Local Is Global: The Inclusion of U.S.-Resident Multilingual Students in Higher Education

Gail Shuck
Associate Professor of English
gshuck@boisestate.edu
Some general principles

• Academic language is acquired in -- and not before -- participation in academic discourse communities.

• Institutional policies and programs rarely account for the presence, much less the needs, of US-resident English learners.

• If we admit English learners, we are responsible for English learners.

• Embracing linguistic diversity as a resource rather than a problem benefits all students.
“The Promised Land”

...in which “each and every [nonnative English speaking] student at an English-medium campus would have access to programs and support systems that are designed to promote mastery and excellence in academic English, in ways that address the local and specific needs of those students....” (Kroll, 2006, p. 298, emphasis added).
<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th></th>
<th>Actual students</th>
</tr>
</thead>
</table>
| A | - Born in Mexico  
   - Arrived in U.S. at age 15, oldest of 5 children  
   - Can’t read or write anything academic in Spanish  
   - Fluent Spanish speaker  
   - Highly proficient, colloquial English speaker  
   - Parents have no formal education |
| B | - Born in Congo  
   - Arrived in U.S. at age 12  
   - Spent 3 years in refugee camp with minimal school  
   - Got accepted to the university based on his relatively high GPA from high school  
   - Doesn’t read well in L1, French, or English |
| C | - Born in Bosnia  
   - Arrived in U.S. at age 3  
   - Spent 2 years in Germany before being resettled in U.S.  
   - Speaks Bosnian-accented English  
   - Perfectly fluent in Bosnian and English, conversant in German |
The Promised Land

(Kroll, 2006)

5 Areas of Support

(Ferris, 2009)

- Writing programs with options for multilingual students
- Appropriate methods for identifying L2 learners and tracking their success
- Tutor preparation for working with L2 writers in support units across campus
- Equitable assessment processes that account for linguistic diversity
- Faculty preparation for working with L2 writers across the curriculum
The Promised Land

(Kroll, 2006)

5 Areas of Support

(Ferris, 2009)

- Writing programs with options for multilingual students
- Appropriate methods for identifying L2 learners and tracking their success
- Tutor preparation for working with L2 writers in support units across campus
- Equitable assessment processes that account for linguistic diversity
- Faculty preparation for working with L2 writers across the curriculum
The Promised Land
(Kroll, 2006)

5 Areas of Support
(Ferris, 2009)

- Writing programs with options for multilingual students
- Appropriate methods for identifying L2 learners and tracking their success
- Tutor preparation for working with L2 writers in support units across campus
- Equitable assessment processes that account for linguistic diversity
- Faculty preparation for working with L2 writers across the curriculum
The Promised Land
(Kroll, 2006)

5 Areas of Support
(Ferris, 2009)

- Writing programs with options for multilingual students
- Appropriate methods for identifying L2 learners and tracking their success
- Tutor preparation for working with L2 writers in support units across campus
- Equitable assessment processes that account for linguistic diversity
- Faculty preparation for working with L2 writers across the curriculum
The Promised Land
(Kroll, 2006)

5 Areas of Support
(Ferris, 2009)

- Writing programs with options for multilingual students
- Appropriate methods for identifying L2 learners and tracking their success
- Tutor preparation for working with L2 writers in support units across campus
- Equitable assessment processes that account for linguistic diversity
- Faculty preparation for working with L2 writers across the curriculum
Abdul: Missed—and then Regained—Opportunities

- Afghanistan, by way of Turkey
- Arrived at age 26
- Started at Boise State after 11 months in the U.S.
- No English proficiency test for admission (submitted translated high school transcripts from Turkey)
- Lowest possible score on ESOL placement test, suggesting IEP before university matriculation
First stop

Abdul

Admissions Office
Next: Boise State Refugee Alliance

Admissions connected with BSRA -- a student organization for peer support

“Try taking the ESOL test again, Abdul.”

“Go talk to Dr. Shuck.”

Meanwhile...
His own decisions

Sits in on Math and Biology. Decides that if they’re understandable, he’s ready for college. They are. Takes The Write Class—our online course-match (placement) system for First-Year Writing. “Places” into English 101.
Five weeks in...

English 101 is too hard.
Comes to me; I help him file an appeal to drop the class late.
I work with Academic Advising and Support Center to get him into an ACAD course.
Takes Engl. 101M the next semester; does great.
Links in Abdul’s support network

Andrea in Admissions

BSRA

English Language Support Programs (ELSP)

AASC

First-Year Writing Program + ELSP partnership

Neighbors United (refugee collaborative) → CNA
Neighbors United

Center for Global Education
- TRIO Programs
- Boise State Refugee Alliance
- Office of Student Diversity and Inclusion
- International Student Services

Writing Center
- Engl/Ling majors

Center for Teaching and Learning

English Language Support

Graduate College
- MA Rhet/Comp.
- Academic Advising

First-Year Writing

College of Western Idaho
- Refugee resettlement agencies

IEP

Admissions
- Faculty across curric.
A fuzzy picture of linguistic diversity

10.9% of the 1185 domestic students in our 2015 survey of first-year students: “No, English was not my 1st language.”
A model of shared responsibility

- Well-prep'd faculty in writing program
- Multilingual & cross-cultural options in writing program
- Early identification of English learners
- Well-prep'd faculty across curriculum
A model of shared responsibility

- Well-prep'd faculty in writing program
- Well-prep'd faculty across curriculum
- Linguistically inclusive assessment & placement
- Tracking of success
- Multilingual & cross-cultural options in writing program
- Early identification of English learners
A model of shared responsibility

- Well-prep’d faculty across curriculum
- Linguistically inclusive assessment & placement
- Tracking of success
- Effective cross-cult. communication a campus priority
- Global Perspectives across curriculum
- Well-prep’ed faculty in writing program
- Early identification of English learners
- Multilingual & cross-cultural options in writing program
- Well-prepared tutors across curric.
A model of shared responsibility

- Refugee Agencies
- Local and international businesses
- Executive
- Local high schools and community colleges
- Multilingual & cross-cultural options in writing program
- Early identification of English learners
- Well-prepared tutors across curric.
- Well-prep’d faculty in writing program
- Well-prep’d faculty across curriculum
- Linguistically inclusive assessment & placement
- Tracking of success
- Effective cross-cult. communication a campus priority
- Partnerships with local and global community
- International university partnerships
- Global Perspectives across curriculum
Thank you!

gshuck@boisestate.edu