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# Integrating Multilingual Students into College Classrooms

Practical Advice for Faculty

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history, science, math, philosophy, sociology, literature or any of the other myriad subjects offered in our colleges and universities. Faculty in the disciplines teach content in their professional fields, generally not English.

This book is designed to assist faculty across the disciplines to integrate multilingual students into their classrooms, to help all students be successful and to help all students learn from each other. These are our students – as Shaughnessy (1998: 7) says, ‘They are here’. We encourage our faculty colleagues to see them, not as a problem but as a resource and opportunity.

## 2 Constructing Classrooms Where Students Can Succeed

*A faculty member walks into her first class of the semester with a sense of anticipation. She quickly scans the room, noticing a multitude of faces, only a few of which are familiar. She sees that in the class different ethnicities and ages are represented and that the class seems to have slightly more females than males. Questions quickly run through her head: (1) ‘How will the first day go?’ (2) ‘Do students want to be in this class?’ and (3) ‘Will this class and the semester go well?’ Putting these and more questions aside, she introduces herself and gives an overview of the class. The semester begins.*

Anyone who has taught understands the above scenario. No matter how long one has been teaching, the first day of a new semester is accompanied by questions about how the class will go and a quick take of the new class. As the semester unfolds, more questions arise and faculty are constantly making decisions and making adjustments based on students’ needs and other variables. Certainly, all teaching situations are not the same. Courses differ widely along a number of variables: size, content, goals and objectives, assessment tools used, level of the course, faculty characteristics, student characteristics and more. Yet, a few things remain the same, notably that by and large faculty are passionate about their disciplines and about teaching. Additionally, most faculty want each student to be successful, not only in their courses but also in the university and their future endeavors. Faculty take pride in their students’ accomplishments and feel disappointed when students do not succeed. In short, faculty care about their disciplines, about student learning and about students as individuals.

As more multilingual and ethnically diverse students arrive on our campuses, faculty face new challenges. Faculty may welcome them into their classrooms, but they may feel unsure how best to make them an integral part of the class and how to assist those who seem to have difficulty. Some faculty may instinctively know how to help multilingual students be successful; others learn strategies through trial and error; still others may never feel they have a handle on helping multilingual students; and others may wish multilingual students would go away and come back after they have ‘fixed any linguistic problems’ and ‘learned how to be good students’. In this chapter, we outline strategies to help faculty working with multilingual

students: to make explicit what they may do instinctively. At the same time, we offer faculty opportunities to reflect on their teaching practices, refine their knowledge of challenges multilingual students face and gain insight into what strategies may be effective. Underlying our discussion are several basic questions: how can we create an environment where all students can succeed, where students feel challenged yet comfortable at the same time? How do multilingual students feel on campus and in our classrooms? Is the campus climate welcoming? How can we integrate multilingual students into the academy, help them learn and increase their chances of success? We begin by outlining fundamentals of second language (L2) acquisition, especially of L2 academic language, and then offer general advice for creating classrooms that foster student success.

## Fundamentals of L2 Acquisition with a Focus on Academic Language

### (1) Languages are dynamic and connected to their contexts and to their users

Linguistic texts such as Curzan and Adams (2012) note three distinctive features of language: (a) It is systematic, that is, it is rule-governed; (b) Language is arbitrary. There is often no logic to the rules. For example, there is generally no direct relationship between a word and its meaning. Why is a pencil called a *pencil*? Why isn't it called a *teapot*? The answer is simple: a community of speakers has agreed that *pencil* is the word that we use and not the word *teapot*. A word's meaning is based on conventional understandings by a group of speakers; (c) Language is creative and evolves. Using a language means understanding new utterances and sentences and creating novel utterances. Also, evidence of language's creativity is around us every day. For example, in English we often make new verbs by changing nouns into verbs. An example is the word *friend*. Until the advent and subsequent popularity of social networking, *friend* was only used as a noun. Now, however, *friend* is commonly used as a verb to mean to add someone as a friend on a social network site. A common question is 'Will you *friend* me?'

These distinctive features, along with others, are found in each language and, of course, each language is a different system with different rules and constituent parts. Here we do not wish to provide a crash course in linguistics but rather to emphasize the complexity and the evolutionary nature of language. Language is not a closed, static system but is dynamic and constantly changing and adapting to the context and situations in which it is

used. Language is embedded in social context and social practices (Benesch, 2009; Curzan & Adams, 2012; Heath, 1983). Therefore, language cannot be acquired simply by studying and learning constituent features (e.g. vocabulary, grammar) objectively. True, to 'know' English one must have command of the sound system (phonology), word formation (morphology), lexicon or vocabulary (semantics), grammar (syntax) and discourse (larger units of communication than the sentence level). Using a language effectively is much more. It entails hard-to-quantify elements such as knowing when to use or not use certain expressions, interpreting units of speech/reading beyond simply adding up the meaning of each word, and understanding an author's intended meaning. In short, much more than 'book learning' is needed to master a language, and this is especially true of language used in academic contexts.

### (2) Identity plays an important role in language acquisition

Lave and Wenger (1991: 53) argue that 'learning involves the construction of identities'. Others researching the relationship between identity and language learning contend that this relationship is complex and little understood (e.g. Chiang & Schmida, 1999; Harklau, 2000; Norton, 1997). Norton (2000: 132) argues that 'Learning an L2 is not simply a skill that is acquired with hard work and dedication, but a complex social practice that engages the identities of language learners in ways that have received little attention in the field of Second Language Acquisition.' Wenger (1998: 154) emphasizes that identity is not static, but is continually constructed and forms what he calls 'trajectories', not a path but a 'continuous motion . . . . It [*trajectory*] has a coherence through time that connects the past, the present, and the future' (Wenger, 1998: 154).

Typically, adolescence and young adulthood are considered important periods in individual identity formation. When individuals come to college, they are often away from home and on their own for the first time and in an unfamiliar environment: they face new personal, social and academic challenges and responsibilities. In addition to juggling the roles monolingual English speakers are required to do (e.g. child, adult, student, friend, employee), multilingual students must negotiate a multi-cultural identity. How do they negotiate between their first language (L1) and English? How do they see their identities as language users? Do they feel like different people when they use their L1 or English? What are their language practices? Do they code-switch (move easily from one language to another) or translanguage (a term that includes code-switching but goes beyond it, focusing on language practices that multilinguals use 'to make sense of their

bilingual worlds' [García, 2009: 45])? If so, when and with whom (e.g. do they use their L1 with family and English with friends and at school)? Do they translanguage in various domains and within single domains? Which groups do students feel they belong to? Which groups do they wish to belong to? How a student answers these questions, largely subconsciously and indirectly, affects her motivation, effort and success in academe as well as in general US society.

Jun Yang (2010), having come to the United States from China only four years before entering college, describes her life. 'I am lost, lost in between my two conflictive natures. . . . Having spent my childhood in China and a large percentage of my teenage years here make neither side of me comprehensible. One plus one never equals two lives to me, but a zero' (Yang, 2010: 51). Yang goes on to describe her difficulties with English: pronunciation is at times problematic but more problematic are idiomatic expressions (e.g. 'under the weather') and cultural references (e.g. Oprah Winfrey, rules of baseball), not the basic linguistic skills of listening, speaking, reading and writing. At the same time, Yang worries about losing her Chinese literacy and knowledge of current topics and events in China. Using her parents' Chinese dialect at home and English in public and with friends, she feels that she does not belong to any group and says:

I am walking back and forth between these two roles I play and trying to look for the one that I truly belong to. What is my identity? I am stuck on the intersection of the two paths and do not know what to do and where to go. I need a direction to follow. These conflicts between my two cultures and natures make me undefined. So I am seeking and trying my best to figure a way out and put these pieces of the puzzles together. (Yang, 2010: 53)

Others (e.g. Shen, 1998; Zawacki & Habib, 2010) also write about the need to reinvent themselves to have an academic identity in English and how gaining such an identity means leaving some aspects of themselves (e.g. their academic identities in their other languages) behind. Shen (1998) writes about how he had to 'redefine himself' which meant not only being his Chinese self but also creating an 'English identity'.

Multilingual students permanently resident in the US, such as Yang, may struggle more with defining themselves than international students, who typically have established their identity and are sojourners in the United States, so their 'home' and 'native country' identities may more easily be balanced as they can keep them more distinct, less entangled.

Identity formation is complex and plays a role in how comfortable an individual feels in academic situations, social communities and in US society in general. Wenger (1998: 146) contends 'Building an identity consists of negotiating the meanings of our experience of membership in social communities' (Wenger, 1998: 146). Emphasizing that it is a 'mistaken dichotomy to wonder whether the unit of analysis of identity should be the community or the person', he argues that 'it is as misleading to view identities as abstractly collective as it is to view them as narrowly individual' (Wenger, 1998: 147). Later we return to the subject of student identities when discussing students' integration into the academy.

### (3) Everyday language and academic language are very different

A distinction is made between two types of language use: (1) Basic Interpersonal Communication Skills (BICS) and (2) Cognitive Academic Language Proficiency (CALP) (Cummins, 1979; Cummins & Swain, 1986). BICS are acquired naturally by children who develop normally in their first language (L1) and can generally be acquired in a second language (L2) in a relatively short period of time when individuals are in a natural setting where the language is used. Linguists agree that by the age of six, normally developing children in rich linguistic environments have acquired the basics of that language, whatever language it is, and are competent users of that language (Curzan & Adams, 2012; Pinker, 1994). CALP consists of academic language skills such as advanced vocabulary, grammar knowledge, articulation of ideas and strong literacy skills. Unlike BICS, CALP requires much longer to develop in L1 and L2, and in some individuals it never develops adequately (Collier, 1987, 1989; Scarcella, 1996, 2003). Estimates are that it takes a minimum of seven years, under good conditions, for individuals to acquire CALP (Collier, 1987, 1989). A term that overlaps with CALP is 'academic literacy' which Ogbu (1990: 520) defines as 'the ability to read and write and compute in the form taught and expected in formal education. Put differently, I consider literacy to be synonymous with academic performance'. Even if CALP is not well developed and academic performance seems weak, students are still capable of critical thinking and abstract reasoning.

Whereas many multilingual students, especially those who are born or largely raised or schooled in the US, may be fluent in English but less proficient in academic skills, typically international students, those holding student visas are privileged and well-educated and have acquired academic literacy in one or more languages before coming to an English academic environment (Vandrick, 1995). Therefore, international students' general



academic knowledge may transfer to the English academic situation. The rules and conventions vary from language to language but individuals literate in one language understand the concept of academic literacy, whereas individuals who lack academic literacy in any language, whether a first or second language, may not have this understanding (Ferris, 2009; Reid, 2006).

The advantages that students who are educated and literate in their L1 have over those who have less developed L1 literacy skills can be explained in part by Cummins' (2000) idea of a Common Underlying Proficiency (CUP). According to the CUP model, languages that an individual knows rely on a common, not a separate, underlying language proficiency. Conceptual knowledge transfers and does not have to be relearned. To visually explain the CUP model, 'Cummins gives us the image of a *dual iceberg*, with the surface features of the two languages separated at the top level where they are visible, but like an iceberg, emerging from the same source' (García, 2009: 69).

Whether an individual is an international student or a US multilingual student, academic literacy is complex and hard to define. Ferris (2009: 26) synthesizes the research of Kern (2000), Scarcella (2003) and Singhal (2004) to assert that academic language proficiency has three interacting dimensions: linguistic, cognitive and sociocultural/psychological. Each of these dimensions is multifaceted, and even native English speakers may not gain proficiency in academic literacy. Acquiring academic literacy is a slow and arduous journey.

#### (4) Multilingual students do not become 'native' English speakers. A few courses will not perfect students' English

Roberge (2009: 6) says the notion of language remediation is based on a *myth of transience*, a belief that students travel from being learners of English to being completely competent in English. This term *the myth of transience* was coined by Rose (1985) to refer to the belief that students who have a perceived deficiency in writing skills (e.g. low literacy skills) only need one or two courses to remediate or 'fix' this lack, and then students will be competent writers in all areas of academe. Stanley (2010) points out that this myth of transience is evident in the idea and rhetoric of remediation that are applied not only to writing ability but also to math ability and general language ability. An assumption about multilingual students whose first language is not English, as well as about those who have not mastered the preferred form of English, is that a few classes targeted at their weaknesses or 'problem areas' will make them 'whole'. It is unrealistic to believe that

multilingual students will become native English speakers. Throughout their academic careers, multilingual students, like native English speakers, continue to improve their academic language proficiency and academic skills. We, as faculty, can help them in this process but can't assume that students will become native English speakers. In fact, questions about who owns English and the definitions of native speaker and non-native speaker are controversial (e.g. Canagarajah, 1999; Kramsch, 1997; Widdowson, 1994). Such questions are even more relevant as English spreads around the world as a global language and more varieties of English (i.e. Englishes) are used (e.g. Indian English, Singaporean English, European Union English). Multilingual students may have a good command of English and, in fact, be native speakers of an English, just not 'our English'. Canagarajah (2006: 217) cautions us not to assume that globalization leads to a homogeneous world where difference doesn't matter. He argues 'Issues of power and difference have simply become more subtle and dispersed.'

Another area where the term *myth of transience* has been used is in examining writing in the disciplines or specific academic fields. Russell (2002) argues that academic writing has historically been seen as a 'generalizable, elementary skill and that academia held a universal, immutable standard of literacy . . . and that writing was simply a form of talking rather than a complex and developing response to a community's discourse – a mode of learning, in other words' (Russell, 2002: 6). From this view, a simple solution (i.e. a course or two on writing) can 'fix' students' poor writing, and then students are able to be proficient writers in any field of study. That is, if one can write well in one course, one can write well in all courses and all disciplines. This belief is simply a myth.

## General Advice

### (1) Cultivate within yourself an orientation to look at students' potential and their abilities, not only at their differences and challenges

Rose (2005) argues, as do others, that students are often judged not by what they do well, but by what they do *not* do well. Faculty may comment on students' poor grammar or lack of what they perceive as good study habits and skills, not recognizing their original ideas or creative use of language. Roberge (2009: 5) writes, 'Students are seen as "learners of English" rather than "users of English".' Roberge, along with other researchers (e.g. Freire, 1970; Kutz *et al.*, 1993; Rose, 1985), encourages us to build on what

students bring to classes and to encourage students to discover and develop their abilities and competencies. Adopting this attitude means rejecting the difference-as-deficit and difference-as-estrangement perspectives, perspectives that see difference as a problem (difference-as-deficit), something to be fixed or difference as an alienating factor (difference-as-estrangement), preventing individuals from being academically successful. Individuals are seen as trapped in their linguistic and cultural worlds (Canagarajah, 2006: 218). Canagarajah (2006) argues that the difference-as-resource perspective provides more complexity than either of the other attitudes. This perspective values what each student brings: her experience, cultural knowledge, values and beliefs. In discussing critical writing, Canagarajah asserts that:

Multilingual students do – and can – use their background as a stepping-stone to master academic discourses. Their values can function as a source of strength in their writing experience in English, enabling them to transfer many skills from their traditions of vernacular communication . . . . We should respect and value the linguistic and cultural peculiarities our students may display, rather than suppressing them. (Canagarajah, 2006: 218)

Although Canagarajah is speaking of writing skills, his comments are equally relevant to other language and academic skills.

## (2) Avoid making assumptions about students, about their knowledge, abilities and experiences

Closely related to treating each student as an individual is avoiding making assumptions about students and labeling or categorizing them. Assumptions can go either way, positive or negative, but by their nature fail to give a full picture of the individual, her knowledge and her experiences. In her article, “‘You are beginning to sound like an academic’: Finding and owning your academic voice”, Tracey Costley (2008), a British student studying in a graduate program in the US, discusses how being given the label ‘first generation student’ bewildered her, impacted her perception of herself and created barriers she had to overcome to find her voice. In arguing that labels such as ‘first generation student’ create binary oppositions, she writes, ‘Ultimately, the dynamic that results is that there are students who at enrolment are considered, on the basis of their socio-economic and ethnic backgrounds, to be in deficit and those who are considered to be “in credit”’ (Costley, 2008: 77). Assumptions about Asian students, especially Asian

American students, being the ‘model minority’ (i.e. hard working, smart students, especially good at math) also place pressure on students and create barriers for individuals. Spack (1997: 765) cautions us against labeling multilingual students regardless of our intentions: ‘But even if our reasons are well intentioned, we need to consider that, in the process of labeling students, we put ourselves in the powerful position of rhetorically constructing their identities, a potentially hazardous enterprise.’

Assumptions about multilingual students tend to be tied to their language abilities and perceived socio-economic status, which may also be based on their language use. A student who seems to struggle speaking English is often assumed to be less intelligent than one who is articulate. Four closely related assumptions seem common: (a) assumptions about a student’s ability or intellect; (b) assumptions about a student’s interest, effort and motivation; (c) assumptions about a student’s background knowledge of and experiences with the subject matter; and (d) assumptions about a student’s knowledge of and experience with academic literacy and Western academic practices. The first two assumptions can be counteracted by keeping an open mind, by getting data and information about each student throughout the semester, by assessing her work and through private conversations. For example, a quiet international student who seldom speaks in class and appears to be lost may earn the highest score on the first written assignment or midterm, whereas an articulate multilingual student who actively participates in class may do less well on written assignments. It’s hard to read students and gauge their comprehension, engagement and ability. A brief scenario illustrates this point. The first week of the semester, a faculty member spoke to her chair about a male student who seemed bored in her writing class for multilingual students. She felt he might benefit from a higher level writing course and be more challenged. The chair suggested that the instructor watch the student closely until the end of the week, gather samples of the student’s work and then come back to speak to her again. The next day, the student, about whom the instructor had expressed concern, came to see the chair. He said that his courses were going well, but in one course the content was particularly difficult and he wondered if he would be able to keep up. When asked which course he found difficult, he explained that it was his writing course. The faculty member had misread the student. It is easy for faculty to misread students as not being interested in their studies or in being unable to handle the material when, in fact, they may be dealing with personal issues or other obligations, such as work or family, which disrupt their studies. Students are often confronting many issues outside their academic studies that make them appear unmotivated

or uninterested. At the same time as avoiding making assumptions about our students and their abilities, we want to identify those who may need additional support as soon as possible. Thus, getting information from students directly and indirectly can help identify such students.

More common than making assumptions about an individual's ability or motivation, we make assumptions about what students do or don't know, their background knowledge and their familiarity with academic literacy and US academic practices. This can be problematic for all students, yet is especially so for multicultural students who may not have a grounding in Western culture and academic practices. Here we are not talking about knowledge gained in prerequisite courses that will apply to upper division courses in a discipline (e.g. calculus, anatomy, accounting, inorganic chemistry). In order to fully understand textbooks, readings, lectures and assignments, students often need background knowledge about the topic or issue, information that may be cultural and Western. Lacking schema or background knowledge about the general subject area may put students at a disadvantage, especially if students see little connection to their knowledge and experiences. For example, an international student told us of his inability to answer an essay question on a marketing exam because he didn't know what the Super Bowl was. Yang (2010) provides another simple example of the need for background knowledge from her high school gym class. When playing baseball, she hit a home run, but not knowing much about the game, did not touch the bases as she ran them, despite her classmates repeatedly yelling at her to 'touch the bases'. Her home run didn't count and her team lost the game.

Assuming that multilingual students cannot handle certain tasks because they don't have the requisite knowledge can also be problematic, though less common. For example, a faculty member of a communication course argued that his international students could not handle a group project in which they had to research a problem in the local community and then propose a solution. He argued that the international students didn't know anything about the community or common practices in the United States. This argument seems to underestimate students' abilities and experiences. Furthermore, it assumes that those unfamiliar with US communities will have no insights to offer when, in fact, they may offer a new perspective and new avenue into local problems.

Assumptions about what multilingual students *do* know about US academic practices can also be harmful. This is often true also for students perceived as 'mainstream'. In courses where students have mastered the subject content previously or have sufficient background knowledge, they

may still not be conversant with Western academic practices, or there may be cultural value clashes. Things that faculty take for granted may not be obvious to multilingual or even English monolingual students. Multilingual students may have different values, beliefs, behaviors, motivations and practices that conflict with US academic beliefs, values and practices (e.g. Ferris, 2009; Kern, 2000; Scarcella, 2003). For example, students may not know how to politely address faculty in person or in emails. They may not be aware of what the standard academic formatting for written assignments is or how to respectfully ask questions or make requests of faculty. Classroom practices may also differ as Flaitz (2003, 2006) illustrates in her books about educational practices, beliefs and values in other countries. For example, Flaitz (2003: 104) points out that in the People's Republic of China (PRC), students do not like to be singled out for praise, yet do enjoy performing. In addition to these seemingly minor issues, there is a tradition of valuing original work, and individuality, in the US that differs in other countries. In writing about creating an English identity, Shen (1998: 124) asserts that the first rule in English composition is 'Be yourself'. Shen goes on to say that 'In China, the "I" is always subordinated to the "We" – be it the working class, the Party, the country or some other collective body' (Shen, 1998: 124). Similarly, Flaitz (2003) notes that students in the PRC are not expected to voice their opinions or reactions to issues presented in class. Flaitz attributes this to 'the widely shared belief that young people are far too inexperienced to generate responses that would sound interesting, or worthy of attention' (Flaitz, 2003: 104). Indeed, we have had Chinese students ask us how they can possibly have an opinion about an important topic on which many scholars have so eloquently written. The clash between the importance the West places on individuality and the value other cultures place on collectivism and authority seems related to the issue of citing and documenting sources and even the important issue of academic integrity, the definition of which is culturally based (Pennycook, 1996; Pennycook *et al.*, 2004).

### (3) If possible, get to know your students

Faculty can get to know their students on a variety of levels and in different ways. The ease with which this can be done is often determined by the size of the class and the workload of the faculty member. In a large economics class of 150, it seems unlikely that a faculty member will know all the students' names or information about each one. Conversely, in a writing course with 20 students, faculty can quickly learn each student's name and get to know each one to some extent. Even in classes with as many as 50



students, faculty may learn students' names and the correct pronunciation of them. Faculty often quickly learn the faces and perhaps names of students who ask questions or make comments in class, come to office hours, contribute to course blogs or discussion boards, or email with questions. Most faculty can recognize students who are in their classes and greet them when they see them on campus. Even in large classes, students can be treated as individuals by small acts from professors that show the professor is interested in the individual.

The type of class, its goals and its size determine how much interaction there is among students and faculty. There are, however, practices that faculty can build into their classes to connect with and get to know their students. Examples of systematic things that faculty can do include (a) conducting a quick online survey before class begins or early in the semester, asking about their major, class level (e.g. freshmen, sophomore), reasons for taking the course, languages they know, home language and other information specific to the course (e.g. previous courses in the discipline); (b) having students briefly introduce themselves to each other in class or online; (c) having each student create a webpage on a course management system; (d) meeting with each student to discuss a major assignment or project either individually or in small groups; (e) encouraging students to come to office hours; and (f) taking opportunities that arise to find out about a student or students (e.g. during an office visit asking a student about how the semester is going or having a general conversation about college life). A faculty member in the natural sciences noted that he feels it is important to meet with students, especially international students, and let them know he is approachable. He commented that he often does this before the class begins.

In sum, students are individuals and as Norton Peirce (1995: 25–26) points out, 'the individual language learner is not ahistorical and unidimensional but has a complex and sometimes contradictory social identity, changing across time and space'.

#### (4) Help students become members of the academy

Adjusting to life as a university student is difficult for all students, but this is especially true for multilingual students, whether they are international students or US residents. Multilingual students may feel like strangers in the social and cultural environments on campus. They may not have an understanding of what is expected of them inside and outside the classroom. They may not have any understanding of how the community operates, who the major players are, or basically know the 'rules of the

game'. They may have more pressure and family expectations placed on them, may have to work more to pay tuition and living expenses, and may have weaker study and time management skills. Harklau (2000), when talking about the transition from high school to college for Gen 1.5 students, notes that basically the rules learned in high school may not apply in college. Because of these changing rules, students are often confused and may flounder. In high school, hard work and diligence are components of grades and these traits are rewarded, whereas in college more focus is placed on the quality of the finished product (e.g. the essay, the exam grade, the speech) with little attention to the effort exerted. In fact, faculty may say, as we have, that the time spent doing an assignment does not factor into the grade, rather the results are what matter. Additionally, Harklau notes that these Gen 1.5 students who have successfully completed high school in the United States, frequently having moved out of high school ESL courses and into all 'regular' courses, often may be lumped with new international students in classes and may even be placed into ESL university courses. The institution and faculty sometimes fail to acknowledge the vast experience with and understanding of US culture and society that these students have. Faculty and others may even ask these Gen 1.5 students 'How is this done in your country?' not realizing that their country is the United States.

Whose responsibility is it to help students understand the workings of the academy, adjust to it, and become full participating members? The answer is 'Everyone's'. Each of us can ease the transition for students by simply making what we take for granted explicit for students. Simple acts include announcing lectures and events on campus that are related to the course; taking students on a library tour or giving an assignment that must be completed in the library; announcing support services and events available on campus such as the writing and speaking center, peer tutoring programs, study skills workshops, student clubs, career services workshops and fairs, counseling and psychological services and free community events.

In our classes, we should not assume that students know, for example, whether Wikipedia is or is not an acceptable resource for a paper for our class. If we do not allow Wikipedia, we need to tell students that. If a student uses an inappropriate email salutation or closing (e.g. misspells the instructor's name, addresses the professor by last name only, begins with 'Yo', ends with 'I love you'), we can point out how such a greeting or closing affects us and the impression it leaves as well as offer appropriate alternatives. In sum, by helping students understand what is expected, what behaviors the community values, what the community has to offer, how

the academy is structured and how it operates, we can help them become a part of it.

As we seek to make our classes more inclusive and accepting of multilingual students, we remain cognizant of the fact that we as individual faculty members do not operate in a vacuum. Rather we operate within the broader context of our universities that in turn operate within the broader social and cultural context.

### (5) Help students become insiders in their disciplines

To be academically successful, not only do students need to become members of the university and feel they belong, they need to become active participants ('insiders') in their specific disciplines. A belief that possessing general academic skills, such as writing and speaking well, can bring success in all courses and disciplines is inadequate. Indeed, Russell (2002: 21–22) contends that only in a broad context do members of the academy today 'share a single set of linguistic conventions and traditions of inquiry'. Rather he asserts that each discipline has its own specific discourse, traditions and norms. Certainly, we can easily recognize that writing a literary analysis of *The Great Gatsby* does not require the same linguistic and rhetorical skills as writing up a research project in computer science. It also seems obvious that the same basic linguistic skills are needed in both (i.e. a knowledge of the structure of English sentences and conventions of punctuation). Nonetheless, one needs much more than these common basic skills and knowledge to become members of a specific discipline. How do students become a part of a discipline-specific discourse community? How do they learn how to do things like insiders in the discipline do? How do they move from neophyte to competent member in a field of study?

Several terms and theories, applied to discipline-specific environments and at times to the academy broadly, have been used to describe the process of individuals moving from being novices to experts. Examples include (a) initiation into the community (e.g. Bizzell, 1982); (b) 'inventing the university' (Bartholomae, 2003); and (c) sociocultural genre studies, studies about the constituents and features of discipline-specific academic discourse (Berkenkotter & Huckin, 1995; Swales, 1990). Although each has a different focus, all of these have similarities: they view academic discipline-specific discourse, writing and speaking as socially situated and they view individuals becoming members of a discipline as a socialization process.

One concept that we find particularly helpful is the apprenticeship model or what Lave and Wenger (1991) call a 'community of practice'.

Embracing the concept of communities of practice means that we consider learning in social terms. Lave and Wenger argue that the academic community is similar to other communities such as insurance claim processors or midwives. With this sociocultural perspective, Wenger (1998) argues that social participation is learning and that:

Participation here refers not just to local events of engagement in certain activities with certain people, but to a more encompassing process of being active participants in the *practices* of social communities and constructing *identities* in relation to these communities . . . Such participation shapes not only what we do, but also how we are and how we interpret what we do. (Wenger, 1998: 4)

This sociocultural orientation sees learning as situated in specific, local contexts and emphasizes the need for novices to have access to experts in the discipline in structured and unstructured situations. Barton and Tusting (2005: 2) assert that important to the 'fundamental process of learning' is co-participation by new members and experts, even if novices participate only peripherally. While some have criticized the apprenticeship model and communities of practice framework as simplistic and unrealistic in their view of environments as being open and welcoming, we believe they do capture how neophytes become members and experts in an academic discipline. The concept of 'communities of practice' emphasizes that a novice learns how to be a biologist, for example, by 'doing science' even if not very well, by having experts guide her while working alongside her, and by participating in a community of biologists.

Bartholomae (2003) argues that students must 'invent the university' for themselves and they do this by:

[M]imicking its language, finding some compromise between idiosyncrasy, a personal history, and the requirements of convention, the history of a discipline. They must learn to speak our language. Or they must dare to speak it, or to carry off the bluff, since speaking and writing will most certainly be required long before the skill is 'learned'. (Bartholomae, 2003: 403)

He goes on to explain that students must 'imagine for themselves the privilege of being "insiders"' and imagine that they have the right to speak and be heard. 'The students, in effect, have to assume privilege without having any'. (Bartholomae, 2003: 408)

While becoming insiders in the academy and a specific discipline, multilingual students can influence, and often change, the academic environment and disciplines. In short, they can become agents of change. 'They transform the communities by critically and consciously resisting and changing the existing ways of doing things, and more often, by simply being who they are, by bringing their ways of living and coping into the mix' (Li & Casanave, 2008: 6).

We, as faculty, need to encourage multilingual students to assume privilege and welcome them to our communities of practice while at the same time being open to our communities changing and evolving because of them.

### (6) Cultivate intellectual curiosity in students

As faculty, we seek to spark students' interest and encourage them to embrace new ideas, take more responsibility for their own learning, venture into areas not specifically covered in our classes and find their passion. Countless stories are told by individuals about how one person, often a faculty member, opened new vistas for them, vistas that led them to eventually pursue a certain subject area or career path. Simple things make a difference. One of the most obvious ways faculty stimulate students' intellectual curiosity is through their enthusiasm, knowledge and love for their subject. A faculty member's enthusiasm and interest in learning and discovering new knowledge are infectious. Students know when a faculty member is excited about the subject and loves the discipline. Individual faculty have found different ways of successfully engaging students and motivating them, taking into account their own personal styles and the discipline. In short, how do we help students find their interests and develop intrinsic motivation, a desire to learn for the pleasure and joy of it, rather than rely on external motivation, a desire to earn a good grade, please the professor, or do what others want?

The following list of possible ways to spark students' interest is by no means exhaustive. Indeed, each reader should add to the list, but a few general ways we have found useful include:

- (1) Exposing students to a multitude of experiences and materials (e.g. through technology, guest speakers, different media, group work, case studies and conferences).
- (2) Making connections, and encouraging students to do the same, between the subject matter and students' lives, experiences and knowledge

(e.g. by bringing in current events related to the course, by discussing connections explicitly, by asking students to make connections explicitly).

- (3) Inventing opportunities for intellectual curiosity (e.g. problem sets, problem solving, probing questions).
- (4) Providing assignments that give students some latitude to explore personal interests within the subject area (e.g. by allowing students to choose a narrow research topic within a broad area; by having students choose a topic and requiring them to use a specific resource; by giving students a set of problems/questions and asking them to choose a given percentage, say 75%, of them).

In this chapter, we have provided a framework for thinking about how to integrate multilingual students into our classrooms as well as offered general advice for making our classrooms inclusive environments in which all students can succeed. In the next part, we move on to specific ways that faculty can build on this information, and we discuss strategies to use in our courses.