Multisemiotics, Race, and Academic Literacies: Trajectories of Racialized Academic Writing Faculty in Canadian Postsecondary Education

Pedro dos Santos and Bong-gi Sohn

This study examines the trajectories of two plurilingual, racialized academic writing faculty, presenting how we brought our Southern onto-epistemologies to curriculum, teaching, and assessment. Although plurilingualism has become a significant dimension of Canadian higher education, monolingual norms that emphasize native-like competence continue to be a mainstream discourse in many academic writing courses. Building on the recent raciolinguistic critique of the lack of discussion of racism in academic literacies discourse, we acknowledge that academic literacies continue to force plurilingual, international students into a white subject position. Acknowledging the tension between the monolingual ideal and multilingual realities, we explore how two plurilingual, non-white faculty challenge an academic writing tradition that is constructed by the white listening subject. By co-creating duoethnographic narratives that provide insight into our complex biographical journeys as cycles of becoming, our story shows how teaching academic writing is not simply teaching a skill set but also involves constant negotiation between students' and teachers' lived experiences. Through this process, we conceive of teaching academic literacies as both an ideological construct and a multisemiotic process that involves multiple histories and meaning-making resources across diverse time and place scales.

Cette étude examine les trajectoires de deux professeurs d'écriture académique plurilingues et racialisés, et illustre la manière dont nos ontoépistémologies du Sud ont contribué au programme d'études, à l'enseignement et à l'évaluation. Bien que le plurilinguisme occupe désormais une dimension importante dans l'enseignement supérieur canadien, les normes monolingues qui mettent l'accent sur une compétence comparable aux locuteurs natifs continuent de faire partie du discours dominant dans de nombreux cours d'écriture académique. En nous appuyant sur la récente critique raciolinguistique de l'absence de discussions sur le racisme dans le discours sur les littératies académiques, nous reconnaissons que ces littératies continuent de forcer les étudiants internationaux plurilingues à se conformer à la posture d'un sujet blanc. Tout en reconnaissant la tension entre l'idéal monolingue et les réalités multilingues, nous explorons la manière dont deux professeurs plurilingues et non blancs remettent en question une tradition d'écriture académique construite par le sujet blanc qui reçoit le message. En cocréant des récits duoethnographiques qui donnent un aperçu de nos parcours biographiques complexes en tant que cycles de devenir, notre histoire souligne que l'enseignement de l'écriture académique n'implique pas seulement l'enseignement d'un ensemble de compétences, mais également une négociation

continue entre les expériences vécues des étudiants et des enseignants. À travers ce processus, nous conceptualisons l'enseignement de la littératie académique comme étant à la fois un construit idéologique et un processus multisémiotique qui implique des récits multiples et des ressources de construction de sens à travers plusieurs échelles de temps et lieu.

This study presents a reflection on the lived experiences of two plurilingual, racialized academic writing faculty, showing how we brought our Southern onto-epistemologies (Comaroff & Comaroff, 2015; García et al., 2021; Lin, 2012; Santos, 2016) to curriculum, teaching, and assessment. Although academic literacies are known to be both a social and ideological construct within applied linguistics (Lea & Street, 2006), monolingual norms that emphasize native-like competence continue to be a mainstream discourse in institutional policies and inform teaching practices in many academic writing courses (Lillis, 2001). While the hegemonic power of individualized Eurocentrism in anglophone Canadian higher education, particularly concerning academic writing, is recognized, it is equally important to undo this hegemonic power. This inevitably involves deeper forms of self-reflexivity and relational rigour (Kubota, 2020) on the part of racialized faculty members in Canada.

Building on Kubota's (2022) call for decolonial thinking in second language writing, we identify complex intersections where diverse material conditions (e.g., course curriculum, textbooks, classroom spaces) and histories converge in the teaching of academic writing in higher education. On the one hand, our expectations as racialized teachers of academic writing are influenced by our experience as learners of writing. In the pursuit of our degrees away from our home countries, we needed to learn academic English, and, in the process, we struggled with the similar linguistic marginalization that many of our students are experiencing. On the other hand, concurrent with the aggressive marketization of higher education within Canada (Stein & Andreotti, 2016), there has been a rapid growth of international students in Canadian higher education (Anderson, 2015), and diversities among international students are consequently inevitable. These diversities go beyond cultural and linguistic backgrounds and include students who have different learning needs and expectations.

As racialized teaching faculty members working with international students in the early stages of their education in North America, we find ourselves amidst the typical and atypical diversities of Canadian postsecondary institutions. At the same time, we are concerned about the expectations of institutions that are highly saturated with an Anglo-dominant Eurocentric tradition that values monolingual and monologic aspects of English academic writing (Kubota et al., 2021). This concern intensified when we joined Dr. Angel Lin's research team in a Canadian university. Angel has played a crucial role in turning our attention to more critical approaches to academic literacies by urging us to interrogate our embodied assumptions and colonial mindsets in English language teaching while exploring possibilities to counteract the racialized pragmatism that permeates academic writing courses.

Amid our discussions, we have identified two significant junctures that brought our attention to Southern onto-epistemologies (García et al., 2021; Lin, 2012; Santos, 2016). The first juncture is our experiences as international graduate students. Although we both struggled to adapt to new social norms as international students, we each realized we can never become the white subject that is idealized through English academic writing curriculum and instruction. Our accented and visually non-white bodies are

translated into our everyday oral and written conversations, including teaching, research, and being on the job market. The second juncture occurred when we became teachers of academic writing for students who are beginning their higher education in Canada. As we moved on from being international graduate students to teaching foundational courses to racialized international students who speak English as an additional language, including academic writing for pre-university and/or undergraduate students, we recognized that we were developing new identities as plurilingual, racialized academic writing faculty.

We have reflected on our struggles, challenges, and adaptations through our discursive conditions in Canadian higher education. This reflexivity is worth exploring because there are not only growing numbers of international students but also growing numbers of minoritized faculty in the name of internationalization of Canadian higher education (Sterzuk, 2015). However, Anglo-dominant practices linked with a dominant imaginary rooted in Western supremacy (Stein & Andreotti, 2016) continue to shape and inform our everyday lives and practices. These two junctures—learners of academic writing in English and plurilingual faculty who teach academic writing to diverse undergraduate student bodies—provide a rich site in which to engage in Southern onto-epistemologies. It is important to denaturalize the attachments and desires that keep us invested in harmful and unsustainable modes of existence—monolingual and monoglossic systems in academic English and writing—and to ethically encounter and engage other horizons of possibility through representing different realities and stories that we have experienced.

With these ethical commitments in mind, we tackle the issue of race in academic literacies and academic writing instruction. By exploring our ongoing trajectories as racialized plurilingual learners, teachers, and scholars, we provide narrative accounts that show our processes of becoming, where we strive to undo European white-settler norms that continue to delegitimize plurilingual racialized teachers and students in Canadian universities, specifically, first-year academic programs. The guiding research questions for our study are the following:

1. How did we become plurilingual, racialized professors of academic writing from the Global South in Canadian higher education?

2. What affordances and challenges have we had for teaching academic writing in the institutions we are associated with?

3. How have we coped with the struggles we face in terms of curriculum, pedagogy, and assessment for teaching academic writing to racialized international students who speak English as an additional language?

With these questions in mind, we first present the theoretical perspectives that inform this reflection. Next, we explain how we structured and organized our duoethnography and present our narrative accounts. Following our theoretical perspectives and methodology, we illustrate how we jointly create our paths as a form of co-action, co-orientation, co-presence, and co-sensing in the human ecology that is grounded in Canadian higher education.

Our Theoretical Lenses

Our reflection and way of thinking about academic literacies are rooted in theories, ontologies, and epistemologies from the Global South. The term *Global South* gained popularity in the social sciences after the Cold War to emphasize the heterogeneity of cultures and societies, and the geopolitical power relations

in our globalized world. It transcends the geographical North–South divide, as it refers to politically and culturally marginalized areas in Latin America, Asia, Africa, and Oceania that have resisted the ongoing colonial agenda of Europe and North America through revolts and intellectual production (Dados & Connell, 2012). After the end of the formal colonial rule, coloniality has endured as "long-standing patterns of power resulting from colonialism that extend beyond colonial administrations, influencing culture, labor, relationships, and knowledge production" (Maldonado-Torres, 2007, p. 243). Over 500 years later, this power framework continues to permeate various aspects of modern life, including literature, academic standards, cultural norms, collective consciousness, self-identity, and aspirations (Maldonado-Torres, 2007). As such, coloniality of power has played a pivotal role in the contemporary global order, shaping social, political, and economic relationships and determining resource access, distribution, and opportunities.

Our Southern onto-epistemology is influenced by the body of work often labeled "Southern" or "of/from the South." It encompasses knowledge production outside the Europe–United States axis that critically examines coloniality and the cultural, material, and political processes of our everyday lives as products of the current globalized world (Comaroff & Comaroff, 2015, p. 47). Onto-epistemology refers to "the idea that the knower, the-world-that-is-to-be-known, and knowledge producing processes are all entangled" (Barad, 2007, p. 828). Our Southern onto-epistemology comes from an effort to understand the enduring coloniality of power that defines culture, labour, intersubjective relations, and knowledge production (Maldonado-Torres, 2007; Mignolo, 2012; Quijano, 2007). These patterns of power reinforce Eurocentric values, discourses, and ideologies and are evident in Canadian universities through the hegemony of knowledge and scientific production in colonial languages (English and French) and the unethical admissions policies (Stein et al., 2019) that prevent marginalized voices and bodies from accessing higher education. By aligning ourselves with Southern theories, ontologies, and epistemologies, our work challenges the colonial logic that creates an abyssal line (Santos, 2016), positioning racialized beings as inferior and rejecting ways of thinking and speaking that do not conform to a monologic norm (García et al., 2021).

As scholars who embrace epistemological repertories from the South and teach academic literacy, we constantly revisit the construct of "academic language." Some scholars (Benesch, 2001; Harwood & Hadley, 2004) approach teaching English for academic purposes (EAP) critically and pragmatically. They defy the idea of the neutrality of English and encourage educators to continuously examine learning objectives, whose interests they serve, and whether they should be challenged, while considering learners' purposes, desires, and aspirations. These critical pragmatic scholars argue that learning academic language at university may involve examining the political history of the English language and its link to linguistic imperialism (Phillipson, 1992). Although they may also challenge the dominance of English in academia, practitioners ultimately need to teach students how to communicate effectively at university and within their disciplines, which still requires compliance with monologic norms.

Another significant influence on our work is academic literacies (ALs), which view academic language learning as a set of social practices that vary according to contexts, cultures, and genres. ALs consider issues of power and discourses in institutions, connecting them to student learning and pedagogical practices. As Lea and Street (2006) argue, ALs view "the processes involved in acquiring appropriate and effective uses of literacy as more complex, dynamic, nuanced, situated, and involving both epistemological issues and social processes, including power relations among people, institutions, and social identities" (p. 369). This approach is helpful, as it promotes a more critical and conscious way of teaching academic language.

Recent discussions have provided further insights into this construct. When examining policies and practices around academic language in Anglo-dominant postsecondary education, we notice that racialized individuals often face harsher processes. For example, students who are non-native speakers of English or without secondary education in an English-speaking country are required to demonstrate

advanced proficiency in this language prior to admission. In some instances, they are admitted conditionally and must attend remedial academic language programs. These practices and policies systematically exclude English-as-additional-language users from legitimate participation in their university based on their "perceived" English proficiency. The juxtaposition between language and race in this context is reminiscent of the colonial project that perpetuates the notion of superior races and languages (Rosa & Flores, 2017). This ideology also positions racialized individuals as deficient and needing remediation because their linguistic practices do not comply with the norm defined by a white listening subject (Flores & Rosa, 2015). In our work, we conceptualize academic language by adopting a raciolinguistic perspective (Alim, 2016; Flores, 2020; Flores & Rosa, 2015), recognizing how language practices are shaped by social, historical, and political processes, valuing linguistic diversity, and acknowledging the legitimacy of all language practices. By doing so, we challenge the idea that white standardized linguistic forms are the only appropriate form of communication in academic settings.

The last theoretical perspectives that shape and inform our understanding are cycles of becoming (Lemke & Lin, 2022; Thibault, 2020). We view our trajectories as a critical, dynamic, whole-body sense-making process centred in movement, growth, and becoming that happens multimodally and across multiple scales of time and space. As we move our bodies from the Global South to the Global North, we coordinate our biological and social bodies across these various scales. This process involves the entanglement of bodies, languages, materiality, and the environment to create new realities (Hill, 2017; Ingold, 2013; Thibault, 2020). Our process of becoming starts in our home countries, unfolds in the host country, and continues as we come to be professors of academic writing. Consequently, as we navigate these new trajectories, we make sense of the world around us by bringing our histories, knowledge, and embodied experiences whenever we interact with other people, with material artefacts, and with the environment (Thibault, 2020), creating new trajectories of becoming that reflect our understanding of the world and the relationships we build.

Methodology: Our Dialogic and Polyvocal Narrative, Duoethnography

Duoethnography has been used in a variety of areas, from the social sciences to the humanities, health sciences, and education. It involves collaboration between two or more researchers who juxtapose their stories of life to deeply reflect upon them as they investigate a social phenomenon and make sense of their lived experiences (Burleigh & Burm, 2022; Norris & Sawyer, 2012). Introduced by Joe Norris and Richard D. Sawyer in 2003, duoethnography is a dialogic and polyvocal narration of juxtaposed stories, creating a space for rethinking, reconceptualization, and reinscription of life stories, generating new stories (Norris & Sawyer, 2012).

As a methodology, duoethnography does not have a fixed outline, but it has tenets that set guiding principles for researchers. According to Norris and Sawyer (2012), it views life stories as "curriculum" or *currere*, in which "[o]ne's present abilities, skills, knowledge, and beliefs were acquired/learned, and duoethnographers recall and reexamine that emergent, organic, and predominantly unplanned curriculum in conversation with one another" (p. 12). Duoethnographies are polyvocal and dialogic, in which the voice of each researcher is made explicit, and the juxtaposition of their stories disrupts the metanarrative of solitary academic writing, encouraging readers to also think critically about the social phenomenon (Norris & Sawyer, 2012). Duoethnographers appreciate the differences between their perspectives, promoting disruption and interrogation of their life stories to create space for the reconceptualization of meanings and to invite new perspectives to old stories to reinscribe them. In doing so, duoethnographers promote a conversation between theory and practice, not with the purpose of finding universal truths but rather to provide a distinct view on the same phenomenon. Finally, "duoethnographers take an ethical pedagogical

relationship with one another, entering into an ethics of caring … assisting the Other in the making of meaning and receptive to the Other in reconceptualizing their own meanings" (pp. 21–22), developing a trustful, respectful, and playful relationship.

Duoethnography emerged as the methodology for this paper because it aligns with our research objectives. By bringing Southern onto-epistemologies, we focus on our trajectories to challenge knowledge hierarchies and emphasize the struggles of becoming scholars in the Global North. We drew inspiration from duoethnographic works with similar goals in related areas, such as English language teaching, English teacher identity, English for Academic Purposes, and language and literacy practices (Heng Hartse & Nazari, 2018; Lawrence & Nagashima, 2020; Morgan et al., 2021; Morgan & Ahmed, 2023; Rose & Montakantiwong, 2018).

In duoethnographies, researchers conduct an autobiographical examination of themselves, making each researcher the research site (Rose & Montakantiwong, 2018). Our research site came into being when we met in Canada in the summer of 2018 when Bong-gi started to work at Simon Fraser University, where Pedro studied and worked. In the fall of 2018, we became closer by joining Angel Lin's research lab, having weekly research team meetings and engaging in both theoretical and practical conversations about decolonizing English language teaching. Although it is difficult to exactly pinpoint when our stories about academic language started to intertwine, we chose a relevant period: from the summer of 2022 to the winter of 2023. During this time, we transitioned to new institutions to take on new professional roles outside Simon Fraser University: Bong-gi at the University of Winnipeg in Manitoba, and Pedro at Kwantlen Polytechnic University and Alexander College in British Columbia. This transition motivated our paper, as we took a stand on identifying ourselves as racialized, plurilingual academic writing professors at our universities and continued our conversations about becoming minoritized faculty members in Canada.

Since data in duoethnographies are dialogic, the data used herein were drawn from email exchanges and video recordings of meetings between May 2022 and March 2023 in which we engaged in dialogue to reflect upon our experiences teaching academic writing. We recorded our conversations from our Zoom meetings, transcribed them verbatim, and edited them to be accessible and of interest to both academics and practitioners. We explored our personal narratives to know more about ourselves and one another, to understand a social phenomenon (academic language) and interrogate dominant discourses (about academic literacy), and to present our readers with opportunities for reflective and reflexive engagement. We also chose to present our stories on two levels. First, by using our theoretical lenses, we looked at our recorded narrative accounts. Then we elaborated on our stories in dialogue with relevant theories and discussions that allowed us to explain our embodied experience of being racialized faculty in Canada teaching foundational courses including academic writing. We purposely did not edit our dialogue extensively so that our stories would show how our oral, accented bodies unfold in conversation to argue that the idealized white native speaker is not the sole representation in academic journals. In this process, we identified the tensions between our lived experiences as racialized professors of academic language and writing and the discourses that construct what counts as appropriate academic language and writing. Through these two levels of representation, we not only share our discussions but also invite other educators and scholars to engage in our conversation.

Analysing Our Life Stories

In our ongoing narrative and experiences, we identified common assumptions that heavily emphasize a monolingual and monoglossic approach to academic literacy (Flores & Schissel, 2014; Kubota, 2022; Sterzuk & Shin, 2021), such as (1) the expectations to master the prescribed linguistic skill sets of a commonly desired academic community, (2) the disregard of the collective work that supports academic writing (e.g., editing, peer reviewing, publishing), (3) the supremacy of the written essay as the only valid type of

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academic text, (4) the idea that the features of academic writing in one language are universally applicable to all languages, and (5) the adherence to a single established discourse that disregards alternative perspectives or marginalized voices.

Therefore, it is important to recognize the ways in which the white monolingual and monoglossic norm contradicts our lived realities. At the same time, it is important for us as plurilingual, racialized writing professors to navigate various discourses and ideologies in order to respond to our plurilingual students (Marshall, 2020). Next, we discuss how we came into being racialized teachers of academic writing while bridging imagined and actual tensions and gaps.

Biographical Accounts: How We Come into Becoming

Bong-gi

I am from South Korea (henceforth Korea) where I completed my BEd in a teacher-training university with a specialization in English as a foreign language. When I was in Grade 6, my family moved to a small town in Indiana, United States, for a year for my parents' work. Although the town was predominantly white, my classmates welcomed me from my first day of school. I recalled to Pedro that "the classmates looked like Hollywood movie stars with blue eyes and blond hair." This was a breakthrough in my life, as I created a deep contrast between Korean and English even after I returned to Korea.

Although English has been frequently criticized as the language of the colonizer, it becomes a source of acknowledgement, empowerment, and aspiration for many English learners around the world (Motha & Lin, 2014; Park, 2022). I was praised for my American English accent, and my English teachers in junior and high school in Korea asked me to recite English texts from our textbook. I became the American English model for my English teacher and my classmates instead of the nationally approved English textbook cassette tape. This classroom practice created so much confidence in me. I also dreamed of going back to North America, as it seemed to be a place that welcomed me and gave me a sense of belonging.

However, this changed drastically when I moved back to the US to pursue my MA degree in Hawaiʻi. I had little experience in university academic writing, and my first written assignment was returned without any grade and a suggestion for revision and resubmission. I remembered that being in a teacher education program, I had to focus on writing lesson plans and classroom demonstrations in my undergraduate program. Recognizing the academic discourse differences between my teacher education in Korea and my graduate program in the US became one of several critical moments that guided me to explore the politics of English academic literacies. I gained interest in critical second language writing education, familiarizing myself with various theories and literature and pursuing writing-related teaching opportunities. Since then, I have been heavily involved in teaching English academic writing in various university settings.

Despite my years of experience and qualifications, I have encountered numerous rejections in pursuing my chosen profession and have had to work even harder to legitimize myself as an English teacher. I remember one comment from a supervisor: "Your English is not good enough to teach upper-level students and is only good for beginners." To this day, I continue to struggle against the scrutiny of the white listening subject (Flores & Rosa, 2015). Whenever someone asks about my profession, I find myself cringing, having to provide a lengthy

explanation of my role and the reasons for my presence in this field. As a woman of colour from a postcolonial country, Korea, who desired to enter into white society and have studied and worked for over two decades in Northern institutions, some may reject me as a Southern scholar, but I also refused to be labelled as a Northern scholar (also see Shin, 2022). This complex intersectionality has helped me critically understand the ideological, political, and institutional implications of second language writing, at the same time, strategically confront race-based inequalities and marginalization in language education. Currently, I am working at the University of Winnipeg, focusing on teaching academic writing to international, domestic, and indigenous students.

Pedro

I am from Brazil, where I did my BA in English language and literature and MA in applied linguistics, specializing in foreign language teaching and learning. I started learning English as a foreign language at school when I was 7, and my passion for this language made me search for books, magazines, cassette tapes, and pen-pals so I could self-teach it. As a teenager, my learning of English was mediated by the translation of heavy metal songs and MTV videoclips. During secondary education, I chose a specialization in chemistry, which led me to study chemical engineering. In this "other life," I worked for 6 years as a technician in laboratories of chemical companies. Due to my knowledge of English, many of the tasks in the labs involved translation of technical documents, interpretation of technical personnel visits, and training of machine operators in Portuguese and English. From this, I envisioned a future where English could be a source of income, which eventually led me to switch my major from chemical engineering to English.

As a non-native speaker of English teaching the language in Brazil, I always needed to make an extra effort and showcase my abilities to compete with native speakers. Interestingly, many native speakers of English in Brazil are tourists who decide to go to that exotic South American country and teach English to make some money. Although some of them have little to no formal training in English language teaching, they are highly desirable and welcomed by students and language schools. This is motivated by students' desire to learn either American- or British-style English, so the teacher's nationality matters more than degrees or qualifications. On the other hand, those who are non-native speakers of English and decide to teach the language are required to provide certificates and even proof they have lived in an English-speaking country (which I never had).

After finishing my MA, I started teaching in postsecondary education in Brazil. This teaching experience helped me move to Canada to join a university as a lecturer of Portuguese and Brazilian culture and to start my doctoral studies in education. Interestingly, as an instructor of Portuguese in Canada, the tables turned. While some non-Brazilian colleagues who taught Portuguese were not popular with the students, I became the desired native-speaker instructor, facing privilege that made me critically examine native-speakerism (Holliday, 2006, 2015) and explore the intersection between language and race (Alim, 2016) in academic settings. Concomitantly, as I progressed toward my doctoral degree, I had to take on numerous temporary teaching appointments for several years before securing a more permanent position. It was disheartening to observe that, once English programs directors realized I was non-white, they began to question my English proficiency, often opting to hire native speakers of English instead. Then, the tables went back to their place again. These experiences broadened my perspective on teaching writing as a person of colour and as someone from the Global South, navigating the

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colonial legacy. Currently, I teach first-year academic socialization courses and English for academic purposes for international students in postsecondary institutions in British Columbia.

As our biographical stories demonstrate, our bodies, experiences, and histories are not confined to binary classifications; rather, they show fluidity in our academic, professional, and racial experiences. Our trajectories, both in our home countries and abroad, are historically sedimented by experiences of the past and shaped by expectations for the future. Looking at our trajectories as a process of becoming (Thibault, 2020) enables us to understand them as dynamic structures characterized by movement, growth, and becoming across past, present, and future time and place scales. We were, and continue to be, forging, discovering, adjusting, and appropriating our pathways that guide us as we learn from others and from the environment. This view conceives humans not as human beings but as "human becomings" (Ingold, 2013; Thibault, 2020). For Thibault (2020), drawing from Ingold (2013), "[h]uman becomings both recursively self-maintain and recursively self-individuate their own lives and those of the others with whom they are in relations of community and reciprocity, all the while making their own individual and collective history (p. 23)." Therefore, we are the result of our own trajectories of movement, growth, and becoming as they intersect and interact with the trajectories of other (human and non-human) becomings. It is noteworthy that English played a powerful role in this process as we created and recreated our paths based on our relationship with this language and various discourse and material conditions mediated by a desire to learn and teach English. Next, we discuss how we make sense of our teaching as racialized writing faculty in Canadian universities.

Bridging the Disconnection Between Institutional Gaze and Student Pathway

As we reflected upon our teaching, we identified a disconnect between institutional expectations of learning and academic achievement and the desired pathways invested in by students. For example, while the institution wants students to master academic English and writing in the way desired by a white speaking and listening subject (Flores & Rosa, 2015), international students' expectations differ.

> **Pedro**: Some of my students have told me they're doing a diploma because it's going to allow them to immigrate to Canada to have a permanent residency, a PR. So, after they have a PR card, they'll decide what they'll do. Maybe they'll study or go to another institution. But now they're focusing on immigration. So, there are so many things involved and affecting their study, leading them towards different academic paths. But the institution is focusing on the students' written work, writing, on the final product. And all the measurements of the students' achievements are by what they produce in writing.

> **Bong-gi**: When the faculty are talking about the international students, they say that the international students' English is not good. They need to have more academic writing. Their classroom participation is low. All these normative discourses about the monolingualism are perpetuated in their dialogue. And they talk about what students should be doing. But in reality, like you said, their life is just coming from very different background. They're craving to go into a different particular pathway that the white subject are not expecting them to do. There is a mismatch and disconnect where the international students are being stigmatized. Unfortunately, the international students are not really responding to their stigma. Instead, they're trying to

navigate what is best for them, for example, finishing or entering the university. Learning academic English or being conformed to white subjectivity is not their goal.

In the juxtaposition of our narratives, we also questioned the underlying assumption about academic writing. The academic writing curriculum is designed primarily for students to engage with research-focused English academic communities. For this reason, it requires students to annotate, summarize, and evaluate texts. It also asks students to use peer-reviewed sources to communicate academically in their targeted academic discipline.

However, this approach may exclude those who aspire to enter non-research-intensive professional communities. For example, Pedro's students seek educational credentials as a pathway for permanent residency in Canada. When Bong-gi was collaborating with a teacher in a college-to-university pathway program for university transfer, she identified that many of the students needed to focus on their grade point averages (GPAs) to meet the minimum requirements for university transfer. In both scenarios, students are seeking educational credentials to change their lives and social realities. Focusing on mastering the English academic literacy skill sets that are valued by the white listening subject does not necessarily correspond to achieving good grades or advancing their educational pursuits.

While identifying these multiple divides and disconnections, we, as racialized faculty, found a need to bridge these gaps by developing a curriculum, teaching, and assessment system that resonated with us. Next, we present how we navigated and bridged these gaps by exploring the intricate intersections of our histories as racialized writing professors in Canada.

Drawing on Our Historical Bodies: Connecting Learning Experiences of Teachers and Students

Reimagining our curriculum was motivated by our identities as racialized educators, focusing on bridging the gap. This comes with our emerging ideas that centre linguistically and culturally empathetic approaches to curriculum and teaching. Pedro gave some examples of how he bridged the expectations of the white listening subject and his students' existing knowledge. For example:

> **Pedro**: Drawing from our experience as writers, I believe this is something that happened to you, as well. So, if I am teaching paraphrasing to them, of course I'm going to consult books and get resources, but I'll look at my own experience and ask myself "how did I learn paraphrasing?" "What hints can I share with them ?" I always do that and you probably do the same, right? So, we always draw from our experience as learners of writing.

This illustrates how we connect our teaching knowledge with our process of learning academic writing. By incorporating our own lived experience as learners of English, we bring a curriculum to the classroom that becomes dynamic and emergent, as opposed to a top-down, rule-governed approach to learning and teaching. For example:

> **Bong-gi**: I hate the top-down approach because it doesn't give a meaning to why they have to learn certain things. Even when I was a student, it doesn't convince me to learn certain rules. I hated the standard English or I hated the outline or I hate the kinds of conventions. Because I didn't see the rationale behind it. Then I'm being constantly outcasted. Later, I start to learn why we say things in a certain way is because that's how people communicate.
> ... But at the same time, I'm not an expert in the rules so I have to, kind of, I don't know. I'm kind of in a difficult position where I just constantly, I have to justify. Otherwise, my students won't be in my classroom. So in my class, I have to reiterate why it's happening this way and

> why we have to learn this way and why is it important and so forth. Then I respond back to what they wrote and then scaffold it from what they have written. So the curriculum becomes more of an emergent one rather than "okay today we learned this so we're going to move on to the next."

Our emergent curriculum is the effect of our historical bodies (Scollon & Scollon, 2004) on our teaching. Inspired by the Japanese philosopher Kitaro Nishida (1870–1945), the Scollons define the historical body as the idea that the experiences, skills, and beliefs of individuals are influenced by and impact society. Consequently, social actions are influenced by the personal historical trajectories of those involved in these actions, and when they happen, these actions become integral to the future trajectories of those individuals as well (Heisig et al., 2011; Hult, 2015). The changes in our curriculum and the teaching approaches we use are guided by our own experiences as academic writing learners and the feelings that emerge when these experiences are recollected. Rather than expecting students to master the white monolingual norms, we empathize with their struggles once we identify commonalities in our life stories in Anglo-dominant settings. By linking our history with theirs, we foster mutual growth and support.

Nonetheless, our historical bodies also bring forth the insecurities and frustrations that we have experienced. As exemplified in Bong-gi's account, we feel compelled to justify our actions in class for not being white faculty or native speakers of English. Racialized faculty bear an additional burden in their teaching, which is the need to legitimize themselves more than non-racialized faculty. The structure of universities in white settler countries is discursively established in a way that positions Western knowledge and knowledge generated in English as superior, erasing other ways of thinking, other languages, and other bodies (Lin, 2012; Motha & Lin, 2014). Consequently, it is challenging to completely depart from the dominant discourse. Instead, we have to either justify or elaborate our ideas using different terms to make certain practices more meaningful for our students. This requires a recalibration of our curriculum.

Recalibrating Curriculum from a Dynamic and Pluralistic Lens

During our second meeting mid-term, we both identified that our teaching duties are quite labour intensive (Barakos, 2022). We both had nearly 100–120 students per term in academic writing courses, which involved managing numerous assignments and providing extensive feedback. Furthermore, the courses we teach are often considered remedial and designed with a deficit lens, and not many faculty members want to teach them. These courses often function as gatekeepers, preventing students from accessing degree-granting programs, discipline-specific courses, or graduation. Due to potential negative repercussions, such as questioning and penalizing students' linguistic performance, students are often reluctant to come to our classrooms. For this reason, we had to think of ways to redesign our curriculum to foster positive, sustainable, and meaningful teaching and assessment experiences for both the students and ourselves.

One strategy we employed to address this concern was shifting our identity from knowledge provider to knowledge facilitator. For example, we introduced collaborative writing to our students, asking them to write one piece as a group and monitored their activities to encourage fair collaboration. This approach was possible through the use of technologies like Google Docs, Canvas, Nexus, iMessage, and WhatsApp, which allowed students to communicate with each other across various space and time scales. This strategy produced various positive outcomes for both instructors and students. It brought various perspectives together while suggesting to us what students could learn in their next class. For example,

> **Pedro**: I can focus better on providing them with feedback. I can brightly see their needs and incorporate them in my classes to help them extend their academic repertoires. If I identify issues that are common across the texts, then I can stop and say, "okay, maybe we need to review these aspects of writing."

This excerpt also shows how we appropriated Hillary Janks's access paradox (2000, 2004) that encourages educators to design curriculum for their students to raise critical awareness of languages, genre, or registers that simultaneously do not reproduce their dominance (Lin, 2020a). While we continue to question the norm, designing our curriculum and teaching in a more pluralistic and diverse fashion, we also know that it is important to equip our students to understand the discourse expectations and have access to the norms.

Then we discussed how collaborative writing demystifies the notion of authorship. Reflecting on her publication experiences, Bong-gi remarked that text production is done by various actors, including one's academic networks, anonymous reviewers, and literacy brokers such as proofreaders and editors (Lillis & Curry, 2010).

> **Bong-gi**: At first, I figured that academic writing is coming from a very Eurocentric view that values authors and does not validate the rest of the other roles, including the editors and so forth. In reality, it's a collaborative work. I'm making it more visible in my classes. This was my rationale for doing the group summary, at least the first draft of the summary, identifying key information as a group then they talk amongst themselves.

As stated above, the notion of academic integrity in academic writing inherently embeds Anglo-dominant values. While writing is a fundamentally collaborative endeavour, it values individual authorship, often neglecting to credit the collective labor behind the scenes. This omission creates an additional emotional burden on students. Forcing individuals to demonstrate every aspect of monolingual writing that is usually done collectively puts much pressure on them, particularly on plurilingual individuals. This approach can inadvertently encourage negative actions, such as hiring ghostwriters, plagiarizing other students' work, or using artificial intelligence with large language models (such as ChatGPT) to produce content as if it were their own. By acknowledging that the authorship of an academic paper is not the sole property of one individual, we both strive to make our students' academic writing curriculum, teaching, and assessment process less self-serving and imperialistic, and more democratic and dynamic.

A Multi-Semiotic Approach to Curriculum, Teaching, and Assessment

Cycles of becoming (Lemke & Lin, 2022; Thibault, 2020) allows us to understand how we draw on various semiotic resources that we learned from our struggles as English learners. At the same time, we recognize that our students bring diverse linguistic repertoires. For example, the students we teach are often exposed to conversational English, novels, and grammar. Pedro indicated, "they learned English in a way that is more conversational." Bong-gi similarly said, "they are exposed to a lot of literary work like poems and novels and then just vocabulary tests or some grammar test," but they have not had much exposure to English academic writing.

However, we did not treat these differences as gaps. Instead, we used scalar analytical lenses to look at how they took place across diverse time and space scales and their relationships with the current learning of academic writing. In that way, we found ways to build upon students' existing linguistic repertoires to teach new ones.

Pedro: I told them "this is another language that you are learning. You have been learning English for many years but it's not the same." Because they are starting university, the point you are now is not that you have to remove everything you learned. It is just another layer of learning that you are adding to the knowledge that you already have. So you are very good at talking about your day-to-day activities about your weekends. The next level is to discuss concepts and use more academic language, right? So, that would be like one more step. We don't even need to see that as basic, intermediate, or advanced. It is just like one other aspect of the language you are incorporating to represent ideas, to represent concepts in a different way.

This approach aligns with contemporary debates about the "academic language" construct. Some scholars (Flores, 2020; Flores & Rosa, 2015) argue that the notion of a proficient academic language user is rooted in a raciolinguistic ideology, which assesses successful engagement of academic language from the perspective of a white listening subject. This ideology has reproduced and promoted white supremacy since colonial times and has been used to devalue the linguistic practices of racialized communities as it positions their home language practices as deficient (Flores, 2020). Therefore, it is important to challenge the white listening subject and encourage students to make full use of their linguistic repertoires in our classrooms.

One approach that has helped us engage with this issue is through the multimodalities-entextualization cycle (MEC; Lin, 2015, 2020b). The MEC (see Figure 1) has helped us enhance our curriculum design, teaching, and assessment to address the concerns mentioned above. As a heuristic tool that reconceptualizes teaching and learning as a curriculum genre with different stages and in a cyclical manner, the MEC promotes the teaching and learning process as a flow with no endpoint. We found that the MEC not only helps us in lesson planning, teaching, and assessment but also in understanding the larger scale of English language learning that we and our students are in. The MEC lens allows us to understand how we connect our practice with our cycles of becoming.

This is an example of how we used the MEC in our practice and in the way we recalibrate our curriculum:

Bong-gi: We're not just teaching the skill, or we're not just opening the textbook to deliver the instruction. We always try to imagine the classroom site. We also reflect on our experiences as learners and how we did that work to ourselves. We ask ourselves "how did we do that work in our actual academic writing?" And then "how can we engage our students, drawing on various visual resources and different online or offline resources or handouts?" So I think it's not just multimodality, but what really we bring is different historicity of ourselves as writers and learners, and then our identity as plurilingual speakers. Then, we try to form a curriculum and we try to design a material. We try to assess the student according to the historicities that we bring into the classroom.

As presented, teaching goes beyond a classroom setting. Cycles of curriculum design, teaching and learning, and assessment draw on different resources across various time and space scales, including our experiences of learning English in our home countries and abroad, and our experiences in teacher training programs and academic pursuits (such as pursuing a degree in an English-speaking country). Other experiences we bring include a critical perspective on English as the language of academia and a critical understanding of the experiences of international students in a Canadian university. These cultural and linguistic experiences are mediated through our application of the MEC, making students' learning

meaningful, thus enabling them to navigate the challenges of the white space while negotiating their plurilingual identities.

Figure 1

The Multimodalities-Entextualization Cycle (MEC) (Ss = students). Source: Lin, 2020b
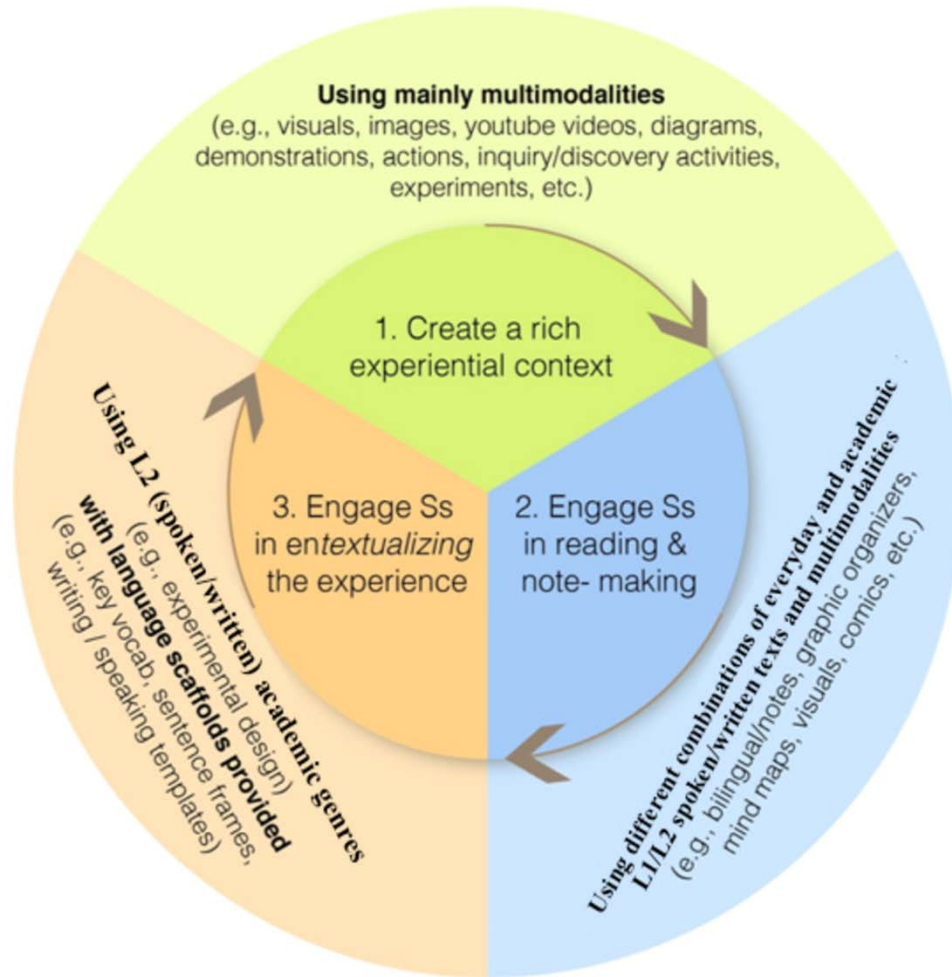
At the same time, these are collective and collaborative endeavors that do not solely happen in one classroom site. As collaborative writing instructors, we share ideas and materials with each other and have found that the MEC also becomes a framework for our reflection on teaching. For example, Pedro used the MEC to explain his teaching process to colleagues who observed one of his classes to provide peer feedback. Likewise, Bong-gi used the MEC to respond to students' feedback provided in course evaluations. In that sense, we found in the MEC a way to teach and understand our teaching as a reiterative process based on both our trajectories and the trajectories of our students. It is not limited to a shorter time-scale event, such as the weekly class; rather, it applies to longer time-scale processes when the semester teaching evaluations from students and peers are made available. This reiterative process ties back to our cycles of becoming, as we (re)imagine our curriculum, syllabus, classrooms, and assessments not as discrete entities but interconnected on both everyday smaller time-scale happenings as well as larger time-scale events.

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Our Discussion and Conclusion

The stories presented above illustrate our processes of becoming as an entanglement of Southern onto-epistemologies and our histories as plurilingual and racialized faculty. This approach allowed us to reflect upon institutional norms and students' expectations, the diversity of the student body in our classrooms, and the changes we make in curriculum, teaching, and assessment using the MEC. Although academic literacy seems to be a coherent, static skill set ready to be learned and taught, our narratives depict it as a contested field that deserves critical reflection. Our narratives of teaching academic literacy show that the instructors' perspectives are not subsumed by monolingual and monoglossic ideologies. Rather, by interrogating the norms, we made academic literacy more pluralistic and diverse while providing students access to the dominant norms and discourses (Janks, 2000, 2004).

Through our teaching of foundational courses to undergraduate students, we first identified two clashes. While still subjected to respond to the white listening subject and conform to institutional requirements, we realized we cannot be complicit with the white norm due to our racialized historical bodies. As racialized scholars and educators, we empathize with our students while resisting the two clashes, navigating a third space (Bakhtin, 1981). This resistance relates to Southern onto-epistemologies, which, according to Mignolo and Walsh (2018), are rooted in our struggles as we continue to be colonized through coloniality. Our pedagogy, then, represents a praxis of decoloniality, a response to how we think, work, live, breath, sense, do, and cope with our embodied racialized, plurilingual faculty experience while teaching academic literacies in a white-settler colonial place such as Canada. We relate ourselves with Southern scholars who continue to resist coloniality and with scholars from the Global North (e.g., Ingold, 2013; Thibault, 2020) who are allies in this onto-epistemological debate. Our praxis of decoloniality empowers us to challenge the hegemony of English and white supremacy.

However, our position is not for completely abandoning the established curriculum. Instead, we critically use a pragmatic and utilitarian approach to education as an alternative. Rather than conforming to the white monolingual norm, we embrace our linguistic struggles to raise critical language awareness (Shapiro, 2022) in our students. We first demystify the expectations and discourses that are embedded in academic English language and literacy. While teaching the students the dominant language, genres, and discourses that enable them to enter their desired white space, we empower them to understand the hidden monolingual expectations and raise critical awareness so that they are not blindly subjugated to the dominant discourse and system (Chen & Lin, 2023; Lin, 2020a). Second, we draw on our struggles and the pain we have experienced while navigating monolingual barriers. By understanding how hurtful this is for our students, we recalibrate curriculum to provide them with a third space to enter the desired white community.

Simultaneously, we acknowledge the emotional labour that surrounds teaching language and writing (Benesch, 2017). Exhaustion, nervousness, and discrimination demand significant energy from teachers. Yet the work that involves managing the everyday emotional labour is disregarded by teaching and research and devalued by institutions when they decide our wages. It is important to present our stories, even though they can be counted as backstage narratives (Goffman, 1959), often hidden and not counted as "work." Although backstage stories are often considered irrelevant to the frontstage performance, they provide the necessary support for the shared frontstage performance (Kim, 2021). Similarly, by sharing the struggles of our work in our conversations, we foster mutual support that equips us to perform better on our stage, the classroom. By bringing these backstage stories to the frontstage, we shed light on the invisible labour we engage in, which is integral to our curriculum and teaching. Our stories provide an emotional dimension of our teaching, reflecting exhaustion and frustration but also

mutual support so that we can imagine other possibilities for both students and us as racialized bodies in a white space.

To conclude, our narratives of becoming (Thibault, 2020) illustrate the sense-making process in our trajectories as racialized faculty in an Anglo-dominant context. It is a whole-body process shaped by our race and our emotional labour. This critical and dynamic process depicts the ongoing challenge of teaching academic literacy and pushes us to critically engage in every moment by moment of our activities, pushing us to constantly revisit our own learning of academic writing strategies, which may evoke unpleasant memories of frustrations and struggles. We also acknowledge that foundational courses, including academic writing courses, are often taught by sessional or adjunct faculty members who are often at the margin of university-wide decision-making processes. Teachers of academic writing need to create communities and form alliances to work together, share their frustration, reimagine their curriculum, and question the normative discourses of monolingual, Anglo-centric academic literacy. This process is gratifying as it makes us reconnect and redevelop another academic community and friendship as we exchange materials, resources, and ideas to engage in more dialogic and democratic education. We believe that change cannot be achieved overnight, and we need to work with and within the system with our allies to make gradual change (Chen & Lin, 2023). We invite other like-minded educators and scholars to engage in our conversation about writing, curriculum, pedagogy, and assessment and to further explore the Southern onto-epistemologies of knowing, doing, and understanding in the plurilingual world.

The Authors

Pedro dos Santos is an instructor in the Department of Educational Studies, Kwantlen Polytechnic University, where he teaches university transition courses. He is currently pursuing a PhD in the Faculty of Education, Simon Fraser University, and his doctoral research examines the academic experiences of international students from Latin America during their trajectories in Canadian universities. He has been an educator for many years, and his interests are higher education research and practice, international student mobility, teaching and learning in postsecondary settings, academic literacy development, epistemologies from the South, and the intersection of race and language in higher education.

Bong-gi Sohn is an instructor in the Department of Rhetoric, Writing, and Communications at the University of Winnipeg. Her research focuses on the intersection of language, education, and migration, with a commitment to expanding critical second language academic writing and literacies, studying the language socialization of international students across their lifespan, and exploring critical content and language integrated learning (CLIL). Currently, she is investigating the academic and professional socialization of university plurilingual/international students, tracing their journey from school to the workplace to gain deeper insights into their academic and social needs. Through her dedication to teaching and research, she has not only delved into exploring students' plurilingual and pluricultural potential but has also collaborated with teachers and educational researchers to advance curriculum (re)design, instruction, and assessment.

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