

**ASSESSING LINGUISTIC STANDARDIZATION IN COMPOSITION
COURSE SYLLABI: A KEYWORD ANALYSIS OF WHITE
LANGUAGE SUPREMACY**

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ABSTRACT

This dissertation examines the key issues and diverse perspectives on language standardization, particularly focusing on the emergence of White Language Supremacy (WLS) as an analytical framework. WLS refers to the systematic privileging of standardized language forms associated with traditionally and predominantly white cultural norms. In professional and educational settings, these dominant language ideologies and practices, or Standard Language Ideologies (SLI), often devalue non-standard Englishes and overlook the linguistic diversity of marginalized communities. Most notably, WLS can be embedded within common terms and phrases such as “clarity” and “convention” used to evaluate students. The presence and usage of these terms can indicate WLS by making assumptions about students’ fluency in Standard English and by imposing requirements for compliance. By applying and revising methods of analysis available in the WLS literature, this study illuminates the complex relationship between language, power, and race in shaping linguistic norms and hierarchies within writing. Accordingly, the methods integrate quantitative keyword frequency analysis with qualitative keyword-in-context analysis to consider how and where WLS manifests in course syllabi, and more broadly, the writing program.

The findings indicate that analysis of WLS keywords is helpful in identifying problematic statements or judgements about language, which has important implications for writing program reform. However, these keywords alone cannot determine linguistic discrimination; they must be understood in context, particularly regarding their prescriptiveness. This study promotes a dialogue that accommodates diverse perspectives and experiences regarding race and considers the disciplinary and political configurations

within writing programs that may also endorse WLS. By acknowledging the limitations of existing WLS theorizations, writing instructors and administrators can navigate the complexities of teaching language and linguistic difference with greater sensitivity and effectiveness. I aim to leverage the knowledge gained from this research not only to validate the need for writing program standardization but also to enhance our curriculum and methods in fostering pedagogies that are more linguistically conscious and equitable. In closing, this study serves as a critical reflection on the challenges and opportunities presented by WLS theory in the field of composition studies.

I dedicate this dissertation to my husband, Patrick,
whose unwavering support, motivation,
and love made this dissertation possible.
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even when I felt like giving up.
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CHAPTER 1

INTRODUCTION

In 2020, conversations about language standardization became a part of our national discussions of race when Rutgers University “declare[d] grammar racist,” as one newspaper proclaimed. This landed the school directly in between progressive and conservative media narratives about liberal education.¹ Several news articles falsely reported that the school considered “proper grammar” racist, when in fact, Rutgers made no such claim. Rather, the open letter in support of Black Lives Matter stated:

[critical grammar] challenges the familiar dogma that writing instruction should limit emphasis on grammar/sentence-level issues so as to not put students from multilingual, non-standard ‘academic’ English backgrounds at a disadvantage. Instead, it encourages students to develop a critical awareness of the variety of choices available to them [with] regard to micro-level issues in order to empower them and equip them to push against biases based on ‘written’ accents. (“Department Actions,” 2020)

Critics of this statement viewed it as an extension of performative “wokeness,” arguing that equating grammar with racism (that is, how critics interpret the situation) was not only an overreach but also a detriment to society by encouraging the breakdown of effective communication. In this way, Rutgers’ adoption of “critical grammar” was misunderstood as eliminating grammar entirely which would result in a “dumbing down” of writing studies for students of color. The backlash against Rutgers exemplifies the complex and often-conflicting conceptions of language and race we see throughout education, particularly the strong emotions and beliefs we have regarding linguistic

¹ During the height and aftermath of #BlackLivesMatter protests, discussion of race, especially how to educate and talk about it was hotly debated by educators, government officials, the media, and by normal citizens. Progressives insisted on the need for Critical Race Theory to be taught in schools, while conservatives argued that addressing race in schools was a form of liberal indoctrination that caused more division, thus advocating for a “colorblind” approach to race.

standardization and who gets to define what that standard is. The issues and formations of language and race discussed here are not limited to Rutgers; they are at the forefront of writing programs and antiracist education initiatives at many colleges and universities across the country, including my own institution, Hudson University, the site of this study.

Accordingly, the field of writing studies and composition in these recent years has renewed its interest on theorizing linguistic difference and Standard Language Ideologies (SLI) and their implications in the composition classroom. While these discussions regarding linguistic difference have been ongoing for decades,² the renewed urgency and motivations for social justice reform has led to more assertive calls for linguistic inclusion. Grounded in these cultural and disciplinary debates regarding language, race, and standardization, this dissertation problematizes the political configurations of university writing programs and their perspective on language and race. Specifically, my research applies, builds upon, and critiques existing frameworks for assessing linguistic discrimination, particularly the concept of White Language Supremacy (WLS), with the goal of gaining a deeper understanding of linguistic standardization within the field and writing program administration.

As such, the framework of WLS promotes the idea that language standards are predominantly white and based on the conventions of White Mainstream English (WME). According to Asao Inoue (2015), the preminent scholar on the concept, WLS

²² Despite multiple statements (CCCC/NCTE 1974; 2020) affirming “Students Right to Their Own Language,” the field continues to have the similar, if not the same, conversations about how to address linguistic justice within the field and writing classrooms. Over the years, it has evolved from discussion of the “social contexts” for writing and valuing home discourses, to more extreme (and current) demands for Black linguistic justice or a complete dismantling of Standard English practices.

influences our “lives, bodies, languages, actions, behaviors, expectations for writing [and] reading practices that judge writing” (*Antiracist* 43). The Conference on College Composition and Communication (CCCC) (2021), a leading professional organization in the field, further argues:

WLS assists white supremacy by using language to control reality and resources by defining and evaluating people, places, things, reading, writing, rhetoric, pedagogies, and processes in multiple ways that damage our students and our democracy. It imposes a worldview that is simultaneously pro-white, cisgender, male, heteronormative, patriarchal, ableist, racist, and capitalist [...] WLS is, thus, structural and usually a part of the standard operating procedures of classrooms, disciplines, and professions [...] WLS perpetuates many forms of systemic and structural violence.

WLS informs our realities, ideologies, and pedagogies, a dynamic Inoue (2015) calls “white racial habitus.” Racial habitus helps to explain how the racialized judging of and attitudes towards language have both linguistic and material consequences by marking “otherness.” As a tool of White Supremacy, WLS thus allows for judgments of “good” and “bad” writing to be created and maintained through the standardization of written language. For instance, we might assign “Between the World and Me” by Ta-Nehisi Coates and have discussions of Black language, encouraging students to explore their linguistic and racial/ethnic differences in discussions, but then judge or penalized the same students when those same differences appear in their own writing. In this case, linguistic difference is only acceptable when it is literature, or stylistic and authorial choice, but not acceptable in academic writing produced by students of color. Similarly, when we think of “good writing” we often associate it with grammatical correctness or fluency in Standard English. Yet rather than serving as one type of “good writing” that exists, it then forms the criteria by which all student writing is judged. Using standard

language, WLS structures how we evaluate people, practices like reading and writing, and our pedagogies.

Nonetheless, WLS has been criticized for its assertive claims about what defines and counts as linguistic racism, which can cover a range of concepts or “habits of white language” (HOWL) from “individualism” to “clarity, order, and control.” These concepts, Inoue (2021b) argues, “are a part of racist discourse, so are historical in origin and a set of social structures that can often be difficult to discern or notice.” However, critics of WLS (e.g., Smith, 2021; McWhorter, 2022) argue that it is not only too all-encompassing and absolute, but also reductive in its reasonings. WLS assumes that racism is the default mode in most, if not all, academic settings. This includes the ideologies behind common writing studies concepts such as “basic,” “logic,” “conventions,” or “clarity.” (Inoue 2015, 2021a, 2021b; Davila 2021). But, while these concepts have the potential to be used in discriminatory ways, it is difficult to claim that every time an instructor asks a student to “be clearer” in their essay, that they are (consciously or unconsciously) participating in WLS. There is a slippery slope in defining something or someone as inherently racist based solely on past assumptions and usage, as exemplified by the reaction to Rutger’s statement. In many ways, this practice is also a type of stereotyping of language. Moreover, as it has been established in the field of linguistics, there is nothing inherently racist in the teaching of grammar. In fact, it is an essential and natural step in the process of language acquisition. Standard English, in and of itself is not racist, but a *lingua franca* that makes communication possible across several dialects of English. Ultimately, what I find most difficult about WLS is its demands for the clear division and classification of people and concepts it deems racist.

WLS suggests that any instructor who teaches Standard English fundamentally engages in White Language Supremacy, and by extension White Supremacy itself. This framework is problematic because, no instructor wants to be labeled as racist, and it discourages open discourse about language and race and how to assess it. If we approach linguistic standardization in this way, it makes it difficult to participate in conversations that effect any sort of social change.

Regardless of which perspective is right or wrong, there are clear limitations and valid critiques of WLS that raise several important questions: what role do writing programs play in cultivating linguistic standardization and racial discrimination? Moreover, how can we use concepts like WLS to interrogate or better understand the mechanisms that enable this process and in turn revise or expand our definitions of WLS? If we are to believe that racism is the default for most academic discourses, it becomes critical to examine the elements of composition courses or programs that permit such attitudes to persist. This dissertation contributes to this discussion by examining the theories surrounding WLS and applying its methodologies (which will be summarized and discussed in Chapters 2 and 3). My goal is to deepen (or complicate) our understanding of the relationship between linguistic racism and writing program administration and provide recommendations for future program reform.

To explore these questions, I employ keyword analysis of Hudson University's writing course syllabi to determine how these types of documents can reflect institutional, personal, or racial biases towards language—or in other words, how they employ WLS. Through a detailed analysis of established WLS keywords and concepts, this dissertation argues that while prominent theories of WLS are valuable in identifying and discussing

linguistic discrimination, they also have limitations in their conceptions of linguistic standardization and definitions of WLS keywords. It is essential then for a study like the one presented in this dissertation to explore the implications of WLS not just in theory but in actual practice and application. This project conducts both quantitative and qualitative analyses of composition course syllabi to examine how linguistic discrimination is expressed by writing instructors. I eventually draw conclusions about how WLS operates and is perpetuated within the composition program to address several key questions:

1. How can the established framework of WLS and its methods be applied to Hudson University's writing program through an analysis of composition course syllabus to identify how linguistic racism appears or what it looks like across program?
2. More broadly, what can this study tell us about the relationship between writing program administration, writing instructors, and the ideological or pedagogical formations embedded within the writing program at Hudson University that may enable, support, or attempt to reconcile linguistic standardization?
3. Finally, how can the results from this study be used to better facilitate writing program assessment and in turn, expand our conceptions, definitions, criteria, and utility of a framework like WLS to address linguistic discrimination?

Research Rationale

The location of this study is Hudson University³, a medium sized, Northeast college serving just over 5,800 undergraduate students. The Composition Program attends to every undergraduate student as they are required to take a sequence of three writing composition courses, ENG 100, ENG 150, and ENG 200⁴ to graduate. This means that the Composition program at Hudson consistently interacts with the largest number of students from all majors, levels, backgrounds, runs the largest number of undergraduate courses, and is taught by a sizable faculty. However, despite its prominence in the University, the writing program at Hudson struggles to provide literacy training to linguistically diverse students especially from academically and politically diverse teachers. Hudson's writing program, like many others across America, is not immune to the social and cultural tensions regarding race that are playing out on our screens and in our classrooms.

Most recently, the writing program and specific instructors at Hudson have come under public scrutiny for racism and language discrimination by students. The broader dialogue surrounding anti-racism, critical race theory, and social justice in education has increasingly raised questions about the role of universities and writing instruction in promoting white supremacy ideologies. In particular, complaints concerning linguistic standardization, like biased evaluations rooted in grammatical accuracy, emerged at the center of students' grievances toward the university and their lackluster response to

³ To maintain the anonymity of this institution I will be using Hudson University as a pseudonym. All names of locations and people have also been changed.

⁴ Course names have also been altered

addressing racism on campus. Within this context, linguistic discrimination, especially in Composition and Writing Studies, has become difficult to ignore.

Also prompted by Rutgers' statement on Black Language that was previously discussed, the Black Student Union (BSU) at Hudson University sent an open letter to faculty and university administrators to address their complaints. The BSU specifically requested mandatory 3-day anti-racism training for all (including tenured) faculty and staff, a commitment to hiring a minimum of 30 Black and Latin/o/x faculty in all disciplines trained in teaching CRT, and that "Black and Latino/o/x students' claims of microaggressions and racism within the context of the university be investigated to the fullest extent" (see Appendix A). Additionally, the BSU and other students took to social media to share testimonials about specific instructors who have used the n-word, targeted Black students in class, displayed obvious preferential treatment of White students, and other "predatory behaviors."⁵ In response, the University organized multiple taskforces, workshops on antiracism, hired a new (and BIPOC) director of diversity and inclusion, and implemented Antiracist Education (ARE) courses for students. Yet, as Haivan Hoang suggests, the ways in which *racial injury*⁶—discourses of race and diversity that determine our positionality and interactions with each other in often traumatic and discriminatory ways—plays out on campuses is concerning (*Writing Against Racial*

⁵ On the BSU social media page (Instagram) many students sent in testimonials and complaints calling out specific instructors by name, and although I took screenshots of these complaints, they cannot be viewed without leaking identifying information, even with redactions, therefore they could not be included here. Any mention of the content of these testimonials and complaints are therefore supported by my observations and summary of the statements/screenshots instead. The details of the complaints are also limited to what was posted by the BSU, for example, there is no further explanation of what "predatory behaviors" implies or means.

⁶ Haivan Hoang draws on Carl Gutierrez-Jones' "rhetoric of injury," which are discourses of multiculturalism, diversity, and colorblindness that interpellate individuals into prescribed racial roles (i.e. savior, aggressor, victim).

Injury). Rather than interrogating what mechanisms at the university allowed for racism to be perpetuated for so long and revising them, university administrators implemented ARE requirements for students rather than instructors. Several faculty and students criticized this initiative for placing the burden of antiracist work on the victims rather than the perpetrators. In many ways, Hudson’s response could be interpreted as greatly missing the mark.

This response also provoked debate amongst Hudson English Department faculty, coming from variety of perspectives on Standard Language and how it should be taught. The Hudson English Department put out a separate statement,⁷ following Rutgers’ lead and in response to the BSU letter, to announce our support, plan of action, and affirm that “Language is not neutral.” The section on language stated:

Language is not neutral. Anti-racist pedagogy must include anti-racist writing assessment. We pledge to organize faculty training informed by sociolinguistic research about racial bias in language, grading, and classroom teaching. We recognize that Standard English is not neutral and that we should value and accept students’ dialects and languages while also teaching academic discourse. (“Hudson University statement on Black Lives Matter,” 2020)⁸.

While not worded as directly as Rutgers’ statement, the department gestured toward linguistic standardization as a possible factor in perpetuating discrimination. However, in my capacity as a full-time instructor and writing program administrator involved in crafting this joint statement, I observed intense debates that highlighted the conflicting disciplinary expertise and pedagogical backgrounds between Literature and Composition faculty—a longstanding issue within English departments. These discussions also brought into question the validity and practicality of Linguistic Justice. For example,

⁷ See Appendix B

⁸ See Appendix C

several instructors in the English department pushed back against a more direct and progressive acknowledgement of students' right to their own languages and the promise of further antiracist assessment and linguistic justice efforts (as guided by CCCC's (2020) statement "Demand for Black Linguistic Justice") within composition courses but especially in our literature and creative writing courses. In fact, in an anonymous and passive-aggressive act, one full-time literature faculty member, whom I'll call "Eleanor" for discussion purposes, revised the collaborative document overnight to instead state:

In our English Department, which focuses on studies of literature and writing, standard formal writing will continue to be taught to help students get jobs when they graduate, but students will also learn about the power and flexibility of language and that non-standard English also has validity. ("Hudson University statement on Black Lives Matter," 2020)

Most notably, Eleanor's attitude toward language and supposed anger toward the original linguistic justice wording seemed to be grounded in her disciplinary or pedagogical training, or even social worldview—that is, students must conform to standard language ideologies and practices to be successful, and it would be a disservice to not correct or teach grammar rules and conventions. As an inheritance of Current-tradition Rhetoric (Crowley, 1989; Berlin, 1982) and an integral tenet of the "literacy myth" (Graff, 1991), many writing instructors still associate Standard English with economic success or the belief that learning Standard English "is presumed to be necessary and sufficient for overcoming poverty and surmounting limitations rooted in racial, ethnic, gender, and religious differences" (Graff, 1991, p. 645). Implicit here is the conviction that literacy attainment, but especially of the right, correct, or dominant kinds of literacies, may reduce social and structural inequalities. Yet, as history informs us, literacy does not guarantee economic or social success, so requirements like learning Standard English,

while undoubtedly useful, diverts attention away from real components of inequality, promotes social hierarchies, isolates literacy practices from social constructs, or fails to acknowledge new, different, or multiple literacies. In more contemporary terms, this particular view of literacy and Standard English is an example of a “habits of white language” (HOWL) which Inoue argues constructs a “white racial habitus,” or the conditions for WLS to thrive. Although concerning, Eleanor’s sentiment is not uncommon or even surprising. It was not lost on me or other writing program administrators, that there was and still is a distinct divide between literature and composition faculty regarding the beliefs about language and the role of linguistic justice despite our collective antiracist objectives and supposed solidarity with BLM.

This event prompted further assessment of the writing program and inspired the objectives of this study. It was determined by program administrators, including myself, that the writing program not only needed to address linguistic racism more directly, but to figure out the best way to discuss the issue of race linguistic difference while respecting a variety of perspectives and disciplinary differences. For these reasons, I became interested in examining the theorizations of WLS, however, to serve the purposes of writing program standardization and reform, it needed more practical application, something this dissertation not only builds on but argues for. Examining a corpus of composition course syllabi, I use the framework and methods of WLS found in previous studies, to identify instances of linguistic standardization and discrimination within course syllabi. This is primarily facilitated by conducting frequency analysis of specific WLS keywords that are then analyzed in context, which assists in identifying common themes and areas of potential revision within the writing program.

Significance of Research

This dissertation makes significant contributions to our understanding of linguistic justice, writing course design and pedagogy, and to our understandings of standardization in several ways. The aim of this project is to gather data and textual evidence on the conflicts related to language and race within the English department, and our divergent disciplines and ideologies. Additionally, it enhances existing WLS literature by broadening the criteria for defining linguistic racism and deepening our comprehension of the theoretical and ideological framework of WLS. In doing so, this project positions WLS and its methods as potential tools for writing program assessment. Dismantling linguistic discrimination in composition and writing studies requires a critical examination of syllabi to reveal patterns of language that reinforce dominant discourses regarding race and class and it is through this analysis that we can document and provide a plan of revision and reimagination of the standard writing syllabus at Hudson.

The implications of this study are significant for writing program assessment. Most notably, that the disciplinary and political issues within English departments have allowed for linguistic discrimination to be maintained and perpetuated. Despite our shared liberal and progressive ideals on education there are very obvious and opposing beliefs on not only what role the writing program should take within the English department, but also how it should be taught and who gets to set the standards and curriculums for these courses. Furthermore, this dissertation underscores the need for open dialogue within the English department, particularly between Literature and Composition faculty regarding expertise and effective writing instruction. Without

addressing these issues directly, we cannot move towards a more equitable or successful writing program; one that not only provides consistent quality of instruction, but values linguistic diversity. Examining the intersections of course syllabi and linguistic standardization is not only a crucial step in promoting equitable learning, but by understanding how the language we use in syllabi might impact students from diverse backgrounds, we can develop more effective and inclusive pedagogical practices. The findings from my research can offer insight and justification for a necessary overhaul of Hudson University's writing program. Moreover, instead of viewing the syllabus only as a transactional document, it can serve as an important tool for enacting social justice.

Chapter Overviews

Chapter 2 "Literature Review" continues the conversation introduced in this first chapter by foregrounding the major definitions and debates surrounding language standardization from both a linguistics and writing studies perspective. As such, this chapter provides an explanation for the technical process of language standardization and how conventions are codified, as well as a discussion of the conflicting perspectives on Standard Language Ideology (SLI) and White Language Supremacy (WLS) and how they've been adopted or appropriated in the fields of writing studies and composition. Lastly, the chapter provides a critique of the limitations of the WLS framework in theorizing language standardization.

Chapter 3 "Research Methods and Design" provides a detailed explanation of the methods and design of my project. In particular, I describe previous WLS studies using the same methods, my critiques of them, and why I chose to apply them to this project. The chapter then presents and describes my research questions, the framework of my

study, and background information on my setting and samples. I also provide a detailed description of the documents I have examined, how I obtained them, why they were selected and finally, the categories I've coded for and why.

Chapter 4 "Data Analysis and Finding" focuses on the findings from a keyword analysis of WLS terms in composition course syllabi. In this chapter, I present the comprehensive results from both the keyword frequency analysis (quantitative data) and the keyword-in-context (KWIC) analysis (qualitative data). By thematically coding and examining WLS keywords within their contexts, the study challenges claims and conclusions regarding WLS by revealing the patterns, concordance, or deviation from previous studies. The chapter highlights the complexity involved in identifying WLS contexts and linguistic biases while providing examples of not only the frequency of keywords, but the various contexts for their use. Lastly, this chapter ends by summarizing and suggesting the prominent themes and areas for discussion in the next chapter.

Finally, Chapter 5 "Discussion and Conclusion" explores the implications of my research. Based on my findings, I provide a comparison of my results to previous studies of WLS keywords. Then, the chapter presents a discussion of the prominent issues and themes that emerged in Chapter 4. By discussing the results specific to Hudson's writing program, I invite writing instructors to reconsider the ways in which they might participate or resist linguistic discrimination on a textual level within their course syllabi and how these insights might be used to challenge or revise our practices and ideologies of language. This chapter ultimately situates my research within a WPA and disciplinary framework, offering perspectives on how course materials such as syllabi navigate issues of language, race, and the broader influences of standardization and neoliberalism. I

conclude by presenting recommendations and exploring the relationship between writing program standardization and WLS. Finally, in light of these suggestions, I offer a reflection on redefining our knowledge of WLS through the lens of Critical Language Awareness (CLA).

CHAPTER 2

LITERATURE REVIEW

Historically, the field of Composition has found success in adopting and appropriating linguistic concepts to explore a variety of language issues. In the 1980's composition theory and practice incorporated linguistics to (1) improve instruction in grammar and usage; (2) enhance students' syntactic and stylistic repertoires; and (3) aid in invention (Crowley, 1989). After the social turn, literacy narratives and ethnographies prominently featured concepts like AAVE (or Ebonics at the time) and home languages (e.g., Heath, 1983; Street, 1995; Delpit, 1995; Brandt, 2015). And at present, calls for linguistic justice have popularized concepts like translanguaging, Standard Language Ideologies (SLI), and linguistic standardization. However, unlike linguists, compositionists have markedly fixated on the political dimensions of language, often prioritizing the democratization of language over the technical processes of language acquisition. This has often led to a misappropriation or application of linguistic concepts, their definitions, and contexts. For a theory like White Language Supremacy (WLS) which is central to this project, it is important then to consider how concepts like linguistic standardization (and by extension, Standard Language Ideologies (SLI) and Standard English) are theorized in linguistics and appropriated into writing studies. To this end, this chapter offers a literature review on the definitions and processes of language standardization from a linguistic perspective and then explores how writing studies integrates these concepts within the frameworks of WLS and linguistic justice.

Linguistic Perspectives on Language Standardization

Language standardization as a concept in linguistics represents a process that is foundational to the formation and uniformity of language within or across speech communities, nations, and cultures. This process involves establishing linguistic norms, rules, and conventions which regulate the usage and structure of a given language. Thomason and Kaufman (1988) define standardization as, “whatever processes are involved in the elevation to preeminence in official, learned circles of a particular form of speech and/or writing out of dialects of a single language, which may be numerous” (p. 209). Expressly, standardization is necessary to synchronize diverse dialects and language variations creating effective communication through various means. Standardization can occur through “diffusion,” a convergence of one or more dialects. A standard language can develop through organic or natural “evolutionary” processes when a particular speech community is provided a privileged status due to non-linguistic reasons. This results in the elevation of that language or dialect to the point of prestige, dominance, and even imitation by other communities (di Gennaro, 2000).

It can also occur through “revolutionary” means when a speech variant is selected, simplified, and/or asked to conform to surrounding variants, which thus becomes the standard (di Gennaro, 2000). Language standardization is something that is necessary as our needs as humans to communicate and understand each other become vital in larger social and political pursuits. Similarly, Scaglione (1984) states that standardization is an intentional change in a language involving literacy, and religious, political, and social factors. He argues, “it is in the very nature of language to be in good part *artificially* manipulated, planned, and directed...by educators, sociologists,

psychologist, politicians and even literary writers” (p. 48). In this way, it is more currently and widely accepted that language standardization is perceived as a “deliberate process, instituted by a group of people with very specific intentions” (di Gennaro, p. 133). In this view of standardization, it is important to note that either through evolutionary or revolutionary means, *linguistic standardization is inevitable*. So, when concepts like WLS view Standard English as something that can be dismantled, de-emphasized, or untaught, it would require an intervention that is not a really feasible (an important consideration for my later discussions and critiques of WLS).

Moreover, *language planning* and *codification* are essential to the process of language standardization. Sociolinguist, Janet Holmes (2013) suggests the prestigious status a standard language achieves then serves as a benchmark for correctness, often found in influential and formal settings such as schools, governments, and media. In other words, language standardization can be defined as the process by which a language has been codified in some way (Holmes, 2013). Codification comprises of two primary aspects: firstly, written language serves as a representation of spoken language through a formal writing system, and secondly, standardization involves the regulating, legitimizing, and formalizing an existing language (Ramlan, 2018). The resulting standard language is deemed the most accurate, approved, and socially acceptable language used by the majority, as in the case of a dialect like Standard English. More significantly, while these conventions can be applied to spoken language to a certain extent, it is primarily policed in written language, especially concerning mechanical, morphological, and syntactical construction. We see this emphasized in early Current Traditional Rhetoric approaches where the end product, a grammatically and

mechanically correct essay was the central focus of writing instruction. *Codification* involves the development of linguistic standards and conventions for communicative function, and regulation of linguistic features through grammars, vocabulary, pronunciation, dictionaries, and even cultural artifacts such as literature. While it could be certainly argued that codification maintains social, cultural, and academic norms, it is also an essential feature of all standard languages; without codification, language would be chaotic or mutually incomprehensible. In other words, for linguists, language codification is a sort of necessary evil: while it has the potential to police language and language users, it also makes clear and coherent communication possible.

Further, codification would not be possible without *language planning*. Kaplan and Baldaulf (1997) provide the following definition:

In the simplest sense, language planning is an attempt by someone to modify linguistic behavior of some community for some reason. The reasons are complex, ranging from the trivial notion that one doesn't like the way a group talks, to the sophisticated idea that a community can be assisted in preserving its culture by preserving its language. The actors are many, though at a macro level some element of government is usually involved. (p. 3-4)

Through this process, language planning contributes to codification in several ways: (1) selection and elaboration whereby planners select specific dialect to become standard, considering factors like prestige, indelibility, and existing tradition to meet the needs in areas such as education or government; (2) development of norms and conventions such as clear rules for grammar, spelling, and pronunciation by establishing dictionaries, grammar book, or style; and finally, (3) Promotion and Implementation of the new standard which involves possible strategies such as education reforms, language policies, or public awareness campaigns to encourage use of the codified standard. In this way we

can think of language standardization as a kind of linguistic democracy, in which a dialect is nominated for elevation, but only become law through the votes of its users (often those in power). It must be clarified here that nonstandard languages are not inherently subpar or substandard languages, but ones that get demoted or relegated to the sidelines in favor of the dominant one. And like any new law, its longevity depends on its acceptance, enforcement, and practical application within the community. This is true of all standard dialects globally, not just Standard English. It is important to acknowledge that just as Standard English is argued to impose linguistic norms, so do all languages in their respective communities. Language planning thus provides the necessary resources, structure, and direction to establish and promote a standard language and for codification to be most effective. However, language planning also provides the process by which those in power can promote particular linguistic standards for specific purposes, end goals, and policies.

Beyond the technical definitions provided above, standardization is most understood as a social process, important in the formation of national identity and social status. In fact, many language users are incentivized to conform to the conventions of standard language given the benefits and advantages they might receive. Wardhaugh (2011) outlines four advantages of language standardization:

1. **Clarity and Consistency:** Standardization ensures clarity and consistency in communication. By confirming the rules and structure for a given language, standardization promotes mutual understanding among speakers/writers across a variety of contexts.

2. Promotes Linguistic Unity: Language standardization linguistically transcends regional or variations of language to serves as a unifying force that strengthens social cohesion and identity of standard language users.
3. Facilitates Learning and Teaching: Standardized language allows for educators to simplify learning and teaching by providing clear guidelines and conventions for writing, streamlining language instruction and assessment.
4. Enhances Prestige and Authority: Often associated with prestige, standard languages are used in formal contexts such as academia, business, and government in which users of standard language can enhance their credibility, authority, or capital in these professional and social settings.

These are important in constructing community and social solidarity. However, along with the positive attributes and application of standard language in facilitating effective communication and comprehension, it is not without its limits. As many contemporary scholars who specialize in socio- or racio- linguistics (e.g., Smitherman, 1996, 2003; Matsuda, 2006; Canagarajah, 2016) have argued, language standardization is not a neutral or equitable process and there must be greater attention paid to the globalization, democratization, and politization of language. Within my study, this perspective is essential, as it is where compositionists have most aligned their understandings and appropriation of linguistic standardization into the field of writing studies. For example, standardization also involves the suppression of linguistic diversity and exclusion of marginalized communities that can inhibit language evolution and growth, create barriers to communication, and stifle the dynamism and vibrancy of language. In writing studies,

this has been adopted for various purposes from increasing creativity or expressionism to social justice initiatives.

What is more important, however, is that language is also ideologically defined. Language ideologies constitute the cultural conceptions of language, its nature of use, structure, and its behavior in social contexts. Woolard and Schieffelin (1994) clarify that language ideologies are “those cultural presuppositions and metalinguistic notions that name, frame and evaluate linguistic practices, linking them to the political, moral and aesthetic positions of the speakers, and to the institutions that support those positions and practices.” More simplistically, language ideologies are what people believe about language, its use, and those who use it. The prevailing language ideology presented in the field of sociolinguistics is Standard Language Ideology (SLI), which Lippi-Green (1997) define as “bias toward an abstracted, idealized, homogeneous spoken language which is imposed and maintained by dominant bloc institutions” (p. 64). SLI commonly refers to the idea that one uniform and consistent variety of a language not only exists but is or should be shared by all users. This tends to happen more frequently in places with dominated globalized languages, such as the prominence of Standard English in America. Yet, what is most significant to note about SLI is that the notion of a standardized language is a myth. Linguists have noted that the core principles of SLI are linked to prestige and power. Milroy (2001) argues that standard variety of languages are more commonly aligned with the “‘highest prestige variety’ rather than with the variety that is characterized by the highest degree of uniformity” (p. 532). However, language does not inherently carry “prestige,” it is assigned this attribute by its users, most likely by those in power. SLI therefore associates language to the social and cultural contexts of its users,

which includes, race, class, gender, etc. This standard ideology further “encourages prescription in language, dedicated to the principle that there must be one, and only one, correct way of using a linguistic item” which more notably impacts writing practices. (Milroy and Milroy, 2012, p. 44). In composition, addressing Standard English and has been crucial in understanding and promoting fairness and equality.

Once a language has been standardized in this way, it is viewed as a part of the national, cultural, or societal identity. For example, in America, as diverse as it is, notions of Standard English are pervasive in all levels of political and social life of its citizens. The national ideology regarding language, in many ways, is so inflexible that at times it becomes classist or racist. This is complicated by the notion that native born speakers have unquestionable authority or ownership of the standardized language. This point acknowledges the most pervasive way SLI can lead to division: as one group is judge as native or “expert” users of a language (though, this may not be true at all), the other is systemically devalued. Our realities are shaped by these interactions with standard language and the ideologies that define it. This is where composition research within writing studies classrooms has most commonly aligned with and adopted linguistic theory. The following section will investigate how specific adaptations of SLI, and standardization have either altered, expanded, or complicated these linguistic viewpoints.

Writing Studies Perspectives on Language Standardization

The globalization of English has prompted writing studies to evolve and be better equipped to address a wide variety of language users. In composition, with a prominent resurgence of interest and engagement in the wake of the Black Lives Matter movement, the theories of language standardization have been adopted and appropriate into writing

studies discourse with less emphasis on the empirical and systematic processes of language standardization and more emphasis on the social dynamics of language, particularly, Standard Language Ideology (SLI) and more radical considerations of standardization for social justice purposes.

One primary purpose of adopting concepts like SLI in writing studies is to interrogate how institutions and neoliberal education at large, set the standards and requirements for student success by devaluing linguistic differences seeking to eradicate them. Baker-Bell (2021) asserts that despite language pedagogies that promise the liberating powers of speaking and writing in Standard English or what she calls, White Mainstream English (WME)⁹, they will not and cannot save marginalized people of color. Two such pedagogies are Eradicationist Language Pedagogies that suggest the complete removal of language difference (i.e., “English Only” or the Official English movement) and Respectability Language Pedagogies which acknowledge that different languages should be valued, affirmed, and respected, but are only used as a bridge to learn Standard English (i.e., code-switching) (p. 28). For instance, movements such as “English Only” have spanned several decades; originating in the mid-17th century with the establishment of Native American reeducation schools and continuing into the 1980’s and 1990’s in California to control the influx of Spanish-speaking migrants in public schools. Even today, echoes of this sentiment persist in nativist rhetoric: “This is America, speak English!” But the key point to note is that these pedagogies and programs—which have been historically funded and sponsored by the federal government—serve as instruments

⁹ In various sociolinguistic and composition texts, White Mainstream English (WME) and Standard English (SE) or Standard American English (SAE) are used interchangeably. However, in work on antiracism specifically, WME is used more commonly to emphasize the racial components of language.

in the language planning and codification of Standard English in America often enabled by institutions of higher education like Hudson University.

While eradicationist language pedagogies are less prominent today, linguist Paul Kei Matsuda argues that ideologies of monolingual pedagogies haven't nonetheless become default in U.S. composition classrooms. In his article, "The Myth of Linguistic Homogeneity in U.S. College Composition," Matsuda (2006) suggests that while many literacy and composition scholars have marked the importance of addressing language difference in the classroom and composition training, many instructors remain underprepared to address these linguistic issues within their classroom (p. 637). Instead, one of the most persistent assumptions of college students is that they are "by default native speakers of a privileged variety of English from the United States' and while this assumption is never openly acknowledged—that is, writing studies no longer openly imposes strict and racist English-only policies—it is implied throughout our own pedagogical studies, practices, and assessments" (Matsuda, 2006, p. 637). Most importantly, these assumptions create a standardization of language that affects not just BIPOC students but also white students as they are presumed to be native speakers of White Mainstream English (WME). The most important goal of college composition is to create "better writers" but implicit in that goal is approximating and assessing how well students use the privileged language of Standard English. Language standardization thus plays an integral role in influencing how we perceive things like students' intelligence, work ethic, or social standing. Unlike traditional linguistic perspectives, standardization in this context is viewed as less of a neutral process and more of a deliberately racist procedure.

Matsuda further contends that “the perpetuation of the myth of linguistic homogeneity in U.S. college composition has been facilitated by the concomitant policy of linguistic containment that has kept language differences invisible in the required composition course and in the discourse of composition studies” (Matsuda, p. 641, 2006). In other words, Linguistic containment vis-à-vis language standardization, creates conditions in which it seems acceptable to dismiss linguistic differences. This perspective on language standardization informs the basic framework for WLS and other antiracist approaches to teaching writing. For example, writing instructors, despite their personal beliefs towards linguistic differences, might feel like they are doing students a disservice if they do not enforce the conventions of Standard English; this was exemplified in the revision of Hudson’s BLM statement introduced in Chapter 1. The “It is the way it is” or “I don’t make the rules” mentality is only made possible because of linguistic standardization or containment. I imagine there is a general belief by most instructors that it is easier to police or contain language difference rather than accommodate for new or different ones. While Matsuda’s work goes on to explore this effect on the influx of international and ESL or ELL students, the language nativism he describes is particularly harmful to Black Language or AAVE users as their language use or misuse cannot be dismissed as “foreignness” or an error of translation. As evidence in Baker-Bell and other scholarship (e.g., Smitherman, Canagarajah, Young, Lippi-Green), Black Language is wrongly understood as an inferior dialect of Standard American English (SAE) rather than a full language and because Black students are considered “native” SAE speakers and not multilingual, they are heavily punished and seen as unintelligent when they “misuse” it. Moreover, when Black students do master SAE they are seen as being “too

articulate” or “too White.” Within the writing classroom, Black students are placed in an impossible position of negotiating this kind of linguistic “double consciousness.”

Language from this perspective is viewed through a deficit model, where the Standard English is always correct, and all other Englishes are less than.

Similarly, in Rosina Lippi-Green’s (1997) *English with an Accent: Language, Ideology and Discrimination in the United States*, she calls this “language subordination” rather than “language standardization.” Again, this slight revision in naming is to highlight the racialized construction of language. She argues, “when speakers of devalued or stigmatized varieties of English consent to the standard language ideology, they become complicit in its propagation against themselves, their own interests, and identities. Many are caught in a vacuum: if an individual cannot find any social acceptance for her language outside her own speech communities, she may come to denigrate her own language, even while she continues to use it” (Lippi-Green, 1997, p. 68). In many cases, Black speakers are expected to code-switch, especially within academic setting. However, Lippi-Green suggests that code-switching is only a temporary solution; it still signals to a speaker that a home language must be relegated to non-professional or informal settings, which may also imply that the language and its user is somehow inferior or subpar. In more recent years, scholars like Vershawn Ashanti Young (2014) have advocated for a reframing of this languaging process as “code-meshing” instead, which is the *deliberate* mixing of two or more dialects or languages,

mainly Black English and Standard English, in one single utterance¹⁰. It is believed that the practice of code-meshing can challenge traditional hierarchies by promoting and valuing Black English alongside Standard English. However, regardless of whether code-switching or code-meshing is used, for Lippi-Green, the process of subordination is not necessarily about hatred towards a language itself, but whether individuals comply with dominant ideologies of language, which are coded in the mystification of the standards (gate-keeping specialized-knowledge) and threats of noncompliance. In other words, it is not the language of AAVE that is hated, but those who use it and the stereotypes attached to the language. Language subordination occurs whether a person chooses to codeswitch or not. The steps of subordination are:

1. ***Language is mystified:*** You can never hope to comprehend the difficulties and complexities of your mother tongue without expert guidance.
2. ***Authority is claimed:*** We are the experts. Talk like me/us. We know what we are doing because we have studied language, because we write well.
3. ***Misinformation is generated:*** That usage you are so attached to is inaccurate. The variant I prefer is superior on historical, aesthetic, or logical grounds.
4. ***Targeted languages are trivialized:*** Look how cute, how homey, how funny. Conformers are held up as positive examples. See what you can accomplish if you only try, how far you can get if you see the light. Non-conformers are vilified or marginalized. See how willfully stupid, arrogant, unknowing, uninformed and/or deviant these speakers are.
5. ***Explicit promises are made:*** Employers will take you seriously; doors will open.
6. ***Threats are made:*** No one important will take you seriously; doors will close.

¹⁰ It is important to note that code-meshing has been heavily criticized by linguists for reframing and misappropriating the well-established concept of “translanguaging” as something new. Translanguaging suggests that multilingual individuals draw on their entire linguistic repertoire (including all languages and dialect varieties and their conventions) to create meaning, viewing languages as interconnected rather than separate entities. In essence, code meshing is a specific practice within the wider concept of translanguaging and while translanguaging is seen as a very intuitive and natural process, code-meshing as it is conceived by Young and others, tends to be much more of a performative and deliberative action.

The process of language subordination Lippi-Green defines is in integral part of maintaining Anti-Black Linguistic Racism and linguistic standardization: the more Black Language is devalued compared to White Mainstream English, the more Black students must denigrate their identities and cultures as a means of survival.

White Language Supremacy: Definitions and Critiques

All these perspectives on linguistic standardization converge and are brought together under the framework of White Language Supremacy (WLS), which at its core represents a more radicalized interpretation of language standardization. In advancing this agenda, proponents have incorporated linguistic principles but have reframed them through an exclusively racial lens. As indicated in the existing literature so far, it has been argued that the drive for language standardization is not just rooted in racialized discourses, it is fundamentally linked to White Supremacy. This view, distinct from traditional linguistic analyses, is not only more extreme and overt, but embraces revolutionary methods for language standardization (rather than evolutionary methods), and these methods are destructive interventions by American society and culture to eradicate Black English. While these assertions are intricate and will be revisited in subsequent discussions and conclusions, WLS stands as concept reflective of its era—a time of heavy racial tensions and division.

Baker-Bell suggests that Black students are conditioned to believe and internalize anti-Blackness so much so that they do not recognize that standard English is a byproduct of white supremacy. In the recent book, *Linguistic Justice: Black Language, Literacy, Identity, and Pedagogy*, Baker-Bell (2021) argues that the violence against black bodies does not only occur physically, but through a very insidious type of linguistic violence,

what Baker-Bell calls “Anti-Black Linguistic Racism” (p. 3) Baker-Bell suggests that historically the writing classroom has been complicit in linguistic racism by not only favoring but promoting White Mainstream English (WME) or Standard American English (SAE), and in turn, dismissing the legitimacy of not only Black Language, but Black identity. Significant here, antiracist scholars like Baker-Bell make it a point to racialize language; rather than call it Standard English (as it is known in linguistics), using terms like “White Mainstream” or “Standard American” as descriptors is a way to argue that the ideologies that surround English are not just grounded in dominant discourses, but *white discourses*. She argues that the policing of Black language and literacies in schools “is not separate from the ways in which Black bodies have historically been policed and surveilled in U.S. society, and the ubiquitous assault and murder of Black bodies is not independent of the symbolic linguistic violence and spirit-murder that Black students experience daily in the classroom” (p. 12). In this way, Baker-Bell also sees Black Linguistic Racism as participating in White Language Supremacy (WLS) and therefore White Supremacy itself. This assertion is central to the claims made by many compositionists who adopt SLI or Standard English as a subject of inquiry, with the goal of dismantling oppression.

Expanding Baker-Bell’s notion of Standard English as white discourse, Asao Inoue (2019a; 2019c; 2021) argues that there are six Habits of White Language (HOWL) that create the conditions for WLS: (1) Unseen, naturalized orientation to the world, (2) Hyper-individualism, (3) Stance of neutrality, objectivity, and apoliticality, (4) Individualized, rational, controlled self, (5) Rule-governed, contractual relationships and (6) Clarity, order, and control. These HOWL are defined as “ways of seeing, saying, and

judging things, ideas, and other people” which “constitute the dominant rhetorical moves that are considered appropriate or preferred in any given context” (2021). For Inoue, qualities like “clarity,” often tied to rhetorical sophistication and logic, are used as veils for racism and white privilege and as such has become an essential keyword for identifying WLS. HOWL give us a wide view of “who controls language practices in schools, universities, professions, and disciplines” where “elite, White, masculine habits of language are the standards of correctness and appropriateness, of ‘clarity,’ of the ‘logical,’ and are considered what ‘audiences want,’” however, “from another view, they are correct and appropriate and clear and logical because they are what elite, White masculine people in charge have wanted” (Inoue, 2021). In other words, HOWL are a tool of language planning, and therefore language control. For this dissertation, one habit in particular has become an essential concept and keyword that often used to identify WLS. Inoue defines this HOWL as:

Clarity, Order, and Control – This habit focuses on reason, order, and control as guiding principles for understanding and judgement, as well as documents and instances of languaging. Thinking and anti-sensuality are primary and opposed to feelings and emotions. Logical insight, the rational, order (often linear), and objectivity are valued most and opposed to the subjective and emotional. Rigor, order, clarity, and consistency are all valued highly and tightly prescribed, often using a dominant standardized English language that comes from a White, middle- to upper-class group of people. Thinking, rationality, and knowledge are understood as apolitical, unraced, and can be objectively displayed. Words, ideas, and language itself are disembodied, or extracted, from the people and their material and emotional contexts from which the language was created or exists. Language can be separated from those who offer it. There is limited value given to sensual experiences, considerations of the body, sensations, and feelings. A belief in scientific method, discovery, and knowledge is often primary, as is a reliance on deductive logics. Other logics that often distinguish this habit in classrooms are those that emphasize usefulness or unity and pragmatic outcomes, all of which are predefined for students by authorities, such as the teacher. (Inoue, 2021, para. 16)

Within the WLS framework, keywords such as “clarity,” when present in assessments or other writing requirements, often imply unstated standards or values which are used to judge students’ writing skills or language. This becomes an exclusionary because while non-White writers must conform to these societal expectations, these standards can be more easily manipulated and bypassed by White writers.

Elsewhere in his studies of assessment, Inoue (2015; 2019a) argues that along with “clarity” other terms such as “effective,” or “logical” are often coded language for writing that is free of grammatical errors or accent, despite our established knowledge of the “linguistic facts of life” identified by Lippi-Green, which suggests linguistically, (1) “grammaticality and communicative *effectiveness* are distinct and interdependent issues,” and (2) “written language and spoken language are historically, structurally, and functionally fundamentally different creatures” (qtd. In Inoue, 2019, p. 29). So, although there is no linguistic research to suggest there a link between effectiveness¹¹ and grammar, we persistently use it to define “good writing.” These keywords, among others, identified by Inoue, show how linguistic standardization functions on a more microscopic or insidious level—HOWL are the manifestation of WLS. Based on Inoue’s definitions and keywords, it can be assumed that looking for these keywords then, would provide a means of identifying WLS in our writing curriculum and practices.

Applying WLS keywords within in this context, using the method of keyword frequency analysis, Davila’s (2022) recent study of course descriptions, investigates how the language used in course descriptions might perpetuate White Language Supremacy

¹¹ Defined in *English with an Accent*: “effectiveness in language is the sum of more specific qualifiers (clarity, logic, conciseness, persuasiveness, and delivery)” (Lippi-Green 14).

(WLS) or Standard Language Ideologies in several distinct ways. First, course descriptions from less selective institutions, frequently used terms like “basic” and “skill” or “remediation” when describing their writing courses. This language suggests a deficit model to imply that students at these institutions (often from marginalized backgrounds) lacked essential writing skills. Second, Davila’s analysis also reveals the implicit bias that is (supposedly) present in the language of course descriptions. She states, “although the terms ‘academic’ and ‘professional’ may seem neutral, they can carry implicit biases that reinforce White Language Supremacy and Standard Language Ideologies” (Davila, 2022). The framing of these terms as the desired or required standard, privileges certain ways (often associated with White, middle-class communities) of using language, while devaluing other practices. Lastly, and most importantly, Davila argues that syllabus course descriptions that emphasize or reinforces WLS or SLI language, might discourages students who do not see themselves reflected in those standards from participating or engaging in academic discourse. She concludes, “The language we use in our course descriptions can have a profound impact on students’ perceptions of themselves as writers and their access to opportunities” (Davila, 2022). Davila’s study demonstrates that while seemingly mundane, course description (and by extension the syllabus) can be a site where discriminatory language ideologies are reproduced and maintained. She advocates for great awareness and revision of language choice when creating syllabus elements like course descriptions. Analysis of course syllabi for social justice (by way of linguistic justice) is a valuable framework of analysis and this study would serve the goals and purposed of my study of standardization in writing program administration as well as language and literacy.

However, WLS and the antiracism movement within Composition is not without its criticisms. In my own analysis (and more relevant to the inquiries and application of WLS methods in this dissertation), a critical issue with these WLS definitions is that the advocates of WLS do not conceal that they too want students to uptake predetermined conclusions of language. Erec Smith (2022) has been vocal about his problems with using WLS as a guiding principle. He contends that Inoue and other antiracist scholars marginalize the very populations they seek to advise, asserting,

Whether he realizes it or not, Inoue projects an identity onto his black students—*because* they are black—that views language as naturally and necessarily intertwined with identity. In so doing, Inoue assumes that viewing individual black students through the lens of what he believes is black people’s shared linguistic history, regardless of whether these students feel this connection themselves, is an obviously noble and necessary educational endeavor.

Smith notes that one of the main tenets of WLS ideology is acknowledging that teaching SAE is racist and this is a problematic idea as it creates challenges for instructors who are required to teach and meet institutional literacy demands and students who personally want or need to learn the rules of SAE. Moreover, when we ask students to stop code-switching and offer solutions such as code-meshing—the purposeful blending or use of two dialects (especially AAVE) in academic work¹² (e.g., Young, 2014)—we are projecting narratives of race onto our students. For instance, we run the risk of assuming every Black student can or wants to communicate in AAVE within the classroom or in their writing. The implementation of code-meshing writing assignments assumes that every Black student is fluent in AAVE and requires them to write in this dialect. Yet,

¹²As mentioned in a previous footnote in Chapter 2, code-meshing is an appropriation of the Linguistic concept of translanguaging, however unlike it, code-meshing is more racialized and performative in its conception and application.

how does a White instructor implement this type of assignment with ideological clarity, genuineness, or without seeming that they are targeting Black students with “special” assignments? In this way, Smith makes some valid points about the limitations and potential isolation this kind of theoretical framework can cause.

Consequently, WLS also prescribes modes and expectations of Blackness and Black Language. By claiming that there is one type of Blackness that defines Black English or how Black people use Black English, WLS creates a horseshoe effect, prescribing the right kind of progressive Blackness to Black people. In CCCC’s (2020) “Demand for Black Linguistic Justice” the authors’ request that “teachers Stop Teaching Black Students to Code-Switch! Instead, We Must Teach Black Students about Anti-Black Linguistic Racism and White Linguistic Supremacy!” The CCCC authors fail to acknowledge how difficult this would be or what problems it might create for Black students or Black instructors. My hesitation with such absolute language is that this “all or nothing” approach risks marginalizing Black students who may find value in code-switching or may speak and write in a way that might be deemed “not Black enough” by the authors cited here. It would seem irresponsible to not only isolate our Black students but to also accuse them of participating or being complicit in White Language Supremacy practices, internalized or not. It is also a bit ironic for the authors to demand such a request when most of the Black authors who contributed to this statement are using Standard English and publishing in a very formal and academic publication. This demand is some ways can be seen as a performative request that also engages in prescriptive rules. What is more, along with prescribing ideologies of Blackness, it also constructs ideologies of progressive Whiteness.

Likewise, McWhorter (2022) pushes back against the idea that Standard English is inherently opposed to Black identity, suggesting instead that it can be another tool of communication and self-expression. In reflecting on an academic conference discussion of code-meshing, McWhorter suggests that while social justice critiques of capitalism and Standard English are valid, they are also reductive, that is they assume that all Black students struggle to negotiate Standard English. However, he acknowledges, “For most Black Americans, both Black and standard English are part of who we are; our English is, in this sense, larger than many White people” (McWhorter, 2022). In his estimation, WLS frameworks tend to essentialize Black students and writer. For instance, McWhorter recalls a discussion between Inoue and another educator while attending an academic conference. In this exchange, the writing instructor mentioned that her Black students not only expressed skepticism about the intentions of her code-meshing task but also actively opposed participating in it, declaring that the assignment was “setting them up for failure.” Inoue’s response to this instructor was to stress the fact that students of color will always be limited and constrained by dominant discourse of race and neoliberal understandings. For McWhorter, this attitude undermines and undervalues the Black experience. Citing W.E.B. DuBois’, double consciousness, McWhorter ultimately argues that Black students are more than equipped to learn and use the rules of both Black and Standard English, in fact, they are experts, so when we ask them to engage in performative exercises such code-meshing, we are also asking them to summarize and essentialize their Black identities:

Foisted on Black Americans, this idea of the standard dialect as a quiet menace, whatever its progressive intentions, is limiting [...] Linguistically, Black Americans can and do walk and chew gum at the same time, like countless people around the world—and like it [...] In the classroom we all learned past participles, but in the streets and in our homes the Blacks learned to drop s's from plurals and suffixes from past-tense verbs. We were alert to the gap separating the written word from the colloquial. We learned to slide out of one language and into another without being conscious of the effort. At school, in a given situation, we might respond with "That's not unusual." But in the street, meeting the same situation, we easily said, "It be's like that sometimes." (McWhorter, 2022)

Based on Inoue's definition of WLS, it seems that two things cannot be true at once, a Black student cannot fully embrace their Black identity while using Standard English or other "White discourses." David Gold (2008) in his work on HBCUs in "Rhetoric at the Margins," points out that this is historically not the case. Although many Black colleges structured their courses and programs similarly to those of White institutions, the culture within these colleges played a crucial role in shaping their own definitions of literacy and education. Through an analysis of Melvin Tolson's teaching as a reflection of the distinctive rhetorical education at HBCUs, Gold underscores how sociocultural factors have had a substantial influence his teaching methods, resulting in the mixing of classical, cultural, and political content in ways that embraced contradiction and cultivated a distinct Black intellectual spirit. Subsequently, for these institutions, it is not only possible to teach white discourses like grammar and still value linguistic heritage, but an inherent a part of their ethos. Obviously, claims of WLS framework is limited in this consideration and if we want to discuss language and race, we cannot demonize or view administrators, instructors, or students as monoliths.

The criticisms we see here from Smith and McWhorter are, however, not new. Throughout her extensive work on AAVE and prescriptive grammar at HBCU's, Black

linguist, Juanita Williamson (1982) resisted the tendency to ascribe racial features to language for this reason. Her linguistic studies showed that language variance was tied to geography rather than race. Williamson asserted that “features used to identify Black English are neither Black nor White, but American” (1971, p. 173). In this way, she argued that the language of America, Standard English, was also the language of African Americans. It was hers by birthright, so by labeling Standard English as what White people speak and what Black people speak as something other, it takes ownership away from the contributions of Black people in shaping American English. Further, while Williamson supported linguistic diversity, she opposed statements like the SRTOL (i.e., “Students Rights to Their Own Language,” CCCC, 1974) believing that the promotion of Black English was another way to mask prejudice as acceptance (qtd in Baddour, 2020). This perspective is one that I think WLS and Antiracism scholars should return to or at least consider. Williamson’s argument is one that would now, in many ways, be considered radical, that is, to not separate Black language from standard English, but to own it and lay claim to the contributions of Black speakers and writers in shaping its conventions. What all of these critiques ultimately suggests is not to say that we shouldn’t strive for antiracism or call out linguistic discrimination when we see it, but that how we frame discussions around language and race needs to consider the reality of all Black (and other people of color) speakers and writers of English, not just the privileged academic perspectives.

In summary, WLS assists White Supremacy by using language to control reality and resources by defining and evaluating people, places, things, reading, writing, rhetoric, pedagogies, and processes in multiple ways that damage our students and our

democracy. It imposes a worldview that is simultaneously pro-White, cisgender, male, heteronormative, patriarchal, ableist, racist, and capitalist (Inoue, 2019b; Pritchard, 2017). What this definition does not acknowledge is that *nonstandard* is not the same as *substandard*. As it has been theorized in linguistics for some time now, labeling a language as nonstandard does not mean that it not formal, rule-governed, or that it is lower in quality. However, as the criticisms cited here suggest, the preoccupation of WLS with positioning nonstandard Englishes consistently within a framework of racism, also paradoxically works to essentialize it. While I find WLS helpful in interrogating our conceptions of language, these critiques insinuate there must be more nuanced ways in which it is applied, studied, and discussed. With my project, I intend to add to the conversation summarized in my literature review by considering how the scholarship on WLS and linguistic standardization can provide a framework to interrogate the racialized ideologies or “habitus” that form the individual, programmatic, and institution demands and how they can also resist or maintain linguistic racism. However, there must be further considerations in how we define WLS and the solutions or practices we derive from this framework. WLS can be a helpful tool in antiracist scholarship, but assumptions cannot and should not be made about all writing instructors or writing programs or even what defines black discourses and identities along with White discourses and identities. In this way, my project both applies and seeks to expand our conceptions of linguistic standardization and WLS.

CHAPTER 3

RESEARCH DESIGN AND METHODS

Inspired by previous studies and theorizations of WLS, this project has the goal of applying and revising already established methods such keyword analysis to identify instances of WLS within Hudson's composition course sequence. The purpose of this method is to (1) determine if and how keywords can be used to identify WLS and (2) better understand where and/or how linguistic discrimination appears within Hudson's writing program for future standardization initiatives or reform. In this chapter, I will expand on the rationale for my methods, describe the data collection and coding process, and provide the specific parameters, unitization, and limitations of my analysis. To examine the prevalence and effect of WLS and linguistic standardization at my institution, Hudson University, I have collected syllabi from all three composition courses in the writing program sequence. I also selected the faculty handbook and syllabi templates to analyze as the controls or benchmarks for data comparison.

Context of Study

The site of this study is my own teaching institution, Hudson University, a medium sized, Northeast college serving around 14,000 graduate and undergraduate students from diverse backgrounds (38% White, 17% Hispanic, 10% Black/African American, 7% Asian, 3% Unknown/Other, 3% Multi-racial, 22% International), including a sizable population of English Language Learners (ELL) (though this population has lowered since the Covid-19 Pandemic). The city campus, which is the primarily location of this study currently has a total of 5,850 undergraduate students. The Composition Program is housed within the College of Liberal Art's English Department

and serves every incoming freshman, requiring a sequence of three writing composition courses: ENG 100: Composition, ENG 150: Critical Writing, and ENG 200: Writing in the Disciplines.¹³

Historically, every student coming into Hudson takes at least two out of the three composition courses. Most first-year students are placed into ENG 100, but some test directly into ENG 150 during placement testing, based on AP scores and other factors. However, students are required to pass each section with a grade of C- or higher to move onto the next. Ideally, these three courses are designed to have distinct curriculums that build upon the previous course in the sequence. ENG 100 emphasizes, “critical reading, writing, and thinking” and the learning of “basic research skills, including methods of documentation and the use of library and Internet resources” while ENG 150 builds on these skills to “emphasize the development of argument and analysis [by working] with a variety of literary and non-fiction text” and learning “more advanced research skills” (“Composition Faculty Handbook” 2018). The last course in the sequence, ENG 200 focuses on “writing effective essays and research papers in disciplinary modes and in students’ field of interest” including “interviews, analysis of journal articles, and appropriate documentation style formats” (“Composition Faculty Handbook” 2018). It is evident in the course descriptions provided in the Composition Faculty handbook that these three courses should vary in both content, requirements, and learning outcomes. Citing the Council for Writing Program Administrators (CWPA) (2014), the handbook further advises that “as students move beyond first-year composition, their writing abilities do not merely improve. Rather, their abilities will diversify along disciplinary,

¹³ Course names have been altered.

professional, and civic lines as these writers move into new settings where expected outcomes expand, multiply, and diverge” (“Composition Faculty Handbook” 2018).

While these are the intended descriptions and outcomes of each of the writing course at Hudson, consistency and compliance have been a major issue within the program. There have been numerous complaints by students that the syllabi for courses in the sequence taught by the same instructor (i.e., teaching ENG 100 and ENG 150), were either not distinct enough or in some cases were remarkably similar, if not the same. Likewise, there have also been instances where one instructor would use a particular text like “They Say, I Say” in ENG 100, while another assigned it for ENG 150. This has meant that students in the same courses as their friends or roommates were encountering different course themes, pedagogical approaches, assignments, content, grading practices, and learning outcomes even though they were technically in the same class. Additionally, I and other writing program administrators, believe that inconsistency in messaging regarding language instruction within these syllabi has also led to student complaints about linguistic discrimination or unfair grading based solely on grammar and mechanics. As the driving force for student learning, these issues we have encountered over the years coupled with the calls for antiracist education has prompted administrators to reevaluate the need for standardization of course curriculums, primarily the supervision of syllabus design and implementation.

In some opinions, standardization of writing programs is seen as a “one-size-fits-all” approach that is repressed creativity and individuality (of both instructor and student), however, other administrators “are eager to align their programs with the field’s ‘best practices’ because they believe that standardization within and across writing

programs will ensure that their students are not shortchanged by dint of the section or program in which they happen to enroll” (Gallagher et al., 2019). More importantly, in terms of linguistic discrimination, at Hudson, it has become clear that students are not receiving the quality and consistency of learning that is promised. And while there will always be many different methods and approaches to the teaching writing and language, general learning outcomes for each course should not be ignored for the sake of instructor preferences. For Hudson’s writing program, it is imperative then that the program is assessed to see where deviations from the expected outcomes occur, and how frequent and impactful that divergence is. The faculty handbook (2018) asserts “A well-designed course syllabus helps the instructor present content in an organized and coherent manner and helps students understand their responsibilities and the instructor’s expectations throughout the course. Keep in mind that a syllabus is also considered a binding contract between the instructor and students enrolled in the course” (“Syllabus Design,” p. 23). As a space in which equality and accessibility are paramount, a syllabus must maintain the objectives and integrity of the writing program. So, along with the political and social pressure to address linguistic justice introduced in chapters 1 and 2, this effort to reform/standardize the writing program at Hudson to meet these demands has prompted my study of the course syllabus as well.

Methodology

In previous studies on WLS, the focus has primarily centered on assessment and course descriptions. Building on this precedent, this dissertation investigates the composition course syllabus as a key site where WLS can be observed and analyzed. While Hudson university provides templates, the syllabi are unvetted and exhibit

significant variation in their content and disciplinary approaches, resulting in highly personalized and subjective documents. This situation has created space for instructors to express judgements about language (whether positive or negative) and for students to potentially adopt or internalize them. Moreover, to identify priority areas for improvement in the writing program, examining the syllabi—comprehensive documents containing valuable information on assessment, outcomes, personal and academic expectations, and more— would serve as an effective starting point. In this section, I will examine previous methods and rationales for studying the syllabus then describe how this information will apply to analysis of WLS.

The Syllabus as a Site of Inquiry

In a survey conducted by Ken Matejka and Lance B. Kurke (1994), two hundred professors, administrators, and students named the syllabus as “the component most often contributing to effective college teaching” (p. 115). Additionally, Anne Womack (2017), argues that the syllabus is a worthy subject of study since a syllabus can present problematic assumptions, use punitive language, or include defensive or combative policies (p. 501). The syllabus, often an overlooked document in higher education, plays a vital role then in shaping course design and learning experience. In the most simplistic definition, a syllabus is a contract or outline of course content and expectations. However, increasingly, scholarly research has recognized it as a powerful tool for engagement, communication, and negotiation between instructors and students. Parkes and Harris (2002) see the syllabus is a dynamic document that can be designed with intention to facilitate student learning. I also add that the opposite can be true: if a well-designed syllabus can promote learning, a poorly designed or problematic syllabus can

halt it entirely. For the purposes of this study, the syllabus and how well or poorly it is designed, may have serious implications for linguistic discrimination.

Accordingly, within the field of composition and central to this dissertation, the uptake of syllabus research has primarily focused on two key concerns: (1) its role in the negotiation and communication of academic discourses between university, writing program administrators, instructors, and students and (2) linguistic justice. In composition, the emphasis of writing studies since its “social turn” has been to acknowledge and prepare students for all contexts for writing, but primarily the social and political contexts for writing. Bizzell (1992) and Bartholomae (1986) notably argued that students are socialized into academic discourses, that is, students must learn the ways to act, speak, and write like those in the academy, or as Bartholomae states, they must “invent the university.” Moreover, it is the role of the instructor to help students demystify academic language because the ability to use it is especially necessary for the “politically oppressed” to be heard within the academic community. In short, students, particularly marginalized students, need to know how to navigate these knowledge-making communities. The role of the syllabus in this context, is a tool to communicate academic discourses, especially about language and writing, and the values of the academy. If students do not understand the rules of academic discourse, who sets the value, and how to navigate entry, it can be a daunting, and even inequitable task.

In this way, the syllabus is an important communicative tool prompting student engagement. According to Matejka & Kurke (1994) a well-designed syllabus can shape student perception and expectation of their course and/or instructor: “the syllabus sends a symbolic message to the students regarding your personality as a teacher and the amount

of investment you have made in the course” (p. 115). This suggests that a close reading of syllabus can also tell us about the instructor’s preferences, tone (humor, seriousness), or ideologies (i.e., “I believe it is best when...”) regarding a range of policies or expectations. Serving as a link between the university, instructor, and students, this also means that dynamics of power are inherently embedded within the syllabus. However, if a syllabus is improperly implemented or includes exclusionary judgements or preference about writing, language, or students’ behavior, they can just as well discourage students from participating in the course. Expanding beyond current WLS studies on course description, this project extends analysis to the syllabus as a whole for these reasons.

WLS Methodologies: Application, Critiques, and Interventions

One of the main motivations for this project is the application of Keyword Frequency Analysis to identify WLS. Beth Davila’s (2022) study, “White Language Supremacy in Course Description” discusses the prevalence and perpetuation of WLS in course descriptions. She uses “a mixed-methods, corpus-based research project (Biber and Conrad 331) that involved compiling and analyzing a database of mission statements and course descriptions from 230 institutions” (p. 644) and employs keyword analysis as its main methodological approach. The study is an extension of Asao Inoue’s work on WLS particularly focusing on keywords like “clarity” and “logic” as markers of WLS. Along with these terms, Davila uses a combination of text frequency searches and close reading to narrow down her final list of WLS keywords for analysis. Davila defines several categories of standardization, which are: understandings of writing (e.g., “academic,” “critical,” and “skill”), rhet/comp values (e.g., “context*,” “genre*,” and “audience*”), grammar and sentence level language (e.g., “gramma*,” “mechanics,” and

“usage”), evaluation (e.g., “good writing,” “well-*”), and remediation (i.e., “basic,” “developmental,” and “preparatory”) but ultimately focuses on the terms that produced the most data: *appropriate, basic, clear, conventions, effective, grammar, logic, and organization*. (p. 647-8). The frequency of these terms is then analyzed in course descriptions across two datasets; the first comprising of five different types of institutions (Hispanic Serving Institutions (HSIs), Historically Black Colleges and Universities (HBCUs), Predominantly Black Institutions (PBIs), Predominantly White Institutions (PWIs), and Tribal Colleges and Universities (TCUs)) and the second, comprising of other institutional classifications (doctoral institutions, master’s institutions, bachelor’s institutions, and community colleges). Davila’s method of keyword analysis is a helpful tool to quickly identify valuable information and patterns of where and how linguistic discrimination can be observed in course descriptions. However, for the purposes of my study, I felt it was a feasible approach to apply to my corpus with several revisions and modifications.

Firstly, in implementing Davila’s method, I adopted her keywords as a starting point but also expanded my list of keywords and how I was defining, applying, and making qualitative conclusions about them throughout my analysis to consider a wider range of contexts and perspectives. At times during my research of WLS, I was not necessarily convinced of the validity or impact of several of the keyword examples provided in Davila’s study or Inoue’s discussions of WLS. Fittingly, I was particularly concerned by limited considerations of certain keywords like “clarity,” for example, because in its simplest formation, WLS assumes that most requirements for “clarity” (and therefore rationality and logic) is an immediate analog for racism. As we know from

earlier discussions (see Chapter 2) “clarity” is considered one of six habits of White language (HOWL), in which it is defined as a uniquely White feature of language and communication used to judge writing and students of color. Following this logic then, one could presume that Inoue is also implying that nonstandard dialects are inherently chaotic in comparison to Standard English or that they themselves do not require order or rules, which is not true. Even in our spoken language (using a variety of dialects), most of us strive for clarity in order to effectively communicate. Moreover, “clarity” is not necessary always in opposition to emotion, feeling, or the body, or belonging to one race’s discourse over another in the way Inoue suggests. The same types of limited considerations are also applied to other keywords such as “convention,” “logic,” and “grammar” within the WLS literature. How Davila and other advocates of WLS define what counts as language supremacy is thus not only a bit unclear, but at times reductive. This was evident in my findings as terms I expected to be most associated with WLS statements, were not the most apparent indicators of WLS. Although heavily inspired and appropriate from Davila and Inoue, within this project the keywords, and how they are selected, expanded upon, analyzed, and interpreted in a given context, will be more judicial and inclusive of a variety of perspectives and interpretations.

Next, Davila’s method is not without its limitations, ones which I seek to reconcile in my adoption of it for this project. On one hand, the frequency analysis can provide a useful overview of WLS in a text or corpus and quickly pinpoint themes/connections. Yet, on the other hand, the conclusions Davila draws based solely on the frequency counts do not seem as reasonable or supported at times. In other words, decontextualizing the keywords and isolating frequency counts alone cannot identify

WLS or justify many of the conclusions she eventually makes. The keyword must be viewed within its surrounding context, the entire text, and across the corpus. In performing keyword analysis, for instance, one of her main findings is that Predominantly White Institutions (PWI) use less WLS terms in their course description when compared to institutions of color like Historically Black Colleges and Universities (HBCU) or Tribal Colleges and Universities (TCU). The one example she provides of a PWI course description reads:

University Writing helps undergraduates engage in the conversations that form our intellectual community. By reading and writing about scholarly and popular essays, students learn that writing is a process of continual refinement of ideas. Rather than approaching writing as an innate talent, this course teaches writing as a learned skill. We give special attention to textual analysis, research, and revision practices. (p. 650)

She concludes from this course description that “the lack of four WLS terms at PWIs, particularly when considered in comparison to institutions associated with students of color, is a form of white privilege that perpetuates WLS, linking White students with standardness” (p. 650). I interpret this to mean that the absence (low/zero frequency) of words like “clarity” “logic” “convention” etc. serve as an example of WLS because Davila claims that explicit writing or language expectations do not need to be stated for White students. This information seems to be assumed solely based on the frequency of the keywords or lack thereof instead of a comprehensive analysis of the course description’s content.

In a later example of the use of the word “basic” from a TCU institution, she then makes an inconsistent claim: her results show a high frequency or presence of WLS keywords in course descriptions and from this data she concludes:

In these phrases, basic communicates something that is expected and attainable, something that is taken for granted as important to obtain [...]

Using the example of ‘basic skills in reading,’ the reading skills that are described as *basic* are likely to be positioned as apolitical [however] nouns [i.e. basics, skills, etc.] in this list aren’t truly apolitical, and treating them as such reinforces the status quo, perpetuates WLS and SLIs more broadly, and privileges monolingualism at the expense of students of color, English language learners, and international students to name a few. (p. 654)

Unlike the previous example, the high frequency and presence of the term “basic” is what implies WLS in this case as it signals expectations that are explicitly stated (i.e., “you will learn basic skills in reading”). The conclusion Davila draws from the previous example and this one are conflicting and confusing to interpret. She implies that when course descriptions do not use WLS terms (especially at a PWI), it can perpetuate racism because it assumes that White students know the expectations, so they can remain unstated—an example of white privilege. However, when WLS terms are used frequently in course descriptions (at predominantly non-white institutions) they marginalize students of color because they require specific types of linguistic/discourse knowledge and skills that are explicitly named or require conformity to a superior or assumed white standard. If Davila posits both these situations to be true and the absence and presence of keywords can perpetuate WLS, it becomes difficult to decipher how we are to interpret the keyword frequencies and what to do with this data. In both examples Davila assumes a lot about what White students and Black students do or do not know. In this case, as a program administrator if I wanted to design a course description that resisted WLS, I would find it difficult to decide whether it is most appropriate to explicitly use keywords like “basic” or “clarity” in crafting my course description, or whether I should avoid them entirely. This process is also apparently dependent on my institution type and how I might racially identify my students and/or myself. In applying Davila’s methods to my own institution, I intend to move beyond frequency counts for this reason, as it is clear that frequency alone

does not provide the necessary information to determine the presence of WLS or to recommend how we are to interpret or apply the results of the findings. For my methods, I adopted and add to Davila's (and by extension, Inoue's) keywords, then beyond calculating their frequency, I examined their context for further thematic coding and qualitative analysis.

Methods: Keyword Frequency and KWIC Analysis

Based on my interpretation, critiques, and application of Davila's study, it was most beneficial to approach my study both quantitatively and qualitatively. Using the method of *keyword analysis (keyword frequency)* but also expanding it to include *keyword-in-context (KWIC) analysis* best suited my goals of applying established WLS methods, while also revising them to be more comprehensive. I first implemented text frequency searches to define my list of WLS keywords by imputing Davila's eight WLS keywords (i.e., *appropriate, basic, clear, conventions, effective, grammar, logic, and organization*) into my data analysis software (NVivo 12). I then used word trees to find further word and phrase associations. Like in Davila's study, this process was iterative as more word trees searches led to more keywords, which in turn led to more word trees. Culpepper and Demmen (2015) argue that this method provides quantitative data with advantaged that are twofold: "First, it is less subject to the vagaries of subjective judgments of cultural importance. Second, it does not rely on researchers selecting items that might be important and then establishing their importance but can reveal items that researchers did not know to be important in the first place" (p. 90). Using both established keywords and adding my own based on my specific corpus allowed me to not only expand WLS keywords but look at terms that were prominent in my corpus yet

neglected in the WLS literature or could serve as better indicators for WLS. I derived a final list of 31 WLS keywords. The frequencies for these words were then calculated, recorded, and analyzed for each of my corpus sample groups. While I am mainly concerned with the analysis and results from my syllabi samples, I also calculated the frequency of WLS keywords for the faculty handbook and for the syllabus templates. This functioned as a benchmark for comparison, to determine whether the frequency results aligned with the program documents and to also reveal any major deviations. This step did not necessarily relate to my larger research questions about WLS, but did provide useful contextual information for future writing program revisions.

After finalizing my list of keywords, I used the data analysis software to isolate keyword instances to observed and compare the context for how keywords appeared in their surrounding paragraph(s) and within body of the text using Keyword-in-Context (KWIC) analysis. This approach is a type of concordance study that looks at a word and its every utterance within a text or corpus not in isolation but within its natural language environment to find out its meaning and usage (Russell et al., 2017). Using the keyword search function, I isolated the phrases/sentences that contained a given keyword and compared the various contexts to each other, looking for patterns of use and meanings or deviations, word trees also assisted in this process. In terms of linguistic standardization, I focused on identifying related language concepts, judgements, and usages. This is a particularly important method for WLS as it provides a more nuanced approach to addressing linguistic standardization when paired with frequency analysis. And rather than having to support my conclusion and claims based on frequency alone (like Davila), I am able to link my keywords (and their frequencies) to larger themes and connections

within a given keyword and across multiple keywords and contexts. By conducting a KWIC analysis of the 31 WLS keywords, I ultimately identified several themes for coding and analysis.

In preview, through thematic coding, I utilized data and examples to support my ultimate claim that linguistic standardization primarily hinges on the prescriptive nature of statements related to language and race. My findings reveal that while keyword analysis of WLS keywords can be a useful tool in identifying these prescriptive statements and more explicit discriminatory statements regarding language, the frequency and keywords themselves do not immediately indicate use in a WLS context. Moreover, the keywords that were expected to be most significant based on the current scholarship on WLS, did not yield as many results when compared to other keywords. For example, analysis of the keywords “clear/clarity,” “logic,” and “basic” were more frequently used in a descriptive or a prescriptive but non-linguistic context. Additionally, while “clear/clarity” did appear in some instances of WLS statements, it was almost always in relation to other, more prominent, keywords like “grammar;” this information can be used to better understand keyword association and significance and relevance of a term. The methods outlined in this section were employed not just to evaluate the efficacy of WLS keyword analysis in pinpointing occurrences of WLS in composition course syllabi, but also to gain deeper insights into the specific types of statements and assessments that constitute linguistic racism. The following section is a more comprehensive description of these methods and the specific codes that were derived.

WLS Keywords and Thematic Codes

Along with the 8 terms analyzed in Davila's study, I also added several keywords to come up with a comprehensive list of 31 WLS terms for analysis. To achieve this, I first ran a word frequency query (word list) which showed the most frequently used terms from the dataset, then narrowed down my list by looking for words that were commonly associated with language use or standardization. So, while words like "academic," "class," "discussion," and "participation" were among the top 20 most frequently used terms, they weren't particularly applicable to my research questions or to WLS and were excluded from my final list and further analysis. To be clear, I chose the final keywords based on the ones already established in the WLS literature and the criteria Davila and Inoue define, which tends to focus on words associated with common academic concepts, language instruction, and writing process, or terms that have been debated within the field of composition like "basic" or "effective." In the end, I added several words to my final list of keywords: "standardization," "standard," "convention*," "tradition*," "discourse," "effective," and "correct*" that I felt represented a wider range of interpretations of WLS, or how it might be best associated and identified. Additionally, I classified four major categories or groupings for these keywords, which again, were based on Davila's categories, but also my own judgements. While some keywords fit into multiple categories, I sorted them based on my experiences with the concepts, the context in which they are most often used and their general associations with the other words in the category. These categories are defined in Table 3.1 below:

Table 3.1 List of Terms for Keyword Analysis

Categories	Description	Keywords
Standardization	Terms in this category are commonly associated with the process of standardization or used to describe features of language that are linked to mainstream or hegemonic conceptions of language.	“convention*” (convention, conventional), “proper*” (proper, properly), “correct” (corrections), “appropriate*” (appropriately, appropriateness), “standard*” (standard, standards, standardly), “tradition*” (tradition, traditional, traditionally), “Standard English*” (Standard Written English, Standard American English)
Linguistic	Terms in this category reference linguistic, or language specific concepts.	“language*” (language, languages), “literacy*” (literate, literacy, literacies), “discourse,” “edit*” (editing), “error*” (error, errors), “grammar*” (grammar, grammatically), “mechanics”, “proofread*” (proofread, proofreading), “punctuation”, “syntax”, “usage
Writing Process	Terms in this category refer to words often associated with writing development or revision, either through negative (remediation) or positive (improvement) conceptions of language.	“basic”, “develop*” (develop, developed, developing), “prepare*” (prepare, prepared, preparatory), “skill” (skill, skillfully), “master” (master, mastery)
Evaluation	Terms in this category are associated with the judgement and/or assessment of writing and language.	“articulate*” (articulate, articulately), “clear” (clarity), “effective*” (effective, effectively), “good writing” “quality,” “well-written,” “cohesive*” (cohesion, coherence), “logic” (logical)

After identifying and revising my final list of keywords, calculating the keyword frequency was a fairly straightforward process assisted by my data analysis software. Based on text frequency searches, the software generated a percentage representing the relevance of each keyword reference in relation to the total amount of words within the corpus. Since my corpus was much smaller and less varied than Davila's corpus, my frequencies did not necessarily show great numbers or deviation and were not a central focus of my analysis. However, this process served as a crucial step in identifying all of the references for which I would be analyzing contextually. Moreover, calculating the frequencies did allow me to compare my own results to Davila's study.

Once frequencies were calculated, I shifted to a keyword-in-context approach using a combination the word search and word tree features in NVivo 12 to see whether a selected keyword and its surrounding context indicated any interesting usage, frequent relationships to other words, showed any explicitly problematic or racist practices, or did not show some of the expected relationships. As mentioned previously this was an iterative process, so although I also refined my keywords using this same process, I then went back to view the keyword references with the purpose of contextual analysis in mind and to derive themes and codes. The keyword search function highlighted every instance of a given keyword within the corpus. From this list, I could see the surround sentences, phrases, and even paragraphs in which the keywords appeared. Word trees were also helpful in showing how a selected keyword connected to particular phrases by providing a visual display their immediate context and associated uses. This was a quicker and more succinct way to view the important contexts and patterns rather than manually sifting through all of the individual keyword references. The more frequent a

particular concept or context showed up in combination with the central keyword, the larger the font is displayed, allowing me to choose whether the connections bared any potential data or indicated further refinement and careful analysis. With this step, I determine whether the mention of the keyword was related to a judgement about language (i.e., using “articulate” to describe a specific type of language or person) or whether it was being uses in a more innocuous/general way (i.e., “this course requires you to articulate your ideas”). As this was a fluid process, the word trees assisted in both refining my final list of keywords mentioned earlier and observing various contexts and pattern for thematic coding. For example, the word tree for “clarity” which is an essential keyword indicating WLS in both Inoue and Davila’s studies, did not outwardly suggest to me, within my dataset, any frequent or particularly racist usage or context regarding linguistic standardization, see Figure 1 below.

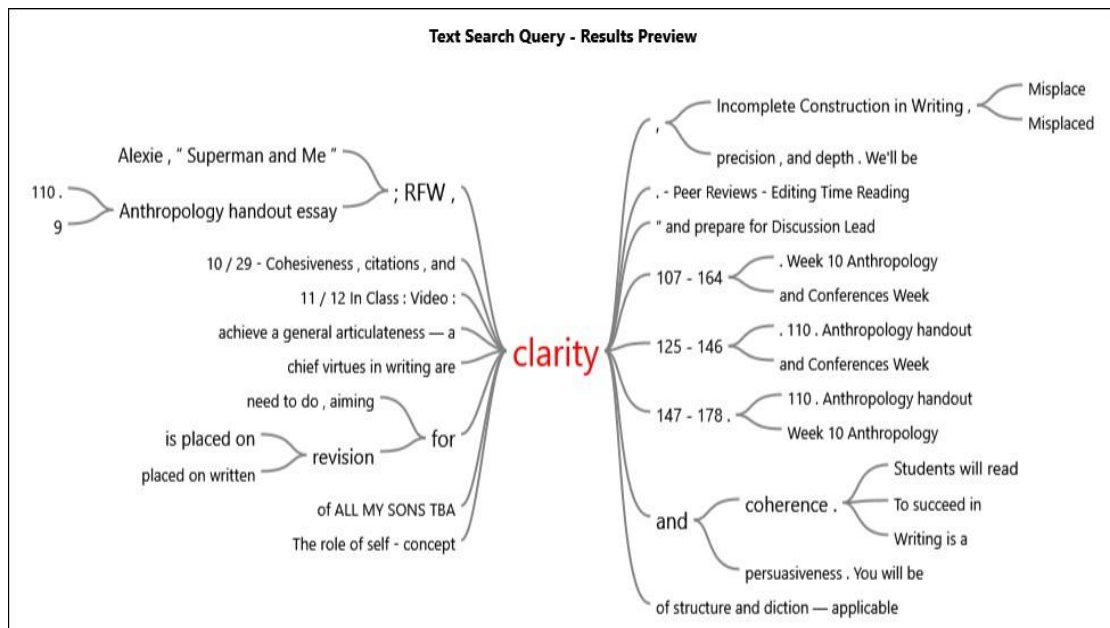


Figure 1. Image. Text search inquiry tree for the keyword “clarity.”

However, the phrase “standard written English” was not only used frequently in context with words like “conform” but associated with ideas such as “errors may distract or impede” which are common attitudes against linguistic difference, as seen in Figure 2:

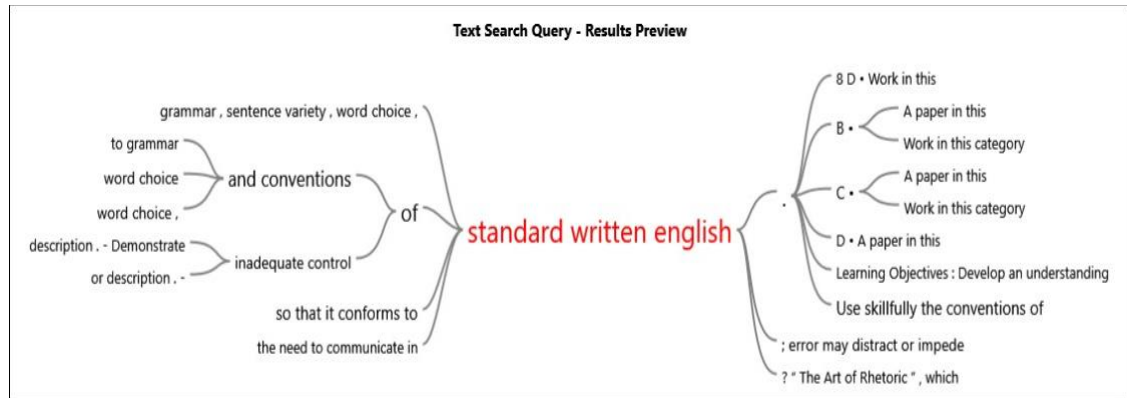


Figure 2. Image. Text search inquiry tree for the keyword “Standard English.”

This indicated to me that not every frequently used term, could or should be considered a direct example of WLS context and that the terms identified by Davila and Inoue, might not be the most accurate indicators for WLS after all. In this case, the significance of a keyword was determined not only by its frequency but also how well integrated the terms was in association with other keywords and language-specific concepts.

Subsequently, to determine if there were any other similar connections between the codes, patterns, relationships, and references, I focused on statements that were associated with or made implicit or explicit judgements about language. For Inoue (2015), the use of a keyword like “clarity” within rubrics requires that the student meet the standards of rationality and logic, or it is viewed as an inherent weakness or cognitive flaw. While I can agree with Inoue (2015) that “white supremacy is structured into the

ways everyone reads and judges writing” (p. 373), and that “white supremacy is already part of the judgments of language no matter who we are or where we come from” (p. 375), his conclusions seem to suggest that whenever and wherever “clarity” is used, it is always participating in WLS, but as the example above shows, this is not necessarily true. It is impossible to conclusively argue that every instructor who asks students to produce “clear” writing is racist. Thus, it was important for my study to revise and be more explicit about what counts as WLS. First, in my interpretation of WLS, I recognize that a given keyword’s context must be related to language use or language users in some way. For example, there is a difference between requiring students to conform to “genre conventions” versus the “conventions of Standard English;” while both require knowing the rules and standards of a given “convention” the latter is more directly aligned with exclusionary language practices. In this case, both instances of this keyword, should not be treated as if they are the same or that they are both equally indicative of WLS. If WLS is defined as ideologies that prioritize and value standards of Whiteness that inform our judgements about language, it makes sense then to focus on statements that either address language use or language users more directly to get a more accurate frequency and context for WLS. Second, even when a keyword is related to language, it is not always used in an exclusionary manner. Not every mention of “grammar” is necessarily problematic—as linguists have long argued, the study of grammar in and of itself is not inherently racist.

Subsequently, what I concluded from my KWIC analysis was that linguistic racism is defined by its prescriptiveness, that is, statements prescribing how a language like Standard English or grammar should be used based on cultural norms or personal

preferences. For example, one instructor emphasized in full capital letters, “ALL ASSIGNMENTS MUST DEMONSTRATE CORRECT AND STANDARD GRAMMAR, PUNCTUATION, SPELLING, AND CAPITALIZATION” In this example, the instructor clearly does not view language in a neutral way, but rather prescriptively. Readers can plainly discern from this sentence and its placement within the “course requirements” that the instructor upholds a highly conventional perspective on language and that complying to their preferences will be a necessary requirement to pass the course. At the core of many language policies is the idea that is one correct way of writing or speaking. Historically, linguistic prescriptivism is a natural product and tool of language standardization and although it is necessary in some genres and discourses, from a sociolinguistic perspective, it is also linked to racism in complex ways. It helps to explain how the instructor above, who might identify as being progressive and antiracist, might still participate in linguistic racism and even defend their language preferences as the academic standard, or see no issue with their statement. I believe identifying how prescriptiveness functions to enable WLS (and how keywords can be used to identify prescriptiveness) in this situation is a more productive analysis rather than assuming the instructor was racist by default or accusing them of participating in white supremacy. In this way, my dissertation revises the criteria for WLS and how to better use keywords to identify instances of linguistic standardization. The criteria for determining WLS statements in this project is based on a keyword’s association with specific language practices and whether it was used in prescriptive manner rather than assumptions about “unstated” expectations or interpretations of a keyword’s intended impact or uptake.

Table 3.2 Coding for Descriptive or Prescriptive Statements Examples

Code	Description	Example
Descriptive Statement	These statements objectively describe or explain reality without expressing any subjective opinions or value judgments. Descriptive statements focus on facts, observations, or empirical evidence.	“...help students to understand the relationship of grammar , punctuation, content, organization and style to the successful college essay.”
Prescriptive Statement	These statements present a recommended course of action or a value judgment. Prescriptive statements often involve subjective opinions, personal preferences, moral values, or societal norms.	“Students are expected to come to class prepared to contribute, having completed the week’s reading and writing assignments.”
Prescriptive WLS Statements	These statements are also prescriptive statements but specifically address judgements or attitudes towards language, language use, or language users.	“ YOU MUST PROOFREAD IT CAREFULLY BEFORE YOU SEND IT TO ME! Correcting as many errors as you can, thinking about what you want to say and saying it well, with conviction and simplicity turn in a sample of your best writing at this time”

Ultimately, the three code groups I classified were (1) descriptive statements, (2) prescriptive statements, and (3) prescriptive WLS statements. As defined in Table 3.2 above, a descriptive statement is non-judgmental, and it does not have the goal of determining what represents good or bad language, correct or incorrect structures, or grammatical or ungrammatical forms. Whereas prescriptive statements often prescribe a “codified” or “proper” standard by which something should be done or judged. In this study, these prescriptive statements do not necessarily have to do with language, but rather notions of academic discourse or classroom behavior. Lastly, WLS statements, a type of prescriptive statement that directly judges language and how it should be used. Prescriptive approaches to language aim to “correct” or reestablish the value of privileged forms of language. (Leech, Deuchar, and Hoogenraad, 2006). Although it was necessary to code and sort each keyword reference into these three categories, my analysis and conclusions will primarily focus on prescriptive WLS statements. In the end, the WLS keyword and codes derived from my keyword analysis provided several avenues for further qualitative analysis and discussion:

1. Understanding Intentions: Distinguishing between prescriptive (normative) and descriptive (informative) statements helps in understanding the intended purpose behind the text. Prescriptive statements often suggest norms, guidelines, or expectations, while descriptive statements provide information or describe phenomena without necessarily implying how things should be.
2. Interpretation and Context: Knowing whether a statement is prescriptive or descriptive aids in interpreting the content correctly. Prescriptive statements may indicate recommendations, rules, or values, while descriptive statements

offer facts or observations. Moreover, in identifying WLS statements, this could reveal the difference between normal prescriptive statements and statements of linguistic racism. Understanding this distinction is crucial for my analysis.

3. **Identifying Bias:** Recognizing prescriptive language can help uncover biases, ideologies, or agendas present in composition course syllabi. Prescriptive statements may reveal implicit beliefs or values held by the instructor or organization, shedding light on potential conflicts within the content.
4. **Impact Assessment:** Prescriptive statements can influence behavior, decisions, or perceptions. By identifying prescriptive elements in content, administrators can assess the potential impact of these statements on students or writing program at large.
5. **Comparative Analysis:** Differentiating between WLS, prescriptive, and descriptive content allows for comparative analysis across texts or contexts. It enables administrators to evaluate norms, trends, or changes in attitudes over time by examining how prescriptive and descriptive language is used in various sources, including program documents like the syllabus.
6. **Policy Implications:** Identifying prescriptive statements may have implications for curriculum design, compliance, and program standardization. Understanding the prevalence and nature of prescriptive language course syllabi can inform policy decisions, educational strategies, or communication approaches.

Data Collection

I collected 131 ($n = 131$) syllabi samples from the years 2018 to 2022, covering all three major composition courses in the writing program sequence, ENGL 100, 150, and 200. I chose this range of dates to reflect the most significant revision of the composition faculty handbook at Hudson—which occurred in 2018.¹⁴ To obtain the syllabi, I downloaded them from the English Department Community page and the Composition Faculty Community page via the university Learning Management System (LMS); community pages are accessible by any Hudson English Department instructor. Every semester, instructors are asked to upload and publicly share their course syllabus on the department’s community pages, and while not every instructor complies, there was a considerable number of syllabi to make up the corpus for my analysis. In total, of the 131 syllabi, I collected 37 syllabi for ENG 100, 58 syllabi for ENG 150, and 75 syllabi for ENG 200 from 54 different writing instructors. In addition to syllabi analysis, I used the Hudson Composition Faculty Handbook¹⁵, which includes course descriptions, curriculum requirements, learning outcomes, best practices, teaching materials, syllabus design guide, and syllabus templates¹⁶. The documents were analyzed using the same keyword analysis to serve as benchmarks for comparison and to establish overall administrative positions on language and race within the writing program that are relevant to my analysis and discussion.

¹⁴ While there have been new editions and updates to the handbook published in 2019 and 2021, these include minor updates in content and formatting; the bulk of the major curricular and pedagogical updates occurred during the 2018 revision and it has been circulated and referenced the longest.

¹⁵ See Appendix D

¹⁶ See Appendix E

Data Segmentation

I segmented my data samples into the following categories: instructor name, course title (i.e. ENG 100, 150 or 200), year, and pedagogical approach.¹⁷ The first three classifications: instructor, course, and year, were used to help filter and organize each syllabus and help facilitate easier data analysis, such as identifying where revision might be needed in or across the writing program's three composition courses. The latter classification, pedagogical approach, was especially important to catalog as it presented a notable variable for my analysis and results. For example, while the handbook suggests taking a Writing About Writing (WAW) approach—providing specific textbook and content recommendations that align with its pedagogy—a large portion of the corpus samples ignored this guidance, and of those syllabi, a greater percentage resulted in instances of WLS. This outcome suggests a relationship between linguistic standardization and pedagogical approach that may provide important data on where and how we might use WLS methods in program assessment practices.

To gather this information, I closely examined each syllabus, sorting and labeling the files accordingly. When it was not obviously stated in the course description, I determined the pedagogical approach based on content clues including required course readings, assignments, and/or course learning outcomes. From my overview of the syllabi, I determined that most courses fell into one of five pedagogical categories:

1. Film: course in this category approach writing instruction using film, TV and other visual media as the central “course text” or object of analysis. These courses

¹⁷ For the results and reporting of my data, the names of the instructors will be hidden or anonymous, however, all other information remains relevant to the discussion

often focused on teaching writing through film writing (screenplays) or film theory/analysis.

2. Literature/Creative Writing: these courses approach writing instruction primarily through literary analysis, poetry, and/or creative writing. Courses in this category mainly follow the format of a traditional literature seminar course, almost exclusively analyzing fiction (i.e. literature, poetry, or playwriting) and/or using assignments such as personal narratives or short stories to model and teach the conventions of writing. There is also an emphasis on creative writing workshopping class format.
3. Thematic: courses in this category utilize common first-year-writing themes like “the American Dream” or other specific areas of interest (e.g., climate change).
4. Rhetorical/Traditional Writing Studies: this approach focuses on defining academic writing through research, rhetorical analysis, and emphasis on writing process (i.e. prewriting, drafting, peer review, etc.). These courses often use a combination of nonfiction and literary texts from textbooks such as the very popular, *They Say, I Say* to help students learn the conventions of academic writing.
5. Writing about Writing/Genre Studies: this approach, as the name suggests, uses nonfiction texts that specifically study or explore the pedagogical theories of writing, composition, and literacy using meta-analysis and reflection. The goal of these courses is to not only teach students the conventions and genres of academic discourse, but why they write and the social contexts for writing.

Limits of the study

Finally, there are some limitations of studying syllabi to consider. Without instructor or student surveys to assess the design process or student uptake of a given syllabus, it is impossible to know how a syllabus may be used in actuality at Hudson. There might be situations where some instructors see the syllabus as a boiler-plate document covering only the basics. This type of approach may create a syllabus that is impersonal, devoid of all personality, writing/linguistic ideology, or personal preference. Yet, even in the cases where a syllabus is well-designed with social justice or language awareness in mind, it may still be impossible to predict if or how students choose to uptake the syllabus and its contents. Habanek (2005) concludes that although syllabi are important and dynamic communicative tools, their design are also wildly inconsistent, which “raise questions about the purpose and integrity of the information presented in syllabi that students depend on to help them navigate a course.” (Habanek, 2005). At Hudson, we run into this very same issue of integrity as there is little oversight and control over what composition syllabi include and how they are designed. Thus, the syllabi samples collected for this study show a wide range of themes and interests, and instructors’ preferences are prioritized over institutional or program requirements. These are all considerations during analysis of results and for future application of this project for writing program assessment.

Secondly, while I collected a significant number of syllabi from a fairly diverse group and number of instructors (54), this only represents less than half of the composition instructors currently teaching at Hudson. Along with the surveys, I might have also benefitted from soliciting participation in the sharing of course syllabi.

Although, I suspect those who already readily share their syllabi on the Faculty Resource Page would also participate in my collection inquiry, this might have also encouraged others who have not shared their syllabi to do for this project. If my sample size was much larger, my keyword frequency counts would have provided more accurate numbers and representation of have changed my results in several ways, this project ultimately only represents a snapshot and the dynamics of language and race from within one institution's writing program.

CHAPTER 4

DATA ANALYSIS AND FINDINGS

This chapter reports my finding from the keyword analysis for WLS terms. Modeling the methods found in Davila's (2022) study of WLS in course descriptions, my project has the goal of applying and revising these methods to provide more practical understandings and applications of WLS in writing program assessment and standardization. As my methods in Chapter 3 describe one amendment to Davila's approach I have implemented in this project was to thematically code and analyze the WLS keywords-in-context (KWIC). My primary critique of WLS scholarship is that it has the tendency to assume racism as the default mode in academia. And while linguistic standardization has been well studied and understood in the field of linguistic as both a natural and socially motivated phenomenon, in composition, we see concepts such as SLI being appropriated and politicize to meet the agendas or popularity of certain topics in the field at the time, such as Linguistic Justice. Moreover, addressing racism from a writing program administrator point of view is complex, requiring nuance and caution and we want to avoid making a monolith of the very marginalized communities we mean to serve. In this project then, context matters and before we make sweeping assumptions of a writing program or instructor's stance on language, we need to identify how and where it is best to implement change. Without coding and analyzing the context for how particular keywords and their associated WLS connotation are being used, the methods of measuring keyword frequencies can only provide so much interpretive data, which often includes making assumption about the use and meaning of keywords or over-generalizing the spread of WLS when the data does not necessarily support these claims.

My findings reveal that the keywords that were expected to be most significant based on the current scholarship on WLS, did not yield as many results when compared to other keywords. For example, analysis of the keywords “clear/clarity,” “logic,” and “basic” were more frequently used in a descriptive or a prescriptive but non-linguistic context. Moreover, while “clear/clarity” did appear in some instances of WLS statements, it was almost always in relation to other, more prominent, keywords like “grammar;” this information can be used to better understand keyword association and the significance of a term. Noticeably, my analysis shows that analyzing keywords in context using thematic codes is an essential step. When coded, data supports the claim that calculating the frequency of a keyword by itself is not an indicator for WLS and cannot be used alone to assess the presence of linguistic discrimination or SLI. So, when Davila (2022) notes that WLS terms are more frequently present in course descriptions from non-PWI institutions, this data requires further research and analysis.¹⁸ In relation to writing program standardization, the analysis of my syllabi corpus was compared to the keyword analysis of composition course templates and the faculty handbook. This provided further context for where concordance or deviation occurred. My analysis of WLS keywords has implications for the application of WLS theories in a more practical sense.

I will begin this chapter by providing the results of my frequency analysis for three datasets, the handbook, templates, and syllabi corpus. My analysis examined how frequent WLS terms were present in the “control” group documents (i.e., handbook and

¹⁸ See discussion in Chapter 3: In her article “White Language Supremacy in Course Descriptions” (2022) she argues that PWI use less instances of WLS keywords which “is a form of white privilege that perpetuates WLS, linking White students with standardless” (p. 650). Yet she does not provide examples of what a statement with higher frequency of WLS looks like, or why it is particularly more racist, so it is assumed in the study that every mention of these keywords not only matter but communicate SLI’s just by their presence alone.

templates); this was to establish a baseline for comparison and to analyze whether the presence of WLS statements in the syllabus samples was dictated/suggested by the templates themselves. Next, I offer a comparison of these frequencies to the ones gathered in my analysis of the syllabi corpus and discuss the patterns of association and usage. I will then report the results of my analysis of these keywords in context, providing examples of the three types of statements, descriptive, prescriptive, and WLS, generated from keyword searches and thematic coding. I will conclude with a summary of my major findings and a preview of the implications of these findings that will be discussed in Chapter 5.

Findings: Keyword Frequency Analysis

Frequency calculation is a fundamental stage in keyword analysis, based on the premise that the greater the frequency with which a word appears, the more substantial its relevance compared to other words. However, because my corpus is not as large or varied as Davila's, the frequency data counts here are not as meaningful or conclusive and any disparities in the final counts may not be entirely accurate or representative of a traditional keyword frequency analysis. Rather, the frequencies presented in this section are used to simulate and apply Davila's methods for comparison, especially within my main syllabi sample corpus. As discussed in Chapter 3, conducting frequency analysis in this manner is insufficient at identifying WLS on its own (even within Davila's original study), but assists in narrowing down potential statements for coding/qualitative analysis and providing meaningful results regarding keyword association—that is, the immediate context of use and relationship between multiple keywords. The three sample groups I analyzed for frequency were the faculty handbook, composition course templates, and the

syllabus samples (the main corpus of my study). While the frequency analysis of the handbook and templates is not central to my broader discussion of WLS, they do offer valuable context regarding the connection between these documents and their intended impact on syllabi design within the writing program. Ultimately, the results of the frequency analysis shown here indicate that the keywords are also dictated by the genre, purpose, and audience of the corpus group or text sample. The emphasis on keywords, which measured by its frequency, and keyword categories differs for each group: the handbook emphasize keywords related to standardization and writing process, while the templates emphasize evaluation, and the sample corpus emphasize linguistic concerns. Although these frequencies from each corpus cannot be accurately or comprehensively compared due to difference in genre and sample size, the frequencies do highlight the most relevant keyword for each corpus which in turn can signal correlation between the sample groups. What follows is a detailed reporting of these findings.

Keyword Frequencies: Faculty Handbook

The analysis of the frequency of the keywords in the handbook showed that keywords in the writing process and standardization categories were more frequently represented than those in other categories. Table 4.1 below displays the complete reference counts and frequencies for all 31 keywords within this dataset:

Table 4.1 Keyword Frequencies Faculty Handbook

Coding Category	Keywords	Number of References	Frequency (% of total words)
Standardization Terms	Standard*	12	0.12
	Standard English*	0	0.00
	Convention*	21	0.21
	Tradition*	2	0.02
	Proper	7	0.07
	Correct*	4	0.04
	Appropriate*	20	0.20
Linguistic Terms	Grammar*	5	0.05
	Syntax	0	0.00
	Punctuation	5	0.05
	Usage	3	0.03
	Mechanics	10	0.10
	Edit*	6	0.06
	Error*	7	0.07
	Language	22	0.22
	Literacy*	12	0.12
	Discourse	8	0.08
	Proofread*	0	0.00
	Writing Process	Basic	3
Develop*		37	0.37
Skill		11	0.11
Prepare*		7	0.07
Organization		13	0.13
Evaluation	Good Writing	3	0.03
	Well-written	0	0.00
	Effective*	11	0.11
	Articulate*	0	0.00
	Cohesive*	9	0.09
	Quality	3	0.03
	Clear/Clarity*	11	0.11
	Logic*	2	0.02

Note: n = 1

The keywords “develop” (0.37%), “language” (0.22%), “convention” (0.21%), “appropriate” (0.20%), and “organization” (0.13%) were among the top five keyword frequencies. Additionally, the absence of several keywords, “Standard English,” “syntax,” “proofread,” “well-written,” and “articulate” was a noteworthy finding. While the word “standard” was used more generally in relation to other concepts (i.e., “standard protocol”), there were zero references, to “Standard English”—a core concept of WLS. This result suggests that although the handbook advises instructors on many issues and best practices, it does not highlight or provide any guidance on the use or understanding of “Standard English” ideologies and practices. However, as a prominent keyword and in the higher frequency in the syllabi sample corpus (discussed below), the variance could imply that one of two situations (or both) may be occurring: (1) the higher instances of “Standard English” in the syllabi sample corpus were not derived from the handbook itself, or (2) because of a lack of guidance or prohibition, its use/misuse is ironically and unknowingly encouraged by the handbook. Interestingly, “Language” emerged as a frequent term with 22 references. But in the handbook, the keyword was most often used descriptively in the title of recommended textbooks and list of resources (i.e., Dasbender, (2000) *Language: A Reader for Writers*, or Clark et al., *Language Awareness: Readings for College Writers*). So, although certain approaches to language may be implied through these readings, there is a need to present very explicit policies or stances on language policies and Standard English in future revisions of the handbook and writing program to prevent the potential for the misappropriation or application of particular language ideologies.

The keywords “develop” and “organization” are categorized as writing process terms while the keywords “language,” “appropriate,” and “convention” are categorized as terms of standardization (for an explanation of these categories refer back to table 3.1. in Chapter 3). Although the handbook stresses writing process and standardization, it was most commonly in the context of *how* to address these concerns or fairly implement student evaluation. For example, the most frequent keyword (37 references), “develop” was used to describe the nature of the course or an intent of design: “Motivation and Development Process for the Outcomes” (Sample ID #H1). When used prescriptively, the keyword gave directives to instructors on what to expect of their students:

By the end of first-year composition, students should:

- **Develop** a writing project through multiple drafts
- **Develop** flexible strategies for reading, drafting, reviewing, collaborating, revising, rewriting, rereading, and editing (Sample ID #H1)

The frequency of the keyword “develop” insinuates a core belief within the handbook of not only student development but faculty development. This makes sense as the genre of a handbook is to provide faculty direction on how to promote students’ writing and improvement. To accomplish this task, concepts such as “convention” were frequently referenced, to underscore the standard and best practices of teaching composition as envisioned by writing program administrators. In one example, the handbook directly describes the concept of conventions, particularly genre and academic conventions:

Knowledge of Conventions: *Conventions* are the formal rules and informal guidelines that define genres, and in so doing, shape readers' and writers' perceptions of correctness or appropriateness. Most obviously, **conventions** govern such things as mechanics, usage, spelling, and citation practices. But they also influence content, style, organization, graphics, and document design. **Conventions** arise from a history of use and facilitate reading by invoking common expectations between writers and readers. These expectations are not universal; they vary by genre (**conventions** for lab notebooks and discussion-board exchanges differ), by discipline (**conventional** moves in literature reviews in Psychology differ from those in English), and by occasion (meeting minutes and executive summaries use different registers). A writer's grasp of **conventions** in one context does not mean a firm grasp in another. Successful writers understand, analyze, and negotiate **conventions** for purpose, audience, and genre, understanding that genres evolve in response to changes in material conditions and composing technologies and attending carefully to emergent **conventions**. (Sample ID #H1)

Significantly, the frequency of the keyword "convention" was much higher in the handbook when compared to the templates and sample corpus groups. The frequency of the term "convention" in conjunction with keywords like "develop" and "language" in the handbook implies that the central theme and objective of Hudson's writing program aimed at enhancing both instructors' and students' comprehension of academic conventions by positioning language itself as a focal point of investigation. For future analysis, it would be beneficial to examine multiple writing program handbooks from comparable institutions to assess whether the handbook could be improved in terms of its content and presentation for instructors.

Keyword Frequencies: Composition Course Templates

Overall, the frequency of the top five keywords in this analysis group showed some accord with the handbook but also emphasized several keywords of evaluation. Table 4.2 below shows the complete reference counts and frequencies for all 31 keywords within this dataset:

Table 4.2 Keyword Frequencies in Syllabus Templates Corpus

Coding Category	Keywords	# of References	Frequency (% of total words)
Standardization Terms	Standard*	5	0.08
	Standard English*	0	0.00
	Convention*	4	0.06
	Tradition*	0	0.00
	Proper	2	0.03
	Correct*	0	0.00
	Appropriate*	13	0.20
Linguistic Terms	Grammar*	4	0.06
	Syntax	0	0.00
	Punctuation	0	0.00
	Usage	0	0.00
	Mechanics	3	0.05
	Edit*	1	0.02
	Error*	0	0.00
	Language	14	0.21
	Literacy*	2	0.03
	Discourse	11	0.17
	Proofread*	3	0.05
Writing Process	Basic	3	0.05
	Develop*	9	0.14
	Skill	6	0.09
	Prepare*	7	0.11
	Organization	1	0.02
Evaluation	Good Writing	2	0.03
	Well-written	0	0.00
	Effective*	2	0.03
	Articulate*	0	0.00
	Cohesive*	10	0.15
	Quality	0	0.00
	Clear/Clarity*	16	0.24
	Logic	0	0.00

Note: n = 4

The top five keywords were “clear/clarity” (0.24%), “language” (0.21%), “appropriate” (0.20%), “discourse” (0.17%), and “cohesive” (0.15%). The keywords “language” and “discourse” are categorized as a linguistic term, “appropriate” is categorized as standardization, and “clear/clarity” and “cohesive” are categorized as evaluation. The analysis of this dataset was comprised of four documents: a general University template and three templates specific to each composition course (i.e., ENG 100, ENG 150, and ENG 200).

The frequencies in this dataset show that the keywords “language” and “appropriate” had similar frequencies to the handbook, but the other keywords differed in relevance. Like the handbook, “language” was primarily used in the templates to describe suggested textbooks, and “appropriate” was primarily referenced in the required university statements on “Appropriate Use Policy for Information Technology.” “Discourse” was more frequently referenced and when viewed within the templates in relation to evaluation and assessment. For example: “assessments of students’ writing should reflect specific task and discourse community expectations and not just sentence-level or mechanical concerns” (Sample ID #T2). As observed in my analysis of the handbook, the templates also reflect, and perhaps more directly and frequently, the theme of academic discourse. In this way, the templates serve their purpose, to contextualize, summarize, and concisely communicate the concepts and ideologies represented in the handbook.

The most significant difference in frequencies was the presence of the keyword, “clear/clarity” which was over twice more frequent in the templates than in the handbook. In the templates, clear was used in a variety of prescriptive context to address what the

instructor should or should not do, or it was described in the assessment criteria of sample rubrics and assignments: (1) “Make it clear to students if you are using a points system or percentages. Indicate your policy on late work, missed exams, etc. (2) “Clearly list assignments on their due dates (Sample ID #T3). From this frequency data, I assumed that the templates served a more direct purpose of guiding instructor to make the most appropriate choices for designing their course and syllabus. In these examples, the frequency data is less useful or meaningful to my overall analysis of WLS since it is clearly reflective of the genre, which has been deliberately crafted by program administrators.

Keyword Frequencies: Syllabi Sample Corpus

The frequency of the top five keywords in this corpus, which constitutes my primary analysis group, exhibited partial alignment with the handbook and templates but also significant divergence. This observation is interesting because all three document types, regardless of their genre, ideally should share common keywords and offer similar content. Handbooks inform the templates, which in turn shape the final syllabi that instructors are expected to present to students. While frequency count may not offer a comprehensive assessment of this concordance, it does provide a snapshot of the correlation between them and serves as a potential starting point for program evaluation, especially in regard to language standardization and inclusion. Table 4.3 below displays the complete reference counts and frequencies for all 31 keywords within this dataset:

Table 4.3 Keyword Frequencies in Syllabi Sample Corpus

Coding Category	Keywords	# of References	Frequency (% of total words)
Standardization Terms	Standard*	185	0.09
	Standard English*	13	0.01
	Convention*	88	0.04
	Tradition*	43	0.02
	Proper	124	0.06
	Correct*	80	0.04
	Appropriate*	209	0.10
Linguistic Terms	Grammar*	187	0.09
	Syntax	5	0.00
	Punctuation	61	0.03
	Usage	36	0.02
	Mechanics	36	0.02
	Edit*	275	0.14
	Error*	66	0.03
	Language	183	0.09
	Literacy*	51	0.03
	Discourse	84	0.04
	Proofread*	77	0.04
Writing Process	Basic	94	0.05
	Develop*	449	0.22
	Skill	267	0.14
	Prepare*	243	0.12
	Organization	168	0.08
Evaluation	Good Writing	24	0.01
	Well-written	9	0.01
	Effective*	14	0.01
	Articulate*	8	0.01
	Cohesive*	44	0.02
	Quality	115	0.03
	Clear/Clarity*	152	0.07
	Logic*	83	0.04

The top five keywords were “develop” (0.22%), “edit” (0.14%), “skill” (0.14%), “prepare” (0.17%), and “appropriate” (0.15%). The keywords “develop,” “skill,” and “prepare” were categorized as writing process terms, “appropriate” was categorized as standardization, and “edit” categorized as a linguistic term. Most notably, the frequencies and association of the top terms suggest that writing process, above other categories of keywords was more important throughout the syllabi corpus. Moreover, the keywords, “develop,” “skill,” and “prepare” signal to me that the syllabi are mainly concerned with guiding student through the stages of writing including development of ideas, research skills, and preparation for the revision process. Additionally, the frequency of “develop” emphasized the relationship between the handbook and course syllabi samples. Like the handbook results, “develop” emerges at the top, this concordance was expected as the handbook is assumed as a useful tool in the development of a composition course syllabi, or it could suggest that student development is a more universal theme of writing courses.

Another notable finding was how low “clear/clarity” and “logic” scored in relation to the other keywords. I was expecting the terms to be regularly referenced (considering their prevalence in the WLS literature) and while a lower frequency does not necessarily invalidate claims about the context or impact of “clear/clarity” in imposing SLI’s, it seems likely that other keywords are more precise at predicting or indicating WLS using frequency alone. Extending the conversation to even the top ten keyword frequencies, we can observe that terms of evaluation were the least apparent in the corpus, however, keywords in standardization, linguistics, and writing process categories exclusively occupied the top frequencies and reference counts. This was a particularly interesting finding as I initially believed that evaluation keywords would not only be

more present in the structure and content of a composition syllabus, but also in terms of instructor’s main objectives and prescriptions for language and writing.

“Standard English” was mentioned 13 times, and while not a significant number and relation to the total corpus, the presence of the keyword despite not being referenced at all in the handbook or templates, suggests that it is a concept or keyword that comes from the instructor’s personal ideologies or approaches to language. Lastly, as a preview of my KWIC analysis, when the top five keywords were viewed in context within the syllabi contents, none of the top keywords were used in a WLS context:

Table 4.4 Top 5 Most Referenced Keywords in Context

#	Keywords	Example	Most Frequent Coding
1	Develop*	Develop flexible strategies for generating, revising, editing, and proofreading... Develop knowledge of genre conventions ranging from structure and paragraphing to tone and mechanics (Sample ID #26)	Prescriptive
2	Edit*	Students will learn to approach the writing, revising, and editing of well-organized and coherent analytical essays as a series of tasks and learn to develop strategies for effectively accomplishing each stage of the writing process. (Sample ID #2)	Prescriptive
3	Skill	The purpose of these assignments are to get you to think about ideas and to give you a chance to practice the skills you need for your writing projects (Sample ID #17)	Descriptive
4	Prepare*	Write a 1-page reflection about the process of learning about, preparing for, and carrying out a debate with your team (Sample ID #13)	Prescriptive
5	Appropriate*	Services are available only to students who are registered and submit appropriate documentation (Sample ID #36)	Descriptive

This result suggests that despite their lack of standardization, the majority syllabi at Hudson do make and attempt to communicate similar ideas and beliefs about writing process, although these aren't as grounded in or follow the recommendations provided in the handbook or templates. It seems then, that despite Composition's move away from solely process-based pedagogy, it is still a large part of many of the instructor's approaches at Hudson.

Keyword Frequency Results Compared

When comparing my finding from the three frequency datasets, I observed that while there was some concordance and overlap between the handbook and syllabus samples, the top keywords varied more greatly between the syllabus samples and the templates. This was unsurprising given the different genres and audiences for each type of document but also surprising considering the final syllabus instructors develop are supposed to match the templates and pull from the handbook content directly. In this way, the comparison of frequencies here is not entirely useful to my analysis of WLS but do show areas in which the syllabi samples diverge and may indicate future revisions. See Table 4.5 below for a summary of the top five keywords for each dataset in comparison. Linguistic standardization is not prominent in either the handbook or templates, but WLS is still occurring, so in terms of program assessment, frequency analysis does provide a quick method to view concordance across the program. Ultimately, the templates were too open-ended and did not provide enough content to really compare to the syllabi corpus.

Table 4.5 Comparison of Top 5 Keyword Frequencies per Sample Group

Dataset	Keywords	Coding Category	Total References	Frequency
Syllabi Samples (<i>n</i> =131)	1. Develop*	Writing Process	449	0.22
	2. Edit*	Linguistic	275	0.14
	3. Skill	Writing Process	267	0.14
	4. Prepare*	Writing process	243	0.12
	5. Appropriate*	Standardization	209	0.10
Templates (<i>n</i> =5)	1. Clear/Clarity*	Evaluation	16	0.24
	2. Language	Linguistic	14	0.21
	3. Appropriate	Standardization	13	0.20
	4. Discourse	Discourse	11	0.17
	5. Cohesive	Evaluation	10	0.15
Handbook (<i>n</i> = 1)	1. Develop*	Writing Process	37	0.37
	2. Language	Linguistic	22	0.22
	3. Convention*	Standardization	21	0.21
	4. Appropriate*	Standardization	20	0.20
	5. Organization	Writing Process	13	0.13

For example, the templates directly addressed the instructor, giving them options for personalization or offering directions on how to customize each section but in some cases did not provide a direct example of what this statement might (or should) look like in a real syllabus:

Provide a statement of your grading approach or philosophy that explains why you grade the way you do and offers some detail about how you will assess student work. Provide a grading scale (e.g., 90-100 A) and a breakdown of how much each individual assignment or group of assignments is worth in terms of the overall grade. Make it clear to students if you are using a points system or percentages. Indicate your policy on late work, missed exams, etc. Provide a statement on academic integrity, including when collaboration is authorized. (Sample ID #4)

It is understandable then that instructors at Hudson assume they have the freedom to customize the syllabus as they see fit. Moreover, to gather the necessary information, it would necessitate the extra step of carefully reading the handbook and it is doubtful that instructors do this, do it regularly to update their syllabi, or even feel the need to comply with the handbook if there are only suggestions and recommendations rather than requirements or directives to comply. The evident absence of syllabi standardization at Hudson highlights the necessity for a reevaluation of both the templates and handbooks. And ensuring compliance is the next crucial step towards improving the writing program. For future program revisions at Hudson, clearer, more direct templates should be made available to instructors. Instead of writing the templates to instructors, they should mimic real syllabi given to students to provide concrete examples of the kinds of statements, policies, and pedagogical approaches the program wants to promote.

In terms of WLS, only the handbook and templates frequently highlighted “language,” particularly in required textbooks and recommendations for a critical language awareness approach. Because many syllabi samples did not comply with this recommendation, it was mentioned in less frequency (0.09%) in the syllabi sample corpus. It is also significant to note that the handbook and templates did not include any direct WLS statements. While it is never certain, it makes sense that a document meant to address language difference and advise writing instructors on how to teach language, does not contain statements of linguistic discrimination. Ideally, the syllabi samples would also follow this logic, however, the frequencies of keywords in the linguistic and standardization categories occupy a majority of the top frequencies. As detailed in the upcoming section, this has significant implications for the inclusion of WLS statements

in the syllabi corpus. In essence, the findings from frequency and concordance analyses here reveal a variance in keyword frequencies among all three sample groups, offering an overview for future program assessment requirements at Hudson, particularly concerning the need for program and syllabus standardization. However, when considering linguistic standardization, mere frequency counts do not offer a comprehensive understanding of WLS or the reasons behind linguistic discrepancies. Therefore, a closer examination of the context of these keywords is essential, including the surrounding sentences and phrases containing the terms, as well as their prevalence within the syllabus contents.

Keywords in Context

A Keyword in Context (KWIC) analysis method was used to examine the context in which keywords appeared within a body of a text or corpus. KWIC provides a snapshot of how many times a specific word appears in a text and when performed across multiple texts, can reveal important themes. After isolating keywords (and calculating their frequency), I examined the surrounding words, sentences, or paragraph(s) to assess their usage. I then observed several themes and derived a coding system to categorize the types of statements I was seeing most often. Each keyword reference was coded in this manner. What follows is a report of my coded categories and findings.

Thematic Coding and Keyword Association Results

As stated in my methods, one of the key themes I derived from my KWIC analysis was that of prescriptiveness. Each keyword was used in a variety of ways that did not immediately indicate WLS to me or even related to language directly, however, one key theme or comparison that emerged was how the keywords were being used in descriptive and prescriptive contexts. Once coded in this manner, I compared context

within one keyword group and across multiple keyword groups to make meaning and conclusions about the presence of WLS. Given the absence of clear and prevalent patterns in the usage of keywords across the coded references, drawing conclusions about how WLS functioned proved challenging. However, an apparent contrast in tone and evaluative language emerged between descriptive and prescriptive statements, which more obviously indicated linguistic preferences and judgements. Below are several examples of the types of statements I coded as descriptive:

Table 4.6 Descriptive Statement Examples

Number	Statement
1	These short writing assignments will be given throughout the semester as a means of reflection on our class readings and discussions, as well as a way to practice academic writing skills and receive feedback on your writing. (Sample ID #1)
2	This course is an English [100] specifically for students whose second language is English. In this course we will focus on improving writing skills, reading, critical thought, and how to do brief research using secondary sources. (Sample ID #29)
3	Composition is a writing intensive course that gives students from across the college the opportunity to practice and develop their skills in the production of academic argumentation (Sample ID #35)
4	The purpose of these assignments are to get you to think about ideas and to give you a chance to practice the skills you need for your writing projects (Sample ID #17)
5	Some individual & group activities may require a follow-up assignment or task which will be made clear in the assignment guidelines (Sample ID #7)

From these statements, we can see that while they mention the keywords associated with WLS, their content either did not relate to language, impose a judgement, or require an action. The overall tone of descriptive statements is informative. For example, the

keyword “skill” was among the most frequently used, however, it was most often used in context with broad conceptions of “writing skills” or “research skills” which implies a specific type of discourse, but one that is not explicitly linked to language or race. In this way, descriptive statements provide an accurate representation of the content being analyzed.

The results of my frequency analysis also led me to identify prescriptive statements. These statements could be related to variety of contexts and usage. More importantly, while they prescribed a particular judgement, these judgements weren’t necessarily discriminatory or isolated to language preferences and clear standard language ideologies. Table 4.7. below offers several examples of which types of statements I coded as prescriptive:

Table 4.7 Prescriptive Statement Examples

Number	Statement
1	Students are expected to come to class prepared to contribute, having completed the week’s reading and writing assignments. (Sample ID #3)
2	we will focus on developing your compositional skills and enhancing your ability to employ critical thinking while engaging with a variety of texts. (Sample ID # 8)
3	You will be encouraged to write and to reflect on your writing; through practice, self-reflection, read-alouds, and revision you will develop the skills that will benefit you in all facets of your college experience. (Sample ID #12)
4	develop knowledge of linguistic structures, including grammar, punctuation and spelling, through practice in composing and revising (Sample ID #14)
5	With feedback, peer editing, group work, weekly readings, and writing workshops, students will also have the opportunity to produce high-quality college-level papers on topics that interest them or topics in their fields. (Sample ID #19)

Observed here, the prescriptive statements make judgements, but what is unclear is their intentionality towards language. In statement #2 the instructor describes “developing your compositional skills” this could imply several things such as organization and structure, or even creatively, however, it does not take a particular stance on language. Similarly, even though statement 4 directly mentions grammar, I cannot confidently say this instructor’s practices are exclusionary or discriminatory based on the keywords or sentence alone. From these keywords, I concluded that while keywords were being used prescriptively, as the nature of a syllabus necessitates, these statements were not necessarily example of WLS either. It was important then to distinguish the differences between descriptive, prescriptive statements, and WLS statements. In this case, I would argue that the teaching of “linguistic structures” itself is not racist and to believe so would be reductive. While I can assume that any instructor who asks their students to “develop knowledge of linguistic structures, including grammar, punctuation and spelling” is participating in linguistic standardization, the process in and of itself is not racist. Rather, the judgements and policing that are derived from it are.

For these reasons, my results were further coded to look for specific prescriptive statements specifically related to language which could be more explicitly interpreted as examples of WLS. Table 4.8 (see below) provides examples of several identified WLS statements. In these examples, the instructors provide clear beliefs and judgements about the writing process and language’s role in it. While these examples will be discussed in further detail in the next section, we can observe that they all prescribe a required language fluency to be successful in the course. These types of statements are more in line with what Davila and Inoue would define as WLS. This distinction in coding was

important to recognize as there are political and ethical considerations to make when we study, make claims about language use, assume the intentions of a writer or program, or impose writing program reforms based on these interpretations. In total I coded 489 descriptive statements, 947 prescriptive statements, and 52 WLS statements.

Table 4.8 WLS Statement Examples

Number	Statement
1	You, and not your computer, are responsible for the accuracy, timeliness, and appropriate format of your work. Sloppy work will NOT be accepted, and the revision will be subject to a late penalty. ALL ASSIGNMENTS MUST DEMONSTRATE CORRECT AND STANDARD GRAMMAR, PUNCTUATION, SPELLING, AND CAPITALIZATION! (emphasis original) (Sample ID # 87)
2	YOU MUST PROOFREAD IT CAREFULLY BEFORE YOU SEND IT TO ME! correcting as many errors as you can, thinking about what you want to say and saying it well, with conviction and simplicity turn in a sample of your best writing at this time. (emphasis original) (Sample ID #120)
3	You need to learn and become accustomed to carefully proofread everything you turn in... All of you, even those for whom English is a second language, generally speak English correctly. You know what sounds correct. If you read your paper out loud, either to yourself or to someone else, you will catch with your ear things that don't sound right, don't make sense, or are confusing. (Sample ID #75)
4	Revisions must address all of the suggestions and corrections that are made in my comments on the original essay, and you should make additional changes and improvements of your own as well. If, for example, you only make half of the corrections that I mentioned in my comments, your essay will be returned with the grade unchanged. No half-baked efforts, please—I expect careful and thorough revisions. (Sample ID # 42)
5	Communicate your ideas in relationship to other arguments through clear and convincing prose, while employing proper academic conventions, including form, tone, citation, syntax, grammar, punctuation, and spelling. (Sample ID #2)

In these examples, the instructors provide clear beliefs and judgements about the writing process and language's role in it. While these examples will be discussed in further detail in the next section, we can observe that they all prescribe a required language fluency to be successful in the course. These types of statements are more in line with what Davila and Inoue would define as WLS. This distinction in coding was important to recognize as there are political and ethical considerations to make when we study, make claims about language use, assume the intentions of a writer or program, or impose writing program reforms based on these interpretations. In total I coded 489 descriptive statements, 947 prescriptive statements, and 52 WLS statements.

Along with coding statements into a more defined WLS context, it was apparent that the keywords also needed to be interpreted in context with other keywords. For example, many references coded within the linguistic category were frequently mentioned in context with other keywords in that same group. This makes sense as the keywords are primarily grouped by theme, however, the data showed that these terms were inextricably linked and sometimes inseparable. Figure 3 below shows the cluster mapping for similarity in usage for the words in the linguistic category. By grouping these keywords into clusters, we can focus on the relationship between these terms and their frequency. The map shows that the words "syntax" and "punctuation" were almost always used with "edit," and the word "grammar" had strong association with "mechanics" and "proofreading."

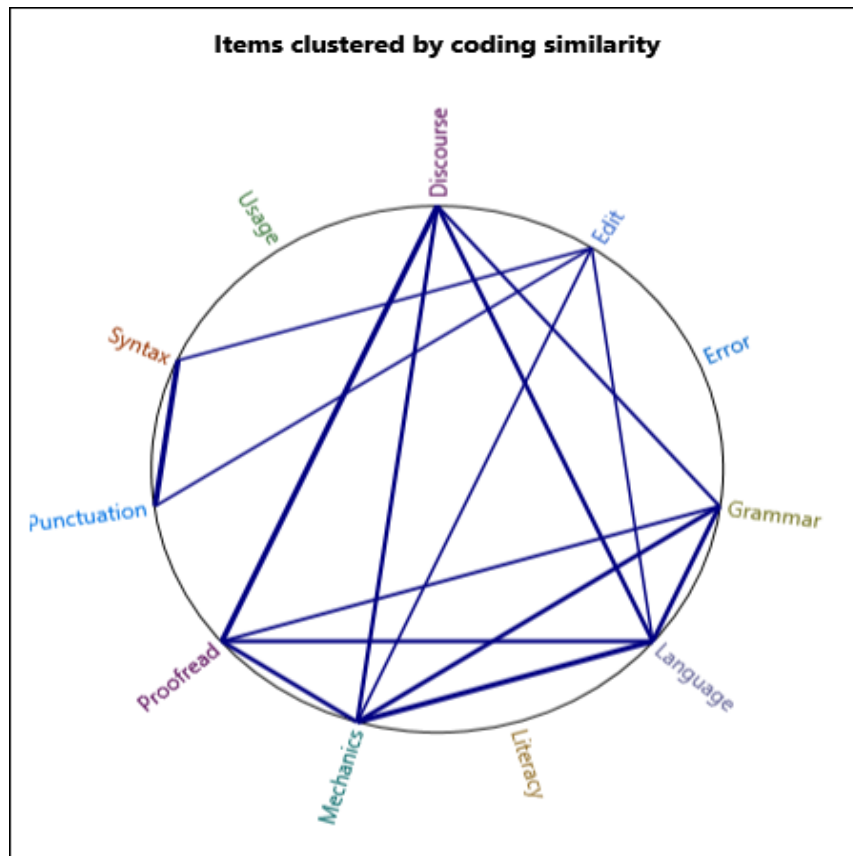


Figure 3. Image. Word cluster map.

Additionally, when used in conjunction with each other, the statements were more frequently coded as WLS statements (see Table 4.9). Here, we can observe that the more frequently a keyword appeared in context with other terms in the category, it was more likely that the statement would be a WLS statement. In this way, word association was also essential in identifying WLS statements. Here, we can observe that the more frequently a keyword appeared in context with other terms in the category, it was more likely that the statement would be a WLS statement. In this way, word association was also essential in identifying WLS statements

Table 4.9. Example Word Association for “Linguistic” Coding Category

Number	Statement
1	Errors in grammar, punctuation, spelling, or usage may distract the reader but do not prevent comprehension. (Sample ID #3)
2	By the end of this course, you should develop control of surface features such as syntax, grammar, punctuation, and spelling. (Sample ID #26)
3	Develop knowledge of linguistic structures, including grammar, punctuation and spelling, through practice in composing and revising (Sample ID #24)
4	Edit to ensure correct grammar, language usage, and mechanics (Sample ID #40)
5	Communicate your ideas in relationship to other arguments through clear and convincing prose, while employing proper academic conventions , including form, tone, citation, syntax, grammar, punctuation , and spelling (Sample ID #2)
6	You need to learn and become accustomed to carefully proofread everything you turn in, even—and especially—first drafts. You can miss things trying to do this on the computer. So, you should print out any paper or draft and go over it twice, looking for and trying to correct simple grammar errors [such as run-on sentences, wrong verb tense, wrong use of comma or semicolon, wrong word in a sentence, sentences that are unclear or don’t make sense]. I will hand out a grid of possible writing errors before the first important paper and we will go over it carefully, so you are aware of what to look for when you proofread . (Sample ID #75)

Keywords in Context Findings

After viewing the results of my coding, I increased focus on analyzing the 52 WLS statements. The finding showed a surprising number of WLS statements when considering that the syllabi were supposed to be in accordance with the templates and handbook. And while this number of references was small, around 3%, when compared to the total number of coded references, there was considerable spread across the number of sample files, years, and instructors in which they appeared. The 52 references were extended across 39 sample files or nearly a third (30%) of the syllabi corpus and were

given to student over the course of multiple years, ranging from 2018 to 2021.

Additionally, the 52 references were written by 19 out of 48 instructors so around 40% of the total number of instructors represented in the study. This data indicated that while WLS only represented a small portion of each syllabi's content, they were consistently implemented year after year by the same instructors. The number of adjunct or contingent faculty who teach composition varies every year, however, the instructors who were identified in these instances typically had years of experienced teaching writing at Hudson. The coverage from 2018 to the time of my study also suggested that this has been a consistent and pervasive issue within the program.

Observing the WLS statements in more detail, we can see that the tone, sentiment, and judgement about language is immediately apparent and more likely to be interpreted as an example of linguistic discrimination. If we look again at the statements from Table 4.8. one pattern that emerges is the emphasis on correctness. Sample ID #87 writes, in all caps, "ALL ASSIGNMENTS MUST DEMONSTRATE CORRECT AND STANDARD GRAMMAR, PUNCTUATION, SPELLING, AND CAPITALIZATION!" This statement is clearly prescribing what Inoue and Davila would call assumed or silent knowledge. There is an underlying assumption that correctness is required to successful in this course and it can only be derived from demonstrating and conforming to the rules of Standard English.

Another theme across these 52 statements was the concept and requirements of proofreading. It is undeniable that proofreading is an essential step in the writing process to produced "polished" or "professional" documents, however, the assumption many of these statements makes seems to be that students either don't already know how to do

this (I suspect they do), don't attempt to do it at all, or that they are lazy or "not careful" enough in their proofreading process. Again, take example 2 from table 4.8. into consideration, the instructor writes, "YOU MUST PROOFREAD IT CAREFULLY BEFORE YOU SEND IT TO ME! correcting as many errors as you can, thinking about what you want to say and saying it well, with conviction and simplicity turn in a sample of your best writing at this time" (emphasis original) (Sample ID #120). Notable here, the instructor equates proofreading to the correction of errors, which is most likely meant to be interpreted as grammatical errors, rather than higher order concerns with content, structure, or argumentation. Another instructor requires "No half-baked efforts, please" (Sample ID # 42) which makes many assumptions about a student's academic performance and habits. In cases where a student of color or English language learners might not be entirely fluent in Standard English, their proofreading might not catch all "errors" or make the correct corrections, but this does not negate their efforts or labor. In summary, the identification and analysis of WLS statements within the syllabi samples revealed significant insights into the prevailing attitudes towards language and writing instruction at Hudson. Despite constituting a relatively small portion of a syllabi's content, these statements make a very substantial and clear impact on how students approach the course, instructor, and their own academic realities. In the following section I will report on several patterns and themes that also emerged when looking at these keywords in context.

Identifying Key Keywords in Context

Another crucial step in my analysis of WLS statements was to identify which keywords were most indicative of WLS and SLI, or in other words, the "key keywords."

This facilitated the recognition of more precise areas for assessment and reform. Looking more closely at Davila’s study, I expected to see the keywords from her analysis (i.e., convention, appropriate, basic, logic, effective, clear/clarity, and grammar) to be in high frequency, however, when WLS prescriptive statements were isolated, the frequencies results showed that only “grammar,” “convention,” and “clear/clarity” appeared in notable frequency. Keywords like “basic,” “logic,” and “appropriate” either did not appear at all or were negligible. Instead, linguistic terms and terms in association with standardization were most prominent. As table 4.10 illustrates, these categories, more than evaluation or writing process, were responsible for almost all the WLS statements:

Table 4.10 Prescriptive WLS Statement Word Frequencies

Keyword	Category	# of References in Corpus	# of References in WLS Statements	Frequency in WLS Statements
1. Grammar	Linguistic	188	28	2.75
2. Correct	Standardization	80	25	2.45
3. Proofread	Linguistic	77	14	1.37
4. Punctuation	Linguistic	61	13	1.27
5. Standard	Standardization	185	12	1.18
6. (Standard) English	Standardization	13	11	1.08
7. Clear/Clarity	Evaluation	152	11	1.08
8. Edit	Linguistic	275	10	0.98
9. Convention	Standardization	88	9	0.88
10. Error	Linguistic	66	9	0.88

Note: n = 52

“Grammar” is an expected keyword since the term and concept is most often associated with the standards or conventions of academic writing. Related, the keywords “correct” and “proofread” were also two significant keywords. The emphasis on correction and proofreading also hints at the location of many of these statements, which were most frequently found in course objectives and student evaluation statements like rubrics.

The word “clear/clarity” provided an interesting example. The keyword was used almost in equal descriptive and prescriptive context but only 9 out of the 152 total references were coded as WLS. The frequency of “clear/clarity” was much higher in WLS statements than in the corpus, 1.08% vs. 0.08%, respectively. This indicated that “clear/clarity” has a strong potential for WLS but most instructors in the corpus did not necessarily use it in this way. In this case, relying on frequency alone to indicate WLS is clearly flawed. While the term has been used historically to suggest assumptions about language, it can also represent a variety of meanings and used as observed in Table 4.11 below. In one sense, clarity could mean explicitness or directness, while in other contexts it could mean organization or comprehension. All of which do not necessarily have to do with linguistic difference. Similarly, the word “convention” was present in WLS statements but also had a wide range of uses and definitions. Davila (2016) notes that, “the term conventions, when associated with language use, can be coded language for grammar/mechanics and is often seen as good” (p. 144) and while this can be true, without knowing if the reference is in fact associate with language use, its frequency did not support this claim for every instance of usage. In my findings, while “conventions” (when in reference to language) was often used alongside several other terms (e.g., grammar, standard English, correct) it was more significantly associated with discussion

of genre, academic discourse, and formatting/citations. Subsequently, it seems that keywords like “clear/clarity” or “convention” are not as good of an indicator of WLS when not used with the other keywords in this list.

Table 4.11 Keyword Context Examples for “Clear/Clarity”

#	Statement	Code
1	Learning outcome: Write a clear and focused thesis (Sample ID #27)	Descriptive
2	Special emphasis is placed on written revision for clarity and coherence (Sample ID #38)	Descriptive
3	My goal is to help you help yourself sharpen any analytical writing you need to do, aiming for clarity, precision, and depth. (Sample ID #53)	Descriptive
4	Students develop clear, logical essays that draw on personal thoughts, course readings, etc. (Sample ID #33)	Prescriptive
5	The best way to learn to write is to practice and to read. Students will keep a journal, writing in class. Special emphasis is placed on revision for clarity and coherence. (Sample ID #58)	Prescriptive
6	Demonstrates a clear understanding of the issues and ideas raised in the texts as well as the ability to draw upon and analyze material from the assigned texts (Sample ID #113)	Prescriptive
7	This course proceeds from the conviction that through practice, one can achieve a general articulateness—a clarity of structure and diction—applicable to any discipline, an articulateness that awaits only familiarity with the discipline itself. (Sample ID #127)	WLS
8	learn how to write clear and interesting prose that abides by the current conventions of written discourse (i.e., grammar, diction, formal presentation, etc.) (Sample ID #50)	WLS
9	The summary overall is clear and (mostly) grammatically accurate (Sample ID #64)	WLS

Other Major Findings

Along with the findings already reported above, I also used the information gathered from segmenting/classifying my samples and my initial overview of syllabus components to find correlations between the frequency of WLS statements and other demographic, or content-based information. The first theme that emerged from this secondary analysis was location; the placement of WLS statements within the syllabus occurred most frequently in student assessment components (i.e., grading policies and rubrics/evaluation) and learning outcomes (i.e., objectives and key questions). Next, using the demographic and file classification data, I was able to link WLS statements to disciplinary concerns. These findings in conjunction with my keyword frequency and context analysis, provided context and a direction for implementing the data from this study into practical tools for writing program standardization.

Location Matters: Keyword and Syllabus Components

Overwhelmingly, my findings showed is that instructors were more willing to express their opinions and judgments about language in course objectives and especially in student evaluation components than in any other context. As noted earlier, the provided templates leave a lot of room for interpretation. In both the “objective” and “evaluation” areas of the templates, instructors were given freedom to customize and insert their own statements or policies. Table 4.12 illustrates some of these WLS statements (see below). Course and learning outcomes are meant to align course and student expectations, especially when we consider the syllabus as contract, so when these components prescribe SLI’s, students take note. If a primary course objective is to learn or “abide” by the rules of Standard English, students can expect that their work will also

be assessed using these same conventions. In this way, course objectives and student assessment work hand and hand, as writing instructor who require their students to “Demonstrates superior control of grammar, sentence variety, word choice and conventions of standard written English.” (Sample ID #23) to receive an A, are also assuming students know what “superior control” entails and how to meet these standards. It is essential for writing program evaluation, then, to focus on these two syllabus components and practices when reviewing it for WLS.

Table 4.12 WLS in Course Objectives and Assessment Components

Number	Statement
1	Students who have difficulties with basic grammar skills, organization, or other composition issues may be asked to set up regular tutorial sessions with our tutor, or to otherwise seek help at the Writing Center. (Sample ID #3)
2	RUBRICS: The essays will be graded according to the effectiveness of content, organization, grammar and punctuation, and style. Only the rewrite grades will count towards the final grade. (Sample ID #10)
3	Attention to grammar and conventions of standard written English. (Sample ID #22)
4	Demonstrates strong development, providing specific details and compelling reasoning. Demonstrates superior control of grammar, sentence variety, word choice and conventions of standard written English. (Sample ID #23)
5	To learn how to write clear and interesting prose that abides by the current conventions of written discourse (i.e., grammar, diction, formal presentation, etc.) (Sample ID #51)

Disciplinary Challenges

The field of composition has long debated the topic of disciplinarity. It makes sense, then, that the syllabi samples have come to represent these debates in an intimate

and complex way. The disciplinary challenges that emerged from my analysis were unsurprisingly. First, when I compared the WLS statements to the classification information on the files, it became evident that disciplinary or pedagogical approaches were highly skewed towards Literature and Creative Writing. As Figure 4 illustrates, 67% of all files containing WLS statements, were from syllabi that focused on reading and analyzing literary texts:

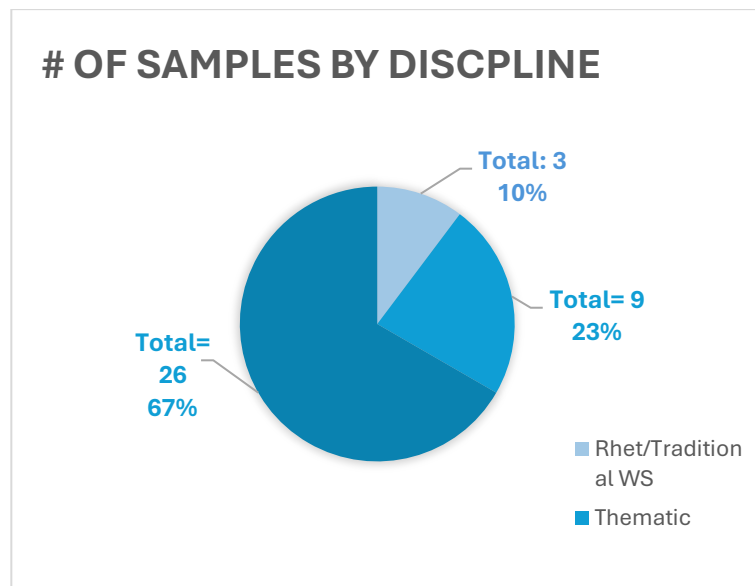


Figure 4. Pie Chart. Number of samples by discipline.

This is not to say that teaching literature in composition is inherently good or bad, right or wrong, but that something about its pedagogical underpinnings or cultural position within academia, has allowed for WLS to be more consistently maintained. Based on the keyword analysis, and an overview of the course readings these samples selected, I suspect that a lot of the WLS statements come from the belief that student's writings should reflect the style and structure of the texts they are reading. When the readings that

are being privileged in these courses are predominantly written by White authors, students are also expected to adopt Standard English practices. Compounded by the lack of standardization and compliance within Hudson's writing program, WLS can emerge when there is too much room for personal opinions and judgements about language to be made. Without proper faculty training, guidance, and compliance, no matter what program administrators do, there will always be more instances of WLS. This finding will also be returned to in my Chapter 5 discussion.

Summary of Findings and Implications

To conclude, my keyword analysis of composition course syllabi revealed several major findings:

1. The difference in keyword frequencies between writing program documents such as the handbook and templates, in comparison to the syllabi samples, indicates that while they do impact syllabus content and keyword frequency to some extent, there is also significant divergence in the keyword concepts or ideologies promoted by the syllabi as opposed to the writing program.
2. When observed in context, it becomes evident that although the most frequently used keywords appear in prescriptive statements, these statements do not necessarily indicate the presence of WLS. Moreover, essential keywords from the literature on WLS did not exhibit as significant a presence or impact on WLS statements as expected.

3. When WLS is evident in prescriptive statements, the associated keywords are often drawn from linguistic and standardization categories and occur together.
4. The context of keyword usage matters. Keyword analysis is a useful tool to address WLS but without considering the context in which these keywords are used, there is a risk over stigmatizing keywords, misinterpreting intentionally, and making under supported claims about the language practices of instructors or writing programs.
5. Lastly, when looking for practical applications of data on WLS statements and usage, we must consider disciplinary constraints and how they may impact WLS.

Keyword analysis for WLS serves as a valuable tool for evaluating writing programs, however, its application necessitates a nuanced understanding and consideration of contextual factors. Relying solely on frequency and theoretical assumptions carries the risk of creating divisions within faculty development rather than fostering cohesion and motivating change. To effectively leverage this method, the data should be utilized for comprehensive program assessments. In future evaluations of composition course documents, a refined focus on the keywords demonstrated to be more indicative of WLS, will enhance the precision of detecting and addressing instances of linguistic discrimination.

CHAPTER 5

DISCUSSION AND CONCLUSION

This dissertation has problematized the position of WLS in composition theory and practice by applying and revising methods of analysis popularized by WLS scholars. A keyword analysis of important WLS terms was performed to better understand how WLS might be identified or functions (at least how it is envisioned to function) within essential composition course artifacts like the syllabus to promote or maintain linguistic racism. Returning to my research questions, this chapter discusses how my findings from the keyword analysis can be used to better understand the conceptions of WLS within the field of composition and how we might critique or revise its ideologies and methodological framework to be more applicable in a writing program administration capacity. As a reminder, my research questions are:

1. How can the established framework of WLS and its methods be applied to Hudson University's writing program through an analysis of composition course syllabus to identify how linguistic racism appears or what it looks like across program?
2. More broadly, what can this study tell us about the relationship between writing program administration, writing instructors, and the ideological or pedagogical formations embedded within the writing program at Hudson University that may enable, support, or attempt to reconcile linguistic standardization?
3. Finally, how can the results from this study be used to better facilitate writing program assessment and in turn, expand our conceptions, definitions, criteria, and utility of a framework like WLS to address linguistic discrimination?

Review of Findings

My findings show that the syllabus frequently serves as a space where writing instructors feel at ease expressing their thoughts and judgements about language. While some of these judgements stem from institutional requirements or Standard Language Ideologies (SLI), there are also particular types of prescriptive statements that can be linked to instructors' disciplinary or personal language preferences. In this way, WLS as a framework offers valuable insights into the intricate dynamics and mechanisms of linguistic racism by uncovering hidden biases and ideological constructs ingrained within writing instruction. However, a critical flaw within this theory lies in its tendency to label everything so swiftly through a lens of racism. Accordingly, my findings also show that WLS methods, particularly the use of keyword analysis, is useful in identifying instances of WLS but not in the way scholars are currently positing they do. Rather, we must view them in the context of their prescriptiveness.

Moreover, the data indicates that WLS's sweeping classification of essential writing concepts such as "clarity," "grammar," or "logic" as inherent products of white supremacy, or as Habits of White Language (HOWL) can be restrictive and deterministic. Regardless of frequency, my data demonstrates that presuming a keyword's involvement with WLS by default, is not only inaccurate but also exposes fundamental misunderstandings or presuppositions about common writing concepts. For example, to say that teaching a student of color to write "clearly" is racist because "clear" is a racist term or has been used in a racist way in the past, is circular reasoning. In many cases, my data showed that most instances of these keywords were either descriptive or prescriptive but did not relate to language use directly. While it is crucial to acknowledge that these

terms/concepts can indeed be wielded in discriminatory ways, it is equally essential to recognize that the mere presence of these terms in course descriptions, syllabi, or other composition artifacts does not always signal linguistic discrimination. Moreover, it is nearly impossible and oversimplified to ask an instructor to avoid using such keywords as a measure of preventing WLS. While the current theorizations of WLS is a radical and even necessary step forward, it also leaves little room for nuance or dialogue, leading to contradictions in its messaging and producing environments that make it difficult for writing instructors and administrators to navigate the teaching of language or linguistic difference. Additionally, WLS theory often does not consider the institutional, pedagogical, or disciplinary constraints that also impact language judgments. In other words, if it does not expand its framework to include more diverse perspectives and realities of language standardization, WLS as an ideology has the potential to be as essentializing and complicit in prescribing constructions of Blackness, Indigeneity, or Standardness as it claims Standard English does.

This project has also applied WLS for the purposes of program assessment. From my results and analysis, I have observed the utility of WLS keyword analysis as a potential tool for making evaluations of Hudson's writing program for linguistic discrimination. It is a quick and visual way to see how particular concepts (tied to particular keywords) are being discussed and implemented within the writing program. My results reveal that the syllabi at Hudson are too diverse and personalized which provides too much space for individual beliefs and judgements about language to be openly displayed and prescribed to students. Through an analysis of WLS contexts, it is also obvious that there are particular instructor beliefs about language, and disciplinary

constraints that are problematic and may be the source of student complaints. This suggests a possible paradoxical situation regarding the idea of standardization for program administrators to consider during their next program assessment initiative. On one hand, there is the aim of diminishing linguistic standardization, while also considering the social and racial repercussions, as well as the promotion of SLI. On the other hand, it is crucial to recognize that not all types of standardization are bad and in fact may be necessary. In Hudson's case, standardization of the program—that is, providing consistent curriculum, pedagogical approaches, and policies regarding linguistic inclusion/diversity—particularly via the composition syllabi, is a much-needed revision if administrators are to address linguistic racism more systematically.

Administrators at Hudson must reconcile the relationship between these two processes of standardization, though counterintuitive at times. While my study is limited to one institution and to the syllabus as a representation of the program's current curriculum, issues, and policies, I can envision this method also being applied (in conjunction with other assessment methods) to address the allegations of linguistic racism and issues in providing consistent and standardized education for a variety of students and home languages.

In this chapter, I will provide an evaluation of Hudson's writing program based on the findings of my research. The discussions will center around my observations of how WLS operates at Hudson, the key discoveries made, and suggestions for administrators on integrating WLS into an assessment and program evaluation process. Within these discussions I also analyze the specific criticisms of the WLS framework that have arisen from my research to assess the efficacy of its methodological approach within my study

and assert my own contributions aimed at enhancing and broadening our comprehension of the framework. Finally, I will conclude my dissertation with a brief exploration of Critical Language Awareness (CLA), a theoretical and pedagogical framework that I believe could greatly benefit, if not replace, WLS.

WLS within Hudson's Writing Program

In grappling with WLS as a theory, my initial challenge was finding a way to incorporate its requirements into my teaching while maintaining my identity as a writing instructor. Amid the surge of #BlackLivesMatter protests, when many instructors were questioning their complicity, I was confronted by several questions: Could my instruction or evaluation of students' grammar inadvertently perpetuate racism? As a woman of color teaching Standard English, what implications did this hold? How can I advocate for antiracism without compromising my writing principles? Most importantly, as a program administrator, what can I do to prevent WLS within the writing program? This line of questioning ultimately led me to this dissertation. In my analysis process, I revisited the CCCC's (2020) statement "Demanding Black Linguistic Justice" which depicts American schools as places where Black students are consistently profiled and racialized via Standard English practices. The authors contend that Standard English writing instruction now "seek[s] to annihilate Black Language + Black Life" (Baker-bell et al.). It struck me just how alarmist this assertion was. I was swept up in the raw emotions of police brutality and felt helpless, like I had been complicit in enabling or even (re)producing this kind of linguistic violence. In fact, like many instructors I talked to during this time, I felt defensive. However, when the dust settled and all the appropriate task forces and antiracism workshops were done, I began to really question the

performativity of social and linguistic justice I was seeing all around me, especially at Hudson University. I didn't see an "annihilation of Black Language" happening in the ways WLS scholars cautioned it would, instead I saw a lot of well-intentioned instructors struggling to understand the intricacies of language instruction and the sudden requirements to change their behaviors or judgements towards grammar or Standard English. However, at the same time, my students shared with me their negative experiences with linguistic discrimination and I could see why there was a need to implement antiracism. What I did learn during this time and has been confirmed by my findings, is that antiracism is intricate, politically charged, and requires careful evaluation. My project was and is a means for me to reconcile my interpretations of WLS within the field of composition and the realities of addressing linguistic discrimination in real life, dealing with real people, a variety of linguistic histories, and political or departmental forces that do not always align. In my discussions here I make an effort to negotiate these various conflicts and challenges to understand how my research can be used to facilitate change at Hudson University. My contribution to the antiracism conversation is not only a consideration of how prescriptivism defines linguistic racism, but also how external forces within a writing program can complicate WLS frameworks.

One of the major conclusions of my findings is that although many identified keywords are indeed frequently used in composition course syllabi, even when they appear in prescriptive statements, these statements do not necessarily indicate WLS. Moreover, the terms most highlighted in WLS literature, "basic," "clear/clarity," "logic," and "convention" were not the most frequently used keywords in the actual WLS statements I identified. To me, this indicates that the WLS framework assumes a lot about

how writing concepts like “clarity” can disenfranchise students of color, but not enough about what really defines linguistic racism or what mechanism within the program enable it to persist. In this way, WLS assumes a universal conception and usage of keywords like “clarity” and “logic,” that is limited in scope and does not necessarily match how WLS manifests at Hudson. When I aligned my findings with Beth Davila’s study of WLS in course descriptions (the study that inspired the methods of this dissertation), I was surprised to see that we came to very different conclusions about the significance of certain keywords and how we were categorizing what counted as examples of WLS. At Hudson, words like “correct,” “punctuation,” “edit,” and “proofread” were much more relevant indicators for WLS. Moreover, from my analysis it was clear that although the concept of grammar itself was not inherently racist, keywords “grammar” could be used in discriminatory ways and was a more accurate indicator of WLS than other keywords. It makes sense that the words more closely related to prescriptive grammar “edit,” “correct,” “punctuation,” and “proofread,” were also more likely to indicate WLS. These linguistic concepts are commonly linked to standardization or prescriptive grammar rules. The research also highlights that prescriptiveness is a defining feature of a WLS statement—dictating how language should be used or passing judgments based on correctness. I argue that this is true of my sample group, but of all WLS statements. It is intriguing that although “grammar” was a common theme in the syllabi at Hudson, it was not explicitly referenced in the handbook or other materials. In my view, grammar occupies a significant and prominent role in these samples not only due to years of teaching the same syllabi with consistent assignments and readings but also because many instructors naturally default to their expertise in the rules of grammar. Because the

majority of writing instructors at Hudson (and at many institutions) lack formal training in composition, TESOL, or linguistics, courses are usually conducted with a literary analysis or creative writing workshop style. Assessments in these classes tend to be more subjective and linked to grammar and professional editing skills. It is also conceivable, that some instructors find it simpler and more equitable to evaluate papers based on standard grammar rules rather than having to devise rubrics or other more objective assessment methods.

It appears then that the writing program at Hudson University is firmly rooted in a traditional and practical perspective of prescriptive grammar above other keywords. Upon revisiting the WLS statements highlighted in table 4.8., it becomes evident that the prescriptive statements regarding language and grammar underscore a significant focus on accountability, precision, and compliance with academic writing conventions and Standard English. These statements require students to exhibit competence in grammar, punctuation, spelling, and capitalization, but emphasize correctness above all. Furthermore, they underscore the instructors' responsibility to uphold these standards through their teaching practices. The tone in all the samples is assertive and direct, emphasizing the significance of thorough proofreading and the delivery of “perfect” work. Additionally, the tone of some statements, such as the warning of late penalties and the expectation for “careful and thorough revisions,” can create unnecessary stress and anxiety for students, particularly those who already struggle with language-related challenges. Lastly, while encouraging students to seek help at writing centers or with tutors to edit and correct their writing is a logical request, the availability and quality of

these resources can vary, potentially disadvantaging students who do not have equal access to additional support.

These statements ultimately echo the revisions made by our unidentified instructor, Eleanor, to the Hudson's BLM statement, reinforcing the idea that "teaching standard formal writing will persist to assist students in securing employment post-graduation." Eleanor, and many others like her at Hudson, have an inherent belief that student success as a whole is based on how well students can appropriate and communicate using the rules of Standard English. But Eleanor's revisions also show an anxiety with the changing landscape of language instruction and language itself. While I agree that Standard Language is a persistent factor in many aspects of society, the United States is rapidly changing, becoming more diverse in ways that emphasize both the need to account for language differences (and how to teach with them in mind), and the value of other dialects and linguistic codes. Stanley Fish (2005) famously expressed his concerns about this anxiety in his New York Times article, "Devoid of Content," where he laments his frustrations regarding what he perceives as students' inadequate and deficient writing abilities. He attributes this issue to an emphasis on teaching content rather than form, specifically syntax and sentence construction. This notion implies that "good writing" and, consequently, student success is determined by grammatical correctness, a concept that is undoubtedly embraced and perpetuates prescriptivism at Hudson. Nonetheless, the deterioration or demise of writing, language, and language standards is a fallacy. Like any evolving technology, writing instruction needs to adapt to the demands of the populations it serves. Evidently, there is a conflict in Hudson's writing program regarding the balance between teaching practical skills for the future and

recognizing how this approach can lead to circumstances that perpetuate bias against students who speak English as a second language, come from non-standard English-speaking communities, or even “native” speakers who may come from socially or economically marginalized communities.

All these findings indicate that prescriptivism at Hudson stems from the tension between pragmatism and progressivism, as well as a pressing need for faculty development, particularly in the realms of learning outcomes and assessment. It comes as no shock that a majority of the WLS instances were discovered in syllabus sections that emphasize these specific areas. Inoue has consistently argued that the inherent nature of assessment practices, centered on evaluating and judging writing, is the primary location where the impact of Standard English is most profound and directly influential in marginalizing students (Inoue, 2019a; 2019c). For linguistic justice, assessments need to deemphasize grading practices that use subjective grammar rules, adopting specific approaches such as rubrics based on content, critical thinking, etc. However, these aspects also need to be enforced in regular and consistent faculty training sessions, along with a system that checks for compliance. For learning outcomes, it is clear that there are stark differences between what the program has laid out in the handbook and how instructors either interpret or revise them to suit their preferences. As is the case at Hudson, when student learning outcomes are inconsistently applied across a program, or communicated to instructors and in turn students, several issues may arise within the curriculum or program: (1) inconsistent learning outcomes can create quality assurance issues where there is misalignment between expected and actual student outcomes, which compromise the quality of instruction and ability to ensure students are receiving and

meeting the necessary educational outcomes set by the writing program and university at large; (2) students receive unequal learning experiences leading to disparities in knowledge and skills among students taking the same writing courses and sequence; (3) without consistent learning outcomes being implemented across the program, grading and evaluation processes may become unreliable and unfair (especially for already marginalized students) when criteria for success are not clearly defined or consistently applied; 4) lastly, without consistently communicated learning outcomes to both instructors and students, it is challenging to hold instructors accountable for student learning, lowering the effectiveness and quality of the program as a whole.

These factors have a significant impact on student success. Instructors at Hudson must realize that teaching students how to use Standard English, is only a small element of what produces student success after college; success is also accompanied by how well students can navigate and are motivated to participate in all kinds of academic discourse, which can be discouraged or shut down entirely if only measured by their degree of language proficiency. The learning outcomes for ENG 100, 150, and 200 at Hudson not only need to be more clearly communicated to instructors, but there must be a system in place that regularly checks for compliance, such as annual syllabi reviews and faculty observations. In this context, it is the standardization of the writing program that fosters opportunities for student success, rather than Standardized English itself (particularly in the manner Eleanor and others like her perceive it to do). Within a well-running, standardized, and consistent writing program, Standard English can still be taught, but in ways that view language in a wider context, where it is only but one dialect that it is used based on particular genres and discourses, but that it is no more valuable than other forms

of English. These results complicate our understanding of how WLS operates and materializes at Hudson, highlighting that prescriptivism, and therefore WLS, often arises from a lack of unified training or guidance on addressing linguistic difference. Nonetheless, the prescriptiveness indicated by the keyword analysis is also shaped by competing perspectives on language instruction within the writing program.

Disciplinary and Politics

Along with my analysis and critique of WLS keywords, my findings also indicate that disciplinary or pedagogical approach plays a part in promoting linguistic racism and shaping discourses around language and race. The data showed that 67% of all files containing WLS statements, were from syllabi that focused on reading and analyzing literary texts, in other words, classes that adopted literature or creative writing approaches. As I noted in my results, this observation did not come as a surprise to me given the historical challenges and debates related to teaching literature in composition in first year writing courses, alongside the political and financial limitations of writing program administration. This has been notably true for Hudson's writing program. To enhance the depth and effectiveness of the WLS framework, my research indicates that it necessary to address these disciplinary and administrative issues, as they contribute to producing circumstances for linguistic racism to occur and be maintained within the writing classroom.

Some scholars see classroom conflict as a consequence of the current conditions in higher education and the move towards a more neoliberal, privatized, and corporate model of education. As more colleges and universities are run like businesses, the budget, and resources for programs like composition become more limited. English departments

have less money for full-time tenure track positions and just like any other industry concerned about their bottom-line, they increasingly rely on the exploitation of cheap labor. Writing programs now primarily hire contingent faculty including adjuncts, part-time, and full-time non-tenure track faculty to teach their courses. The central theme of the collection, *Contingency, Exploitation, and Solidarity: Labor and Action in English Composition*, edited by Seth Kahn et al. (2017) is the idea is that our field cannot address classroom and student conflict if we do not first acknowledge the larger institution concerns such as unfair pay, and lack of faculty training. The authors of the various articles in this collection argue that the unstable position of many writing instructors has caused lasting problems that change the way they approach writing instruction. For example, in the article “Hitting a Wall,” Desiree Holter et al. argue that over-reliance on contingent faculty creates a state of constant or permanent underemployment where qualified instructors can never reach their full potential. This dynamic causes an environment where writing instructor are not given the incentive to show or improve their teaching abilities or are too stressed by the demands of the job to teach well. In both cases, writing instructors must negotiate how much effort goes into improving their teaching practices when they are stretched thin, have to work at multiple institutions to make ends meet, or are simply not given enough guidance to perform their jobs well. In terms of antiracism then, which requires a lot of time, effort, and training, many instructors might not be as motivated to change their syllabi or approaches to teaching language. The scholarship on labor is not only necessary for WLS to consider but important for understanding of the agendas of writing instructors, especially how these working conditions shape their conceptions of literacy. More importantly, however, how

these labor issues also leave many writing instructors underprepared to deal with the realities of diverse students, especially regarding complex topics like racism.

At Hudson, the writing program contends with many of these issues and situations that not only limits the power program administrators have in improving the program, but the resources and incentives given to instructors to comply. One of the major issues that my analysis of the syllabus revealed was that the program lacked any kind of standardization. If I didn't know that my syllabi samples came from the same program or institution, I would think they represented multiple different programs. However, many efforts over the years to standardize the program have failed due to a variety of political and disciplinary differences. Because most of the syllabi are created and taught by contingent adjunct faculty, there is a conviction, especially at Hudson, that full-time faculty and administrators should not overly criticize or add to their workload with unpaid labor or requests. While this is noble in thought, it means that adjuncts and contingent faculty are excused from regular training and not held accountable for poor performance, even when it is a legitimate concern. Not only is this a bit patronizing in my view but prioritizes fairness and parity in the wrong ways. While in any other job, no matter the pay, level, or position, frequent performance reviews and requirements for improvement and compliance are standard protocol, at Hudson it becomes a moral or ethical issue to do so. As a result, the syllabi samples in this dissertation represent the lack and perceived impossibility of requiring or implementing faculty development and training. It is clear based on my inside knowledge and observations of the syllabi samples that many of them have not been updated in years and that they may be taken from other courses and universities the adjunct instructors also teach at. Clearly, this labor situation

at Hudson has created space for WLS or linguistic discrimination to occur and because of larger seemingly more pressing issues within the department, some instructors may not even know students have complained about them or that their notions of grammar and language are outdated.

However, as my criticism of WLS in Chapter 2 suggests, WLS is also too rigid in its approaches to identifying linguistic racism. One of the major tenets is that Standard English participates in white supremacy discourses. For many of the same reasons cited above, it becomes difficult to accuse an instructor of participating in white supremacy because they teach Standard English. In my experience, I have witnessed instructors become defensive and not quite understand how something they have taught for 15 to 20 years is now deemed unacceptable. Though it is a necessary and worthy cause to address linguistic racism in composition, the political dynamics described here also make it a challenging task for program administrators. It is also important to acknowledge that understanding the WLS framework inherently requires a lot of reading and training on the issues of not only antiracism, but of language standardization, SLI, and other linguistic concepts that may not be accessible to most faculty, especially those with training in linguistics or composition. WLS's "all of nothing" approach to antiracism, does not account for the situations or specific challenges outline here.

Another major conflict for writing program administrators is navigating the politics of Composition programs within English departments. As many scholars (e.g., Wardle and Downs, Yancey, Miller S.,) suggest, composition has always held a precarious position in the English department, especially in relation to literature that has made it difficult at times to assert agency or take control over writing program

administration. Most problematically, the lack of power also constructs attitudes regarding writing studies that are not only pervasive but harmful. In their study of microaggressions, Meghan Brewer and Kristen di Gennaro (2018) observe, “although English faculty typically pride themselves on their fight against racism, sexism, ableism, and other types of marginalization, they are less aware of how class-based, hierarchical prejudices play into the relationship between composition and literature” (p. 17).¹⁹ Further evident in the authors’ numerous examples of hierarchical microaggressions²⁰—subtle everyday insults based on status—not only do stereotypes and assumptions of composition persist, but they also adversely affect faculty relations and denigrate composition scholarship often at the expense of students and vulnerable faculty members. In one example, the authors observed in their department meetings that literature course assignments were being offered as a reward to adjunct faculty who had met their “service requirement” of teaching composition courses (p. 31). Here, many assumptions about composition are being made—teaching composition is inferior to literature, composition is not a scholarly field, composition is only service—many of which serve to further marginalize it and place it at the bottom of the English department hierarchy. This shapes writing instructor’s practices and how they view language as those hired with backgrounds in creative writing or literature are constantly bombarded with the idea that anyone can teach writing, that to teach writing is to teach grammar and correctness, and

¹⁹ See Crowley, Hairston, Miller S.

²⁰ Coined by Kathryn Young et al. “to represent the everyday slights found in higher education that communicate systemic valuing (or devaluing) of a person because of the institutional role held by that person in the institution. . . . Findings indicate 4 main types of hierarchical microaggressions: valuing/devaluing based on role/credential, changing accepted behavior based on role, actions (ignoring/excluding/surprise/interrupting) related to role, and terminology related to work position.” (“Hierarchical Microaggressions in Higher Education,” abstract)

while those trained in composition know that to be false, these ideas about writing are nonetheless internalized and perpetuated.

Again, in returning to my introduction, we can see that this exact dynamic played out in act of writing Hudson's BLM statement. Eleanor's act of aggression was clearly not meant to be micro, but a signal to writing program administrators that there was little respect of not only our expertise on the issue, but that addressing linguistic discrimination was less of a priority than implementing Critical Race Theory. As the antiracism movement proliferated in many English departments in 2020 and 2021, it became the newest and trendiest social justice initiative, however, in the end it was a means for White instructors to assuage their guilt. I have personally observed department chairs giving priority and tokenizing other faculty members of color (including myself), suddenly acknowledging their contributions with awards and new offices, not always out of genuine appreciation, but rather as a way to showcase their inclusivity. Moreover, the bulk of antiracist work fell on already marginalized instructors, instructors of color, or contingent faculty, while very few full-time faculty attended our antiracism workshops on mitigating language discrimination and labor-based grading. Essentially, I was surrounded by coworkers who supported implementing WLS and linguistic justice in the composition courses but did little to address it within their own literature courses or pedagogy because they felt that teaching Latino or Black literature was enough. By thinking that antiracism simply entails choosing diverse literature or organizing trips to museums to view displays by Black artists, the literature faculty at Hudson exposed a clear lack of comprehension regarding the realities of linguistic racism, its pervasiveness, and how they inadvertently perpetuate it, even within their antiracism initiatives. By

separating what they do from what we do in composition, they were able to say they supported our needs for program standardization but also undermine our power to do so. Ultimately, without the administrative and leadership support of the English/Literature department in which Hudson's writing program is housed, it has been difficult to effectively address WLS in the ways Inoue and others "demand."

Relatedly, the debate over whether literature should be taught in composition classes has persisted. This argument was most notably discussed in Erika Lindemann's (1993) article, "Freshman Composition: No Place for Literature" and Gary Tate's (1993) response in "A Place for Literature in Freshman Composition." Lindeman argues against including literature in FYW courses for several reasons. First, literature courses focus too heavily on consuming texts rather than producing them. Second, this creates a classroom that is teacher-dominated rather than student-centered. In essence, the course becomes about the literature itself. Lastly, there is a lack of relevance and connection between the student and the writing they produce. Lindeman argues, "They rarely connect literature with life. If students get to write a paper or two, they must assume the disembodied voice of some abstruse journal as they analyze the ingrown toenail motif in *Beowulf*" which "silence students' voices in the conversation literature is intended to promote" (Lindeman, 1993, p. 314). What Lindemann ultimately supports is a writing course solely based on writing instruction which she believes can help elevate students' voices and allow them to grow as writers. With an opposing perspective, Tate (1993) argues that while literature should not dominate composition courses, it should not be excluded either because "we have denied students who are seeking to improve their writing the benefits of reading an entire body of excellent writing" (p. 317). Tate's overall contention

here is that literature is a valuable resource for modeling good writing and to deny a student of the opportunities to read literature is to also deny students all the available resources that can help them. Ostensibly, these two perspectives are representative of the tensions described above, while faculty who teach literature value expertise and “model” writers, faculty who teach writing value student voices expertise through practice rather than mimicry.

Nevertheless, whether literature should or shouldn't be taught in composition, the data from my analysis of Hudson suggests that there are higher instances of WLS when classes are taught from this disciplinary approach. I suspect this could be due to several related reasons. First, while literature itself might not be the issue, it might depend on the type of literature we are privileging. In surveying the assigned or required texts taught in the syllabi sample at Hudson, an overwhelming number of them were written by White authors or about the white experience. Secondly, as mentioned previously in Chapter 2, when white forms or “habits” of language are privileged so are their conventions and attitudes. In this way, literature privileges forms of writing that are considered “traditional” and serve as models of “good writing” students are asked to mimic this language and are assessed on how well they can appropriate it. Tate (1993) himself acknowledges that one of the main reasons for incorporating literature is that it serves as a model of “good writing,” something that students simply cannot be deprived of. Moreover, I noticed in these particular classes there is less emphasis on the drafting process where only a final paper is graded and therefore few opportunities for revision are given to students to “perfect” their grammar or correct their mistakes. A lot of the onus of actual writing instruction is instead placed on the students and their ability to

seek supplementary help from the writing centers and tutors. Per Lindeman's critique, these courses prioritized the novel as the subject of inquiry rather than student-centered learning. This is a large part of what constitutes and creates the conditions for WLS to be sustained. From my data and conclusions here, I recommend that Hudson's program more strongly promotes, if not require, instructors to adopt pedagogical and disciplinary approaches to teaching writing that fall more in line with WPA and writing studies best practices.

It seems then, that the disciplinary approach and political configurations of writing programs matter greatly when assessing linguistic standardization. For a theory like WLS to be comprehensive, it must also consider these disciplinary and pedagogical challenges. We might also consider that a lot of these instances of linguistic racism aren't necessarily always due to malicious or "racist instructors" but rather a lack of understanding and training in sound composition theory and practice or the products of political tensions in writing program administration. All these issues are connected and systemic. For WLS, it might be beneficial then to address the internal tensions and political formations of writing programs and English departments in the pursuit of linguistic justice. With all of these constraints in mind, this could mean broadening the definitions of WLS and providing more nuanced approaches and guidance on how to pedagogically and practically implement the demands of linguistic justice into our individual and collective writing practices. The utilization of WLS, particularly through keyword analysis, can assist program administrators in evaluating their writing programs for linguistic standardization. This method can unveil the prevalent concepts and keywords, such as "grammar," shedding light on elements within the program that may

unknowingly promote linguistic standardization. For example, with my results, I hope to show that standardization of Hudson's writing program and syllabi are needed. And while seemingly paradoxical, the increase in program standardization—that is, oversight over the curriculum content, and pedagogical approaches—can help decrease instances of linguistic standardization or WLS. This will require training but can also start with something as simple as improving templates, making sure there are incentives to comply, or prioritizing hiring of writing instructors with training in writing studies or linguistics.²¹

Implementing WLS for Program Assessment at Hudson

Given the program's current structure and the political and disciplinary variances between the English department's leadership and the writing program administrators described above, at Hudson, there are several challenges to standardizing the composition to consider before proving specific recommendations. As Gallagher (2019) points out, many writing instructors in the field of composition tend to associate standardization negatively with standardized testing. Historically, in America, policies such as “No Child Left Behind” favored standards-based education reform, which mandated the establishment of measurable goals and outcomes. In such policies, student performance was solely based on high stakes testing rather than other comprehensive assessments of learning. Additionally, the idea that setting high standards for achievement improves educational outcomes for all students has proven to be flawed as these policies ended up “leaving behind” the very students they intended to help. In many of these cases marginalized or disadvantage students have less access resource than their privileged

²¹ To clarify, there will always be ethical decisions about how much work we place on our contingent faculty and fair pay, but it is also unethical to use this as an excuse to disregard the seriousness of linguistic discrimination and the ways in which these writing instructors consciously or unconsciously promote linguistic racism. We must treat the program and linguistic standardization issue as one.

peers—recourses such as expensive test-prep courses or tutors are now educational luxuries. In this perspective, standardization of education can significantly and negatively impact vulnerable populations.

This perspective is one that many English faculty at Hudson still hold, as talks of standardization in faculty meetings inevitably return to this point. This notion of standardization filters into writing studies more specifically as critics take similar issue with attempts to teach students universal “academic discourse” skills that are learned in one writing course and applied or transferred across multiple disciplines (Gallagher et al., 2019). Although many full-time faculty do not teach composition, they tend to support that idea that the universality of composition courses, especially first year writing, has the potential to erase individual student voices. As the most frequent argument I have encountered, numerous instructors, particularly those in literature, argue that program standardization fosters discourses that not only produce academic robots but also do not align with their disciplinary objectives of fostering creativity and individual expression. Consequently, this belief has authorized instructors to develop distinct courses that prioritize creativity and individualism above all other learning outcomes and has given instructors the autonomy to design courses that correspond to their expertise rather than implementing the writing studies practices provided by writing program administrators.

The other side of this debate suggests that standardization is key to democratizing education. In Gallagher’s (2019) overview of the issue, he notes that many efforts have been made by professional organization WPA (“Outcome Statements for First-Year Writing”), NCTE (“Framework for Success in Postsecondary Writing”) and concepts such as “threshold concepts” (Adler-Kassner and Wardle, 2015) to better articulate the

“skills, capacities, and dispositions that cut across various writing contexts and hope for a broader consensus about what we want our students to learn” (p. 477). These attempts were not only to stabilize the field, but to provide a cohesive pedagogical approach to teaching effective writing. The field has always to some extent had to deal with public and disciplinary conceptions of writing. As previously discussed, many writing programs like Hudson are housed in English Departments with a variety of faculty teaching our writing courses (e.g., lit faculty, adjuncts, creative writing instructors, etc.) and there has been a need to communicate the legitimacy of our field and what we do. While critics like the ones cited above view the intellectual and pedagogical freedom for instructors to design the courses they see fit as vital in supporting diverse student voices, proponents of standardization maintain a different perspective. In order to prevent the erasure of student voices, particularly marginalized ones, standardization can help provide equal footing and assure that all students voices are heard. Moreover, in this view, creativity and individualism is not limited to content and theme but can also be fostered by encouraging and embracing linguistic differences within classroom discussion and as the central focus of the writing course. Further, “[t]his kind of “quality control” seems especially critical in writing programs where institutional support is scant, resources for professional development are limited, labor conditions are (to put it charitably) suboptimal, teaching staffs are diverse and itinerant, and student demographics are ever shifting . . . which is to say, in almost all writing programs.” (Gallagher, 2019, p. 478). To this end, standardization is viewed as a democratizing force rather than a limiting one.

When we consider this debate in relation to WLS, standardization can also be viewed in both these perspectives. On one hand, program standardization can act as a

vehicle for WLS if we assume it necessitates applying SLI's and conventions within its outcomes. On the other, program standardization can provide opportunities to equal the playing field for many students of color, where course themes and assessments aren't based on instructors' preferences and subjective expertise. My study of Hudson shows that in an effort to promote both student and instructor individuality and agency, Hudson is now contending with syllabi and a writing program that lacks consistency in curriculum, student outcomes, and language policies. So, while WLS can exist due to Standard English conventions, program standardization can also provide the necessary steps to address the inconsistencies and properly train faculty to deal with language issues. In my view, language standardization is unavoidable; thus, the critical question revolves around whether implementing program standardization provides more opportunities to identify where linguistic discrimination is coming from and mitigate its effects. Based on my findings, it is clear that Hudson's writing program is in need of standardization and while "standardization" in general has been misunderstood as "bad," if implemented with care, it can become an unlikely tool for dismantling racism. In light of the findings and discussions presented in this chapters, I have several suggestions for implementation of WLS and program standardization:

Program Assessment:

Based on the methods presented in this dissertation, I would refine my list of keywords and use keyword analysis as a means of initiating program assessment. The keywords I would focus on are from my list of top 10 WLS terms "grammar," "proofread," "punctuation," "standard (English)," "clear," "edit," "convention," "error," (see table 4.11.) and include the keyword, "language." Because these terms were most

associated with WLS statements, running a text search of program documents would help give a quick overview of potential areas of concern. While in this case I would not focus on frequency, since this information doesn't provide as useful data, I would recommend looking at the immediate contexts of these keywords, run word trees, and look for keyword associations. This initial step will allow administrators to home in on particular documents or areas that need more attention. Beyond this step, I would again look for prescriptive statements in relation to these keywords and the goals of the administrators. I can see this method being applied to not only syllabi but other important documents such as a collection of assignment and assessments.

Beyond the implementing keyword analysis, student surveys and instructor interviews would provide the complementary data my study was missing. If administrators can link particular prescriptive statements to certain instructors but also understand their intentions and assess their conceptions of language and literacy via interviews, this could provide useful data about how and why linguistic discrimination persists within the program. Student surveys would also provide a means to collect useful information on uptake of syllabi, assignments, and grading practices. Throughout my study here, it has been difficult to make conclusive claims about the effects of WLS without knowing how students may have taken up and reacted to prescriptive statements, so this data is not only important to gather but essential in determining how to best serve the needs of the students and program.

Program Standardization

Based on the data administrators collect at Hudson using the refined and expanded methods above, standardization of the program would be the next goal, starting

with the faculty handbook. Based on my observations, the genre of this document needs to be clearer and more precise. As a document that gives direction and sets the tone for current and future writing instructors coming into the program, it is critical that the handbook is not only extremely explicit but rather than providing too many options for customization and best practices, it needs to lay out the exact curriculum, pedagogy, and syllabi instructors should adopt. Relatedly, updates also need to be made to the syllabi templates, which should be written as if they are real syllabi given to students, instead of addressing the instructor or again, providing them with options to customize. The templates also come with an update to Hudson's standard syllabi for each of the composition courses. The standardization process will not be easy given the dynamics of the English Department, but because the writing program provides the bulk of the instruction, hires the most instructors, and engages most frequently with students, and therefore provides the most financial support for the English department, this should and can be leverage, with the appropriate presentation of data and research, to demand more support in this initiative. Without a comprehensive study and assessment of the program in recent years, it has become difficult to prove the consequences of going without program standardization for so long. I believe presenting a more objective study of the program using the methods I've suggested above, can provide not only the visual proof of how linguistic discrimination manifests at Hudson, but show that composition courses are distinct from literature and creative writing courses, they too have specific pedagogy, genres, and goals and should be treated as such. Additionally, while these steps are drastic and also more prescriptive, I believe instructors it will actually lighten the burden or onus of continually updating their syllabi and practices themselves. Administrators can

do the research and work to prepare these documents, which can be updated regularly and relieve our contingent faculty from doing too much unpaid labor. In this way, standardization can not only improve student outcomes, but administrator's relationships with instructors.

Faculty Development and Training

Along with efforts to standardize the program, there needs to be a larger effort to decrease the gaps of knowledge between program administrators, those with language training, and instructors with backgrounds in other disciplines (i.e., literature, creative writing, and film). This means for program standardization to work it must be a collaborative and gradual process. Before beginning program standardization, instructor surveys, or conducting open discussion or debates about how to best respect a variety of teaching perspectives is important. Considering the current writing faculty at Hudson, if the administrators can find ways to respect and accommodate instructor's interests and disciplinary expertise in other areas of the program, perhaps there will be less of a desire to use composition courses as their testing grounds or means of expression. Providing opportunities like organizing yearly faculty conferences or professional workshops where instructors can share their current research on a variety of writing topics from all disciplines or promote their projects, could not only provide opportunities to connect with each other, but provide a better understanding of our common grounds while learning about areas outside our expertise.

This comes with an inherent understanding of specific writing pedagogy. Currently, Hudson offers an overview course of writing and composition theory to students within our language and linguistics track, this course could be used as a model to

develop a faculty practicum, one that can be required to attend once a month when an instructor is first hired or perhaps once or twice a semester. Moreover, framing this practicum as “new employee training” could provide a reasonable rationale for funding from the deans and provosts offices. However, even if this is not a funded process, I believe new hires would be more open to learning and training at new institution if the sessions are accessible and set as a requirement from the beginning of their hiring process. For current instructors, this practicum can be required in the process of standardizing the program.

Ultimately, what is most important about faculty development is providing incentives, and while higher pay is always the ultimate incentive, creating a collaborative and supportive environment, increases the efficiency and effectiveness of the program. With easily accessible resources and flexible training opportunities, administrators can ease the transition and compliance to program standardization while promoting an environment of continuous learning and development. The process of program standardization at Hudson will not be an easy task and I imagine that there will be push-back, however, writing program administrators must emphasize that antiracism goes beyond teaching Critical Race Theory, it actually begins with an assessment of how we, as writing instructors, are complicit in promoting discrimination. These could be in obvious ways, but most often it manifests in the attitudes we have towards each other’s disciplines and expertise. I don’t pretend to know how to run a creative writing workshop or teach African American Literature, but that same energy must be returned by my colleagues on the other side. We are all ultimately striving for the same thing, to support student learning and success, but that will not be possible if we cannot respect each other,

collaborate, or compromise and recognize what is best for one discipline is not for another. Linguistic discrimination is a reality for many students but just because it is harder to identify, it does not mean it is not just as degrading and traumatic as other forms of racism. This is an issue that affects us all and as I've argued here, standardization can be an unlikely tool to not only better communicate the goals of the writing program, but to see that our students receive the best and most consistent writing instruction.

Towards Critical Language Awareness

Employing a WLS framework can enable us to learn a lot about the ways language, particularly our discussions of linguistic difference, contributes to linguistic discrimination. Nevertheless, it is crucial that this framework does not adopt such a deterministic stance that it promotes division and undermines its own objectives and principles. There needs to be strategies that avoid claiming that Standard English and those who use or teach it are participating in white supremacy while also being critical of the ways in which we can reproduce linguistic injustices. Moreover, it undermines our ability as program administrators to encourage change when all an instructor may feel is defensive. Racism is a tricky subject to address and its not to say that it isn't correct or worth it to call it out, it is, however, it must be theorized and put into action in ways that advance the discourse among writing faculty rather than cause an adversarial effect. What I am ultimately advocating for is a framework of WLS that is more judicial and closer to a Critical Language Awareness (CLA) approach that considers all the conditions for language learning and writing instruction. CLA Pedagogy is defined as "an approach to language and literacy education that focuses on the intersections of language, identity, power, and privilege, with the goal of promoting self-reflection, social justice, and

rhetorical agency among student writers” (Shapiro, 2022, p. 4). This approach to understanding and teaching linguistic standardization is unique from WLS in that it seeks to reconcile the tension between pragmatism and progressivism, that is, wanting to teach writing in ways that reflect our commitments to linguistic justice, while also preparing our students for success beyond college (Shapiro, 2022). While Inoue and others dismiss the concerns of the latter as perpetuating racism and white standards, CLA argues that both can be true at the same time: that our goals of pragmatism are not inherently opposed to our progressive goals. This is where I see the most potential for CLA to either revise or replace WLS as the dominant antiracism pedagogy and framework.

In her specific critique of Inoue, Shawna Shapiro (2022) further claims that his arguments for WLS create an “overly simplistic binary in which practicality is at odds with the aims of social justice” and when viewed in this limited way where “pragmatism is interpreted as a complete acceptance of the status quo, then it does seem logical that a purely pragmatic orientation is problematic” (p. 6). This limited perspective causes a pedagogical conundrum and fear as writing instructors must ask themselves how they can accomplish both tasks. She states:

But this fear is real and understandable: Teachers have been told that the stakes for this work are high—that linguistic injustice and other forms of oppression have a tangible, material impact on our students. We want to be part of the solution, and we certainly don’t want to contribute to the problem. Thus, one concern about the lack of guidance and frameworks for “both/and” writing pedagogy is that it can cause pedagogical paralysis.... But the biggest danger, in my view, is that teachers may give up altogether on reforming their pedagogies. They may simply revert back to what they already know. Or, more likely, teachers may tinker at the edges of their curriculum without truly changing the core of what they do. (p.12)

Given what I have already discussed in this chapter, I can personally identify with the pedagogical paralysis that Shapiro writes about here. But more importantly, it also explains my earlier discussion of Hudson's attention and presumed need to teach Standard English for student success and the positions presented in the WLS statements. In this way, CLA promotes preparing our students for future success after graduation but also preparing students for the realities of the (often unjust) present. Ultimately, "CLA pedagogy does not ignore the power of academic norms and other linguistic standards (i.e., the status quo), but aims to demystify, critique, and—at times—resist those norms and standards" (p. 14).

Unlike WLS, it does not seek to dismantle linguistic racism by demanding we get rid of Standard English, but rather by giving the students tools to recognize the realities and demands of those standards, while also resisting them. It is clear that even in Inoue's and other proponents of WLS work, that they too still adopt SAE as a means of communicating their ideas and theories to a specific audience and genre. For me, it would be entirely impossible to abandon academic writing or the use of Standard English. As a person of color, I know what it is like to navigate both worlds, and at this point it is difficult to separate the Asian from Asian American; both dialects are a part of my native tongue, so in a WLS framework, how am I to determine which part of my identity to abandon now? CLA does not assume that native speakers do not struggle with the effects of Standard English either. Because CLA addresses how language standard can affect all individuals from every race or socioeconomic background, including our White students, this leaves room for them to contribute to discussions, consider their struggles, while also acknowledging their privilege in certain circumstances.

From a program administration perspective, CLA can open up conversations about linguistic difference in ways that WLS does not. When we describe something or someone as participating in “white supremacy” that carries with it very specific historical context and brings with it a variety of attitudes and anxieties. Put differently, WLS can provoke hesitation and defensiveness. While I am not advocating for a watered-down approach to addressing linguistic justice, the truth is that many educators would be more receptive to exploring strategies for addressing linguistic diversity if they experienced less guilt or anxiety regarding the perceptions of their peers, particularly those who are more progressive. The first step in any program revision is to get everyone on board, sharing the same goals and baseline knowledge and WLS is limited in this capacity.

Within a classroom, CLA provides the same opportunities to create a classroom where the focus is less on separating our experiences based on race and comparing traumas, but instead one that is based on sharing common ground, that we are all subjects of linguistic standardization. More importantly, however, CLA also gives program administrators the tools to reconcile the disciplinary differences of instructors. Because the focus of CLA is on interrogating the politics of language and language instruction, using their expertise, it gives instructors opportunities to discuss how language functions in their disciplines while also recognizing it is only one of the academic conventions or conditions for writing that students will encounter. This way, CLA works well with Writing About Writing (WAW) or Writing Across the Curriculum (WAC) frameworks. Rather than promoting something like code-meshing, CLA approaches account for all of the demands for student writing and their preferences. From my syllabi corpus, I did observe that several instructors (though not enough) were already implementing a CLA

approach, resulting in syllabi that were not only more adept at addressing language and linguistic diversity, but contained no instances of WLS statements. Here are some sample CLA statements from these syllabi samples:

1. Course description/Overview

Course Topic of Inquiry: For the purposes of building our critical reading and thinking practices, we will engage several readings on a shared course topic of inquiry: “The Politics of Language.” We will explore questions such as these: What roles do language and literacy play in U.S. society? How do our language backgrounds affect our lived experiences and how we are perceived and treated by others? What is the relationship between literacy and social differences, such as race and culture? How are we—the readers and writers participating in this class—affected by the ways that language and literacy function in the U.S.? We can understand this course as drawing on the topic of language and literacy as a vehicle for critically analyzing and developing our own languages and literacies. (Sample ID # 32)

2. Learning Objectives/Key Questions:

This course is motivated by the following key questions:

- What is Critical Language Awareness?
- What are some invisible ways that people discriminate based on language and how can we combat this discrimination?
- What types of sources do academic writers typically rely on?
- What is cohesion in writing and how can I improve cohesion in my own writing?
- What helps to make a text coherent?
- How is language linked to identity? (Sample ID # 55)

3. Language Acknowledgement Statement:

Grammar: Students are expected to take an active role in developing their English language, grammar, and mechanics. We recognize that students come from different educational, linguistic, and cultural backgrounds and that it takes a lifetime to fully develop language and grammar, especially if English is a student’s additional (and not first) language. As your instructor, I am committed to adopting approaches deemed most effective by the fields of TESOL and Composition and Rhetoric: I will provide ongoing feedback on your writing to highlight language issues on which you need to work, and I will refrain from penalizing you for your language. (Sample ID #32)

4. Course Readings/themes:

[The course theme is...]

“The Politics of Language” which includes the following questions:

- What roles do language and literacy play in U.S. society?
- How do our language backgrounds impact our lived experiences and how we are perceived/treated by others?
- How are we—the readers and writers participating in this class—impacted by the ways that language and literacy function in the U.S.?
- What racial/cultural presumptions and stereotypes exist based on how one communicates through language?
- How can we honor our native languages and dialects while recognizing the need to communicate in standard written English?

By the end of the course, you should be able to:

- Recognize the role of language attitudes and standards in empowering, oppressing and hierarchizing languages and their users. (Sample ID # 12)

These courses made a great effort to forefront literacy awareness or addressed language discrimination directly. Language awareness and discussions of linguistic standardization and justice were highlighted in several key areas, (1) course descriptions/overview, (2) learning outcomes/key questions, (3) language acknowledgement statements, and (4) course readings/theme. For instructors like Eleanor, I can see CLA being a way to transition their beliefs about the importance of teaching grammar and form, while also encouraging discussions with students about why they are being taught these skills. Rather than a “because I said so” or “it’s for your own good” attitude, students can actively participate in understanding why academic conventions and Standard English might be useful, without devaluing their home languages. As I have suggested here, CLA can expand our pedagogical approaches to linguistic standardization in ways that acknowledge a variety of realities, tensions, and perspectives of literacy and language.

Not only is CLA more accessible and inclusive as a pedagogical approach, but it also provides more practical applications to our classrooms.

Conclusion

Upon revisiting my research questions, this study highlights that writing course syllabi feature a range of judgments regarding academic discourse and classroom conduct, but among these judgments, those concerning language stand out as particularly problematic. In no other context, do instructors feel as emboldened or even claim as much authority, as they do with language. In the WLS statements I observed, linguistic racism wasn't as hidden or covert as Inoue and Davila suggest, but boldly assertive. This dissertation's examination of WLS keyword analysis has highlighted the discrepancies between theoretical assumptions and practical applications. My findings underscore the need for a more nuanced interpretation of terms and concepts like "clarity," "grammar," and "logic" as potential products of white supremacy within the framework of linguistic diversity and standardization. As a result, while WLS keywords offer a valid means to assess composition program documents for instances of WLS, the implications of my research also challenge the deterministic nature of WLS theory and calls for a reevaluation of its methodologies to better account for the diverse linguistic landscapes within writing programs.

Moreover, this chapter emphasizes the importance of moving beyond rigid categorizations of people, language, and race, including antiracist and WLS ideologies. In the act of reclaiming marginalized bodies and voices, we must be careful not to reinscribe other binaries or monolithic views. This study promotes a dialogue that accommodates diverse perspectives and experiences regarding race and considers the disciplinary and

political configurations within writing programs that may also endorse WLS. By acknowledging the limitations of existing WLS theorizations, writing instructors and administrators can navigate the complexities of teaching language and linguistic difference with greater sensitivity and effectiveness. At Hudson University, I aim to leverage the knowledge gained from this research to not only validate the need for program standardization but also to enhance our curriculum and methods in fostering pedagogies that are more linguistically conscious and equitable. In closing, this study serves as a critical reflection on the challenges and opportunities presented by WLS theory in the field of composition studies.

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APPENDIX A

BLACK STUDENT UNION STATEMENT

The Executive Board of the Black Student Union of █████ University deems it necessary to use our platform and influence to amplify the voices of the unheard. We stand in solidarity and fight for justice for George Floyd, Breonna Taylor, Ahmaud Arbery, and thousands of other Black lives taken from us. The injustices that the Black community faces in America are not new; they are perpetuated in every aspect of our society and we are tired and angry, and rightfully so. We carry not only our own personal burdens but the burdens and pain of our ancestors. To be Black is to constantly walk with a target on your back, seen as a threat, and deemed less than by society. These riots and protests we see all around the country are the results of years of outcry for equality and equity, and our voices will be heard! We are in the midst of a revolution and it is imperative that we define where we stand. We stand for Black children, Black LGBTQ+ communities, Black disabled people, Black immigrants, all Black people.

It has been said that President █████ and administration stand with the students, yet when injustices against Black students are brought to light, they are not quick to act. The mission of the University is to educate those to confront inequality and fight for justice, yet what actions have been made to further instill this statement? Now, more than ever, should be the time for support and solidarity. However, this is when we feel most neglected and unrepresented as a part of the █████ community. Black students receive the bare minimum acknowledgement and resources. To the BSU community, we apologize as we have tolerated ignorance for far too long; allowing the mistaken idea that this behavior is okay. We stand now and say we deserve better! We refuse to accept the feeling of insignificance that this predominantly white institution has impressed upon us.

The Black Student Union is not a barometer for Black rage, and we find it insulting that school publications, administrators, and faculty only call on us in times like this for our “input” or “direction”. Rather than calling on us only during Black History Month and in times of civil unrest, do the due diligence to cover these topics, as you would any other topic, in the spaces you occupy and dominate. We are more than just “the Black voice”

when it is time to write an article or teach a difficult lesson. If you are unable to consistently and inclusively engage our voices in all aspects of [REDACTED] due to a lack of representation or knowledge, it is your responsibility to look within and find solutions to said problem. If you only call for Black voices in times like these, you are part of the problem. It is not the job, or responsibility of Black people to teach you that racism is wrong, and you should stop asking Black people for resources as if we are racism encyclopedias.

Now it is time for you, the [REDACTED] community, to show your solidarity with this fight to end white supremacy, institutionalized racism and police brutality. Moreover, we demand that:

- (1) The University provides mandatory, 3-day anti-racism trainings for all faculty (including tenured) and staff.
- (2) All UNV 101 students be required to fulfill 6-hours of anti-racism training.
- (3) As a requirement for graduation, all students be required to take 2 Critical Race Theory courses.
- (4) Pace University commits to hiring a minimum of 30 Black and Latina/o/x faculty throughout all of the disciplines who are adept in teaching Critical Race Theory.
- (5) Black and Latina/o/x students' claims of microaggressions and racism within the context of the university be investigated to the fullest extent.

Every person counts! The fight against white supremacy, institutionalized racism and police brutality has been an ongoing fight for generations, but it's time for our generation to put a stop to this!

We ask that you listen with the intent to understand, not just hear our words to reply. And remember that if your activism is not intersectional, then it is not activism.

APPENDIX B

HUDSON ENGLISH DEPT. BLM STATEMENT

[EMAIL TO OUR STUDENTS AND ADMINISTRATION]

BLACK LIVES MATTER. We the faculty of the English Department at _____ University fully support the statement and demands made by the Black Student Union at our university. We have also read closely the statements issued by our university in support of the demonstrations following George Floyd's death, and we believe that we need to say and do more: Black lives matter. We commit to taking responsibility for the change that can start with us.

We believe that universities can and must be sites for modeling the change we need right now. But, too often, universities, including our own, have engaged in tokenism over true reform, formed task forces and investigations that do not lead to action, and failed to align their budgets with a vision for transforming higher education to reject systemic anti-blackness and make social justice central to all we do.

Here are the actions we will take within our department:

- **Change starts with us.** We must take action to address Black and Latina/o/x students' experiences of microaggressions and institutional racism. As a department, we acknowledge and apologize for our failure to prevent these injustices. We are working to respond more effectively to these student claims, and we are actively investigating recent grievances. We commit to improving our response and to creating proactive anti-racist discourse informed by Critical Race and Ethnicity Studies within the department about these issues as our priority. We also call on the university to acknowledge past shortcomings and to investigate and react appropriately to all grievances going forward.
- **Language is not neutral.** Anti-racist pedagogy must include anti-racist writing assessment. We pledge to organize faculty training informed by sociolinguistic research about racial bias in language, grading, and classroom teaching. We recognize that Standard English is not neutral and that we should value and accept students' dialects and languages while also teaching academic discourse.

- **Literature reflects life.** Syllabi that center the perspectives of white authors and artists do not reflect our students or the world. We pledge to ensure that no student can complete an English major in our department without substantial education in Critical Race and Ethnicity Studies. We also commit to reviewing our course offerings and evaluating new courses for their capacity to reflect our students and the world. We will make a curriculum revision within one year that will integrate a course of study in BIPOC literature, history, and culture as a requirement for English majors
- **Writing and reading have always been tools for racial justice.** We pledge to create undergraduate research and archival projects that contribute to knowledge and awareness about the Indigenous Lenape land and African Burial Ground that our campus occupies. We acknowledge that we work and live on land that was developed using stolen labor from enslaved people. We will advocate for a plaque or monument on campus to acknowledge its location on indigenous land and African Burial Grounds.
- **We can learn from each other.** We pledge to dismantle borders in our own department and between our department and our communities in this city. We will start with guest teaching in our classrooms and new departmental conversations that enable us to review our syllabi for the inclusion of critical race theory and anti-racist pedagogy. We have initiatives underway to develop more civic engagement/ community-based learning courses, plus antiracism peer education training (by students, for students) to support such fieldwork; ongoing faculty development workshops in antiracist pedagogy and critical race theory; and a series of conversations that will bring together two or more courses at a time to choose from and discuss a selection of texts put together by Professor ____ who has taught creative writing, African literature, and Black Studies at ____ for 44 years.

We pledge to pursue and advocate for, throughout the university community at every opportunity, the BSU's demands:

1. The University provides mandatory, 3-day anti-racism training for all faculty (including tenured) and staff.
2. ALL UNV 101 students be required to fulfill 6-hours of anti-racism training.
3. As a requirement for graduation, all students be required to take 2 Critical Race Theory courses.
4. Pace University commits to hiring a minimum of 30 Black and Latina/o/x faculty and senior administrators throughout all of the disciplines who are adept in teaching Critical Race Theory
5. Black and Latina/o/x students' claims of microaggressions and racism with the context of the university be investigated to the fullest extent.

We will continue to provide updates and invite conversation with you as we move forward with our commitments made here and continue to develop new initiatives. As a starting point, **we invite you to join us and share ideas in [this anonymous Google Form](#).**

In solidarity,

The Faculty of the English Department, _____University

APPENDIX C

REVISIONS TO ENGLISH DEPT. BLM STATEMENT

Example of microaggression:

Here are the actions we will take within our department:

- **Change starts with us.** We must take action to address Black and Latina/o/x students' experiences of microaggressions and institutional racism. As a department, we acknowledge and apologize for our failure to prevent these injustices. We are working to respond more effectively to these student claims, and we are actively investigating recent grievances. We commit to improving our response and to creating proactive anti-racist communication informed by Critical Race and Ethnicity Studies within the department about these issues as our first priority. We also call on the university to acknowledge past shortcomings and to investigate and react appropriately to all grievances going forward.
 - **Language is not neutral.** Anti-racist pedagogy must include anti-racist writing assessment. In our English Department, which focuses on studies of literature and writing, standard formal writing will continue to be taught to help students get jobs when they graduate, but students will also learn about the power and flexibility of language, and that non-standard English also has validity.
 - **Literature reflects life.** All-white syllabi do not reflect our students or the world. We pledge to ensure that no student can complete an English major in our department without substantial education in Critical Race and Ethnicity Studies. We also commit to reviewing our course offerings and evaluating new courses for their capacity to reflect our students and the world. We will make a curriculum revision within one year that will integrate a course of study in BIPOC literature, history, and culture as a requirement for English majors
 - **History informs the injustices of our present.** Writing and reading have always been tools for racial justice. We pledge to create undergraduate research and archival projects that contribute to knowledge and awareness about the Indigenous Lenape land and African Burial Ground that our campus occupies. We acknowledge that we work and live
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APPENDIX D

COMPOSITION FACULTY HANDBOOK

(Due to privacy, only sections that were relevant to the discussion are included here)

Course Outcomes for ENG 100, 150, and 200

Motivation and Development Process for the Outcomes

During the Academic Year 2012-13, the Director of Composition and the Director of ESL and Undergraduate Placement set out to create a set of outcomes for the composition course sequence, ENG 100, ENG 150, and ENG 200. The motivations for creating the outcomes were to provide composition faculty with a frame of reference to use in designing course syllabi and assignments, and to create a sense of continuity for students as they progress through the composition course sequence.

The resulting table of outcomes was created based on consultation with several sources, including the NCTE/WPA Outcomes Statement for First-Year Composition, focus group meetings with composition faculty, results from a grant-supported research project analyzing incoming students' placement exams, existing syllabi for ENG 100, 150, and 200, and members of the English Department's Curriculum Committee. That is, ideas for which outcomes to include came from both top-down, theoretical sources from composition studies, and bottom-up, practical information from local practitioners in the field.

Findings

Our sources indicated that, for instructional purposes, composition is often viewed as comprised of several related, yet partially distinct, components; that composition faculty would like to have a clearly articulated description of what is expected at each course level, especially with regard to assignment types and assessments; that students struggle with both sentence-level and discourse-level writing issues; and that existing syllabi reflect some progression in terms of assignment types and expectations across the three composition course levels.

Caveats

It is important for composition faculty, especially those teaching the courses later in the composition sequence, to recognize that even when something is taught in ENG 110, students may not learn it. For this reason, instructors should expect some students to continue to have difficulties with certain writing issues as they progress through the sequence of courses. While the list of outcomes provides a suggested sequence of teaching points and potentially achievable goals for each level, we advise against treating these as concepts or skills that students will have mastered at the end of each course.

As a work in progress, this list of outcomes may be used both to inform composition faculty and students about course curricula, and to stimulate reflection and discussion as

to how the list might be revised or enhanced to best meet the needs of faculty members and students.

Course Outcomes

IN THIS COURSE, STUDENTS WILL ...	100	150	200
Develop awareness of sentence-level concerns, such as			
Accurate use of word forms and verb forms	X	X	X
Accurate word choice	X	X	X
Accurate use of a variety of sentence types (simple, compound, and complex)	X	X	X
Identify and correct a range of mechanical errors, such as			
Punctuation (capitalization, apostrophes, etc.)	X	X	X
Fragments and run-on sentences	X	X	X
Develop awareness of discourse-level concerns			
Apply strategies to improve cohesion and coherence	X	X	X
Maintain focus on the topic and/or a consistent point of view	X	X	X
Adjust writing according to genre, purpose, and audience	X	X	X
Adopt language to reflect sociolinguistic awareness (use of appropriate register, stance, and tone)	--	X	X
Examine and describe specific conventions for different disciplines	--	--	X
Engage in the process of writing			
Practice various stages of the writing process (planning, revising, editing, etc.)	X	X	X
Use writing as a heuristic to discover and create ideas	X	X	X
Critique their own and their peers' writing	X	X	X
Develop a variety of research skills			
Follow citation conventions to avoid plagiarism	X	X	X
Collect secondary sources	X	X	X
Integrate secondary sources appropriately (avoid plagiarism)	X	X	X
Assess strengths and weaknesses of secondary sources	--	X	X
Synthesize and evaluate information found in sources	--	X	X
Incorporate primary data (i.e., interviews, observations, surveys)--	--	--	X
Produce a variety of text types, such as			
Short expository papers (descriptions, explanations, etc.)	X	X	--
Argumentative essays	X	X	--
Response papers/reflections	X	X	X
Summaries	--	X	X
Critiques	--	X	X
Research papers/projects	--	X	X
Annotated bibliographies	--	--	X
Research proposals	--	--	X
Presentations	--	--	X

Composition Course Descriptions

ENG 100: Composition (3 credits)

From the University Undergraduate Catalog:

This course will emphasize critical reading, writing, and thinking. Students will learn to approach the writing, revising, and editing of well-organized and coherent analytical essays as a series of tasks and learn to develop strategies for effectively accomplishing each stage of the writing process. In addition, students will learn basic research skills, including methods of documentation and the use of library and Internet resources. Students must earn a C- or better to move on to ENG 150

Information for Instructors:

Types of Readings

Readings can be drawn from a variety of genres as long as they are aligned with the course description and outcomes. Readings that follow a Writing-about-Writing pedagogical approach are preferred. See the pages below on The Writing-about-Writing Approach to Teaching Composition and Recommended Textbooks, as well as sample syllabi on the Blackboard site for Composition Adjunct Faculty for more ideas.

Types of Assignments

Students in English 100 write brief, expository papers (such as descriptions and explanations) and argument-style essays. Students may also write summaries and reflections based on readings. Students complete one or two guided research assignments or projects to introduce them to basic research skills and methods of documentation, but complete research papers or projects are not required at this level. Students will produce approximately 15-20 pages over the course of the semester. Library sessions are strongly encouraged.

Focus of Assessments

Assessments of students' writing should reflect specific task and discourse community expectations and not just sentence-level or mechanical concerns. See the Composition Faculty Handbook for more information about writing assessment and sample rubrics.

Research and Information Literacy Expectations

Students can identify research needs based on gaps in their own knowledge and gain respect for the original ideas of others. Student should be able to find information using a variety of research tools, including the library catalog, research databases and websites. Students can generate questions to guide research and begin to understand the importance of proper attribution and citation.

Keep in mind that ENG courses are composition courses; LIT courses are dedicated to the teaching and learning of literature

ENG 150: Critical Writing (4 credits)

From the University Undergraduate Catalog:

This course will emphasize the development of argument and analysis as students work with a variety of literary and non-fiction texts. Students will learn more advanced research skills, including methods of documentation, the use of library and Internet resources and the synthesis

and integration of primary and secondary sources into their own essays.

Students must fulfill the prerequisites or request permission from the Department Chair.

Information for Instructors:

Types of Readings

Readings can be drawn from a variety of genres as long as they are aligned with the course description and outcomes. Readings that follow a Writing-about-Writing pedagogical approach are preferred. See the pages below on The Writing-about-Writing Approach to Teaching Composition and Recommended Textbooks, as well as sample syllabi on the Blackboard site for Composition Adjunct Faculty for more ideas.

Types of Assignments

Students in English 120 build upon the writing tasks from ENG 110 by writing brief, expository papers (such as descriptions and explanations), argument-style essays, summaries, critiques, and research papers or projects. Students may also write response papers or reflections based on readings. A complete research paper or project is required in ENG 120. Students will produce approximately 20-25 pages over the course of the semester. Library sessions are required for ENG 150.

Focus of Assessments

Assessments of students' writing should reflect specific task and discourse community expectations and not just sentence-level or mechanical concerns. See the Composition Faculty Handbook for more information about writing assessment and sample rubrics.

Research and Information Literacy Expectations

Students should be able to locate and evaluate information from a wide variety of sources, including scholarly journal articles, books, and internet sources, and use this information to help them formulate a research topic that fits the scope and aim of the project. Students are able to integrate ideas from other writers in their own work, with an emphasis on proper attribution and citation. Students begin to see research as an inquiry process that is open-ended and focused on formulating complex questions. Students also learn search strategies that allow them to approach research strategically but remain flexible and creative.

Keep in mind that ENG courses are composition courses; LIT courses are dedicated to the teaching and learning of literature.

ENG 200: Writing in the Disciplines (3 credits)

From the University Undergraduate Catalog:

Course Description: This course is an upper-level writing requirement. Its focus will be on writing effective essays and research papers in disciplinary modes and in students' field of interest. It may include interviews, analysis of journal articles, and appropriate documentation style formats. Prerequisite: Upper sophomore standing (completion of 45 college credits) Required course for all New Core students in their second semester sophomore or junior year.

Information for Instructors:

Types of Readings

Readings can be drawn from a variety of genres as long as they are aligned with the course description and outcomes. Readings that follow a Writing-about-Writing pedagogical approach are preferred. See the pages below on The Writing-about-Writing Approach to Teaching Composition and Recommended Textbooks, as well as sample syllabi on the Blackboard site for Composition Adjunct Faculty for more ideas.

Types of Assignments

Students in English 201 complete a variety of assignments that allow them to explore the writing conventions, preferences, and expectations of their disciplines. Assignments can include summaries, critiques, annotated bibliographies, and presentations. Students complete research proposals, papers, and/or projects. Students may also write response papers or reflections. Students are encouraged to include both secondary and primary research (such as data from interviews, observations, or surveys) in their research papers or projects. Students will produce approximately 25-30 pages over the course of the semester. Library sessions are required for ENG 200.

Focus of Assessments

Assessments of students' writing should reflect specific task and discourse community expectations and not just sentence-level or mechanical concerns. See the Composition Faculty Handbook for more information about writing assessment and sample rubrics.

Research and Information Literacy Expectations

Students gain an understanding of authority as constructed and contextual and can identify authoritative sources within their own discipline. Students also begin to see scholarship within their individual discipline as an ongoing conversation and are able to critically evaluate contributions made by others in various information environments. Students are able to understand and evaluate the difference between primary and secondary materials and may engage in their own primary research. Students understand and are able to match information needs and search strategies to search tools.

Keep in mind that ENG courses are composition courses; LIT courses are dedicated to the teaching and learning of literature.

The Writing-about-Writing Approach to Teaching Composition

Composition Studies is a well-established field with an ever-expanding body of research and analytic methods. Rather than rely on readings and analytic approaches from disciplines outside composition, the Writing-about-Writing approach draws on scholarship within the discipline of composition for course content. That is, course readings and assignments are related to the study of writing and address such questions as What is writing? How do definitions of “good” writing vary across contexts? Who decides what counts as “good” writing? What features are associated with certain genres and discourse communities? Does empirical evidence support “commonsense” writing rules? How can we assess and develop our own writing abilities?

The Council of Writing Program Administration Bibliography includes this definition of WAW by Doug Downs:

“Writing-about-writing (WAW) curricula have students study and sometimes perform disciplinary research in writing studies in order to build procedural and declarative knowledge about and experience with writing with an eye toward maximizing transfer of knowledge from writing courses to new writing situations. By helping students use writing studies scholarship to (re)construct knowledge about writing, writers, writing processes, discourse, textuality, and literacy, WAW aligns a writing course’s object of study—writing— with its read and written content, the research of the field of writing studies. Teachers and students pose questions about these subjects and read articles that address them. Students write a variety of genres that facilitate reflection on their literacy experiences and help them put readings in conversation with each other and in some cases conduct original research on their own questions about writing.”

For more information about WAW, see <http://compile.org/wpa/bibliographies/Bib12/Downs.pdf> and the recommended textbooks for teaching composition included in this handbook.

Recommended Textbooks

The following recommended textbooks work well with a Writing-about-Writing composition pedagogy. Individual titles are listed under specific ENG composition course levels as a guideline; the suitability of a text for a specific level can vary depending on the instructional approach and additional materials. Feel free to recommend additions to this list.

ENG 100

- 24 Tips for Teaching Writing: A collection of essays drawn from *Lingua Franca*,

The Chronicle of Higher Education's blog about language.

<https://www.chronicle.com/resource/24-tips-for-teaching-writing/6247/>

- Bad Ideas about Writing. Edited by Cheryl E. Ball and Drew M. Loewe: An open-access textbook including a collection of short chapters on writing-related issues; written for a general audience <https://textbooks.lib.wvu.edu/badideas/>
- Considering Literacy by Linda Adler-Kassner:
<https://www.pearson.com/us/higher-education/program/Adler-Kassner-Considering-Literacy/PGM73419.html>
- Naming What We Know, Classroom Edition: Threshold Concepts of Writing Studies Edited by Linda Adler-Kassner and Elizabeth Wardle: A collection of short chapters by composition theorists and practitioners
<https://www.barnesandnoble.com/w/naming-what-we-know-linda-adler-kassner/1120806557?type=eBook>
- They Say, I Say by Gerald and Cathy Birkenstein: There are multiple editions of this popular textbook, including one with readings and one without
<http://books.wwnorton.com/books/webad.aspx?id=4294982902>
- Writing Spaces, Multiple authors: An open-access textbook; individual chapters could be relevant for all levels of composition <http://writingspaces.org/essays>

ENG 150

- Academic Writing: An Introduction (3rd ed.) by Janet Giltrow, Richard Gooding, Daniel Burgoyne, & Marlene Sawatsky:
<https://broadviewpress.com/product/academic-writing:-an-introduction---third-edition/?ph=520e08a63daa08ffebfa06f6#tab-description>
- The Informed Writer: Using Sources in the Disciplines. by Charles Bazerman: An open-access textbook published by The WAC Clearinghouse
<https://writing.colostate.edu/textbooks/informedwriter/>
- Language: A Reader for Writers by Gita DasBender:
<https://global.oup.com/ushe/product/language-9780199947485?cc=us&lang=en&>
- Language Awareness: Readings for College Writers by Paul Eschholz, Alfred Rosa, and Virginia Clark:
<https://www.macmillanlearning.com/Catalog/product/languageawareness-twelfthedition-eschholz>
- Language Diversity and Academic Writing (A Bedford Spotlight Reader) by Samantha Looker-Koenigs:
<https://www.macmillanlearning.com/Catalog/product/languagediversityandacademicwriting-firstedition-looker-koenigs>
- What's Language Got to Do with It? by Keith Walters and Michael Brody:
<http://books.wwnorton.com/books/webad-detail-editions.aspx?id=10325>
- Who Says? The Writer's Research by Deborah H. Holdstein and Danielle Aquiline: A small book that walks readers through the various stages of a research project <https://global.oup.com/academic/product/who-says-9780190633479?cc=us&lang=en&>

ENG 200

- Academic Writing: Concepts and Connections by Teresa Thoney:
<https://global.oup.com/ushe/product/academic-writing-9780199338344?cc=us&lang=en&>
- Exploring College Writing: Reading, Writing, and Researching Across the Curriculum by Dan Melzer, published by Equinox
<https://www.equinoxpub.com/home/exploring-college-writing/>
- Literacies in Context by Shannon Carter, published by Fountainhead Press
Available as a PDF via academia.edu account
www.academia.edu/601027/Literacies_in_context
- Writing about Writing: A College Reader (2017, 3rd edition) by Elizabeth Wardle and Douglas Downs:
<https://www.macmillanlearning.com/Catalog/product/writingaboutwriting-thirdedition-wardle> Website links to instructor’s manual, videos with the authors, and a link to Wardle and Downs’ Bedford Bits blog

Additional Open-Access Resources for Composition Faculty and Students

The following highly recommended resources include handouts, teaching tips, Powerpoint presentations, and other useful materials for teaching composition.

Baruch College’s Writing Center

writingcenter.baruch.cuny.edu/online-resources/writing-guides/writing-in-the-disciplines/

Colorado State University’s materials for writing teachers

writing.colostate.edu/teaching.cfm

Excelsior Online Writing Lab owl.excelsior.edu/

Montclair State University’s Digital Dashboard

www.montclair.edu/center-for-writing-excellence/digital-dashboard/writer-resources/writing-disciplines/

The Purdue Writing Lab (Purdue OWL)

<https://owl.purdue.edu/>

The University of North Carolina at Chapel Hill’s Writing Center “Tips and Tools” pages

Syllabus Design

A well-designed course syllabus helps the instructor present content in an organized and coherent manner and helps students understand their responsibilities and the instructor's expectations throughout the course. Keep in mind that a syllabus is also considered a binding contract between the instructor and students enrolled in the course.

In designing a syllabus, some use a “backward design” approach. That is, the instructor starts with the expectations of what students will have achieved by the end of the course and works forward to include what students will need to know or practice in order to reach these expectations. This includes thinking about what evidence students will have to provide to show that they have met or exceeded expectations. How will students be assessed? What products and/or performances will they have to complete for assessment purposes? Are assignments aligned with the course objectives and the course content?

Be sure to include the following sections in your syllabus:

- Course title, CRN, semester, class meeting days / times, and class location
- Instructor's name and contact information
- Brief course description
- Course pre-requisites (if any)
- Course goals and/or objectives
- Learning outcomes
- Reading list
- Detailed requirements and major assignments
- Methods of assessment
- Grade breakdown (percentage per assignment)
- Statement about minimum grade requirement of C- (for ENG 110)
- Policies (e.g., lateness, e-mail, class participation, etc.)
- Reference to the Writing Center
- Statement on academic integrity
- Statement for students with disabilities
- Calendar with weekly plans

Please note

When composing your course description and course objectives, remember to consult the WPA outcomes, composition course outcomes, composition course descriptions, and Pace University learning outcomes for ideas.

Remember to check that your syllabus is internally consistent (i.e., How do assignments and grading criteria lead to course objectives?) and that it reflects departmental and WPA outcomes.

Once you have been added to the Blackboard Community for Adjunct Composition Faculty, you will be able to browse the Blackboard site for sample syllabi.

Syllabus Statements

MINIMUM GRADE REQUIREMENT FOR ENG 100 (Starting Fall 2014)

Starting in Fall 2014, students taking English 100 must earn at least a C- to be eligible to enroll in English 150. Faculty teaching English 100 should include a statement about the minimum grade requirement on their syllabi and bring it to the attention of their students.

ACADEMIC INTEGRITY; STUDENTS WITH DISABILITIES

For statements regarding academic integrity and students with disabilities, consult the Pace Student Handbook, www.pace.edu/student-handbook/ to download and paste the most current statements and policies into your syllabi. The following paragraphs about were downloaded August, 2013.

ACADEMIC INTEGRITY

Students are required to be honest and ethical in satisfying their academic assignments and requirements. Academic integrity requires that, except as may be authorized by the instructor, a student must demonstrate independent intellectual and academic achievements. Therefore, when a student uses or relies upon an idea or material obtained from another source, proper credit or attribution must be given. A failure to give credit or attribution to ideas or material obtained from an outside source is plagiarism. Plagiarism is strictly forbidden. Every student is responsible for giving the proper credit or attribution for any quotation, idea, data, or other material obtained from another source that is presented (whether orally or in writing) in the student's papers, reports, submissions, examinations, presentations and the like.

Individual schools and programs may have adopted additional standards of academic integrity. Therefore, students are responsible for familiarizing themselves with the academic integrity policies of the University as well as of the individual schools and programs in which they are enrolled. A student who fails to comply with the standards of academic integrity is subject to disciplinary actions such as, but not limited to, a reduction in the grade for the assignment or the course, a failing grade in the assignment or the course, suspension and/or dismissal from the University.

Disabilities and Accommodations

The University is required to provide a reasonable accommodation; it is not required to provide the specific accommodation requested by the student. In providing accommodations, the University is not required to lower or effect substantial modifications to essential requirements or to make modifications that would fundamentally alter the nature of the service, program or activity. Thus, for example, although the University may be required to provide extended time within which to complete a test, it is not required to change the substantive content of the test.

Request for an Accommodation

To request an accommodation for a qualifying disability, a student must self-identify and register with the Disability Services Office for his or her campus. The Office of Disability Services is housed in the Counseling Center.

Before an accommodation will be provided, the student may be required to submit medical and/or other diagnostic information concerning the student's disability and limitations. If the information provided is unclear or incomplete, the student may be required to provide additional information or participate in further evaluations. In addition, the University may, at its expense, arrange for its own evaluation of the disability and needs of a student.

APPENDIX E

COMPOSITION SYLLABUS TEMPLATE

Syllabus Template Modified to reflect ENG 100 content

See the latest generic syllabus template for updated information regarding currently relevant information such as course modality and the use of face masks.

Instructors should modify this document further to reflect their individual courses. Highlighted sections are notes to the instructor and should be deleted from your final version. For the generic template, see the Faculty Center: [LINK](#)

Course Information

Course Title:

Course Number and Section:

Term:

Class Meeting time(s):

Class delivery format/location:

Contact Information

Instructor(s) Name(s):

Email:

Phone:

Preferred Contact Method:

Office location: We have a small common area of English part-time faculty on the 15th floor of 41 Park Row.

Office hours: Part-time faculty are not required to hold office hours.

You may want to advise students on how you manage emails and what response time they should expect. If not, some may expect you to be on 24/7.

Course description

[from the university course catalogue]

This course will emphasize critical reading, writing, and thinking. Students will learn to approach the writing, revising, and editing of well-organized and coherent analytical essays as a series of tasks and learn to develop strategies for effectively accomplishing each stage of the writing process. In addition, students will learn basic research skills, including methods of documentation and the use of library and Internet resources. Students must earn a C- or better to move on to ENG 150. 3 credits

Prerequisites

English Placement into ENG 110

Course learning objectives
[you can modify these somewhat to meet your specific approach]

In this course you will ...

1. Produce a variety of texts in multiple genres including reflections, response papers, short expository papers (descriptions, explanations, etc.), and argument essays.
2. Understand the importance of audience and purpose.
3. Develop and demonstrate awareness of discourse-level features that contribute to a text's cohesion, coherence, and genre expectations.
4. Understand writing as a process as well as a product.
5. Learn to use writing as a heuristic.
6. Provide and respond to suggestions for revising a piece of writing.

In addition to course learning objectives, you might consider including a list of “big questions” that taking the course will enable students to answer. Some examples:

In this course, we will explore some of the following questions about writing:

What is academic writing?

Does academic writing differ from other types of writing? If so, how and why?

What does audience have to do with writing?

What is cohesion in writing and how can I improve cohesion in my own writing?

What are some benefits of sharing my writing with a peer?

What does it mean to use writing as a heuristic?

Instructional Materials *Required*

[Select among the recommended texts for ENG 110 listed below or propose an alternative to the Director of Composition for approval. We strongly encourage the adoption of Open Educational Resources (OERs).]

Bad Ideas about Writing [OER]

Edited by Cheryl E. Ball and Drew M. Loewe

An open-access textbook including a collection of short chapters on writing-related issues; written for a general audience

<https://textbooks.lib.wvu.edu/badideas/>

24 Tips for Teaching Writing [OER]

A collection of essays drawn from [Lingua Franca](#), *The Chronicle of Higher Education*'s blog about language.

<https://www.chronicle.com/resource/24-tips-for-teaching-writing/6247/>

Write Here, Right Now: An Interactive Introduction to Academic Writing and Research [OER]

By Aaron Tucker and Paul Chafe

An e-textbook for first-year university students.

<https://pressbooks.library.ryerson.ca/writehere/>

Writing Spaces, Volumes 1, 2, and 3 [OER; also recommended for ENG 120 and ENG 201]

Multiple authors

An open-access textbook; individual chapters could be relevant for all levels of composition

<http://writingspaces.org/essays>

Naming What We Know, Classroom Edition: Threshold Concepts of Writing Studies

Edited by Linda Adler-Kassner and Elizabeth Wardle

A collection of short chapters by composition theorists and practitioners

<https://upcolorado.com/utah-state-university-press/item/2705-naming-what-we-know>

To request an instructor's copy: <https://upcolorado.com/our-books/request-desk-exam-copies>

They Say, I Say

by Gerald Graff and Cathy Birkenstein

There are multiple editions of this popular textbook, including one with readings and one without

<http://books.wwnorton.com/books/webad.aspx?id=4294982902>

To request an instructor's copy: <https://wwnorton.com/educator>

If you are interested in searching for alternative OERs, see:

[Teaching Resources](#) from the WAC Clearinghouse

[Textbook Library](#) → Education

[Open BC Campus Collection](#) → Communication/Writing, Academic Writing

Optional

Items on reserve in Library, relevant periodicals, other optional readings, websites and Internet links.

Grading Policy

Provide a statement of your grading approach or philosophy that explains why you grade the way you do and offers some detail about how you will assess student work. Provide a grading scale (e.g. 90-100 A) and a breakdown of how much each individual assignment or group of assignments is worth in terms of the overall grade. Make it clear to students if you are using a points system or percentages. Indicate your policy on late work, missed exams, etc. Provide a statement on academic integrity, including when collaboration is authorized.

Example:

Grades for this course will be determined through a number of assignments. I recognize that different kinds of assignments feed into the strengths of different students, and I work to provide a range of opportunities for you to show what you've learned.

Types of Assignments for ENG 100:

Students in English 110 write brief, expository papers (such as descriptions and explanations) and argument-style essays. Students may also write summaries and reflections based on readings. Students complete one or two guided research assignments or projects to introduce them to basic research skills and methods of documentation but fully-developed research papers or projects are not required at this level. Students will produce approximately 15-20 pages over the course of the semester. Library sessions are strongly encouraged but not required.

Final Grade Breakdown:

[Example – modify to fit your specific course]

Class Participation	10%
Reflections (2 x 5% each)	10%
Short Assignments	15%
In-class Assignments	20%
Summary Assignment	15%
Critical Response Essay	15%
Argument Essay	15%
Total	100%

University's grading scale (%) is as follows:

- A = 90-100
- B = 80-89.99
- C = 70-79.99
- D = 60-69.99
- F = 0-59.99

Assignments & Homework

Describe each graded component in enough detail that students reading will have a general understanding of the amount of and type of work required. Include information about the assignment’s purpose.

Example:

Reflections on writing (2 x 5% = 10%)

For these two assignments (one at the beginning and one at the end of the course), you will practice introspective approaches to studying writing. Specifically, you will reflect upon and write about your observations and experiences with writing. While these are informal assignments, they should still be clearly written and submitted to Blackboard when due.

Describe what students will be required to do to prepare for class and/or complete weekly homework. Include information here about “best practices” for maximizing their learning (e.g. attending study sessions, taking good notes).

Rubrics

Focus of Assessments for Writing Courses

Assessments of students' writing should reflect specific task and discourse community expectations and not just sentence-level or mechanical concerns. For this reason, separate assignments will probably require separate rubrics reflecting the specific expectations of each task.

See the *Composition Faculty Handbook* for more information about writing assessment and sample rubrics.

See also the [Faculty Center webpage](#) for samples of rubrics.

Sample rubric:

Brief Article Critiques (2 x 10% = 20%)

Write a brief critique of an assigned article.

Grading Criteria Checklist

- ___ Complete source information for the original article is provided
- ___ The critique includes an adequate summary of the article's main points
- ___ The critique includes an adequately supported (not simply stated) evaluation of the article
- ___ The evaluative language resembles that of an academic audience
- ___ The critique overall is clear and (mostly) grammatically accurate

Course Policies

Attendance and Participation

Describe your attendance policy. Describe the function of classroom participation within the course as well as your expectations for how students should participate. Explain whether participation is required and how it will be assessed. Add anything specific here about your expectations for participating via Zoom or other tech-related behaviors.

Explain your policy regarding use of technology in the classroom (e.g., use of laptops, cell phones for note taking).

Example:

Discussion and participation are a major emphasis in this course. This means that it is your responsibility to come to class ready and willing to take part in group knowledge-building. Your in-class participation grade will be primarily based upon the small group work and activities that we do in class. This grade will also reflect your level of investment in classroom discussion and how often you bring required materials to class. I will provide you with a provisional participation grade at three checkpoints during the semester.

Proofread and check the spelling before submitting a post in the Discussion Board or sending an email. While online communication is more relaxed, it is not careless communication. Doing a quick proof of your work before you send it may alleviate the need to clarify your posting and save you some time and potential embarrassment. Be aware of copyright and "fair use" law; do not plagiarize, and don't forget to cite your information.

Penalty on Late Work

Use this area to explain any consequences associated with turning in work past established due dates.

Plagiarism

Use this area to address plagiarism in your subject area and any penalties associated with plagiarism. Refer students to the Academic Integrity Policy under the University Policy section of this syllabus.

Classroom Climate

Consider including ground rules for appropriate classroom interactions, as well as a clear statement of expectations that classroom interactions will remain civil, respectful, and supportive. Encourage students to speak with you, the department chair, or their advisors about any concerns they have about classroom dynamics and/or classroom climate. They can also contact Chief Diversity Officer or Executive Director of Institutional Equity and Title IX Coordinator

Example:

Our community benefits from the richly unique experiences and individual diversity each of us bring. Intellectual growth and development happen when we engage in free and open discourse that challenges our own assumptions and beliefs. Together we all have the responsibility to create and maintain an environment where differences are respected and valued. To that end, we will challenge all manifestations of bias and discrimination to maintain a climate of mutual respect and civility.

Whether you are learning in an online or on campus environment, the same expectations of courtesy and conduct apply. All classroom interactions should remain civil, respectful, and supportive. If you disagree with someone, aim to acknowledge your disagreement in a respectful way. Try responding with a question to open up further discussion (e.g., I'm not sure that I understand your point of view. Can you say more?). When working online, choose your words carefully. It's easy for someone to misinterpret your meaning when they can't see your expressions or hear the tone of your voice. Be careful when using sarcasm and humor. Without face-to-face communication, your comments may be misinterpreted.

Course Schedule

When creating a course schedule:

- List class sessions by topic title, month, and day; include a brief description (optional).
- Specify reading and other preparation for each class session.
- Note activities that go beyond the usual lecture/discussion format, i.e., case discussions, group exercises, presentations, experiential exercises, etc.
- Clearly list assignments on their due dates.
- Highlight tests, quizzes, and examinations by class session. Use **bold face** to make them stand out.

- Create Alt Text and Description in Table Properties to make it accessible.

Due Date	Topic	Readings	Assignments & Notes

University Policies and Resources

Academic Integrity

Students in this course are required to adhere to University's Academic Integrity Code. The Academic Integrity Code supports honesty and ethical conduct in the educational process. It educates students about what constitutes academic misconduct, helps to deter cheating and plagiarism, and provides a procedure for handling cases of academic misconduct. Students are expected to be familiar with the Code, which can be found under "University Policies" in the [Student Handbook](#). Individual schools and programs may have additional standards of academic integrity. Students are responsible for familiarizing themselves with the policies of the schools, programs, and courses in which they are enrolled.

Instructions for faculty, a paper about best practices, and the form for reporting integrity policy violations are posted on the [Provost's webpage under policies and forms](#). Reporting forms should be sent to the Chairs of the Academic Conduct Committee on each campus.

Learning Commons

[The Learning Commons](#) uses an array of programs and a holistic approach to assist students with academic skills and content knowledge. We are dedicated to developing independent learners by creating purposeful interactions with trained, well-qualified peer and professional staff.

Procedure for Students Who Wish to Obtain Reasonable Accommodations for a Course:

The University's commitment to equal educational opportunities for students with disabilities includes providing reasonable accommodations for the needs of students with disabilities. To request a reasonable accommodation for a qualified disability a student with a disability must self-identify and register with Student Accessibility Services for his or her campus. No one, including faculty, is authorized to evaluate the need for or grant a request for an accommodation except Student Accessibility Services. Moreover, no one, including faculty, is authorized to contact Student Accessibility Services on behalf of a student. For further information, please see [Resources for Students with Disabilities page](#)

Technological Resources:

- List of all [Information Technology Services](#).

- For assistance with a technological concern (Blackboard, Internet, Computer, etc.), contact the Helpdesk at 914-773-3648 or create a [help desk ticket](#).
- Visit the [Online Learning Website](#)

Appropriate Use Policy for Information Technology:

___endorses the following statement on software and intellectual rights distributed by EDUCAUSE, the non-profit consortium of colleges and universities, committed to the use and management of information technology in higher education. The statement reads:

Respect for intellectual labor and creativity is vital to academic discourse and enterprise. This principle applies to work of all authors and publishers in all media. It encompasses respect for the right to acknowledgment, right to privacy and right to determine the form, manner and terms of publication and distribution.

Because electronic information is volatile and easily reproduced, respect for the work and personal expression of others is especially critical in computer environments. Violations of authorial integrity, including plagiarism, invasion of privacy, unauthorized access and trade secret and copyright violations, may be grounds for sanctions against members of the academic community.

[appropriate use policy](#) applies to recordings of classroom instruction and digital artifacts created by faculty and students.

Sex-Based Misconduct Policy and Procedure:

University is committed to providing a safe environment for every member of its community and to ensuring that no student, faculty or staff member is excluded from participation in or denied the benefits of any University program or activity on the basis of sex. Accordingly, the University prohibits the following forms of Sex-Based Misconduct: sexual assault, sexual harassment, gender-based harassment, dating violence, domestic violence, sexual exploitation and stalking.

Instructors are a **non-confidential** resource and have an obligation to report any information about sexual assault with the Executive Director of Institutional Equity and Title IX Coordinator. The Title IX/Affirmative Action Office is responsible for investigating violations of the sexual misconduct policy. For more information about the University sexual misconduct policy, see the [Sex-Based Misconduct Policy and Procedure \(PDF\)](#).

Members of the University community who believe that they have been subjected to Sex-Based Misconduct are encouraged to report such incidents to the University and, where applicable, to local law enforcement. **Confidential** resources include the

University Counseling Centers, Offices of Sexual and Interpersonal Wellness and University Healthcare. Contact information for those offices may be found in the self-care section below.

Self-Care:

Your academic success in this course and throughout your college career depends heavily on your personal health and well-being. Stress is a common part of the college

experience, and it often can be compounded by unexpected life changes outside the classroom. The Community strongly encourages you to take care of yourself throughout the term, before the demands of midterms and finals reach their peak. Please feel free to talk with me about any difficulty you may be having that may impact your performance in this course as soon as it occurs and before it becomes unmanageable. Please know there are a number of other support services on campus that stand ready to assist you. I strongly encourage you to contact them when needed.

Just In Case Website:

The Counseling Center's *Just In Case* website supplies potentially life-saving mental health information to University students, staff, and faculty. This smart phone App puts vital information and support options at your fingertips. Scan and open the App today, just in case you or a friend needs help. Download the Counseling Center [Just In Case Website](#) or go to "Counseling Center: Just In Case" on the My Mobile App.

Department	Pleasantville	New York City
Counseling Center	914-773-3710	212-346-1526
Dean for Students Office	914-773-3351	212-346-1306
Health Care Unit	914-773-3760	212-346-1600
Residential Life	914-923-2791	212-346-1295
Student Development and Campus Activities	914-773-3861	212-346-1590
Office of Multicultural Affairs & Diversity Programs	914-773-3775	212-346-1563
Sexual Assault Prevention & Education	914-597-8783	212-346-1931
Academic Advisement		
Advising Center for Exploring Majors	914-773-3847	212-346-1798
College of Health Professions	914-773-3961	914-773-3552
Dyson College	914-773-3781	212-346-1518
International Student / Scholars	914-773-3425	212-346-1368
Lubin School of Business	914-773-3531	212-618-6550
Pforzheimer Honors College	914-773-3941	212-346-1697
Seidenberg School	914-773-3254	212-346-1864
Study Abroad	914-773-3447	212-346-1368