistic Uniformity, Stability, Separateness*).

While these stances and praxes are downright progressive, commendable, and worth celebrating, they take up only

three of the four strands of monolingualism.{5} Such a pedagogy lends to celebrating diversity and the "trans" nature of language, and it heightens awareness of linguistic diversity and language theory for students and faculty alike. But it also misses the critical opportunity to acknowledge in our research, teaching, and administration how language differences are tied up with language ideologies that hierarchize language varieties and their users—which, as we see it, is the most crucial aspect of combating monolingualism.

If, in this hypothetical pedagogy, we also attended to *Monolingualism as Standard Language Ideology*, we would set ourselves up for more socially just approaches: to better interrogate the paradox of upholding *SE even after decades of research recognizing how *SE serves oppressive projects; to avoid the pitfalls of language play (rather than linguistic justice) taking priority in our research and pedagogy; and, to shift from a disembodied, history-less language user to focusing the purposes of our work in mitigating real, historical struggles that have long haunted our literacy work in composition classroom and across the university. A more multidimensional accounting of monolingualism (including and especially *Monolingualism as Standard Language Ideology*) can lead us to making language politics and the material realities that follow more central to composition scholarship and pedagogies (in addition to writing program administration, writing center work, and teacher training).

Our concern here can be likened to recent criticisms made of translingual approaches to writing. As translingualism may be considered the latest iteration of combating monolingualism in composition studies, it serves as a useful example for the need to be mindful of all facets of the monolingual paradigm.{6} Juan Guerra, in his contribution to the recent *College English* special issue on "Translingual Work in Composition," convincingly claims that "we falter in our efforts to help our students understand what a translingual approach is because we have been leading them to think that we expect them to produce a particular kind of writing that mimics what we call code-meshing" (231). He argues that, as teachers adopting a translingual approach, "what we want instead is for [students] to call on the rhetorical sensibilities many of them already possess but put aside because of what they see as a jarring shift in context" (231-32). In his concluding remarks to the same special issue, Keith Gilyard worries that portraying translangauging as something all students perform may lead to the "devaluing of the historical and unresolved struggles of groups that have been traditionally underrepresented in the academy and suffer disproportionately in relation to it" (286).

We, alongside Guerra and Gilyard, fear that dwelling too locally in the realm of language practice assumes a sort of "linguistic everyperson" in our students and so fails to serve the political project translingualism offers for communicators drawing on non-standardized varieties.{7} We interpret the move away from focusing on material realities of language difference as, potentially, resulting from applying disparate definitions of monolingualism. We have come to understand this pattern as emerging when we treat translingualism as foremost a process and practice (i.e., translanguaging) rather than as an ideology with material consequences (i.e., our cultural attitudes about language and their effects on individuals). Our agenda supports Gilyard's conclusion that despite legitimate criticisms of translingualism, "its rejection of the monolingual paradigm is certainly the way forward" (289). Whether we take up translingualism or work against monolingualism from another perspective, we believe that explicit attention to *Monolingualism as Standard Language Ideology* should guide and inform our pedagogy and scholarship.

Explicitly Combating Monolingualism: A Shared Outcome

Monolingualism in all of its complex iterations is harmful to our students, harmful to faculty, and serves nefarious projects with which we are certain none of us would wish for our work to be aligned. As those of us who have long fought monolingualist ideologies see it, failing to combat monolingualist ideology is equivalent to perpetuating it; it leads us, consciously or not, to "ultimately support a status quo, laissez-faire approach to language that helps to maintain the dominance of some languages and language users over others" (Horner, "Students' Right" 743). We make false promises in our composition classrooms that the standard (English) language students will learn in our courses will give them the tools they need to be successful in their college careers and far beyond. We assure students that standard language is the key to the gate. But standard language—or, more accurately, the shared ideology that privileges it—*is the gate*. Standard language ideology is what holds back groups who use non-privileged language varieties; *SE regularly serves as a barrier, not merely a path, to social upward mobility. If language, an abstraction, is indeed a tool, it is often more effective as a tool for oppression than a tool for mobility. While the consolidated consequences that result from monolingualist ideologies are weighty, all can be understood foremost as preserving social hierarchies and maintaining oppression.

It is irresponsible, indeed unethical, to assume and treat language and language differences as apolitical. How, we ask, can we be informed about the harms of monolingualist ideologies—the kinds of beliefs that classes like the ones most of us teach have historically perpetuated for decades—and not address and combat them more explicitly? How can we know about the oppression resulting from the dominance of English and demands for *SE and not challenge

these standards and their effects actively with our colleagues and students?

While some may argue that pragmatism is the way forward, we argue that it is no one's best interest to wait until racism and everyday language discrimination are overcome before we reorient our pedagogies to overtly dismantle monolingualist ideologies. Either we get busy contesting them, or we continue perpetuating them all in the name of waiting for a revolution we can't guarantee will come. We believe that salient and intentional classroom approaches that work explicitly against monolingualism will enhance the field's movement toward a literacy work that is decolonizing, antiracist, and nonviolent. But such promise will only be realized through ongoing collective and large-scale endeavors. Some may prefer to leave this work to those who have a special interest in language difference, hoping that their own pedagogies will make more modest strides by supporting language varieties without explicitly working against monolingualism. This approach problematically assumes or hopes that more acceptance of linguistic differences will come with time and through the efforts of select groups, such as translingual writing or second language writing specialists. However, such selective and special interest efforts provide little hope for change when the majority of our discipline turns a blind eye, consciously or not, to the myths and harms perpetuated by monolingualist ideology. Collective intervention in cultural and systemic perpetuations of monolingualism is required if we are to expect any sort of real strides against the social and racial hierarchies that are aided by linguistic discrimination and exclusion.

It is beyond the constraints of this current article to exemplify the many ways in which teachers can better work to combat monolingualist ideologies. To briefly illustrate what this looks like in the classroom, however, we can turn to pedagogical examples from scholars already committed to making the historical and social relations of power and language central in composition. Consider Guerra's emphasis in his teaching on "explicitly demystifying the various approaches to language difference" (16). With students, Guerra examines a continuum of competing ideologies "with a monolingual/monocultural approach at one end, a multilingual/multicultural approach in the middle, and a translingual/transcultural approach at the other end" (16). Inviting students to study each approach allows them to consider the real world impacts of these linguistic orientations. Relatedly, in Michelle Cox's first-year composition course for international students at Dartmouth, she "sought to create optimal conditions for agency by inviting students into the academic conversation on second language writing, equipping students with the same literature and tools that academics have access to, and providing a venue for self-positioning" (Shapiro et al. 43). In her classroom, students can study and take an active stance regarding monolingualism.

Building from Guerra's and Cox's approaches, we believe all composition teachers and students will benefit from expanding their understandings of how competing language ideologies inform their writing today, gaining insights on how ideologies have and continue to mark and violate larger cultures and communities far beyond the work they will do in our classroom, other classrooms, and the workforce. That said, we are inspired by those who incorporate language diversity explicitly into writing instruction as a way to actively resist the oppressive functions of *SE. Vershawn Ashanti Young has long advocated for code-meshing as a way to expand what we perceive as possible and powerful in academic writing ("Naw We Straight"; "Your Average Nigga"). In the same vein, in his chapters in *Other People's English*, Kim Brian Lovejoy shares how self-directed writing provides an opportunity for students to problematize the cultural context that has politicized and constrained linguistic variety in the classroom, while making space for code-meshing to "validate students' multiple voices" and build their rhetorical dexterity across writing contexts. In the context of code-meshing as it's been theorized by Young, this kind of language praxis blends an attention to the undercurrents of power that shape language expectations in various spaces with a rhetorical strategy that leverages writer agency in remaking those expectations through their intentional discursive practices.

Thus, an important difference between the approach we advocate for here as compared to other approaches to addressing language diversity in the classroom is an insistence on contextualizing the oppressive aspects of *SE so that students are armed, just as we are, with the knowledge needed to make decisions about how, whether, and when to push against standardized norms. Consider Greenfield's call for drastically revising our shared goals in writing courses and tutoring. She acknowledges the need to work with students to enhance their language and literacy, but she encourages us to support students as they "develop a critical consciousness of the effects of their choices at an individual and institutional level, and—most importantly—cultivating in them a sense of agency in combating, linguistically and otherwise, the injustices they encounter along the way" (58).

Greenfield suggests we might accomplish such an ambitious feat by examining with students the racist undercurrents of language attitudes and the inherent linguistic and racial hierarchizing sustained in composition pedagogy and in higher education at large. Only then might "students' choices about language use [be] based on their own critical thinking, not on the instructors' personal biases" (58). Importantly, as Greenfield clarifies, "Such a pedagogy is not a distraction from the real work of teaching and tutoring writing but an investment in teaching and tutoring through a lens that both ethically and practically accounts for the social and linguistic truths of our time" (58).

To be clear, though, the composition classroom, framed by commitments to combating monolingualism, does not

lecture on the ills of *SE or try to convert students over to vilifying it so much as it treats the politics of *SE and language diversity as complicated and multifaceted topics of inquiry in and of themselves. This approach could perhaps be likened to writing about writing movements, but with far more attention to the larger sociopolitical contexts of English's dominance and its role in empowering privileged groups and in oppressing groups already disadvantaged. As Canagarajah so poignantly notes in regards to translingual approaches to teaching, "Translingualism doesn't ignore Standard English ... Such norms are a social fact, and can be ignored only to one's peril" ("Clarifying" 425). Instead, he argues, "What translingual pedagogies favor is deconstructing Standard English to make students aware that it is a social construct" in order to "critically engage with this variety to represent their voices and renegotiate its norms" (425). While teachers who aim to combat monolingual ideologies may still rely upon *SE in the classroom, it will be treated as content and rhetorical strategies to critically examine and critique rather than abstract skills and discourses to master.

We can, at once, prepare students to identify and harness the standard strategically in context while also deconstructing its perceived inherent legitimacy and inviting linguistic and rhetorical differences. Further, keeping *SE as central content of the composition classroom aligns well with scholars in translingualism who call on us to spend more time "dwelling in borders" (Cushman), exploring the "meso" or "in-between position" (Paudel), and treating writing as critical translation (Horner and Tetreault). Rethinking the role of *SE in the classroom in this way allows students to, as Hem Paudel describes, "rethink historical language conventions, consider their interactions with dominant social ideologies, reflect on the available resources for creatively resisting the hegemony of English monolingualism, and develop a mesodiscursive awareness of language use in specific micro-macro contexts" (216). A course informed by the ills of monolingualist ideologies will strive to build "mesodiscursive awareness" as well as "metalinguistic and meta-rhetorical dexterity" in students, as Paudel and other scholars invoked here call for.

At Rachael's university, she has been working with Celeste Del Russo, director of Rowan University's Writing Center, to highlight and work against standard language ideology in the center. Through a carefully designed series of professional development workshops, hiring of a multilingual tutor coordinator, as well as in partnerships with campus resources like the Office of Social Justice, Inclusion, and Conflict Resolution, they have been steadily working to shift the tutoring culture to one that values language difference and actively works against standard language ideology. In ongoing efforts, they are working alongside tutors to define and design tutoring strategies that activate ethical approaches to language diversity while meeting students' needs and working against all dimensions of monolingualism; these approaches might include honoring and welcoming students' language varieties in all stages of the writing process, treating those language differences as resources rather than impediments to English language writing, and using a "questioning orientation" rather than a "correcting gaze" to respect writer agency when considering perceived error or irregularity in student writing.

In her graduate courses in the Language and Literacy MA Program at City College, Missy works to heighten awareness of the linguistic discrimination and other obstacles facing all learners of English and especially speakers of undervalued varieties—the very realities that we have discussed in this article that may go overlooked especially by budding teachers who may be unaware of research on standard language ideology or who, like most teachers of English language and literacy, may be focused solely on highlighting the advantages of learning and using SE*. Meanwhile, Missy's campaign for a more explicitly political course learning outcome guiding FYC continues, as do her efforts toward offering professional development workshops aimed at addressing with City College instructors the politics of monolingualist ideologies.

In the teaching of our undergraduate writers at Rowan and City College, we both treat monolingualist ideology as a topic of inquiry that students critically examine through readings, dialogue, and writing assignments. Many undergraduate students, especially those at City College, are themselves affected daily by the politics of monolingualist ideologies, and they show readiness and even eagerness to learn more about the too often mystified politics and oppressive nature of *SE. Rowan students, on the other hand, would appear to be a much more racially and linguistically homogenous group, making awareness of language difference and confrontation of standard language ideology perhaps still more critical. It is precisely *because* of the perceived sameness that students are moved when they discover a more nuanced understanding of language difference and power. Our methods for doing this sort of language work with students, then, must of course be situated, localized, and shaped by our unique university contexts.

Inherent within the select examples of teaching we've synthesized here is a shared commitment to account for the full politics of monolingualist ideologies. We recognize that each is imperfect and incomplete; these examples of research and teaching reflect just some of the means by which we may work together toward delinking the profits of our literacy work from colonization and violence against bodies locally and around the world. In a way, each example above addresses a course outcome such as this:

Students will recognize the role of language attitudes and standards in empowering, oppressing, and hierarchizing languages and their users.

Again, there are a variety of pedagogical strategies we might propose or recall from past scholarship that might address this outcome, too many to review here. For now, we wish to highlight the need in our current historical moment for all writing teachers, tutors, and administrators to consider how we might implement lessons, readings, discussions, and assignments that interrogate *SE with students, offering critical reflection on how standard language shapes and is shaped by social power. Adopting a learning outcome such as this one, or like the one suggested by Ligia Mihut at the beginning of this essay, we believe may help writing teachers explicitly work against all forms of monolingualism, whether they do so out of a translingual framework or through other approaches. Guided by such an outcome, our hope is that composition research, teaching, and administration will merge in a collective pursuit against the many affective, embodied, and material consequences of monolingualism. While this is but a modest step, we know well the importance of defining the culture of a discipline, department, and classroom by way of settling on shared goals.{8}

We will be the first to acknowledge that none of the work we've covered, including our own approaches and the outcome we suggest, will magically solve the problems we've highlighted with monolingualist ideologies and the incomplete treatment of them. However, moving forward, we believe we can work toward a set of shared ideals. We can make sure other languages and Englishes are invited, supported, and valued; we can ensure that students and teachers alike come to know the full politics of English; we can develop strategies to help our institutions gain a fuller sense of what students' language backgrounds and language goals are; we can fight for a range of credit-bearing composition courses that fulfill degree requirements, and advocate for students' agency in self-selecting courses that best meet their linguistic needs and goals; we can better train and support service staff who work with linguistically diverse students; we can advocate for smaller classrooms to provide the space and time teachers need to work on languaging; we can develop programmatic assessments that value labor and rhetorical sensibility rather than proficiency in academic discourse; we ourselves can normalize and make visible the plentitude of language variety by continuing to publish in our own dialects and languages; we can press our universities and the public at large to understand the full politics of English and monolingualist ideologies; we can increase efforts toward becoming a more multilingual nation; we can protest unethical media portrayals through public critique; we can lobby for legislation and community programs that work to support rather than discriminate against folks who don't use English. We invite your ideas, suggestions, and participation to extend this list of actions and to better unite against linguistic injustice in our classrooms and in everyday moments.

Notes

1. We intentionally include the "-ized" suffix when referring to standardized English to recognize the ongoing and emergent historical and social processes that shape what version of English is privileged at a given place and time (see Laura Greenfield). We aim to further emphasize the myth of so-called "standard English" by preceding our acronym with an asterix, in chorus with sociolinguist Rosina Lippi-Green who explains her use of *SAE as follows: "syntacticians use an asterisk to mark utterances which are judged grammatically inauthentic. I am adapting that practice here, and will use *SAE to refer to that mythical beast, the idea of homogenous, standard American English" (62). (Return to text.)
2. See Dingo's treatment of women's economic "fitness" in neoliberal policy in *Networking Arguments*. (Return to text.)
3. This conversation has also come up in cultural rhetorics scholarship, especially by Geneva Smitherman, Keith Gilyard, and Victor Villanueva; in alternative discourse conversations including scholars like Patricia Bizzell and Tom Fox; more recently around code-meshing with scholars like Vershawn Ashanti Young and Suresh Canagarajah; and throughout decades of basic writing and second language writing research. (Return to text.)
4. Especially important scholarship on language politics from beyond our field comes from, among many others, aforementioned scholars Lippi-Green, James Milroy, Lesley Milroy, and Phillipson, but also linguists Alastair Pennycook, Terrence G. Wiley, and Walt Wolfram, as well as TESOL and second language writing scholars Elsa Roberts Auerbach, Ryuko Kubuta, and Angel Lin. (Return to text.)
5. We can imagine readers questioning our reasoning that encouraging code-meshed texts does not contest *Monolingualism as Standard Language Ideology*. While it's true that inviting language difference may work to assign heightened value to other varieties and languages within academic settings, unless we are actively and explicitly exposing and deconstructing the harmful standard language ideologies undergirding our unchecked privileging of *SE (and that which make code-meshing a purposeful and useful act of contestation in the first place), we fail to address the full politics of monolingualism. In other words, we can invite language difference into our classrooms without students ever challenging their and others' belief systems deeming *SE as superior. Such a pedagogical approach, we believe, would be an incomprehensive treatment of monolingualist

ideologies. ([Return to text.](#))

6. Of course, translingualism isn't the only entry point for discussing language politics. But here we invoke scholarship on translingualism because of its situatedness in composition studies, its relevance to our own projects, and, especially, its explicit and unapologetic commitment to combating monolingualism. In this way, we understand translingualism to be an active strategy for working against monolingualism and intervening in the harmful effects of *SE, particularly for the most vulnerable student bodies in US higher education. Further, although here we ground our understanding for combating monolingualism in translingual approaches to writing, we respect and reflect important critiques of translingualism's potential to elide difference in language users in its attempts to unite all language through the differences within and among language uses. In Horner et al.'s opinion piece, they define translingualism as threefold: "(1) honoring the power of all language users to shape language to specific ends; (2) recognizing the linguistic heterogeneity of all users of language both within the United States and globally; and (3) directly confronting English monolingualist expectations by researching and teaching how writers can work with and against, not simply within, those expectations" (305). Of interest to us here is how this definition aligns to the multifaceted nature of monolingualism that we outline. Significantly, the third aspect of translingualism they name explicitly works with students to combat monolingualism. That said, while "teaching how writers can work with and against" discursive norms like those in *SE no doubt helps to combat monolingualism, such a pedagogical approach still does not make clear the need for instructors to examine alongside students the oppressive nature of said norms. This, we argue, is where our field can unite behind a shared outcome, like that we propose below, to make this work more explicit in our classrooms. ([Return to text.](#))

7. It's worth acknowledging that the field was examining the myth of standard English before it was examining tacit English-Only policies and before it was examining the myth of linguistic homogeneity. Indeed, we may even respectively align influential texts that were significant to each of these three notions, which also reveals chronology (*SRTOL*, 1974; Horner and Trimbur, 2002; Matsuda "Myth," 2006). However, what we find particularly noteworthy is that the term translingualism was coined once most monolingualisms had been introduced to the field (*As Standard Language Ideology*, *as Tacit English-Only Policies*, and *as the Myth of Linguistic Homogeneity*), while the other monolingualism we review here (*As the Myth of Linguistic Uniformity, Stability, and Separateness*) was (and is still being) developed alongside, and as a response to, the translingual movement. While we do not have the time and space to explore that further here, this may be relevant given recent arguments that focusing on *the Myth of Linguistic Uniformity, Stability, and Separateness* without attending more to *Standard Language Ideology* can lead to overlooking the politics of language. ([Return to text.](#))

8. Some folks may argue that outcomes constrain pedagogical possibilities in an effort to streamline easily assessable deliverables and to satisfy neoliberal university impulses toward efficiency, scalability, and replicability. We, rather, understand this kind of outcome to offer unity to teachers in a department or discipline. Through shared outcomes, we project and enact a shared vision of best practices and shared values; we tether our ideological commitments to pragmatic action. We imagine the outcome we propose as one that an individual teacher may take up in her classroom, that a writing program may adopt or adapt in their lower division courses, or that may even be used to amend the current Council of Writing Program Administrators' Outcomes Statement. ([Return to text.](#))

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