

THE DILEMMA OF THE LANGUAGE-MINORITY STUDENT IN THE  
COMPOSITION CLASSROOM

by

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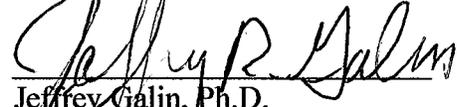
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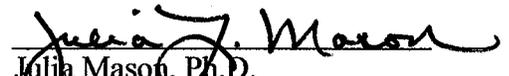
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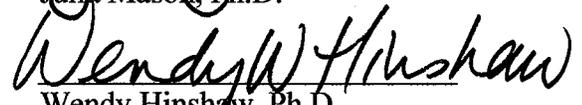
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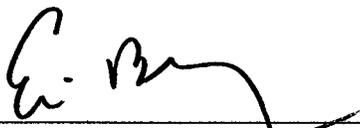
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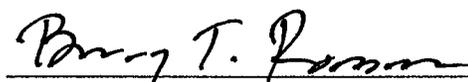
  
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## ABSTRACT

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If we define language fluency as more than simply a way of speaking, but also a way of thinking, acting, and *being*, then we enter a conversation of language as ‘Discourse’ that was sparked by James Paul Gee. This conversation invokes discrete designations of Discourse as home-based, school-based, dominant, and non-dominant. These designations reveal divisions between Discourses that are *believed* to manifest themselves in the identity formation of ‘language-minority students:’ those whose home Discourse is non-dominant. The dominant Discourse that these students encounter in school generates two documented paths: Richard Hoggart’s scholarship boy and Herbert Kohl’s not-learner; both paths reflect the limited agency of these students within academia. In order to counteract this delimiting of student agency, this project proposes a progressive shift towards a post-modern conception of identity formation; this can be accomplished by opening the Composition classroom to student-authored, non-traditional, ‘hybridized’ Discourses.

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## I. INTRODUCTION

Among teachers there is a tendency to characterize learning as successful only if it is extremely transformative for the student; they want the student to realize her potential through an expansion of her outlook that prompts a rediscovery of herself. At the very least, they want students to take something away from the class that changes them somehow or *improves* upon them. Educators often adopt the view that learning can and should open our minds, change us from the inside out, and do so through a discovery of new knowledge that helps students better realize who they are. However, for students from non-mainstream homes, the learning is transformative in unexpected ways; by ‘unexpected ways,’ I am referring to the perceived imposition of standard classroom English upon students from ‘language-minority’ backgrounds. The home dialect of these ‘language-minority’ students is not valued in the classroom, and in and of itself, this scenario would not lead to further inquiry, for it is assumed that educators want to best prepare their students for life after secondary school, and functional use of standard formal English is certainly useful. However, when language is placed into its social and historical context, it acquires the label of ‘Discourse:’ a specific form of a language that is tied to particular social groups. This definition engenders innumerable Discourses, such as the Discourse of academia or the Discourse of African-American Vernacular Slang. Therefore, when language is seen as Discourse, a link is established

between language acquisition and identity formation due to the social nature of Discourses.

The primary source when discussing Discourses is James Paul Gee; he expands upon his theory of Discourses by defining ‘fluency’ within Discourse communities. He defines fluency as more than simply a way of speaking, but also a way of thinking, acting, and *being* (“Introduction” 530). Gee’s assertions characterize language as a key component within identity formation since they allow or deny an individual access to certain social groups. Additionally, when describing Discourses, Gee invokes all the social, historical, and economic facets of identity formation. He considers these aspects of identity formation to exert force upon the way in which language is acquired, used, manipulated, and tested. These influences are most clearly present in his assertion that one’s identity can be in conflict by way of the acquisition of different primary (acquired at home) and secondary (acquired in school) Discourses (“Introduction” 527). The differences between Discourses would be based both upon their respective places of acquisition as well as their association with social and economic power; this means that Discourses would be either dominant (linked to social groups and economic goods) or non-dominant (linked purely to social groups) (“Introduction” 527-528). This framework leads to social and economic advantages for certain students. These advantages are based largely upon the type of language spoken at home and its continuity with the language taught in school (“Introduction” 528).

According to Gee, Discourse acquisition occurs through an apprenticeship process that most often takes place within school at the secondary and post-secondary levels. The dominant Discourse taught at these levels can generally be referred to as

‘standard academic English’; it is free of dialects, coarse language, or slang. Students who struggle to acquire this academically ‘dominant Discourse’ are typically members of a marginalized minority community who have not had access to this institutionalized rhetoric within their household. Instead, these students exhibit fluency through speaking, thinking, acting and *being* within their ‘non-dominant Discourse.’ Gee believes that this causes acquisition of differing and conflicting ways of ‘being’ within the world; his logic traces back to his characterization of language as a socially- and economically-embedded Discourse. Within his argument, he denotes the ways of thinking, acting, and being that are taken on by a Discourse group as an ‘identity kit’; he sees identity kits as the social signifiers of Discourse acquisition amongst group members (“Introduction” 526). Therefore a language-minority student who acquired a primary non-dominant Discourse as a child and later acquired a secondary dominant Discourse in school would, out of necessity, have acquired two distinct identity kits that potential contain conflicting sets of values, expectations, etc. Therefore, following Gee’s line of argument, if Discourses are the bridge between language and identity, and if they are subject to the hierarchies of economic and social dominancy, then students in possession of more than one Discourse must also be comprised of more than one identity kit, each of which asks them to speak, think, act and *be* in ways that conflict with the other. For language-minority students, this framework of Discourses and identity kits leads to the perception that the identity formation process is somehow being disrupted. This perception is evidenced by current academics with language-minority backgrounds; they provide detailed self-reflective descriptions of their

progression through higher education, and they generally characterize this disruption as identity fragmentation, division, disjuncture, elision, and fracturing.

For language-minority students, the framework of dominance and non-dominance amongst Discourses leads primarily to two documented and consciously-chosen paths: to actively pursue academic Discourse acquisition as a ‘scholarship boy’ or to rebel against Discourse acquisition as a ‘not-learner.’ Richard Hoggart describes the scholarship boy as a high-achieving pupil who sacrifices his home identity for the sake of mastery of the dominant ‘academic Discourse’ (Hoggart 239). Academic Discourse is not as widespread and informal as standard English, for it is a grapholect (meant to be written, not spoken) within which academics who are endorsed by an institution of higher education are considered fluent. As a grapholect, academic Discourse is only marginally acquired outside of communities of scholars, and it is a highly exclusive type of Discourse within the broader category of ‘standard English.’ As such, academic Discourse is acquired in a highly specific manner: a pupil must apprentice under a fluent master of the Discourse, and this apprenticeship period solidifies the ‘scholarship boy’ path. In his autobiographical text, Richard Rodriguez, a Mexican-American scholar of Renaissance Literature, concurs with the description of Hoggart’s scholarship boy: someone characterized as having an inability to set aside the academic mindset, engaging in a period of self-imposed isolation, experiencing a sense of unfitness when attempting to rejoin primary home communities, assuming a degraded authenticity of one’s narrative voice, feeling the loss of marginalized codes of speech, etc. Rodriguez details these traits in a self-reflective search for the source of his feelings of identity confusion and conflict that he experienced later in life. Rodriguez

believes that these feelings are a necessary consequence of acquiring a Discourse that conflicts with one's home identity, and since scholarship boys are by necessity students who come from less affluent and non-mainstream homes, the conflicts between home and academic Discourses are ever-present.

The other path, that of Herbert Kohl's 'willful not-learner,' describes the student who refuses to acquire the school-taught dominant Discourse. The not-learner's reasoning is based upon her impression that the classroom does not accept or value her primary way of speaking, such as that of her family, community, ethnic group, etc.; her fear is that by acquiescing to academic norms, she will lose her sense of self. In order to prevent this from occurring, she consciously strives to limit her exposure to, and learning of, the dominant academic Discourse. Either path (scholarship boy or not-learner) for the language-minority student is linked indelibly to a perception of identity. For the not-learner, her academic choices are actively based upon fear of losing her 'authentic' identity; she chooses not to acquire academic Discourse once she has gained a measure of control over her academic choices, which most likely occurs during high school. For the scholarship boy, his past academic choices are often retroactively examined and linked to identity confusion and fragmentation; unlike the not-learner, the scholarship boy does not seek to avoid identity conflict, but rather to understand it after it has occurred and he has completed his apprenticeship under a master of academic Discourse. The relationship of language to identity is therefore the basis of the language-minority student's dilemma, whether the language-minority student becomes a not-learner or scholarship boy. This dilemma is further predicated upon certain ways of defining identity. The prevalent conception of identity expressed by

language-minority students is described by Stuart Hall as the ‘sociological subject:’ a seemingly stable “possessor of an inner unified core . . . formed interactively between the inner world and the outside social world” (Barker and Galasinski 40). The notion that one’s identity can be fragmented is based upon the belief that it was once constructed in a cohesive and ordered way, thereby lending it to a subsequent process of disruption through breakage and fracturing. If we define *identity* differently, then what is perceived as identity ‘fragmentation’ may actually be a normal part of the identity negotiation process.

The notion that fragmentation, not cohesion, is the perpetual state of identity is part of a post-modern perspective on identity formation; this perspective views identity as a dynamic and active process of negotiation. Chris Barker and Dariusz Galasinski detail the contrast between Hall’s sociological subject and the post-modern individual, stating that the latter is “comprised [of] fractured multiple and contradictory identities which cross-cut or dislocate each other” (Barker and Galasinski 41). The logic would then be that if we are all post-modern subjects, then we are already fractured, multiplied, dislocated, etc.; the remedy is to become aware of this fractured state and to shift our expectations of what an identity should look like. For Barker and Galasinski, this shift in perception requires the utilization of Hall’s theory of ‘articulation.’ Hall’s articulation is based upon the study of how entities become conjoined within certain contexts despite the unnecessary nature of that joining; it is the examination of the ways in which, and the reasons behind why, ideas, objects, etc. become ‘articulated’ together. A relevant example would be the linkage of particular Discourses and their accompanying identity kits. By rhetorically deconstructing existing articulations, one

can theoretically create new articulations that problematize existing hegemonies; the pedagogical application of articulation is the hybrid Discourse classroom.

Hybrid Discourse pedagogy is the teacher's best resource when addressing the language-minority student's dilemma; it is the study of articulation as both product and process. As 'product,' the students initially study literature from Mary Louise Pratt's 'contact zone:' the metaphorical space between asymmetric power structures. The study of the literature of the contact zone exposes students to the ways in which different cultural and ethnic groups can be 'articulated' with certain identities through language. After deconstructing these rhetorical articulations within literature, the class merges with the 'process' portion of the pedagogy: students attempt their own articulation of their many identities through writing. This articulation is very specific, however; it is a type of 'code meshing' in which students intertwine their multiple Discourses, and by extension, their multiple identities. Code meshing allows students to create their own unique, hybridized Discourse, thereby allowing them to carry out a small-scale negotiation of their own identities within the writing classroom in what Robert Brooke titles 'identity negotiations theory' (Brooke 12). Since "we cannot have an identity, rather we are a series of descriptions in language," the articulation of identity from a post-modern perspective by students would necessarily entail identity negotiations within and through language (Barker and Galasinski 42). Articulation and Hybrid Discourse pedagogy therefore involve a highly personal and experimental approach to education; they hinge upon the notion that the language minority-student, whose home and school Discourses are dissimilar, is not receiving the maximum benefit from traditional Composition classrooms.

The most pressing critique against Hybrid Discourse pedagogy address its experimental nature. In particular, traditionalists like Lisa Delpit assert that by placing home and school Discourses on equal footing, this pedagogy is not preparing the student from success outside of the hybrid Discourse classroom. I would agree with Patricia Bizzell and Judith Hebb in their support of this pedagogy by contending that it not only grants students functional acquisition of formal, academic, standardized English, but also addresses their wellbeing in a holistic way that is often ignored. For some students, functional acquisition of academic Discourse will be all that they experience during their semester in a hybrid Discourse classroom; they will have done so by engaging in the most basic studying and writing activities, which always incorporate academic English as one of the two Discourses being hybridized. Yet for other students, particularly the language-minority student, the skill of ‘code switching’ will also be acquired. Code switching, as described by Barbara Mellix and bell hooks, is the ability to switch Discourses at will. Since the hybrid Discourse classroom equally recognizes both home and school Discourses, language-minority students will develop the ability to switch between Discourses *and their attendant identities*; the development of this skill will assist students in subsequent real-world and academic scenarios. For students who enter the hybrid Discourse classroom with code switching experience, the expectation is that they will move past acquiring functional use of the dominant Discourse and enter the process of articulation. When engaging in articulation, these students will use their home Discourse to bring their non-academic identity into classroom with its ancillary experiences, narrative voice, and history; this Discourse will be woven into the standardized academic Discourse to produce a code-meshed text.

The result would be a hybridized text that builds upon the rhetorical strategies of the contact zone in order to express, in a positive manner, the ‘fragmented’ post-modern identity of the student.

The language-minority student is clearly situated at the center of this thesis project, yet this student can often be found at the margins of the writing classroom, of debates over educational practice, and of theory concerning literacy. This accustomed neglect is due to a narrow view of our students. We often limit students to their academic persona rather than view them as complex individuals in the midst of identity formation and negotiation. This is an especially comfortable norm because many educators cannot fully identify with the language-minority student; most educators and students alike are from mainstream homes, so they have never felt compelled, as Barbara Mellix and Richard Rodriguez were, to publish self-reflective literature expressing their latent struggles with identity. However, the ease with which the educational system dismisses the Discourses and identities of these non-mainstream students is worthy of attention and effort on the part of educators. It is important to note that even when attention is paid to this subset of the student population, the attention spotlights troubling assumptions. For instance, James Paul Gee, noted language theorist, authored the research on Discourses that I frequently refer to in this project. Yet the tight causality that links Discourses to identity kits also necessitates the scholarship boy/not learner binary for students from non-dominant Discourse households; this binary asks students from non-mainstream backgrounds to make a choice that mainstream students are not asked to make. Unconsciously, the educational system asks language-minority students to be scholarship boys or not-learners, thereby placing

students into the extremes of academic excellence or failure. I believe that many educators would be uncomfortable with this trend if it were brought to their attention, and that is one of the primary goals of this project.

The ensuing chapters concern, respectively, ‘The Language-Identity Link,’ ‘How Identity Formation Occurs Through Language,’ and ‘The Pedagogy of Subversive Hybrid Discourses.’ The first chapter encompasses the theory of Discourses and its relation to the language-minority student. Specifically, this chapter argues that this project is problematizing a trend that actually exists – that students from non-mainstream homes have specific and documented difficulties within the educational system. These difficulties for language-minority students are subsequently linked to the ways in which language is informed by its conformity to the structure of Gee’s Discourses. Chapter one will therefore discuss Discourse theory in great detail in order to aggregate moments when a causal relationship between language acquisition and identity formation are evidenced. The second chapter probes the ‘identity’ side of the framework of Discourses, with particular focus upon the ways in which identity is characterized and understood. I give greater attention to the autobiographical sources of current academics in order to take the assertion of chapter one, that there is a causal link between language and identity, a step further. Namely, to present evidence that the acquisition of academic Discourse by language-minority students leads to the perception that the student’s identity is being fractured, compromised, erased, etc. The rhetoric surrounding identity from chapter two’s sources leads to this singular perception, and although I see value in the honesty and openness of these sources, I don’t believe that language-minority students *must* suffer these repercussions in this

self-perception. Instead, the end of chapter two posits that if we alter our understanding of identity, which entails progression from a sociological (cohesive and whole identity) to a post-modern perspective (naturally fractured and multiplied identity), then we can accept identity fragmentation as a trait present amongst all individuals rather than a consequence of acquiring a Discourse.

Chapter three is the logical extension of its predecessors; it builds upon the discussions of language and identity theory in chapters one and two, but adopts a distinctly practical approach. In essence, chapter three shows educators *what* to do after explaining to them *why* they should do it. Chapter three delineates the means by which the shift in our understanding of identity, advocated at the end of chapter two, can occur: Hybrid Discourse pedagogy. This chapter provides specific methods by which educators, working with classes at the secondary and post-secondary levels, can create a more inclusive environment for students from non-mainstream backgrounds whose home language would otherwise be excluded from academic writing. These methods cover a typical range of classroom concerns, such as literature sources and writing assignments, that reflect the needs of language-minority students without alienating students from mainstream homes. Although there is considerable elaboration upon core concepts of the pedagogy and its case studies, the chapter is primarily meant to show readers a tangible and useful tool for addressing the language-minority student within composition classrooms. The triad of information presented in this project, drawn from autobiographical sources, theory, and pedagogy, has been compiled in pursuit of a multi-tiered goal: that Discourse acquisition has a tangible effect upon identity formation; that language-minority students have a negative perception of this effect;

that this perception can change by adopting a new perspective regarding identity; that this change can take place through utilization of Hybrid Discourse pedagogical elements at the secondary and post-secondary level.

## CHAPTER 1

### THE LANGUAGE-IDENTITY LINK

As the basis of the relationship between one's identity and one's language, 'Discourse' helps to place the student who acquires it within a particular socioeconomic context; this context is based upon distinctions of primary, secondary, dominant, and non-dominant. When students from non-mainstream homes embrace acquisition of dominant secondary Discourses, they are labeled 'scholarship boys,' while students who reject these Discourses are labeled 'not-learners.' This binary is of value because it reflects the notion that language and identity exert influence upon one another; the choice to acquire or not to acquire a particular Discourse affects the way a student perceives of herself, and the way a student perceives of her identity affects which Discourses she decides to attempt acquiring. The resulting schema designates a discrete 'identity kit' with which a student can figuratively don the costume of a Discourse group member, yet the components of one's identity kit often reveal social contradictions for students from non-mainstream homes, hereafter referred to as 'language-minority' students.

#### **Discourse**

I have chosen to utilize the work of James Paul Gee as a basis for all my subsequent hypotheses regarding identity formation, classroom dynamics, and pedagogical approaches. The especial value of Gee's work lies in his ability to

discretely describe the politicized nature of language acquisition; he sifts out the implicit dynamic of language through an explicit system of dominance, fluency, mastery, and primacy. Therefore, in order to fully immerse oneself in his language system, it is pivotal that one retains his definition of language as a fluid entity composed of many Discourses, or languages tied up in value systems (“Introduction” 527). Gee defines for us his concept of a ‘Discourse:’ “a socially accepted association among ways of using language, of thinking, and of acting that can be used to identify oneself as a member of a socially meaningful group or ‘social network’” (“What is Literacy?” 537). While language is communicative and dialogic in nature, a Discourse is a *socially* regulated function of one’s identity. Patricia Bizzell states that “a discourse community casts its discursive net over boundaries of geographic location, cultural background, socio-economic status, and even time—the dead may participate in discourse communities if their ideas and their texts survive” (Bizzell 9, 10). Discourse is therefore *more* than a way of speaking, but rather a way of belonging within a specific Discourse group or community; Discourse becomes a socially formed and socially enforced way of *being* that allows the speaker to establish an identity within a social network. Language becomes a signifier of one’s status as a member of a particular Discourse group, therefore Discourse acquisition signifies that one has also fully acquired the *identity* associated with said Discourse, which is displayed through explicit adherence to Discourse group traits. As a result, the very formation of these Discourse groups involves a selection of traits that make it extremely difficult to

simulate membership. One must *actually* have inculcated the values of a Discourse to belong to it.

As ideological constructs, Discourses are dependent upon the presence of ‘identity kits:’ “ways of being in the world . . . [and] the forms of life which integrate words, acts, values, beliefs, attitudes, and social identities as well as gestures, glances, body positions, and clothes” (“Introduction” 526). Discourse acquisition hinges upon the adoption of an identity kit that supports the ideology of the Discourse group; this integration of Discourse and identity that Gee here asserts is a display of the nature of Discourses as “inherently ‘ideological,’ . . . resistant to internal criticism, . . . concern[ed] with certain objects, . . . put[ting] forward certain concepts, viewpoints and values at the expense of others; . . . intimately related to the distribution of social power and hierarchical structure in society” (“What is Literacy?” 538-539). Discourse can then be characterized as a frame through which the world is filtered, and due to its “intimate relation to the distribution of social power,” the designation of one’s Discourse as dominant, non-dominant, primary, or secondary, is tantamount to one’s preparation for a politicized world. The connotation of ‘dominance’ involves concepts of power, hierarchy, and exclusion; consequently, no two entities can be dominant at the same time. One language must always be dominant while the other is non-dominant. Gee designates Discourses “that lead to social goods in a society [as] ‘dominant Discourses’” – they are those Discourses that are used by “those groups that have the fewest conflicts when using them, [called] ‘dominant groups’” (“What is Literacy?” 539). To gain access to this dominant group, one must display the signifiers of acquisition of this dominant Discourse; these signifiers are evidenced through “using

language, talking, and acting” in ways that conform with all other members of the dominant group. In essence, the acquisition of a Discourse is proven by the complete embrace of its concordant identity kit. For this reason, no individual can ever truly ‘master’ a Discourse; no one person can ever be the ultimate incarnation of any Discourse group’s identity kit since individuals fulfill multiple social roles, not a single one. Dominant Discourse individuals are therefore identified by their membership in a dominant Discourse group through their display of certain signifiers. Individuals outside of this group will have necessarily obtained membership in the remaining non-dominant Discourses: “secondary Discourses, the mastery of which often bring solidarity with a particular social network, but not wider status and social goods in the society at large” (“Introduction” 528). Nondominant Discourses bring a sense of social belonging, while dominant Discourses confer both social belonging and social currency. This disjunction between Discourses can most clearly be seen when comparing the household and the classroom, for in the each location a certain Discourse is preferred due to the social belonging it confers. In the classroom, the dominant Discourse is considered the ‘correct’ Discourse, so certain individuals are at an advantage if they have been exposed to this Discourse at an early age; these individuals are said to have a ‘primary’ Discourse that correlates with the ‘secondary’ Discourse of their schooling, such as grammatically correct standard English sourced from literature.

Dominant and non-dominant Discourses can be further distinguished by their primary and secondary nature: primary Discourses are acquired at home, while secondary Discourses can be acquired at any point and in any place after the primary Discourse is acquired. Gee states that “our primary Discourse, the one we first use to

make sense of the world and interact with others . . . constitutes our original and home-based sense of identity;” primary Discourse is therefore the initial ideological frame through which one sees him-/herself and the outside world (“Introduction” 527). An individual can only have a single primary Discourse, even if he grew up bilingual. All other Discourses that he acquires can be deemed “secondary Discourses, [which] all build on, and extend, the uses of language we acquired as part of . . . the primary Discourses of different social groups” (“What is Literacy?” 541). Therefore a primary Discourse that fuses easily with a secondary dominant Discourse will confer an academic advantage upon a student, while a primary Discourse that is at variance with a secondary dominant Discourse will be a hindrance for students. The advantage stems from the social currency of dominant Discourses, which are “secondary Discourses the mastery of which, at a particular place and time, bring with them the (potential) acquisition of social ‘goods’ (money, prestige, status, etc.)” (“Introduction” 528). The amount of friction between Discourses can make it easier to adapt to a secondary Discourse that closely mirrors one’s primary Discourse. When children are from what Gee terms ‘mainstream homes,’ they “often look like they are learning literacy” in school, but they are actually “acquiring these literacies through experiences in the home both before and during school” (“What is Literacy?” 542-543). These children are part of the “middle-class mainstream,” in which their primary and secondary Discourses reinforce one another through the interplay of social currency, or “power and prestige” (“Introduction” 531). This scenario is optimal for student acquisition of the dominant Discourse; what is *acquired* at home is built upon in school, and what is *learned* in school reinforces the lessons experienced at home.

The importance of this process is apparent through Gee's semantic differentiation between acquisition, "a process of acquiring something subconsciously by exposure to models and a process of trial and error," and learning, "a process that involves conscious knowledge gained through teaching" ("What is Literacy?" 539). Whereas learning, as defined by Gee, is a conscious act of metacognition monitored by a teacher, acquisition is a subconscious phenomenon that grants an individual status as a native speaker; exposure to a Discourse in terms of both acquisition and learning is the most effective means by which one can become fluent. Therefore the middle-class mainstream student benefits by *acquiring* the dominant Discourse at home, and this process is augmented through *learning* at school. This student is subsequently exposed to "differential sources of power" in which acquisition aids performance, and learning aids "explication, explanation, analysis and criticism" ("What is Literacy?" 539). However, this system of acquisition and learning does not work synergistically for the non-mainstream student. "Children from non-mainstream homes often do not get the opportunities to acquire dominant secondary Discourses . . . due to the lack of access their parents have to these secondary Discourses" ("What is Literacy?" 543). Non-mainstream children have no access to the 'built-in' primary Discourse that will support the secondary Discourse they're learning in school; "thus, when coming to school they cannot practice what they haven't yet got" ("What is Literacy?" 543). As a result, these students, should they desire academic success, are required to *learn* the dominant Discourse without any prior exposure through *acquisition*, thereby slowing their progress as they focus more on performance and less on mastery the "meta-level cognitive and linguistic skills that they can use to critique various Discourses" ("What

is Literacy?” 543). On the other hand, mainstream children have already acquired a Discourse that mirrors the dominant Discourse, therefore these students can spend much more time developing these higher order skills while learning their secondary Discourse.

Within Gee’s elaborate definition of Discourses, the disadvantage for non-mainstream students emerges very clearly. bell hooks summarizes the synergy of the intersection between our class system and our schooling: “rewarded if we chose to assimilate, estranged if we chose to maintain those aspects of who we were, some were all too often seen as outsiders” (hooks 182). hooks is here describing ‘language-minority students’ as outsiders because their primary Discourse is of little help when they enter the classroom. But of greater concern than language would be the value system of the dominant Discourse community that these students encounter. We should recall that these values are part of Gee’s ‘identity kit;’ in order to gain access to a Discourse group, an individual must exhibit complicity with the identity of the Discourse group during his or her apprenticeship under a Discourse group member:

In a discourse community, shared conventions of language use affect social status, world view, and work. These elements are so powerful that the discourse could be said to take on a life of its own, independent of individual participants; it could be said, even to ‘create’ the participants that suit its conventions by allowing individuals no other options if they wish to be counted as participants. (Bizzell 9)

Bizzell takes Gee’s description of Discourses a step further as she first acknowledges the ‘shared conventions of language’ within a Discourse community, then asserts the

power that these shared conventions bequeath in the form of ideology; she does so by remarking that although Discourses *are* ideological constructions, they are also enforcers of the ideology of their community through their ‘creation’ of individuals that match its conventions. The very existence of a Discourse enacts this ‘creation,’ and the very existence of individuals who inhabit a particular ideology in turn necessitates the ‘creation’ of a particular Discourse. Therefore, when speaking of Discourse compatibility, it is a discussion not only of socioeconomics and demographics, but also of ideology, value systems, and *identities*. Due to the operation of Discourses as ideological constructs, language-minority students potentially face an incompatibility of Discourses *and* identity kits. This engenders a conflict of interest for these students regarding their school-based secondary Discourses and home-based primary Discourses; as such, it is perhaps the best signifier of the linkage of language and identity (“What is Literacy?” 543). Although I will complicate, criticize, question, and remediate this linkage later, the immediate task at hand is to thoroughly probe the language-identity causal relationship through an extreme example: the scholarship boy. Throughout this discussion, my aim is not to prove that student agency is non-existent in regards to language acquisition’s affect upon identity formation, but rather to expand upon the complex nature of the relationship and to advocate for greater self-consciousness by students.

### **The Scholarship Boy**

The reasoning behind pursuit of the dominant Discourse varies amongst individuals. Some students do so based upon an affinity with the language itself; they are not after the “money, prestige, status” that belong to the dominant Discourse

community, but rather the love of the literature that becomes accessible through their acquisition of said Discourse (“Introduction” 528). Other students, however, are actively seeking the material goods associated with dominancy, at least to some degree, and in response access to these goods is therefore purposefully delimited through the creation of barriers to acquisition, or as Gee deems them “tests of fluency,” in which the power of the dominant group is symbolized (“Introduction” 528). These tests of fluency carry out two functions: “they are tests of ‘natives’ or, at least, ‘fluent users’ of the Discourse, and they are *gates* to exclude ‘non-natives’ (people whose very conflicts with dominant Discourses show they were not, in fact, ‘born’ to them)” (“Introduction” 528). Perhaps the most skilled navigator of these tests of fluency is the ‘scholarship boy,’ Richard Hoggart’s “‘declassed’ expert . . . [who has gone] through the process of further education by scholarships . . . [and whose] long scholarship climb has led [him] to a Ph.D” (Hoggart 239).

Many members of higher academia could be deemed scholarship boys; they are children of working-class parents who advanced through dependence upon a combination of an extraordinary intellect and work ethic. These scholarship boys would have progressively acquired the dominant Discourse using the somewhat dated ‘apprenticeship’ formula, for Discourses are mastered “by enculturation (‘apprenticeship’) into social practices through scaffolded and supported interaction with people who have already mastered the Discourse” (“Introduction” 527). The apprenticeship formula is dependent upon frequent and meaningful interaction between master and pupil, therefore the process of acquisition of the dominant Discourse for the scholarship boy, the student whose home and school Discourses are at the greatest

removes, places him “between two worlds, the worlds of school and home; and they meet at few points” (Hoggart 228). A scholarship boy is quite literally uprooted from his primary Discourse group through his acquisition of a dominant secondary Discourse; he is an example of the ideal pupil who inhabits two discrete identities, and therefore two antagonistic Discourses. Building upon Hoggart’s explication, Richard Rodriguez, author of “The Achievement of Desire,” examines his own rise through the ranks of academia, and his autobiographical accounts are particularly useful because he harkens from the language-minority/non-mainstream household that Gee references. As the American child of Mexican immigrants, Rodriguez self-identifies as a scholarship boy; he recalls that he mastered the necessities of “mov[ing] between environments, home and the classroom, which are at cultural extremes, opposed; . . . [while] lavish emotions texture home life . . . at school, the instruction bids him to trust lonely reason primarily” (Rodriguez 654). Rodriguez highlights that the distinction between home and school is not only physical, but also ideological, cultural, and social; the two environments are clearly distinct in language, but also in ways of being, in the privileging of certain ideals, etc. These environments are consequently distinct in the *identities* they engender due to the ideological construction of Discourses.

The enculturation of the scholarship boy into the dominant Discourse of academia is accompanied by a shifting perspective that upsets the traditional role model formula; the authority figure in the scholarship boy’s life often shifts from the parent to a master of the dominant Discourse out of necessity. It is the apprenticeship formula that makes this shift possible, for this teacher disseminates not only the dominant Discourse, but also the identity that comes with it: “the kind of allegiance the young

student might have given his mother and father only days earlier, he transfers to the teacher, the new figure of authority” (Rodriguez 656). This transference of authority allows the scholastic to overtake the familial and the dominant community to displace the nondominant community. Regarding the impetus for this shift, Hoggart implores:

Think of his reading-material, for example: at home he sees strewn around and reads regularly himself, magazines which are never mentioned at school, which seem not to belong to the world to which the school introduces him; at school he hears about and reads books never mentioned at home. When he brings books into the house they do not take their place with other books which the family are reading, for often there are none or almost none; his books look, rather, like strange tools.

(Hoggart 228)

The physicality of the divide between home and school that Hoggart here describes is a reflection of the social dictates that the scholarship boy eventually succumbs to: adoption of a mentor from a dominant Discourse group and isolation from the non-dominant Discourse group due to rigorous study in preparation for tests of fluency.

In particular, the scholarship boy’s adherence to social norms regarding how and where he spends his time reflects a heightened sense of awareness regarding the politicized nature of language. At some point during his apprenticeship, he “finds himself chafing against his environment during adolescence [because] he is at the friction-point of two cultures” (Hoggart 225). Lying at the ‘friction-point’ between the dominant Discourse community at school and the nondominant Discourse community at home, the scholarship boy is acutely aware of the disunity between Discourses. As a

result, the scholarship boy chooses to move towards the secondary dominant Discourse and away from the primary non-dominant Discourse due to an awareness of the unequal power structures of home and school:

Advancing in his studies, the boy notices that his mother and father have not changed as much as he. Rather, when he sees them, they often remind him of the person he once was and the life he earlier shared with them . . . I was not proud of my mother and father. I was embarrassed by their lack of education. (Rodriguez 656, 658)

It is clear that there is a disjuncture between the languages of home and school, but when framed within the rhetoric of Discourses, we find that this is also a disjuncture between culture, values, etc. In essence, the scholarship boy becomes the site of a disjuncture between ways of *being* in the world, which Hoggart comments upon:

With [scholarship boys] the sense of loss is increased precisely because they are emotionally uprooted from their class, often under the stimulus of a stronger critical intelligence or imagination, qualities which can lead them into an unusual self-consciousness before their own situation. Involved with this may be a physical uprooting from their class through the medium of the scholarship system. (Hoggart 239)

Rodriguez and Hoggart both reference a type of awareness that is peculiar to language-minority students; it is a heightened consciousness of the political structure of language and language groups. Rodriguez in particular speaks about this structure as though it is somehow compressing and constricting his agency where learning is concerned. Hoggart and Rodriguez concur that scholarship boys are aware of the choices they are

making and the logic behind those choices, and in this way they are fully engaged in their academic decisions. However, those decisions are necessarily delimited by the structure of Discourses as dominant, which links them to social and economic power, or non-dominant, which provides social support from the home community. For language-minority students who are even fractionally aware of the presence of Discourses, their actual agency and their perception of their agency are subsequently limited to two paths: embrace acquisition of the dominant Discourse and membership in said group, or retreat back towards the primary non-dominant Discourse of one's youth. Of course, their 'success' upon either of these paths is influenced by myriad other factors, yet this proverbial fork-in-the-road remains.

### **'Not-Learning'**

The antipode of the scholarship boy would then be the 'not-learner,' Herbert Kohl's student who makes "the conscious decision not to learn something that [he or she] could learn" (Kohl XIII). While most students do not fall into either category, that of scholarship boy or not-learner, the students who do are either embracing or rebelling against the dominant Discourse and its attendant identity. This choice is not made lightly, but rather reflects their awareness of the politicization of language. In a sense, the not-learner proves the language-identity link just as firmly as the scholarship boy:

Not-learning tends to take place when someone has to deal with unavoidable challenges to her or his personal and family loyalties, integrity, and identity. In such situations there are *forced* choices and no apparent middle ground. To agree to learn from a stranger who does not

respect your integrity causes a major loss of self. The *only alternative* is to not-learn and reject the stranger's world. (Kohl 6)

Kohl is asserting that rejection of a Discourse requires awareness of the different Discourses comprising one's world, and a sense that the Discourse being taught somehow contradicts the Discourse that is learned in the home. Not-learning is a reaction to a perceived infringement upon one's primary Discourse community and its attendant identity; it is the conviction that, to acquire this Discourse, the student would be giving up a sense of personal integrity in order to please a teacher who does not allow equal privilege of the student's primary Discourse. This occurrence is therefore most often found in classrooms where students are coming from language-minority households, such as those of working-class or racial or ethnic minority families; Kohl asserts that these students have used not-learning in a particular way:

[As a] strategy . . . to function on the margins of society instead of falling into madness or total despair. It helped them build a small, safe world in which their feelings of being rejected by family and society could be softened. Not-learning played a positive role and enabled them to take control of their lives and get through difficult times. (Kohl 10)

Not-learners are therefore unique in their ability to reestablish the sense of authority that is often relegated to the teacher in the classroom, and in doing so they present a quandary for authors of literacy pedagogy.

This sophisticated conception of the phenomenon of 'not-learning' is often oversimplified due to its similarity to outright failure. Many teachers cannot distinguish between being *unable* to learn and *choosing not* to learn, since the latter reflects

potential to learn whereas the former reflects an inability that cannot be remedied. “Because not-learning involves willing rejection of some aspect of experience, it can often lead to what appears to be failure. For example, in the case of some youngsters, not-learning to read can be confused with failing to learn to read if the rejection of learning is overlooked as a significant factor” (Kohl 4). It would seem that many educators dismiss the free will of their students in an attempt to be as effective as possible; they often focus upon the failure to complete an assignment without questioning whether the student is intentionally doing so. It would seem illogical to most teachers for a student to choose not to learn, yet the difference between not-learning and failing to learn is much more obvious at the social level:

Failure is characterized by the frustrated will to know, whereas not-learning involves the will to refuse knowledge. Failure results from a mismatch between what the learner wants to do and is able to do. The reasons for failure may be personal, social, or cultural, but whatever they are, the results of failure are most often a loss of self-confidence accompanied by a sense of inferiority and inadequacy. (Kohl 6)

In essence, failure results in a loss of self-confidence due to one’s inability to meet the academic benchmarks. In contrast, Kohl states:

Not-learning produces thoroughly different effects. It tends to strengthen the will, clarify one’s definition of self, reinforce self-discipline, and provide inner satisfaction. Not-learning can also get one in trouble if it results in defiance or refusal to become socialized in ways that are sanctioned by the dominant authority. (Kohl 6)

Not-learning therefore gives the student a sense of gratification that runs parallel to the path of scholarship boy. For the not-learner, the gratification is a result of adherence to one's convictions in accordance with the belief that the knowledge being refused *should* be refused; the gratification comes from within the student. For the scholarship boy, the gratification is a result of obedience to superiors that leads to certain rewards, such as scholarships, memberships in honor societies, etc.; this gratification comes from outside the student. Both types of students are actively engaging in different roles based upon their consciousness of their options within contemporary schooling.

The divergence between the scholarship boy and not-learner is based upon their respective allegiances: the scholarship boy rejects his primary Discourse in favor of his secondary Discourse while the not-learner protects his primary Discourse through rejection of his secondary Discourse. The not-learner quite literally refuses to acquire a secondary Discourse, and this choice would preclude him from entering post-secondary institutions of learning, therefore the 'not-learner' is exclusive to primary and secondary classrooms. Kohl characterizes the not-learner in the following ways:

Learning how to not-learn is an intellectual and social challenge; sometimes you have to work very hard at it. It consists of an active, often ingenious, willful rejection of even the most compassionate and well-designed teaching. It subverts attempts at remediation as much as it rejects learning in the first place. (Kohl 2)

By discerning between failure and not-learning, Kohl asserts that not-learning in effect requires diligence similar to that of the scholarship boy, but towards a vastly different goal. No matter how interesting the subject matter nor how engaging the teacher, the

not-learner is determined to remain faithful to his or her primary Discourse and all its values, culture, perspectives, ideals, etc. In essence, “deciding to actively not-learn something involves closing off part of oneself and limiting one’s experience. It can require actively refusing to pay attention, acting dumb, scrambling one’s thoughts, and overriding curiosity” (Kohl 4). It is the ‘closing off part of oneself’ asserted by Kohl that is most thought-provoking here, since he seems to be insinuating that if, as these students believe, acquiring the dominant Discourse will affect one’s identity, then these students have a right to protect their primary community identities as they so choose. I will argue later in chapter two that this perspective is dependent upon one’s beliefs about identity, thereby subverting the not-learner’s assumptions about how Discourse acquisition affects one’s identity.

The not-learner is the one student in the class who must deny her natural inquisitiveness; the not-learner is not failing, but *denying* herself the chance to succeed or fail. In refusing to strive for the scholarship boy role, not-learners believe themselves to be “beyond success or failure” by “consciously [placing] themselves outside the entire system [that is] trying to coerce or seduce them into learning” (Kohl 7). In essence, not-learners *choose* to not-learn in conformity to the belief that this act can somehow remove them from the entire politicized structure of Discourse acquisition; they believe the act of not-learning can subvert the school system and its predilections concerning language, and they consciously follow through on this belief. Yet this act contains no greater agency than the act of becoming a scholarship boy; both paths have been established by forces outside the student, so the student’s agency operates solely as a choice between these paths. It is the perception of the act of not-learning by those

who practice it that creates the impression that they are somehow ‘opting out’ of the Discourse system and taking back their agency. Even the rhetoric surrounding not-learners is subversive:

Not-learners “[spend] all their time and energy in the classroom devising ways of not-learning, short-circuiting the business of failure altogether; . . . [they are] engaged in a struggle of wills with authority, and what seemed to be at stake for them was nothing less than their pride and integrity. Most of them did not believe that they were failures or that they were inferior to students who succeeded on the school’ terms, and they were easy to distinguish from the wounded self-effacing students who wanted to learn but had not been able to do so. (Kohl 7)

The not-learner therefore excels at frustrating the designs of educators to the utmost degree in order to retain a sense of authenticity, integrity, and identity within a system that often strips away relics of one’s primary Discourse community. The act of not-learning, however, is not the most productive nor far-sighted method through which the language-minority student can gain greater agency within the system of Discourse acquisition. Yet neither is the choice to become a scholarship boy, given that this can often engender negative effects in adulthood, such as identity fragmentation, elision, etc. Therefore, in order to determine the means by which the language-minority student can take part in Discourse acquisition with greater agency,, and therefore without necessarily having to adopt either of these extreme paths, we must probe the social component of a Discourse: its identity kit.

## The Identity Kit

Although we can debate the value of adopting either the scholarship boy or not-learner model, we cannot deny the particular sense of awareness that accompanies the agency of the language-minority student. It is an awareness of the differences between home and school in terms of language, economic power, value systems, etc. For not-learners, the awareness seems almost natural due to its full manifestation at a young age, but for the scholarship boy, the awareness seems to begin at a young age then grow in depth and breadth as he or she advances in academia. This nagging awareness eventually results in discernible effects upon the identity of scholars, and some of these scholars have composed self-reflective autobiographies concerning their experiences within both their primary and secondary Discourse communities. For instance, Richard Rodriguez remarks upon his path to a Ph.D., characterizing it as a balancing act in which he had to maintain two distinct and discrete identities at home and school. Yet Rodriguez states:

Gradually, *necessarily*, the balance is lost. The [scholarship] boy needs to spend more and more time studying, each night enclosing himself in the silence permitted and required by intense concentration. He takes his first step toward academic success, away from his family. (Rodriguez 655)

The physical removal Rodriguez here describes seems extreme, but it is a familiar situation for many successful scholars for whom separation from social interaction due to the pursuit of academic distinction is often required. However, Rodriguez describes this shift as more than purely physical, stating that “I was the first in my family who

asked to leave home when it came time to go to college . . . [and] my departure would only make physically apparent the separation that had occurred long before” (Rodriguez 661). Richard Hoggart confirms the verity of this statement when he details scholarship boys as those who “for a number of years, perhaps for a very long time, have a sense of no longer really belonging to any group” (Hoggart 225). As ‘declassified’ members of society, scholarship boys are a radical example of the potential for Discourse acquisition to remove one’s ability to determine identity through membership in social groups.

The insinuation would be that literacy transcends merely reading and writing, thereby constituting James Paul Gee’s “‘identity kit,’ which comes complete with the appropriate costume and instructions on how to act and talk so as to take on a particular role that others will recognize” (“What is Literacy?” 537). Consequently any apprentice to a secondary Discourse must be able to display the identity that is associated with that Discourse, for acquisition is contingent upon membership in the Discourse group. Therefore the formation of one’s identity is intimately linked to the acquisition of a Discourse; for many women, minorities, or children from non-mainstream homes, “true acquisition . . . involves, at least while being in them, active complicity with values that conflict with one’s home- and community-based Discourses” (“Introduction” 532). The scholarship boy then becomes a less radical and more prototypical example of the link between language and identity; scholarship boys-turned-scholars become “people leading apparently normal lives but never without an underlying sense of some unease” (Hoggart 239). Rodriguez attributes this unease to his schooling, stating:

A primary reason for my success in the classroom was that I couldn't forget that schooling was changing me and separating me from the life I enjoyed before becoming a student . . . only then, at the end of schooling, I determined how far I had moved from my past. (Rodriguez 654)

When Rodriguez uses verbs such as 'change' and 'separate,' he seems to be referring to the peculiarity of the scholarship boy's tenuous position at the 'friction-point' of Discourses; his self-referential statements reflect his musings over the active complicity required of apprentices to a Discourse group identity. While the scholarship boy sees and accepts this complicity, the same stimulus prompts an inverse response from the not-learner: rejection. Both complicity and rejection of dominant Discourses are means by which agency is exercised by language-minority students, but it is a very discrete and constrained type of agency.

The physical isolation of the scholarship boy is here described as a necessary part of academic advancement within the larger process of acquiring a secondary Discourse. The concept of becoming 'fluent' in a Discourse or of 'mastering' a Discourse, particularly a dominant Discourse, is dependent upon making certain changes in order to gain access to that Discourse group. In particular, the scholarship boy must take on the 'ways of using language, of thinking, and of acting' in order to be considered an authentic member of a Discourse community ("What is Literacy?" 537). The veneer of language acquisition is not sufficient to gain entry to a true Discourse community, for "discourses are connected with displays of an identity; failing to fully display an identity is tantamount to announcing you don't have that identity, that at best you're a pretender or a beginner" ("Introduction" 529). When speaking of the academic

community, members of which are most often the purveyors of this dominant Discourse, the question is not necessarily one of *true* mastery, for even Gee alleges that this is highly unlikely. Instead, the question is one of *sufficient* mastery, so much so that an apprentice can display the signifiers of the Discourse group identity and gain acceptance into the Discourse group, thereby bringing the social element of Discourses into the discussion once more. Therefore the disjunction between a student's primary and secondary Discourses can have effects upon the scholarship boy's identity that may manifest themselves in physical ways. For instance, the need for a proper study environment, the priorities of the serious student, and the distractions to be encountered at home, are all reasons why a student may distance herself from her primary Discourse community. These dual existences of home and school thereby exert continual pressure upon each other as they vie for dominance.

The general theme of the evidentiary support from Gee, Hoggart, and Rodriguez would seem to be that Discourse acquisition exerts incredible influence upon identity formation in a causal relationship, particularly for scholarship boys. Consequently whenever a dominant Discourse is acquired, it slowly displaces the previous primary non-dominant Discourse; the very requirement of membership in Discourse communities, i.e. complicity of the components of one's identity kit, makes this possible. The belief is that the scholarship boy-turned-scholar "cannot forget that his academic success distances him from a life he loved, even from his own memory of himself" (Rodriguez 655). More so, the notion is that a return to the primary Discourse community necessitates "remain[ing] an academic – a kind of anthropologist in the family kitchen, searching for evidence of our 'cultural ties' as we ate dinner together"

(Rodriguez, 110). Additionally, there is a sense that the “built-in enemy” of Discourse performs an elision of the scholarship boy’s former identity: “when he is older and thus when so little of the person he was survives, the scholarship boy makes only too apparent his profound lack of *self-confidence*” (Rodriguez 667). Rodriguez seems to be confirming the symptoms of Discourse acquisition that Hoggart posits, and Gee’s theory additionally seems to provide the reasoning behind these symptoms. Of further evidence are the actions of the not-learner, since he rejects acquisition altogether in an effort to maintain the primacy of his home Discourse and its attendant identity. The corroboration of Discourse theory and self-reflective narrative concerning language-minority students provides sufficient evidence that this subset of the student population faces a reduced sense of academic and personal agency within the classroom. While chapter one has shown how the structure of Discourses enables this dilemma, the task of chapter two is to detail the process of identity formation and its relationship to language.

## CHAPTER 2

### HOW IDENTITY FORMATION OCCURS THROUGH LANGUAGE

In order to advance our knowledge of the language-minority student and thereby increase our academic capacity to empower this student within our classrooms, we must first study the self-perception of this student as presented in autobiographical literature. The recurring themes of identity fragmentation, elision, and inauthenticity recounted in this literature will then be discussed in relation to the definition of identity that they endorse, for it is one of cohesiveness and stability. This seemingly meandering path through self-reflective narrative and identity theory is meant to examine the language-minority student as a holistic entity that is not a pre-determined construct without agency or power, but rather an active negotiator of her own identity. The rhetorical shift required to logically support this claim involves a progression from a traditional to a post-modern conception of identity, which views the individual as the site of identity negotiations amongst various social forces; consequently each description of the language-minority student within this chapter takes an incremental step towards the post-modern identity that I endorse.

## **‘Code Switching’**

The complicity of identity necessary when operating as a member of a Discourse group engenders a need for the *proper* identity at the *proper* time; a ‘scholarship boy’ would therefore be able to ‘code switch.’ This linguistic term is commonly understood as the concurrent usage of two languages, and it denotes its user as a fluent speaker of each language as well as the possessor of the social tact to know when to use which language. For our purposes, we can describe ‘code switching’ as more than just the concurrent usage of separate languages, but also separate Discourses; the most applicable example would be the scholarship boy’s fluency in both a primary non-dominant Discourse and a secondary dominant Discourse. Just as Richard Rodriguez was our example of the prototypical scholarship boy, so Barbara Mellix, faculty member at the University of Pittsburgh, will be our example of the prototypical code switcher. The best example of her ability to code switch was provided in her essay, “From The Outside In,” as she recounts her conversation with a White male police officer during her youth:

I had taken out my English and put it on as I did my church clothes, and I felt as if I were wearing my Sunday best in the middle of the week. It did not matter that Toby had not spoken grammatically correct English. He was white and could speak as he wished. I had something to prove. Toby did not. (Mellix 63)

For Mellix, the use of proper English, Mellix’s secondary dominant Discourse, was akin to changing her outward appearance in order to present the best image of herself;

code switching was a superficial alteration that was carried out on the social level. Through her grammatically correct English, Mellix was able to converse with Toby, the officer, and thereby *prove* her social status through her use of Discourse. She was essentially creating a social identity that would signify her membership in the dominant Discourse group despite her skin color, and this display was established through language.

The ability to code switch is one that must be developed over time, so the sooner one can begin practicing, the greater ease with which one will be able to successfully code switch; in this respect, code switching is similar to the practiced acquisition of Discourses. Mellix procured the ability to code switch during childhood, stating: “in time, I learned to speak Standard English with ease and to switch smoothly from black to standard or a mixture, and back again. But no matter where I was, no matter what the situation or occasion, I continued to write as I had in school” (Mellix 65). Mellix later mentions that it was her parents’ enforcement of proper grammar and spelling; the demarcation they established between speaking and writing allowed her to relegate code switching to social settings, thereby granting her a sense of what language was appropriate and when. In contrast, Richard Rodriguez did not have a parental support system for code switching, given that his parents did not speak fluent English, which in turn resulted in his under-developed sense of how to appropriately pair a language and a social setting. This marked contrast between successful and unsuccessful code switching as parentally-dependent supports the notion that there is more to switching Discourses than metaphorically changing one’s outward appearance. Rather, successful code switching potentially involves habitation of an identity

associated with a particular Discourse, and without this particular identity, the individual is neither a successful code switcher nor a recognized member of the Discourse community. As with Discourse acquisition, code switching requires a display of membership through a display of a specific identity.

Richard Hoggart supports a similar line of reasoning for his scholarship boy model in which the student inculcates the accents, characters, and even values of each acquired Discourse: “once at the grammar-school, he quickly learns to make use of a pair of different accents, perhaps even two different apparent characters and differing standards of value” (Hoggart 228). As a scholarship ‘girl’ herself, Mellix attests that her speech patterns actually adapted to her academic lifestyle; her home life and school life were at a divide of Discourses, therefore the identity kits that she acquired along with those Discourses necessitated the display of different traits in different settings. Although code switching connotes flexibility and adaptability, it also invokes probing questions about the nature of identity: is Mellix truly inhabiting different *identities* at different times? Gee would assert that she is, for he believes that Discourses are intimately tied to the ways in which we relate to our surroundings through the process of identification. However, Mellix’s possession of multiple identities also begs the question as to whether identities can truly be manipulated in this manner, and whether there are unintended effects upon the code switcher. In response, I would answer that the code switcher often attests to the *perception* of ‘identity fragmentation,’ or the ‘fracturing’ of her identity, in response to the act of code switching. This perception of the phenomena associated with code switching constitutes a particular conception of

identity expressed by Mellix, Hoggart, and Rodriguez; it is their conception of identity that I disagree with, yet my remediation of this disagreement will occur later.

Much of the logic presented by Gee and extended by Hoggart, Rodriguez, and Mellix regarding code switching and identity formation is sound. They assume that the act of switching between Discourses is also an act of switching between identities, and that this continual habitation of separate identities will never result in perfect balance between the identities. Essentially, code switching necessarily alters the sense of balance between the different Discourses and their ‘identity kits:’ “ways of being in the world; the forms of life which integrate words, acts, values, beliefs, attitudes, and social identities as well as gestures, glances, body positions, and clothes” (“Introduction” 526). Consequently, if the Discourses determining one’s identity kit are very different from one another, much as they are for language-minority students who acquire a dominant secondary Discourse, then the resulting identity kits will contain *contradictory* ‘words, acts, values, beliefs, attitudes, and social identities.’ bell hooks emphasizes this contradiction when describing the “demands [placed upon] individuals from class backgrounds deemed undesirable;” these students, hooks included, were asked to “surrender all vestiges of their past [which] create psychic turmoil. [They] were encouraged, as many students are today, to betray our class origins” (hooks 182). These inherent contradictions are present for all language-minority students at various ages. For instance, many years after Barbara Mellix’s encounter with Toby, she reflects on her relationship with the dominant Discourse, stating “not until years later, as a college student, did I begin to understand our ambivalence toward English, our scorn of it, our need to master it, to own and be owned by it – an ambivalence that extended to the

public school classroom” (Mellix 63-64). Mellix is here signaling language-minority students through her usage of ‘our,’ and it is these students who can identify with Mellix when she describes the love-hate relationship she experienced with the dominant Discourse. It would seem that rather than manipulating Discourse, Mellix began to feel manipulated *by* Discourse, and to subsequently cast code switching in a negative light due to its tangible reduction of her agency as a student, writer, speaker, etc. Her feelings carry the familiar refrain of inevitability and negativity regarding agency over one’s identity expressed by language-minority students; her descriptions invoke sentiments of loss that are based upon the perceived conflict, tearing, fragmentation, and fracturing of her identity.

### **The Regulation of Identity**

Throughout this project, the common element when discussing dominant Discourse acquisition by language-minority students are identity crises of different sorts: elision of one’s home identity, a sense of identity confusion, the fragmentation of one’s identity, etc.; many scholars who have successfully acquired the dominant Discourse after spending years upon the scholarship boy path attest to this. The extrapolation of these feelings (regarding how one copes with Discourse acquisition) is therefore of value in regards to why they occur, whether they are real, and if so, how to mitigate them. To answer these questions, we will once again turn to Richard Rodriguez and Richard Hoggart in order to trace our way through this phenomenon of perceived identity loss. For Rodriguez, dominant Discourse acquisition was accompanied by bittersweet pride and shame, for he believed that he had essentially rejected his home and his community’s way of being. As a result, when Rodriguez

returned home after completing his program of study, he evinced mixed feelings, which he describes: “I came home. I felt easy sitting and eating and walking with [my parents] . . . But after the early relief, this return, came suspicion, nagging until I realized that I had not nearly sidestepped the impact of schooling. My desire to do so was precisely the measure of how much I remained an academic” (Rodriguez 669). Rodriguez was under the impression that the signs of his schooling were written indelibly upon his identity, and as a result, he was especially self-conscious of his status within both his primary and secondary Discourses communities. Whether these feelings were based upon observation or fact, Rodriguez believed them to be real, and in believing them, he manifested their power; he was convinced that he had suffered identity loss, and so he in turn read every experience through the lens of identity loss.

Rodriguez was under the impression that he had moved away from his past and could never fully return, therefore he was always conscious of the disparateness of his two identities; he also believed that this recognition extended to those with whom he interacted who came from a similar background. For instance, when teaching, Rodriguez admitted feelings of being a “comic . . . a ‘coconut’ – someone brown on the outside, white on the inside . . . the bleached academic – more white than the *anglo* professors;” he believed his sentiments were mirrored by his Mexican American students: “in my classes several students glared at me, clearly seeing in me the person they feared ever becoming” (Rodriguez, 111). The scholar here is convinced that he has lost a sense of authenticity when attempting to teach other Mexican Americans, and so his perception of what is ‘authentic’ has led to feelings of inadequacy, ‘other’-ness, and isolation. When examining the type of identity being characterized here, it is important

to note the sense of physical distance and solidity of personhood. Rodriguez states that “those who would take seriously the [scholarship] boy’s success – and his failure – would be forced to realize how great is the change any academic undergoes, *how far one must move from one’s past*” (Rodriguez 667). Richard Hoggart describes the scholarship boy process in similar fashion: “as childhood gives way to adolescence and that to manhood, this kind of [scholarship] boy tends to be progressively *cut off from the ordinary life of his group* . . . he is in a way cut off by his parents as much as by his talent which urges him to *break away from his group*” (Hoggart 226). The characterization of identity here draws heavily from considerations of ethnicity, social standing, and economic background. This double-sided conception of identity is one within which the individual responds to group influence, thereby forming his or her identity through negotiation of this influence through acquiescence, rebellion, etc. The imposition of socially-mediated normative traits upon one’s identity is therefore the starting point of this perceived ‘identity fragmentation;’ it is the socioeconomic pull of Discourses that exerts pressure upon identity formation. The determination of dominance amongst Discourses is consequently a necessary component of the negotiation of one’s identity.

bell hooks further attests to the academic privileging of certain Discourses:

Those of us from diverse ethnic/racial backgrounds learned that no aspect of our vernacular culture could be voiced in elite settings. This was especially the case with vernacular language or a first language that was not English. To insist on speaking in any manner that did not conform to

privileged class ideals and mannerisms places one always in the position of interloper. (hooks 182)

It is not just language, but also culture, class ideals, and mannerisms that language-minority students are expected to conform to. For some students, this expectation is untenable: “I see many students from ‘undesirable’ class backgrounds become unable to complete their studies because the contradictions between the behavior necessary to ‘make it’ in the academy and those that allowed them to be comfortable at home, with their families and friends, are just too great” (hooks 182). Therefore the dominance of a particular Discourse within education is by extension a dominance of a particular identity, and this relationship is acknowledged by language-minority students through code switching. Laura Lai Long, author and advocate of alternative Discourses, deems code switching a ‘learned necessity:’

Stigma has made it necessary for Pidgin speakers to learn how to code shift from Hawai’i Creole English into Standard English for more formal situations (i.e. job interviews, boardrooms, research papers). This ‘learned necessity’ tacitly perpetuates the assumed superiority of Standard English over Hawai’i Creole English, which in turn reinforces the assumption that speakers of Pidgin’ are intellectually and socially inferior to speakers of Standard English. (Long 147)

Both hooks and Long make clear the reality of a hierarchy among Discourses and their tandem identity kits, and Mellix and Rodriguez build upon this notion to argue for the existence of identity confusion for the language-minority student, such as contradictions in behavior, feelings of inauthenticity, breakages with social groups, etc.

These catalogued moments are a result of the peculiar position of the language-minority student within the framework of politicized language and school, and as such they *are* real, tangible, and documented. Yet the way in which we interpret these moments is a by-product of the way in which we conceive of identity. The authors present identity as something that can be lost or inauthentic because they characterize it, in this context, as capable of fragmentation, multiplication, and deletion. Therefore my endorsement of hooks, Long, Hoggart, Rodriguez, and Mellix is not without critique, for we disagree on our fundamental understanding of what identity is.

### **Identity Negotiation**

In order to support my view of identity, I will utilize the critiques of others where Discourse acquisition is concerned. To begin, we will first look at the criticism that James Paul Gee's theory of Discourses has garnered from Lisa Delpit. Delpit has countered Gee's theoretical framework with her pragmatic concerns as an educator. While I do not champion Delpit, I do believe there is validity to the attention she brings to the need for reorientation of the language-identity discussion. Delpit asserts that "Gee's argument suggests a dangerous kind of determinism as flagrant as that espoused by geneticists: instead of being locked into 'your place' by your genes, you are now locked hopelessly into a lower-class status by your discourse" (Delpit 546). Delpit here references 'determinism,' which is broadly defined as the position that certain conditions will inevitably lead to certain outcomes; it is a term that carries with it the connotations of extreme predictability, cause-and-effect relationships, and control over variables. Delpit believes that deterministic causality in the educational system invokes ideals that run counter to the goals of learning, and that it is this determinism that is so

troubling to educators, for she believes that it leads to a feeling of nihilism amongst teaching professionals. Delpit posits that if Discourse is truly determined at a young age by one's primary community, and if the secondary Discourse that one must acquire to access material goods is guarded by tests of fluency and barriers to acquisition, then *how* and *why* would a teacher devote any time to a seemingly lost cause? Of course, Delpit is purposefully exaggerating the implications of Gee's theory in order to provoke a dialogue over literacy pedagogy; while Delpit does cite examples of successful dominant Discourse acquisition by language-minority students, she asserts that these examples were only possible thanks to extraordinary teachers who hammered the linguistic superficialities of the dominant Discourse into their students. Yet Gee agrees with Delpit that there is something unfair, yet logically deduced and supported, with the way in which the language-minority student is treated within academia. Gee acknowledges the struggle that Discourses present for teachers and students, stating, "beyond changing the social structure, is there much hope? No, there is not. So we better get on about the process of changing the social structure" ("Introduction" 529). Gee is clearly aware here of the inequalities within the structure of Discourses, yet his answer is not the nihilism of Delpit. Rather, Gee posits that changing the social structure is not only possible, but also the responsibility of "people who have been allotted the job of teaching Discourses, for example, English teachers, language teachers, composition teachers, TESOL teachers, studies-skills teachers" ("Introduction" 531). The *how* of Gee's response to Delpit's critique is where my argument begins.

When discussing Discourses, it is important to recall that Gee differentiates between acquisition and learning; acquisition occurs "subconsciously by exposure to

models and a process of trial and error,” while learning “involves conscious knowledge gained through teaching” (“Introduction” 539). Language-minority students are often expected to ‘learn’ the dominant Discourse without a prior period of ‘acquisition’ at home, and while this occurrence denies these students the synergy of acquisition and learning within the same Discourse, it grants them ‘meta-knowledge:’ “seeing how the Discourses you have already got relate to those you are attempting to acquire” (“Introduction” 532). Meta-knowledge is a product of Discourse multiplicity and comparison; it requires that one gain perspective on a particular Discourse by already having acquired another. Through classroom instruction, meta-knowledge “leads to the ability to manipulate, to analyze, to resist while advancing ... Such meta-knowledge can make ‘maladapted’ students smarter than ‘adapted’ ones” (“Introduction” 532). According to Gee, meta-knowledge is the key to addressing the inequalities within language and society, and he speaks of it as a potential tool within classroom instruction. I believe that Gee’s advocacy of meta-knowledge is an appropriate response to the concerns of educators like Delpit who believe that teaching the dominant Discourse to language-minority students is either nihilistic or superficial and linguistic. Yet within Gee’s description of meta-knowledge lies a concept that pushes Discourse analysis and acquisition past the academic plane: Gee asserts that meta-knowledge involves discovering “how the [Discourses] you are trying to acquire relate to self and society” (“Introduction” 532). Gee here extends meta-knowledge into a type of self-knowledge that involves looking at both society and one’s identity within society as they relate to Discourse acquisition. This concept is important because it introduces the practice of analyzing one’s identity on a ‘meta’ level; this practice

necessarily involves contextualizing Discourse and identity within the social structure. This process of contextualization is present in Patricia Bizzell's description of the dominant academic Discourse:

The persona speaking through academic writing projects the following characteristics: objective . . . skeptical . . . argumentative . . . extremely precise, exacting, rigorous . . . It might be said that the characteristics I have just outlined are most congenial to those actual humans who are white men of the upper social classes, that is, that these characteristics are most in accord with the personality traits that they are already socialized to develop. (Bizzell 10, 11)

Bizzell here provides a 'chicken and the egg' analogy, but not in the service of determining whether Discourse determines identity or identity determines Discourse. Rather, Bizzell highlights this connection in order to expose it as a naturalized phenomenon that is subject to socioeconomic factors, demographics, historical conditions, etc. Rather than viewing a particular Discourse and its attendant identity as a natural linkage, Bizzell asserts that this link must be probed and analyzed as part of Gee's meta-knowledge. This process of contextualization is embraced by post-modernists when describing identity, e.g. Chris Barker and Darius Galasinski stating that "there are no *necessary* links between the discourses that constitute us; rather, connotative or evocative connections are forged through historical custom and practice" (Barker and Galasinski 41). Barker here asserts that Discourses cannot be proven to be inherent to any identity, but are instead associated with certain identities due to numerous social and historical forces. The rhetorical movements presented by Bizzell

and Gee advance the conception of identity to one in accord with my own opinion: an identity that is developed *in attachment* to a particular Discourse *without needing to be*, i.e. identity formation is not a product of Discourse acquisition, but rather a negotiation of the identity traits that have been socially and historically fused with a particular Discourse despite no intrinsic relation.

Post-modernists build upon this conception of identity to further characterize it as process, rather than a product, that is continually negotiated with respect to outside forces. Robert Brooke, author of *Identity Negotiation in Writing Workshops*, posits “the task of forming an identity within [plural and conflicting] contexts is largely a task of working out stances towards these roles. For any role, I may embrace it . . . reject it . . . [or] comply with it under duress. I may even swing between these positions as time passes. Each of these stances shows something about how the self relates to that role, and hence how the self conceives of itself” (Brooke 22). Identity, as the process of negotiating one’s stance towards the multiple roles one inhabits, thereby incorporates notions of fluidity, progression, and multiplicity through active negotiation. In a fitting description, Brooke defines the term ‘identity negotiations:’ “the *identity* is most often used in psychological studies, while the term *negotiations* is taken from political and social theory. The term *identity negotiations* therefore highlights the development of the self within a complex arena of competing social forces” (Brooke 12). Brooke’s identity negotiations theory fits rather snugly into the post-modern definition of identity as a dynamic site of bargaining amongst both internal and external forces. A person’s identity arises through negotiation of these competing, and often conflicting, forces; of importance is Brooke’s belief that the writing classroom is a site of post-

modern identity negotiation, for this notion is brought up repeatedly by post-modernists (Brooke 12). The interpretation of identity as an evolving negotiation between social forces is a valuable contrast to the identity presented by Rodriguez and Mellix. These authors voiced sentiments that were highly dependent upon their perception of identity, such as inauthenticity, loss of their essential selves, and a sense of being pulled apart by incompatible social roles; in turn, these sentiments can only logically proceed from a particular view of identity as solid, whole, authentic, stable, etc. I believe that it is the former, post-modern characterization of identity that proves most beneficial when discussing language-minority students, for it views identity as a place of agency for the individual and active negotiation of social forces, and as such it is the definition of identity that subsequent text will be built upon.

### **Identity Theory**

The way in which identity is interpreted has progressed slowly within academic circles, and Stuart Hall can help to quickly synopsise the “three different ways of talking about identity: the ‘enlightenment subject,’ the ‘sociological subject’ and the fractured (de-centered) or ‘postmodern subject’” (Barker and Galasinski 40). Both the enlightenment and sociological subject are based upon the premise that identity is stable: “the ‘enlightenment’ or Cartesian conception of the subject pictures a conscious and unified individual marked by inherent rational capacities . . . with an inner core;” the sociological subject:

[That in which] the social and the individual are mutually constituted.

Thus, the internalization of social values and roles acquired through the processes of acculturation stabilizes the individual and ensures that

they ‘fit’ the social structure . . . for s/he is held to reflexively coordinate herself into a unity. (Barker and Galasinski 40)

The movement is always towards centralization and stability, whereas the later postmodern subject is not. Additionally, the progression through conceptions of identity has been accompanied by a debate over identity as either essentialist or anti-essentialist. It is a debate of “contrast[s] between an eternal metaphysical self and a contingent linguistic self; the essentialist arguments hold identity to be the name for a ‘one true self’” while “the anti-essentialist position stresses that identity is a process of *becoming* built from points of similarity and difference” (Barker and Galasinski 30). Previous discussions of identity formation within this project have proceeded from the assumptions of the autobiographical texts of scholars from language-minority backgrounds. Given the traits attributed to identity, it is clear that amongst these assumptions lie undertones of the essentialist argument, which designates identity as true, natural, and unalterable. Unfortunately, this conception of identity would necessarily interpret all identity change as negative, harmful, fragmenting, etc. Therefore, I believe that although the *effects* of dominant Discourse acquisition on the identities of language-minority students are certainly real, and supported by Gee’s theory of Discourses, the *perception* of those effects is skewed by the way in which identity is interpreted. I would assert that by inverting the logic of this process, language-minority students can change their interpretation of identity and thereby change the way in which they perceive of these effects.

To further explain the third way of talking about identity, that of the ‘postmodern subject,’ I will draw heavily from Chris Barker and Dariusz Galasinski’s

*Cultural Studies and Discourse Analysis: A Dialogue on Language and Identity*. While Barker and Galasinski bring modern modes of thought to the language-identity link, they also build their argument upon the interpretation of language as comprised of Discourses. They state:

Historical and cross-cultural work suggests that the resources that form the material for personhood are the language and cultural practices of specific times and places. We are born into a world that preexists us and learn to use a language [that] was here long before we arrived. In short, we are formed as individual in a social process using culturally shared materials. (Barker and Galasinski 29)

Barker and Galasinski here present the idea that language is historically and culturally grounded in shared social materials, just as Gee does; they state that “identities are both unstable *and* temporarily stabilized by social practice and regular, predictable behavior . . . [therefore] subjectivity and identity are constituted through the regulatory power of discourse” (Barker and Galasinski 30, 31). Their interpretation of Discourse is one in which Discourse regulates both subjectivity and identity, but this regulation is only a temporary stabilizing force for identity, which is perpetually unstable. In addition to being unstable, identity is a process of *becoming*, not of being, and so it is already built upon multiple points of social and cultural reference; in this interpretation, identity fragmentation is no longer a concern because identity is already dispersed. The belief that identity is ever unified, autonomous, or concrete is described by Louis Althusser as an ‘illusion,’ for “you and I are *always already* subjects, and as such constantly practice the rituals of ideological recognition, which guarantee for us that we

are indeed concrete, individual, distinguishable and (naturally) irreplaceable subjects” (Althusser). We find value in the ideological recognition of our identity, and so we relegate agency to ourselves through the illusory veil of ideology, yet an individual will still “behave in such and such a way, adopt such and such a practical attitude” and “participate in certain regular practices which are those of the ideological apparatus on which ‘depend’ the ideas which he has in all consciousness freely chosen as a subject” (Althusser). Therefore the perception of identity fragmentation is an ideological representation of the material conditions of the language-minority student’s experience; the emotions are real, yet they are filtered through ideology and consequently contorted to conform to the illusory unified identity. With respect to the language-minority student, the perpetuation of the essentialist identity is consequently a hindrance when addressing the goal of greater agency for this subset of the student population.

The progression towards a conception of identity as post-modern and anti-essentialist is the crux upon which this project hinges. It would seem that to truly address the language-minority student in a holistic fashion that takes into account emotional and social needs, we must first begin with a redefinition of identity. To do so, we must accept the validity of “the fragmented or ‘de-centred’ self . . . [which is] composed not of one, but of several shifting, sometimes contradictory, identities . . . [for] we comprise fractured multiple and contradictory identities which cross-cut or dislocate each other.” (Barker and Galasinski 40-41) Within this interpretation of identity, fragmentation is no longer a danger, but rather the normative path along which all individuals, whether members of the dominant or non-dominant Discourse group, will travel. Additionally, the worry over elision of one’s primary Discourse group

identity is no longer a factor, due to the fact that “no single identity can act as an overarching organizing core since identities shift according to how subjects are addressed or represented” (Barker and Galasinski 41). There is no ‘essential’ and authentic core identity that can ever be displaced, for no core identity exists. “Thus, identities, which our cultural generally takes to be unified and eternal, can instead be thought of as the unique historically specific temporary stabilization or arbitrary closure of meaning” (Barker and Galasinski 41). The valuing of identity’s arbitrariness over its determinism, its temporary stabilization over its eternal nature, and its fragmentation over its unity lead us to the understanding that “the apparent ‘unity’ of identity is better described as the articulation of different and distinct elements that, under alternative historical and cultural circumstances, could be re-articulated in disparate ways” (Barker and Galasinski 41). If we are all the products of our social and historical circumstances, then the *articulation*, i.e. the naturalized coupling despite no inherent linkage, of these circumstances and their tandem Discourses becomes the key when addressing the language-identity link for language-minority students. Chapter three will continue this discussion of articulation with respect to both its theoretical and pedagogical applications.

## CHAPTER 3

### THE PEDAGOGY OF SUBVERSIVE HYBRID DISCOURSES

While chapters one and two were a mixture of theory and autobiographical literature, chapter three broaches the pragmatic angle of this project: pedagogy. As such, the discussion will focus upon the application of a theory of ‘articulation,’ Stuart Hall’s term for an unnecessary linkage of entities within particular contexts. Articulation is the basis for numerous post-modern pedagogies that place the language-minority student at the center, rather than the margin, of the writing classroom. The malleability of Hall’s theory allows it to be academically studied in two ways: as a means of understanding how a particular Discourse and identity can converge under certain social and historical condition; how this convergence can be undone through writing that meshes dominant and non-dominant Discourses, and by extension, identities. Articulation will therefore be studied with respect to its various monikers: Hybrid Discourse, as coined by Patricia Bizzell; Code-meshing, as described by Suresh Canagarajah; and Interlanguage, as detailed by Eleanor Kutz. This pedagogy of articulation will be detailed from the perspective of its literature, its methodology, and its benefits for language-minority students.

#### **Articulation**

‘Articulation’ is a sociological theory concerned with the appropriation of cultural practices by particular social classes. Although the theory is based upon the

work of Antonio Gramsci, its adoption by Stuart Hall is more applicable due to Hall's larger post-modern framework. When speaking of articulation during an interview with Lawrence Grossberg, Hall stipulates his greatest concern as "how an ideology discovers its subject rather than how the subject thinks the necessary and inevitable thoughts which belong to it" (Grossberg 53). He is concerned with the contrasting notions of human agency and determinism within ideological constructs, stating that "[articulation] enables us to think how an ideology empowers people, enabling them to begin to make some sense of intelligibility of their historical situation, without reducing those forms of intelligibility to their socio-economic or class location or social position" (Grossberg 53). The interplay of individual autonomy and socio-economic determinism proposed by Hall is reminiscent of Lisa Delpit's criticism of James Paul Gee's theory of Discourses. Delpit is critical of the way in which Discourses limit students to socio-economic 'castes' based upon the ideological nature of Discourse groups. When Gee asserts that secondary Discourse acquisition necessitates the acceptance of a particular identity that may carry traits contradictory to one's primary Discourse, Delpit assumes that this compromises the educational system. She believes that teachers who are conscious of the intricacies of Discourse systems may refuse to teach the dominant Discourse to language-minority students either out of sensitivity to their cultural background or nihilism concerning the way in which one's primary Discourse predetermines his or her social status. Gee, of course, proposes the concept of 'meta-knowledge' discussed in chapter two as the means by which language-minority students can increase their agency within the classroom. Gee believes that the prior acquisition of a primary non-dominant Discourse grants language-minority students an unusual

advantage in that they have a perspective regarding language that has been informed by another Discourse, and therefore that they are well-suited to meta-level analysis and manipulation of the dominant Discourse. Meta-knowledge is subsequently applicable to the specific goals of Stuart Hall's "theory of articulation: a way of understanding how ideological elements come, under certain conditions, to cohere together within a discourse, and a way of asking how they do or do not become articulated, at specific conjunctures, to certain political subjects" (Grossberg 53). Articulation is understood as the process of identifying conjoined phenomena and separating them, such as subjects and their ideology, individuals and their socio-economic position, and even identities and the Discourse groups they belong to.

Hall describes articulation at its most basic level: "an articulation is thus the form of the connection that *can* make a unity of two different elements, under certain conditions" (Grossberg 53). The emphasis upon 'can' is important because Hall denotes this linkage as one "which is not necessary, determined, absolute and essential for all time" (Grossberg 53). Articulation is therefore a type of connection between entities that is established within particular contexts but without dependence upon any intrinsic relationship between the entities. While this definition of articulation is rather abstract, Hall eventually provides Grossberg with a much clearer delineation of the term:

In England, the term has a nice double meaning because 'articulate' means to utter, to speak forth, to be articulate. It carries that sense of language-ing, of expressing, etc. But we also speak of an 'articulated' lorry (truck): a lorry where the front (cab) and back (trailer) can, but

need not necessarily, be connected to one another. The two parts are connected to each other, but through a specific linkage, that can be broken (Grossberg 53).

The syntactic nuances of ‘articulation’ allow us to understand it as a singular phenomenon that carries out dual actions: speech and linkage. It is *through* language that a linkage between objects can be done or undone within certain contexts, and when this link is forged Hall describes it as a type of unity, which is “really the articulation of different, distinct elements which can be re-articulated in different ways because they have no necessary ‘belongingness’” (Grossberg 53). Therefore when Hall speaks of ‘unity,’ he is really referring to the ways in which entities are articulated in ways that *seem* meaningful or determined or natural, but are not. In theory, any elements can at any time be articulated together so long as the context allows for it: “the ‘unity’ which matters is a linkage between that articulated discourse and the social forces with which it can, under certain historical conditions, but need not necessarily, be connected” (Grossberg 53).

Articulation can subsequently be brought into the classroom in dual forms: as a product and a process. In the most general of terms, articulation can be studied as a product through the use of contextually-dependent literature within the classroom in order to better understand how ideology works within Discourses, such as the examination of rhetorical strategies, the probing of subtler aspects of language play, etc. As a process, articulation can be carried out by students through their writing as they pair different aspects of their post-modern identities through the use of multiple Discourses; this in accordance with the post-modern notion that “there is no *automatic*

connection between the various discourses of identity; class, gender, race, age etc.,” leading to the articulation of those factors together in different way (Barker and Galasinski 41). While this application of articulation will be discussed at greater length later, it is simply being mention now to establish the two-fold structure of articulation as a pedagogical tool. Articulation is consequently based upon the idea that one’s identity is irreducible to a single category: we are not simply our class, gender, race, age, etc; instead, we are a social and historical product of all these elements.

[However] this description of the self, obviously, is different from the notions of self accepted by many Americans. In our individualistic tradition, the self is often thought of as some inviolate core at the center of the organism, as a fixed consciousness that never changes, as a kind of ‘little me’ inside that opposes the efforts of parents, peers, authorities, or other social groups to alter its basic nature. (Brooke 15)

The individualistic tradition of a stable, inner core of identity is a concept that most students carry with them into the classroom, yet it is also the source of negative feelings for language-minority students who choose to acquire the dominant Discourse. When students assume that identity is a cohesive whole, then they are liable to perceive that part of their identity can be lost or replaced when they acquire a new Discourse and its resultant ‘ways of being in the world;’ the effect would be perception of identity fragmentation or fracturing within a heavily deterministic framework, as attested by Barbara Mellix and Richard Rodriguez.

To clarify, the term ‘determinism’ is here being used to mean causal determinism, in which a cause-and-effect relationship occurs. This term is being

applied specifically to the link between Discourse and acquisition and identity, whereas in previous chapters the term has been used in the context of Delpit's critique of Gee concerning socio-economic determinism. Determinism is the notion that for a set of data, such as language-minority students, certain conditions, such as dominant Discourse acquisition, will incontrovertibly result in certain events, such as identity fragmentation. The biographical and theoretical texts referenced in the previous chapters often accept the premise of determinism between language and identity, for "in this view, the notion of self-understanding as changeable is unthinkable: the unity and permanence of the self, or at least what is most central to the self, is held to be the essential ingredient of identity" (Brooke 15). When speaking of the 'self,' Brooke is referring to only the personal self (the way we think of our identity), but I would like to extend this view of the self to both the personal and social self (the way *we* think *others* think of our identity). James Paul Gee is clearly concerned with the social-personal self, for he believes that Discourse acquisition is predicated upon the joint acquisition of the identity kit of said Discourse, which grants its possessor ways of speaking, thinking, and being that allow access into a particular Discourse group; the need for possession of the identity kit is predicated upon the need for Discourse group acceptance of the individual. Since acceptance is based upon functional acquisition of the Discourse *and* its identity kit, certain demands are placed upon students with a language-minority background. These students must display the correct identity at the correct moment, or in other words 'code switch.'

Barbara Mellix is able to efficiently code switch between her primary and secondary Discourses *and* identity kits, unlike Richard Rodriguez, who is incapable of

ever setting aside his secondary Discourse identity. Yet even Mellix attests to feelings of inauthenticity and identity confusion. If code switching is not sufficient to disrupt the causal determinism of dominant Discourse acquisition by language-minority students, then the source of these feelings must be the way in which we conceive of identity and our hesitancy to dismiss the notion of a centralized and authentic personal self. The feelings of inauthenticity, disjointedness, and isolation are experienced by those who can code switch and those who cannot, therefore the tentative solution would be an embrace of a post-modern, articulated identity:

I encourage students to reject the notion that they must choose between experiences. They must believe they can inhabit comfortably two different worlds, but they must make each space one of comfort. They must creatively invent ways to cross borders. They must believe in their capacity to alter the bourgeois settings they enter. (hooks 183)

hooks posits that one can be 'comfortable' when continually code switching, for her advice to 'make each space one of comfort' and 'creatively invent ways to cross borders' hearken to Hall's articulation of a post-modern identity. Articulation then becomes the counterweight to the conception of the personal self, for it emphasizes the undoing and reforming of components of identity in order to creatively cross the borders of Discourse groups in an effort to lessen the deterministic identity fragmentation of students.

In the classroom, articulation would then be the novel combination of multiple elements of one's identity through writing. For language-minority students, articulation becomes the potential bridge between their dominant and non-dominant Discourses

during the process of acquisition. Instead of viewing Discourses as cohesive and self-contained wholes battling for dominance of their singular identity kit, the student must view Discourses as components of a vast identity kit that can be articulated in myriad ways. To do so, a post-modern view of identity must be embraced, for without it, Discourse acquisition becomes problematic for the language-minority student. The veneer of authenticity must consequently be stripped away in order to lay bare the reality of identity formation, which is that “the fragmented multiple identities of the ‘postmodern’ subject are the consequences of the construction of identity in and through the signifying practices of symbolic representation” (Barker and Galasinski 42). Barker here assumes that every individual has multiple identities, which is valid; he also describes these multiple identities as ‘fragmented,’ or broken apart, due to the ways in which we construct identity and the process of signification. The perception of fragmentation is based upon the diverse social roles that individuals must fill despite the personal desire to retain a sense of remaining whole and cohesive; identity is a negotiation of these opposing compulsions. Therefore if we accept that any individual is always and already multiple, then any ‘fragmentation’ can be mitigated through changing either the way in which we construct identity or the process of signification.

When discussing signification and symbolic representation, Barker states: “given that language does not mirror the world, we can never say what we ‘really are.’ We can only go on making what we consider to be better, more useful, descriptions of ourselves” (Barker and Galasinski 42). It is here asserted that despite our inability to ever completely describe ourselves, the way we express our identity can help to progress our conception of what an identity is; consequently I would assert that

language-minority students must construct a post-modern identity *through* language, thereby accepting their multiplicity of identity; students will use this embrace of multiplicity to filter any feelings of identity elision, fragmentation, etc., so that these sensations are no longer necessarily negative or even present. This process involves a search for ‘better, more useful descriptions’ of the identities of student writers. This movement through ways in which identity is articulated is important because Hybrid Discourse pedagogy is based upon a conception of the student writer as a holistic entity. It is not just the academic work of the student that is valued, but also the intangible ways in which the student writer identifies herself through articulation. By valuing the student’s hybrid Discourse, the teacher is by extension valuing the identity associated with that meshed Discourse by seeing *integrity* in it, a trait often perceived by language-minority students to be lacking in the educational experience of Herbert Kohl’s ‘not-learner.’

The specific pedagogical techniques undertaken to assist students in articulation have been built upon the “value of describing ourselves as ‘multiple’ . . . [by] recognizing the variety of vocabularies, range of purposes and numerous sites of activity and social relationships that are involved in being a person in contemporary society” (Barker and Galasinski 42). This acknowledgement of multiplicity of identity is the basis of numerous Discourse-inclusive classroom pedagogies, and for our purposes, several terms will be threaded through this chapter in order to accurately describe the classroom, pedagogy, and writings in which Discourses are fused with one another: ‘Hybrid Discourse’ is the noun used when describing a particular Discourse-inclusive pedagogy, which is primarily employed by Patricia Bizzell; ‘Code meshing’

is the verb describing the process of interweaving Discourses when writing, which is primarily used by Suresh Canagarajah; ‘Interlanguage’ is the noun for the written production of the hybrid Discourse classroom, which is primarily expressed by Eleanor Kutz. Since all the terms comprise descriptions of pedagogies that seek to discover and interweave the dominant academic Discourse and non-dominant Discourses through student writing, the authors often aim to, in a sense, level the playing field between Discourses, at least in the classroom. Consequently they fight against the tendency of academics “to look down from a pinnacle of generically appropriate, elaborated, and wholly standard academic discourse to the valley of students’ present language” (Kutz 45).

As such, pedagogies of articulation are risky; they require instructors to deny the expected authority that stems from their position in the classroom and the Discourse that they are accustomed to. However, they are also rewarding, particularly for students at the high school level who might otherwise have become not-learners who eventually dropped out of school, or scholarship boys at the undergraduate level who felt the keenness of identity elision. These Hybrid Discourse pedagogies are consequently discussed in reference to *both* high school and undergraduate classrooms; they are meant to address the needs of all language-minority students at the undergraduate level, but they are solely aimed at not-learners at the high school level. This distinction is of value because not-learners may never reach the college classroom due to their tendency to act out rebellious impulses through exiting the school system, so the inclusive pedagogy of alternative Discourses must be tailored for both levels of academia. Although I make this distinction, the example that I will be threading through this

chapter of a hybrid Discourse classroom and student interlanguage will be at the undergraduate level; it is a case study by Judith Webb documented during her Graduate Teaching Assistantship at Texas A&M University-Commerce and explored in her doctoral dissertation: “Hybrid Discourses and Academic Writing.” Hebb’s research is important to this project because it makes concrete my abstract pedagogical concepts and because it shows that educational theory *can* incorporate the language-minority student and place him at the center, rather than the margins, of the writing classroom; it is a testament to the continuing relevance of this area of study and its need for greater attention. All subsequent examples will be excerpted from the first essay composed by Jeremy, a student of Hebb’s. Despite my use of only Jeremy’s first essay as a source, I believe that the many examples from this essay are of value because they reflect writing that was revised throughout a semester of hybrid Discourse learning. Of note is the inclusion of two sources that significantly inform my own research: “From Outside, In” by Barbara Mellix and “Keeping Close to Home: Class and Education” by bell hooks. The commonality of the textual sources in both Hebb’s project and my own adds credence to the idea that information about the language-minority student can be gleaned from both standard sources, such as theory, and non-standard sources, such as autobiographical literature, in order to produce appropriate pedagogy.

### **Discourse Hybridity: A definition**

While the strategies, settings, and materials of each pedagogy differ, the course objectives are most often built upon the perceived value of novel intersections of vastly removed Discourses. Their value is not fixed, however, for the perception of Discourses is often dependent upon their utility within academia; consequently, the anomalous

instructors who *do* value Discourse hybridity are, according to Patricia Bizzell, looking not for what is “comfortable or more congenial, but [something that] allows . . . intellectual work in ways they could not if confined to traditional academic discourse” (Bizzell 12). Therefore hybrid Discourses are constituted by their inclusion of differing non-dominant Discourses in conjunction with the dominant Discourse. The variable non-dominant Discourses that students bring into the classroom make the written production of any hybrid Discourse classroom experimental, dynamic and unprecedented:

[For this reason,] the dialects typically found in hybrid academic discourses cannot be helpfully conceptualized as forms taken directly from other discourse communities . . . but in a hybrid form that borrows from both and is greater than the sum of its parts, accomplishing intellectual work that could not be done in either of the parent discourses alone. (Bizzell 12, 13)

This unique quality leads inevitably to variations amongst pedagogy, heuristics, and study material for each Composition theorist, college instructor, and high school teacher attempting to teach Discourse hybridity. The pervasive notion of enlarging and expanding intellectual work within the classroom is still a key component of Hybrid Discourse pedagogy, for it quite literally incorporates a greater number of languages and dialects from different cultural, social, geographic, and economic backgrounds. For this reason, we can't truly pin down what a hybrid Discourse always looks like, but rather what it does not look like.

In particular, hybrid Discourses display a set of traits that clearly contrast with

those of the dominant academic Discourse; they are not only inclusive of the students' Discourse communities, but also of their personalities:

[They encourage] coming at one's main points indirectly, meandering, holding off the main point, assuming that all readers know and share the writer's emotions and cultural assumptions rather than claiming and valuing an individual and individualistic viewpoint, [and] showing respect for important earlier work by reproducing it rather than seeking to be 'creative' by superseding earlier work. (Bizzell 16)

These characteristics are far removed from the sterilized scholarly works that are often encouraged in classrooms, here described by Bizzell as:

Employ[ing] a form of language called a 'grapholect' . . . [which] is meant to be written and read, not spoken . . . [using] the most formal and ultra-correct form of its participants' native language, treating as 'errors' usages that would be unproblematic in casual conversation . . . [in which] traditional academic genres shape whole pieces of writing . . . [and within which] the traditional academic discourse community enforces a typical world view. (Bizzell 10)

The key difference between hybrid discourses and the dominant academic Discourse would then be the place of the writer. In the former Discourse, the writer is at the center of the work, but in the latter Discourse, the writer is a tangential entity who must strive for objectivity and clarity, not personalization. The academic preference would be for the latter writer, for we often assert that the objective writer can more thoughtfully absorb, weigh, and critically evaluate a text. Yet this preference for the dispassionate

writer carries with it an implicit devaluing of the subjective writer who shapes the text around his or her identity.

Jeremy, Judith Hebb's English 101 student at Texas A&M, certainly molds his writing around his sense of self; he titles his first essay "What is a 'Writer'" in response to the prompt "What has been your best writing experience? In what ways do you consider yourself a writer and in what ways do you not?" In this essay, which will be continually referenced throughout this chapter, Jeremy asserts that "making a point about something or somethings from point A to B, fiction or non, is the act of a 'writer.' Thus making us all 'writers' in some shape, form, or fashion" (Hebb 126). Jeremy's statement of argument is that everyone is a writer because writing and thinking are one and the same, therefore Jeremy believes himself to be a writer whether or not he is actually engaging in traditionally-held literate acts. In response to his thesis, Hebb composes this marginal comment: "not technically; writing still involves letters and words on a page or else it is speaking;" she also responds on his portfolio log that his thesis is flawed, to which "he admits that he shares 'a different view on what a 'writer' is,' but he [also] gently challenges [Hebb] for acceptance and indirectly refutes [her] definition of a writer by framing his position: 'If you or anyone do not agree with me . . . that is absolutely fine'" (Hebb 126). Subsequent revision comments by Hebb and his peers do not lessen this assertion of individuality; he even changes the title of his essay from "What is a 'Writer'" to "Listen to what I have to say" (Hebb 126). The way in which Jeremy is engaging with the notion of what a writer is reflects the merging of his identity and his writing; there is no objective distancing of himself from the topic, and he consequently embraces his subjectivity. Within this embrace is also an

acknowledgement of his subjectivity within the revision process as he asserts that is “absolutely fine” if his peers do not agree and that he simply wants others to “listen to what [he has] to say” (Hebb 126). Although the subjectivity reflected here does not mimic the sophisticated rhetorical maneuvers that we model for our students, which are appropriate for the general student population, it does address writing as a personal and subjective process that is much more applicable to potential not-learners and scholarship boys; this allowance of subjectivity makes possible the inclusion of their non-mainstream backgrounds and identities.

The utility of hybrid Discourses for the specific subset of students addressed (language-minority students) can be seen in the emphasis these pedagogies place on non-traditional studies, which “enable scholarship to take account of new variables, to explore new methods, and to communicate findings in new venues, including broader reading publics than the academic” (Bizzell 12). The emphasis is upon what is ‘new,’ yet scholars often admit that when writing about literature, it is difficult to label anything as ‘new’ due to the derivative nature of collective knowledge. Yet, these same scholars will assert that ‘new knowledge’ is really just a ‘new’ forging of connections between old knowledge; it is exemplified by literary criticism in the vein of comparative literature, cross-cultural studies, etc. Pedagogies of hybrid Discourses thereby follow this same line of thinking, yet the focus is much more personal. Kutz asserts that “interlanguage provides a conceptual framework for seeing student writing as a stage in a developmental process, for seeing what is there as opposed to what isn’t, for seeing the individual differences, and for seeing common patterns also as a way of seeing variations” (Kutz 46). Therefore hybrid Discourses are unique in both their

ability to explore novel connections and express patterns within the process of writing; this preference leads to a valuing of ‘new connections’ over ‘new knowledge,’ consequently inverting the traditional privilege of writers as objective observers over subjective participants:

[These] new discourse forms are openly subjective [as they] . . . seek to find common ground among opposing positions . . . deviate from the traditional grapholect by using language that is more informal . . . include words from other languages . . . [and] employ cultural references from the wide variety of world cultures rather than only the canonical Western tradition, and so on. (Bizzell 12)

The type of alternative Discourse writing that Bizzell is here referencing is gaining greater traction within academic circles. The impetus is unclear; it may be a promotion of multiculturalism, a leaning towards self-expression, or simply exhaustion with the standardized language of academic expression. In any case, alternative Discourses are part of a paradigm shift towards greater inclusion of the ‘alternative’ voice, which is a familiar label for writing from non-dominant Discourse groups:

The term ‘alternative’ is a bit problematic for me because I don’t see my voice as alternative. It is my voice and therefore it can’t be alternative for me. But to answer the question, I see ‘alternative discourses’ as forms of expressions (or communication and ways of being) that express a person’s voice. For me, this voice constitutes everything about me: identity, culture, experience, values, knowledge, language and so forth. (Long 144)

The danger of *not* valuing alternative Discourses therefore becomes a danger of not valuing particular classroom identities, and Hybrid Discourse pedagogy specifically aims to combat this. The growing presence of alternative Discourses within academia consequently lends greater credence to Hybrid Discourse pedagogy and its mission of addressing a holistic conception of the student writer.

During her exploration of classroom Discourse hybridity, Bizzell once again poses a loose framework of traits for the expected hybrid text:

Willingness to use a variant range of cultural references' . . . [inclusion of] personal experience to add persuasive force to a point by invoking an emotional response from the reader . . . [or] as a source of illustrative examples; [use of] 'offhand refutation:' not a rigorous frontal assault on an opposed scholarly position but a casual critical remark; cit[ation of] a number of scholarly sources . . . with proper documentation; [insertion of] 'appropriative history:' a creative retelling of traditional history in which the writer's agenda for needed new research is highlighted; use of wry humor. (Bizzell 12-14)

The emphasis in this description turns toward the traditional elements of academic writing, such as credibility, textual support, critical assertions, etc.; this inclusion is an acknowledgement that "traits [of interlanguage] are all drawn from successful, published academic discourse that nevertheless takes hybrid forms" (Bizzell 17). Hybrid Discourses are not easier, more comfortable or less reputable; rather, they are composed of the same basic elements of critical writing, but simply wrapped in a different package for the reader. These elements are clearly present in the writings of

Jeremy, Judith Hebb's student writer in her case study of hybrid Discourses. In his first essay "What is a 'Writer,'" Jeremy makes plain his awareness of literary convention. Jeremy states "(nothing sexist is intended by me putting he before she . . . I just thought it sounded better)," which is an explanation of his statement: "If a poet thinks up a poem or prose and does not write it down isn't *he or she*" [emphasis mine] (Hebb 127). Later, "In the fifth paragraph, Jeremy talks about audience and language. He cleverly repeats the vocabulary words [Hebb] asked the students to define from the reading and duly notes that if he uses these 'special' words he will 'sound smart.' This is evidence of Jeremy's metacognitive abilities (and 'insider' knowledge)" (Hebb 129). The same functional critical writing skills of a traditional composition classroom, such as grammatical conventions and proper diction, are here employed in hybrid Discourse with elements of humorous reflection and stream of consciousness-esque parenthesis usage. Patricia Bizzell advocates the expansion of conditions that encourage this pairing of convention and originality, stating that "each of these writers has his or her own distinctive hybrid discourse . . . [and] I do not recommend taking into class a taxonomy of hybrid discourse' . . . [but] rather, it seems to me that what we have to do is to create conditions in which students are encouraged to experiment with their own forms of hybrid discourse" (Bizzell 12-17). Bizzell clearly states that experimentation should be a guiding principle in Hybrid Discourse pedagogy in order to create opportunities for distinctive productions of meshed Discourse. However, 'experimentation' must be framed with the specific goals for students, such as awareness of Discourse systems, functional usage of the dominant Discourse, and

application of discursive strategies for argumentation; goals such as these will therefore be elucidated and paired with examples in the subsequent section.

### **How to Code-mesh**

Patricia Bizzell recommends a technique for instructors who are interested in teaching students to mesh their primary and secondary Discourses: “perform a thought experiment: give [your]self the task of writing about something valuable [you have] learned about teaching writing, discussing at least one piece of published scholarship that helped [you] learn it, and also bringing in at least one instance of personal experience” (Bizzell 17). This thought experiment is a microcosm of the larger pedagogy of Discourse hybridity, within which the goal is to progress from simple code switching to complex code meshing. Suresh Canagarajah describes the difference in his case study of minority undergraduate students:

Whereas code switching treats language alternation as involving bilingual competence and switches between two different systems, code meshing treats the languages as part of a single integrated system . . . accommodat[ing] the possibility of mixing communicative modes and diverse symbol systems (other than language). (Canagarajah)

If code switching is the possession of two discrete Discourses (and identities) that can be used at different times, then code meshing is the fusion of these Discourses; when enacted through writing, this action is Stuart Hall’s articulation. What is implied here is a purposeful inclusion and exclusion of certain portions of language *and* identity, therefore the agency relegated to the writer is much greater than that of code meshing or standard academic writing. Bizzell states that “the object should be to create a

classroom environment in which questions can be asked without embarrassment,” yet she qualifies this statement by asserting that “imitation exercises, too, are excellent facilitators of analysis, helping students really to see how a text works” (Bizzell 19). It is evident that this increase in agency by the student is accompanied by a discriminate implementation of traditional writing techniques, such as imitation of previous works.

The variety of pedagogical techniques advocated by hybrid Discourse scholars reflects the context-driven process nature of code meshing, and as such the techniques being used are often composed of both the traditional and non-traditional variety. Bizzell once more describes that duality of technique as she admonishes her students to “write papers in which they connect the materials with their own experience. They must cite these texts and engage them rigorously; but they must also talk about their own experience in ways that feel right to them” (Bizzell 19). Citation and textual engagement are clearly academic, while personal experience and following what ‘feels right’ are clearly not, yet Bizzell meshes these tasks together as she qualifies the implementation of Hybrid Discourse pedagogy. The meshing advocated by Bizzell is part of the experimental and unpredictable nature of this sort of pedagogy. The emphasis here would be upon range, multiplicity, and experimentation; it therefore inverts the typical goals of advanced scholarship: narrow focus of study, singularity of purpose, and derivation of knowledge. Whereas academic writing is a craft honed upon a single subject to the point of deep knowing, hybrid Discourses are enacted with “a sort of craft-person attitude toward writing, in which various tools are developed . . . [as opposed to] essentializ[ing] their supposedly appropriate discourses based on race, gender, or other variables” (Bizzell 20). Bizzell’s descriptions make it clearer and

clearer that Stuart Hall's articulation of the post-modern identity is quite literally mimicked by the pedagogies of hybrid Discourses; the articulation of identity through interlanguage is composed of new and better descriptions of the self with a 'craft-person attitude' that allows access to Discourses typically excluded from classroom writing. This opening of material for hybrid Discourse writing as part of a 'craft-person' role for the student writer is present in Jeremy's conclusion of his first essay from Judith Hebb's ENC1101 hybrid Discourse classroom. Titled "What is a 'Writer,'" the essay "concludes by saying, 'So . . . bottom line . . . I'm a writer, you're a writer, everybody's a writer . . . there.' This is a take-off on a pop culture jingle, a rhetorical act of pathos, and a bold yet casual self-defense" (Hebb 128). Whereas many composition classrooms would exclude pop culture, Hebb widens the points of reference her students are allowed to access through their writing, thereby granting Jeremy the autonomy to express his response to the prompt through a non-academic reference. By mirroring a familiar cultural reference, Jeremy enacts, on a small-scale, the incorporation of cultural materials; this strategy is often advocated in hybrid Discourse classrooms through the study of literature from Mary Louise Pratt's 'contact zone.'

Pratt's contact zone has been traditionally studied as a site within which asymmetric power relations are made visible; it operates as a "social space where cultures meet, clash, and grapple with each other, often in contexts of highly asymmetrical relations of power, such as colonialism, slavery, or their aftermaths as they are lived out in many parts of the world today" (Pratt 607). The contact zone is the space in which cultures are able to define themselves and the 'other' within a system of

dominancy; it is often characterized by transmission of literature from the dominant to subordinate group through materials labeled “ethnographic texts” by Pratt. The transmission of materials is then part of the establishment and support of identity formation for the dominant identity, while the responding literature of the non-dominant group is deemed “autoethnographic” because it engages “representations that the so-defined others construct *in response to* or in dialogue with those texts” (Pratt 608). By exploiting the unstable link between literature and group identity within the contact zone, the nondominant Discourse group is thereby able to initiate rhetorical movements that reformulate the definitions of ‘us’ and ‘them’ by “selective collaboration with and appropriation of idioms of the metropolis or the conqueror” as members “undertake to describe themselves in ways that engage with representations others have made of them” (Pratt 608). This engagement requires “ways of talking, acting, thinking, valuing, etc.” that are acquired by those proficient within a Discourse (“Introduction” 530). The contact zone is therefore constituted by literature that engages representations of group identity in a complex and extended debate. The rhetorical maneuvers and ideological arguments of ethnographic and autoethnographic literature are consequently considered appropriate material for the hybrid Discourse classroom. In particular, Patricia Bizzell advocates the use of literature from the contact zone in order to demonstrate to students “the necessary complexity and ambiguity of serious argumentative positions . . . addressed in a variety of ways” (Bizzell 18). Therefore the emphasis on multiplicity, voice, and identity negotiation present in the hybrid Discourse classroom is reflected in this non-traditional choice of literature.

Contact zones are “carefully derived from local conditions . . . [with] historical roots [that have] developed over time;” as such, they provide a visible representation of the differing perspectives concerning contemporary issues based on a “cultural crux of our day” (Bizzell 17, 18). Citing that the search for interesting and relevant material is “the sort of vexed problem that professional academic scholarship grapples with,” Bizzell advocates the employment of the contact zone as an updated version of the “traditional ‘case study,’ which [unfortunately] usually devolves into ‘pro’ and ‘con’ sides” (Bizzell 18). The recognition of a multiplicity of arguments that exceed the labels of ‘pro’ and ‘con’ will help students to explore the nuances of argumentation outside of the dominant Discourse group since these texts can range from “all sorts of written texts (letters, sermons, histories, poems, captivity narratives, etc.)” to “any human artifact that can be ‘read’ or interpreted (all sorts of visual representations, from drawings to computer screens, craft objects, music, films, posters, etc.)” (Bizzell 19). Yet certain scholars, such as Lisa Delpit, whose criticism of Gee I often reference, would assert that the inclusion of such non-traditional sources for study necessitates a lowering of educational expectations for students. Delpit contests that Gee’s Discourse system offers a dangerous determinism for language-minority students in which they are essentially ‘born into’ their Discourse; she posits that instead of accepting this determinism, teachers must drill dominant Discourse acquisition into their students through intense teaching of the “superficial features (grammar, style, mechanics)” and “subtle aspects of dominant Discourse (decorum, character, neatness)” (Delpit 549). Delpit concludes that classrooms that ignore this need for functional knowledge of the dominant Discourse are ineffectual, yet this designation does *not* apply to the hybrid

Discourse classroom. In order to interweave Discourses, the student must have a functioning knowledge of at least two Discourses, one being the primary Discourse she acquired in her community and the other being the secondary Discourse she continues to acquire in school. Therefore the dominant Discourse still constitutes a major component of learning in the hybrid Discourse classroom; this is carried out in order to prepare students to enact rhetorical movements that mimic those of the contact zone: ‘ways of using language, of thinking, and of acting’ that engender appropriation ‘idioms of the metropolis.’

The dependence of hybrid Discourse writing upon functional usage of the dominant academic Discourse requires that informal contact zone literature be balanced by “previous published scholarship” that begets “course conditions that will encourage experimentation” with the accompanying academic expectations (Bizzell 17). The incorporation of a variety of textual references in multiple genres is expected to generate greater insight into argumentation: “it’s a good idea that whatever collection of materials is used be generically diverse, to provide students with a lot of examples of discursive strategies to adapt” (Bizzell 19). The expected effect upon students will be an awareness of the charged nature of arguments and Discourses; the hope would be for this awareness to be internalized, thereby lending itself to novel articulations of identity. In the fourth paragraph of Jeremy’s ENC1101 essay “What is a ‘Writer,’” he displays this awareness of the politicization of language, stating “teachers would always try to make a juxtapose with my style and the text book’s. Why’s the man always trying to bring me down?” (Hebb 128) Jeremy is clearly engaging in a reflection not just upon writing, but writing styles and their association with particular identities, such as those

of ‘the man.’ Hebb interprets this as “Jeremy question[ing] academic demands placed upon his writing in both content and style; [by talking] about the writing style expected of him, [he] gently questions the oppressive hierarchy (the man) which victimizes nontraditional students” (Hebb 128). According to Hebb, the way in which Jeremy refers to politicized language “assumes the reader understands what he is saying” despite his final sentence, which “is a slang expression which pushes at academic language demands” (Hebb 128). Jeremy is therefore asserting his awareness *through* slang, a type of non-traditional diction that is intensely personal and cultural due to its basis in particular communities. The presence of slang reflects the diversity of rhetorical strategies accepted in Judith Hebb’s hybrid Discourse classroom and their potential to augment academic work rather than detract from it.

In a hybrid Discourse classroom, the sense of ‘personalization’ is necessarily and purposefully heightened as students are “attempting to inter-weave rigorous responses to their reading and their own reflections” as they “devise a new version of the essay genre for the academic setting” (Bizzell 19). This notion of ‘weaving’ the academic with the personal is characterized as a progression: “having established my position and having understood my voices, I then speak to/with/against the academic discourses and even poke fun with and at them” (Long 147). Long asserts that code-meshing is an intricate process that depends not only upon her position and her multiple voices, but also her understanding of her position and voices in relation to other individuals, their ideas, and their writing. Long characterizes this process as developmental, for it occurs slowly and with great effort, and never truly ends for the conscientious and reflective writer. In order to most effectively guide students along the

beginning of this path, two principles would run parallel in the hybrid Discourse classroom: examination of the literature of the contact zone in order to excerpt and imitate rhetorical strategies, and intense study of the dominant academic Discourse to impart functional usage to students. Both tenets incorporate close reading of literature and frequent discussion in adherence to traditional classroom norms. Yet this process functions as preparation for code meshing, in which the student uses rhetorical strategies of the contact zone to weave academic Discourse and her non-dominant Discourse. Due to the developmental nature of this process, demands for frequent journal writing would be placed upon students in order to acclimate them to the personal and experimental nature of code meshing. The emphasis is upon “help[ing] students develop a range of experimental discourses” as opposed to “encourage[ing] them to think that each one has a unique, ‘authentic-voice’ sort of hybrid discourse that he or she must discover” (Bizzell 20). Bizzell’s point is valid, given that students often feel an unrealistic pressure to write something new and unique, when in reality this isn’t the expectation of educators. The goal, at the very least, would be to get them thinking about how language relates to their identity at an academic level, and at the very greatest, to conceive of this relation at a personal level.

Although experimentation and diversity are at the heart of Hybrid Discourse pedagogy, Patricia Bizzell tempers the freedom of this personalization with the rigor of academia, stating, “if, at the same time, students are asked to write some more traditional academic papers, they might also be able to make these papers more essayistic, more charged with their own particular blends of discourses” (Bizzell 19). Bizzell speaks of essays ‘charged’ with a ‘particular blend of Discourses’ and

'reflections' incorporated into 'rigorous responses' to classroom reading; she believes that an intertwining of Discourses within the classroom is necessarily an interweaving of one's personal and academic identities. Canagarajah also agrees: "significant choices in code meshing are motivated by desire for identity. This attitude also provides her with a strong investment in writing. She writes, not for a grade but for voice" (Canagarajah). This appropriation of agency back to the student writer is reflected clearly in the writing of Jeremy, Judith Hebb's ENC1101 student, when in his sixth paragraph he "addresses writing style. He has been paying attention in class. He announces that '[s]tyle, language, and purpose walk hand in hand with getting your point across to people.' Here he reiterates that he writes like he talks and he overuses 'ellipses' (a big word which is correctly pluralized)" (Hebb 129). Jeremy is very conscious of the choices he makes when writing, such as his merging of the way he speaks and the way he writes, as well as his frequent use of ellipses to replicate the lulls that occur when speaking. Jeremy's creation and recognition of a personal style that is faithful to both his idea of what writing is and the rhetorical strategies of academic writing reflect his 'strong investment' in polyvocality. In her margin comment for Jeremy, Hebb mentions that she is "curious how he has become so aware of his individual style" (Hebb 129); I would contest that the hybrid Discourse classroom made Jeremy aware of his individual style.

### **Why Interlanguage?**

Despite my careful progression through theories of language acquisition, identity formation, and Hybrid Discourse pedagogy, the case for code meshing in high school and undergraduate courses is still in need of elaboration. The final question

needing answering is: why are pedagogies of hybrid Discourse the *best* option for increasing the agency of language-minority students within academia? To begin to answer this question, it is necessary to consider the outcomes if no pedagogies of Discourse inclusion are present. Kohl here describes the not-learner:

[He possesses] a strong will and an ability to take the kinds of pressure exerted by people whose power [he] chooses to question [when engaging] not-learning [as a] . . . central technique that supports changes of consciousness and helps people develop positive ways of thinking and speaking in opposition to dominant forms of oppression. (Kohl 23)

In this scenario, the task of simply remaining in school requires shifts in consciousness and fierce willpower in order to combat the educational establishment; it is, in essence, a diversion of student energy that is born of fear of losing one's identity. Herbert Kohl would agree, yet his self-reflective musings stem from his regret over not-learning Yiddish as a child: "the voice I needed to hear and to call on in my own musings about identity was not there for me. I managed to limp along and after a while discovered, first through reading . . . voices and people that helped me understand how to cross boundaries of class and culture without losing my own identity" (Kohl 15). The necessity of 'limping along' in the pursuit of a malleable identity is also spoken of regrettably by Laura Lai Long:

I grew up learning how to live in two worlds: the Standard English speaking world and the Hawai'i Creole English speaking world. I've been pretty fortunate, because I've learned to exist successfully in both. Well, let's say I had to learn. Those who either refuse or haven't learned

to shift in and out of these worlds should never feel the lesser for it.

(Long 147)

Long here refers to her ability to code switch, a trait also reflected upon in the writings of Barbara Mellix; however, Long describes this ability as a ‘fortunate’ acquisition while also establishing that many language-minority individuals cannot code switch. The ability to code switch is therefore a trait that divides language-minority students, thereby creating two distinct groups: those who can code switch and those who cannot. In response, Hybrid Discourse pedagogy addresses the primary needs of each of these groups: the hybrid Discourse classroom can teach language-minority students to code switch due to its emphasis upon teaching functional use of the dominant Discourse, and it can teach those who can already code switch how to mitigate feelings of identity fragmentation through articulation of the post-modern identity. Although the former goal falls short of the true ambitions of Hybrid Discourse pedagogy, which are reflected in the latter goal, it does show great pragmatism regarding the needs of language-minority students. Hybrid Discourse pedagogy is consequently specifically structured to meet the needs of both code switchers and non-code switchers in a redirection of the fierce energy of the potential not-learner.

Additionally, when discussing the notion of Discourse hybridity, it is interesting to note that those who choose to engage with articulation, whether through practice or theory, are often products of minority Discourse communities themselves; bell hooks is self-referential when asserting “those of us in the academy from working-class backgrounds are empowered when we recognize our own agency, our capacity to be active participants in the pedagogical process” (hooks 183). It would seem that hooks,

and other instructors implementing code meshing, are looking for ways to engage their students that may have been lacking in their own educational background, for the subjects that have personal resonance for students are frequently the subjects that are given greatest attention in their academic research. This maxim is clearly evident in the autobiographical writings of Barbara Mellix and Richard Rodriguez as language-minority students who later became professors. The manner in which Discourse acquisition affected them was either significantly positive or negative. If positive, then they hope to replicate the results with their own students; if negative, then it was either lacking or improperly implemented. The cyclical nature of this relation attests to the importance of bringing hybrid Discourses into the classroom despite the acknowledgement that “this process is not simple or easy: it takes courage to embrace a vision of wholeness of being that does not reinforce the capitalist version that suggests that one must always give something up to gain another” (hooks 183). When referring to ‘wholeness of being,’ hooks is invoking a holistic view of the student that incorporates both academic achievement and identity formation. When speaking of ‘gaining’ and ‘giving up,’ hooks is referring to the view of identity as a fixed entity in which one’s primary non-dominant Discourse must be relinquished in order to acquire the secondary dominant Discourse; she believes that this view is a misrepresentation of what language-minority students must accomplish. Hybrid Discourse classrooms consequently have value due to their holistic view of the student and subsequent ability to disrupt the traditional progression of language-minority students into scholarship boys or not-learners.

In order to plead the case of hybrid Discourse, it is also necessary to address the

binary around which pedagogy can go awry: standardization and individuality. The need for balance between these classroom traits is especially important in the hybrid Discourse classroom due to its tendency towards personalization and its danger of alienating the potential readers of interlanguage. Due to the experimental incorporation of non-dominant Discourses within the classroom, a familiar criticism of Hybrid Discourse pedagogy is that “the confidence in one's identity and background and the ability to draw from them as resources for one's communication” will “lead to miscommunication and stigmatization if the reader fails to negotiate one's creative code meshing” (Canagarajah). The concern is that hybrid Discourses will employ language so localized and particular that students will essentially be writing for an audience of one. However, the danger of this occurrence is simply a requirement of embracing Discourses outside of the dominant academic code. This occurrence is a possibility, not a probability, and it is a notion that denigrates the idea that student writing is not only a product, but also a process. Laura Lai Long attests to this, stating:

I've been learning the dominant discourse my entire life and I never said, 'You're imposing on me' because they did a good job of keeping me in the dark. Now that I know better, I'm not saying, 'Get rid of academic discourse.' I'm just saying, 'Let me write this way.' Wait, let me rephrase that. I'm saying, 'I'm going to write this way PERIOD.' (Long 146)

Long is careful to avoid sacrificing standardization in favor of individuality by stating that she does not want to dismiss academic Discourse from the classroom, and in doing so she side-steps Lisa Delpit's criticism of classrooms that neglect the functional

aspects of the dominant Discourse. When speaking of Discourses, Long does not favor expelling the dominant Discourse, but rather creating room for other Discourses as well; she advocates for students bringing their own Discourses into the classroom. Her assertions are based upon the realization that she has been ‘kept in the dark’ while acquiring the dominant Discourse; her subsequent reaction is to assert that she will no longer accept the homogeneity of academic Discourse, and it is a sentiment that hybrid Discourse classrooms hope to emulate. In other words, Hybrid Discourse classrooms seek to project Long’s revelatory moment upon language-minority students. Long attests to two clear events: the realization of her inculcation in the dominant Discourse, and her subsequent desire to bring her own Discourse into the classroom. This pattern can be mirrored by study of the interaction of Discourses within the contact zone and the subsequent articulation of non-dominant identities of students through code meshing. As such, Hybrid Discourse classrooms do not seek to divert value from the dominant academic Discourse and its attendant identity, but rather to add value to students’ non-dominant Discourses and their identities through their pairing with the academic Discourse.

To answer the question posed at the beginning of this section, I would assert that Hybrid Discourse pedagogy embraces the Discourses *and identities* of students in danger of falling through the cracks of dominant Discourse-centered classrooms; it does so by valuing writing that incorporates non-dominant Discourses. By enhancing the value of interlanguage, the hybrid Discourse classroom denies the binary of not-learner or scholarship boy for language-minority students. Instead of rebelling against a classroom that sees no integrity in one’s identity (as a not-learner), or conversely

denying one's background in favor of a purely academic identity (as a scholarship boy), language-minority students will have the opportunity to pursue a third path in which functional dominant Discourse knowledge and personalized writing styles are paired. Along this path, students will learn "to engage or enter the dialogue [by] speaking [their] voice," thereby placing the student at the center of the classroom (Long 147). This placement of the student necessitates an uprooting of the traditional hierarchy between Discourses in order to appease students' initial feeling that "speaking, writing, and thinking in Standard English actually [constituted the] alternative discourse" (Long 145). By temporarily equalizing dominant and non-dominant Discourses within the classroom, said Discourses should be lent more easily to the 'weaving' process through which "'new languages' of identity [are forged]" (Barker and Galasinski 37). Yet this process, "whether as individual therapeutic practice or the collective struggles of identity politics, can never be a simply matter of casting off one identity and taking on another through an uncomplicated re-description of oneself" (Barker and Galasinski 37). Echoing bell hooks, Chris Barker asserts that articulation of the self through code meshing is not a one-size-fits-all pedagogical approach, but rather a continual rewriting of one's personal narrative; this process is therefore initiated in the hybrid Discourse classroom, yet perpetuated once the classroom experience has ended. The key would be to utilize the opportunity, however brief it may be, to show students that Discourse *can* be explored with equanimity within academia; teaching of functional usage of the dominant academic Discourse reflects the mindset that Discourse equalization is only temporary. Even if the rules are normalized once more when the course is over, the student has gained a measure of awareness regarding her language and her identity that

cannot be un-made.

The combined effect of Hybrid Discourse pedagogy, code meshing writing practices, and interlanguage compositions is, at the least, functional acquisition of the dominant Discourse in order to code switch, and at the greatest, a re-articulation of one's identity through code meshed writing. While both aims are of value, the latter is more clearly aligned with the holistic view of the language-minority student adopted by Hybrid Discourse pedagogy. As such, it pursues a lasting effect for students as “[a] rewriting [of] self-narrative [that] involves an emotional shift, a moving of psychic identifications which constitutes a transformation of one's whole being . . . [and] a displacement in feeling simultaneous with the taking on of new maps of the world” (Barker and Galasinski 37). Barker here references the student as a ‘whole being’ whose perception of herself undergoes various qualitative shifts through writing; it is an opening of the classroom to include the personal narrative of each student within a process of identity formation and transformation. For the last time I will cite a student example from the classroom of Judith Hebb; her student, Jeremy, in his essay “What is a ‘Writer’” incorporates into his “third paragraph a personal response in which he claims to be a writer because even though his ‘wordless comics’ aren’t written down, they tell a story” (Hebb 127). In a continuation of his thesis statement, Jeremy asserts that everyone is a writer, therefore his wordless comics, a relic of his primary Discourse community, are still a type of composition. This refusal to discretely categorize what academic writing *is* or *isn't* is part of an even greater self-narrative, for Jeremy evinces an “unusual way of declaring his personal voice and individuality by,” even to the point of “using his social security number to identify himself” (Hebb 127). Instead of using

his name, Jeremy employs a standardized numerical identifier to label his paper, thereby bleaching his composition of any links to the restrictions of academic writing. By disassociating his composition from his name, the course, grammatical conventions, essay guidelines, etc., Jeremy is opening the assignment up to his voice, his individuality, and his self-narrative. This student's bold rhetorical move would most likely be dismissed in a traditional composition classroom, therefore it is Judith Hebb's purposeful acceptance of hybrid Discourses within *her* classroom that makes possible the exploration of identity and language by students such as Jeremy. With this in mind, we should all, as educators, take steps to make the classroom a more inclusive setting as we engage a multiplicity of voices and identities in response to a holistic perspective of our students. "Sadly though, a multiplicity of voices in the academy will begin to emerge only if students (as well as faculty) from diverse backgrounds get into the academy in the first place . . . Paradoxically, for the academic discourse community to become less exclusive . . . those with different and diverse native styles of communication must learn the conventions of academic discourse to have any reasonable chance of changing it" (Lowenthal 307). I believe that Hybrid Discourse pedagogy is the most effective, and transparent, way of addressing the paradox of Discourse acquisition by language-minority students with respect to considerations of culture, identity, and community.

## CONCLUSION

When writing about her experience as an academic, Barbara Mellix asks herself whether she would, knowing what she now knows about Discourse acquisition, choose a different path were she able to have a ‘do-over;’ she states:

Rather, the question represents a person who feels the consequence of her education, the weight of her possibilities as a teacher and writer and human being, a voice in society. And I would not change that person, wouldn’t give back the good burden that accompanies my growing expertise, my increasing power to shape myself in language and share that self with ‘others.’ (Mellix 69)

Mellix specifically references gains in agency that present a holistic view of her as an adult: her success within academic circles, her utilization of the dominant academic Discourse, her ability to communicate clearly with her peers, and her ‘increasing power to shape [her]self in language.’ In essence, her justification for becoming a scholarship boy is an extrapolation of the goal of this project: for language-minority students to feel the ‘good’ burden of a growing level of comfort within academia that bequeaths power to use language in order to perpetually rearticulate one’s identity across class divisions. Yet most educators cannot fully understand or identify with the sentiments of Mellix, for they have never been in the position of the language-minority student nor been subjected to the dynamics governing the language-minority student within the

classroom. Whereas many educators want students to make a *certain* choice, e.g. take the scholarship boy to academic success, the more thoughtful approach would be to impress upon students that more than two choices *exist* should they take an active, purposeful role in their own identity negotiation. For most educators, there have always been more than two paths when navigating the education system, and it would be a shame to think that any student could be so constrained where learning is concerned. Yet these choices can only exist when the way that students conceive of identity progresses to the post-modern, anti-essentialist subject, within which each individual is already multiple, fractured, and dynamic. Once language-minority students understand what Discourses are and how they function, then they can also embrace the notion that they can acquire a secondary Discourse without losing their identity by simply reorienting what they believe identity is. In final support of this claim, I have traced the logic of this project one last time, beginning with my most basic assumption: the existence of Discourses.

Discourse, James Paul Gee's term describing language as a politicized construct, is by its very nature more than a means of communication, but rather a means for discerning the subtle compulsions that govern language's acquisition, usage, and socioeconomic power. Discourses are designated as dominant, non-dominant, primary, or secondary, depending upon whether they are linked to economic or social goods, and whether they are acquired at home or outside the home. While non-dominant Discourses bring a sense of social belonging, dominant Discourses confer both social belonging and social currency; the latter Discourses are often linked to power in the education system, in the business world, etc. Therefore the inclusion of a dominant

Discourse in the home life of a student creates a synergistic effect that enhances the student's ability to acquire this Discourse more easily in school. Unfortunately, this also creates a disadvantage for students who have acquired a non-dominant Discourse at home, such as students from non-mainstream homes, ethnic communities, etc. This effect is exacerbated by the social component of Discourses, for they are more than ways of speaking, but rather are ways of belonging within specific communities. Since Discourses are socially-formed and socially-enforced ways of communication, they are governed by social networks that require the display of a particular identity kit to gain admittance. Therefore acquisition of a Discourse is predicated not only upon functional linguistic use, but also the inculcation of the identity kit of the Discourse, which consists of forms of speaking, acting, thinking, and *being* in accordance with other members of the Discourse group. Since individuals can acquire multiple Discourses, and each Discourse requires the acquisition of its attendant identity kit, the level of compatibility between Discourses is necessarily a level of compatibility between identities. Consequently language-minority students are in a peculiar position, for if they acquire the dominant Discourse they are taught in school, then they face an incompatibility between the Discourses and identity kits of their home life and school life. Gee cites this incompatibility as an eventuality that necessarily limits student agency.

Many members of higher academia could be deemed 'scholarship boys:' Richard's Hoggart's term for children of working-class parents who excelled academically through dependence upon a combination of an extraordinary intellect and work ethic. By nature of the structure of the education system, these scholarship boys

would have progressively acquired the dominant Discourse using the ‘apprenticeship’ formula; they would have worked closely with a fluent member of the dominant Discourse community to acquire both the superficial aspects of the Discourse as well as its identity kit. The apprenticeship formula enacts an important shift in regards to the identity of the scholarship boy, for he is quite literally uprooted from his primary Discourse group through his acquisition of a dominant secondary Discourse. Richard Rodriguez, when comparing his own past to that of Hoggart’s scholarship boy ideal, cites that the distinction between home and school was not only physical, but also ideological, cultural, and social. The two environments were clearly distinct in language, but also in ways of being, in the privileging of certain ideals, etc. These environments were consequently distinct in the *identities* they engendered due to the ideological construction of Discourses. Consequently the scholarship boy is the site of a disjuncture between ways of *being* in the world, and this prevents him from establishing a basis for his identity; he is an example of the ideal pupil who inhabits two discrete identities, and therefore two antagonistic Discourses, that can never be balanced. The perception is that the acquisition of conflicting Discourses leads incontrovertibly to conflicts of identity for the scholarship boy.

The other path for language-minority students is that of the ‘not-learner:’ the student who refuses to acquire the dominant Discourse in accordance with the conviction that, to acquire this Discourse, she would be giving up a sense of integrity in order to please a teacher who does not allow equal privilege of her primary Discourse. Not-learning is unique in that it gives the student a sense of gratification that runs parallel to, yet is distinct from, the path of scholarship boy; the gratification is a result

of adherence to one's convictions in accordance with the belief that the knowledge being refused *should* be refused and comes from within the student. Conversely, for the scholarship boy, the gratification comes from sources outside the student and is a result of obedience to superiors that leads to certain rewards, such as scholarships, memberships in honor societies, etc. While most students do not fall into either category, that of scholarship boy or not-learner, the students who do are either embracing or rebelling against the dominant Discourse and its attendant identity. Both types of students are actively engaging in different roles based upon their consciousness of their options within contemporary schooling, and the limited number of roles reflects the limited agency of the language-minority student. While not-learners choose to not-learn in conformity to the belief that this act can somehow remove them from the entire politicized structure of Discourse acquisition, in reality they have no greater agency than the scholarship boy. Despite the belief that the act of not-learning can subvert the school system and its predilections concerning language, both the path of scholarship boy and not-learner have been established by forces outside the student, so the student's agency operates solely as a choice amongst these paths.

This agency operates in response to an awareness of the differences between home and school in terms of language, economic power, value systems, etc. Both complicity and rejection of dominant Discourses are means by which agency is exercised by language-minority students, but it is a very discrete and constrained type of agency. While the scholarship boy sees and accepts the complicity required for dominant Discourse acquisition, the same stimulus prompts an inverse response from the not-learner: rejection. This complicity or rejection is a response to the identity

associated with the dominant Discourse, since whenever a dominant Discourse is imparted from master to pupil, the belief is that its ways of speaking, acting, thinking and being, i.e. its identity kit, slowly displaces that of the previous primary non-dominant Discourse. Since any apprentice to a secondary Discourse must be able to display the identity that is associated with that Discourse, the formation of one's identity is intimately linked to the acquisition of a Discourse; the very requirement of membership in Discourse communities, i.e. complicity of the components of one's identity kit, makes this possible. The general theme of the evidentiary support from Gee, Hoggart, and Rodriguez is that Discourse acquisition exerts incredible influence upon identity formation in a causal relationship that reduces the agency of language-minority students and propels them down one of two paths. The corroboration of Discourse theory and self-reflective narrative concerning language-minority students provides sufficient evidence that this subset of the student population faces a reduced sense of academic and personal agency within the classroom.

The delimited agency of the language-minority student has traditionally been addressed through the advocacy of 'code switching:' the concurrent usage of two Discourses and the display of their attendant identity kits. By speaking and acting in accordance with her social context, the code switcher manipulates her identity to meet the demands of different Discourse groups. However, the code switcher's possession of multiple identities also begs the question as to whether identities can truly be manipulated in this manner, and whether there are unintended effects upon the code switcher. For instance, if the Discourses determining one's identity kit are at vast removes, much as they are for language-minority students who acquire a dominant

secondary Discourse, then the resulting Discourse identity kits will contain *contradictory* ‘words, acts, values, beliefs, attitudes, and social identities.’ The anecdotal evidence from Barbara Mellix and Richard Rodriguez supports this line of reasoning, for they attest to the *perception* of unintended negative effects, e.g. identity ‘fragmentation’ or ‘fracturing.’ Yet when the experiences of Mellix and Rodriguez are compared, it becomes clear that it is irrelevant whether one is a successful code switcher or not; the perception of identity fragmentation is present regardless. Therefore this perception of the phenomena associated with code switching is really a response to how one conceives of identity. Since Mellix and Rodriguez interpret identity as a whole and stable construct, they cast identity fragmentation as a negative destabilizing phenomenon; consequently their conception of identity colors their perception of the effects of dominant Discourse acquisition by language-minority students.

When examining descriptions of identity crises for language-minority students, certain commonalities are clear: elision of one’s home identity, a sense of identity confusion, the fragmentation of one’s identity, etc. For instance, Richard Rodriguez was convinced that the signs of his schooling were written indelibly upon his identity, and as a result, he was especially self-conscious of his status within both his primary and secondary Discourses communities. Despite the subjective nature of this conviction, Rodriguez believed it to be real, and in believing it, he manifested its power; consequently he was convinced that he had suffered identity loss, and so he in turn read every experience through the lens of identity loss. When considering the ways in which Rodriguez perceived his identity to have been fragmented, it becomes clear that the

imposition of socially-mediated normative traits upon his identity was the starting point; the socioeconomic pull of Discourses exerted pressure upon identity formation. The characterization of identity here draws heavily from considerations of ethnicity, social standing, and economic background; this dual conception of identity is one within which the individual responds to group influence, thereby forming his identity through negotiation of this influence through acquiescence, rebellion, etc. The determination of dominance amongst Discourses is consequently a necessary component of the negotiation of one's identity, therefore the dominance of a particular Discourse within education is by extension a dominance of a particular identity. The catalogued moments of scholars who have successfully acquired the dominant Discourse after spending years upon the scholarship boy path are a result of the peculiar position of the language-minority student within the framework of politicized language and school; as such, these moments *are* real, tangible, and documented. Yet the way in which one interprets these moments is a by-product of the way in which he or she conceives of identity. The authors present identity as something that can be lost or inauthentic and thereby imbue identity with traits such as fragmentation, multiplication, and deletion. Additionally, these traits are then deemed negative based upon their definition of identity in the context of the structure of Discourses within society. While this interpretation of identity has value in that it expresses, in less technical diction, the struggles of a minority of students, it is not the only way to interpret Gee's theory of Discourse acquisition. Consequently this project chose to endorse a fundamentally different definition of identity.

The post-modern conception of identity promulgated by this project is part of a general critique against the assumption that language-minority student agency is necessarily delimited by the structure of Discourses within society. Patricia Bizzell contributes a characterization of Discourse acquisition and identity formation as the convergence of socioeconomic forces, thereby connoting their link as artificial. Additionally, Gee proposes that ‘meta-knowledge’ is a means for analyzing this convergence and, by extension, increasing the agency of language-minority students in the classroom; he believes that the Composition classroom can be the site of explicit analysis of Discourse acquisition and its relation to identity, and that language-minority students have an advantage given their prior acquisition of another Discourse. Therefore Bizzell and Gee advance the conception of identity to one in accord with my own opinion: an identity that is developed *in attachment* to a particular Discourse *without needing to be*. Post-modernists also endorse this conception of identity, and they use it to further characterize identity as a perpetual process, rather than a completed product, that is continually negotiated with respect to outside forces. This definition of identity, as the process of negotiating one’s stance towards the multiple roles one inhabits, incorporates notions of fluidity, progression, and multiplicity; it is therefore a considerable deviation of the conception of identity presented by Rodriguez and Mellix. These authors voiced sentiments that were highly dependent upon their perception of identity as solid, whole, authentic, stable; among these sentiments are inauthenticity, loss of their essential selves, and a sense of being pulled apart by incompatible social roles. In order to best incorporate these sentiments into a productive definition of identity for language-minority students, the post-modern identity is

endorsed by this project, for it views identity as a place of agency for the individual and active negotiation of social forces.

The post-modern subject is one of three conceptions of identity; the others are the enlightenment and sociological subject, Stuart Hall describes as the essentialist identities, for they are based upon the notion that the identity is stable, true, natural, and unalterable. By its very nature, the essentialist identity would necessarily interpret all identity change as negative, harmful, fragmenting, etc., for these traits are not considered inherent to identity. Therefore, while the *effects* of dominant Discourse acquisition on the identities of language-minority students are certainly real, the perception of those effects is skewed by the way in which identity is interpreted. If the perception of identity fragmentation is an ideological representation of the material conditions of the language-minority student's experience, then real emotions are simply filtered through ideology and, according to Louis Althusser, consequently contorted to conform to the illusory unified identity. Therefore by inverting the logic of this process, if language-minority students change their interpretation of identity, they change the way in which they perceive the effects of dominant Discourse acquisition. Of course, it is the post-modern subject, with its anti-essentialist traits, that is advocated by this project, for it sees Discourse as a force that temporarily regulates a perpetually unstable identity. The post-modern subject is conceived of as *becoming*, not being, and so it is already built upon multiple points of social and cultural reference; in this interpretation, identity fragmentation is no longer a concern because identity is already dispersed. Within this interpretation of identity, fragmentation is no longer a danger, but rather the normative path along which all individuals, whether members of the dominant or non-

dominant Discourse group, will travel. With respect to the language-minority student, the perpetuation of the essentialist identity is consequently a hindrance when addressing the goal of greater agency for this subset of the student population; to truly address the language-minority student in a holistic fashion that takes into account emotional and social needs, we must first begin with an endorsement of the post-modern identity.

When describing the post-modern subject, Stuart Hall's theory of articulation becomes an important component of identity negotiations; articulation is the naturalized coupling of entities despite no inherent linkage between them. Articulation has spawned numerous pedagogies that seek to discover how Discourses and identity kits are 'articulated,' and how they can subsequently be separated and deconstructed through intense study; these pedagogies are broadly termed 'hybrid Discourse' pedagogies (à la Patricia Bizzell) that seek to 'code mesh' dominant and non-dominant Discourses (à la Suresh Canagarajah) through the written production of 'interlanguage' (à la Eleanor Kutz). Articulation is used as a process- and product-oriented classroom resource that imparts both the critical thinking skills necessary to pull apart articulated entities within literature and articulate elements of students' identities within their own writing. Hybrid Discourse pedagogies operate in opposition to the popular conception of identity as the 'personal self,' for they emphasize the deconstructing and reconstructing of components of identity in order to creatively cross the borders of Discourse groups. Traditionally, for language-minority students, 'code switching,' or employing the correct Discourse and its attendant identity at the appropriate moment, has been the only way to navigate the structure of Discourses and their attendant identity kits. Therefore this undoing of the traditional view of identity as a cohesive

whole is important for language-minority students; when these students perceive that part of their identity can be lost or replaced when they acquire a new Discourse and its resultant ‘ways of being in the world,’ then this perception colors all subsequent feelings about learning. The individualistic tradition of identity as a stable, inner core is consequently the source of negative feelings for language-minority students who choose to acquire the dominant Discourse; the effect is a perception of identity fragmentation within a heavily restricted conception of student agency, as attested by Barbara Mellix and Richard Rodriguez. Therefore, if we accept the post-modern definition of identity, which stipulates that any individual is always and already multiple, then any ‘fragmentation’ shifts from a negative effect of Discourse acquisition to a normal trait of identity. This acknowledgement of multiplicity of identity is the basis of numerous Discourse-inclusive classroom pedagogies that ask the educator to place value in the student’s home Discourse, thereby also placing value in the aspect of the student’s identity that is associated with that Discourse.

These Hybrid Discourses pedagogies are discussed in reference to *both* high school and undergraduate classrooms. While they are meant to address the needs of all language-minority students at the undergraduate level, they are only meant for not-learners at the high school level; this is because not-learners may never reach the college classroom due to their tendency to act out rebellious impulses through exiting the school system. This variable is one of many that constitute the application of Hybrid Discourse pedagogy to the classroom. Another variable is the number and source of non-dominant Discourses that students bring into the classroom. Since hybrid Discourses are constituted by their inclusion of differing non-dominant Discourses in

conjunction with the dominant Discourse, the written production of any hybrid Discourse classroom is experimental, dynamic and unpredictable. In line with the non-traditional nature of these pedagogies is the place of the writer: when working in a hybrid Discourse, the writer is at the center of the work, but in the dominant academic Discourse, the writer is just another tangential entity who must strive for objectivity and clarity, not personalization. Although academia puts greater stock in the latter dynamic, this preference for the dispassionate writer carries with it an implicit devaluing of the subjective writer who shapes the text around his or her identity. Judith Hebb, an English 101 instructor at Texas A&M, provides specific examples of the dynamic of the hybrid Discourse classroom through her commentary on her student Jeremy's writing. At several points in his first essay, Jeremy is able to inject his subjectivity and personality into his writing without dismissing grammatical conventions and proper diction. In essence, Hebb uses Jeremy's code meshed text to inject Hybrid Discourse pedagogy with an air of legitimacy and workability. She does so within a paradigm shift among academics toward greater inclusion of the 'alternative' voice, which is a familiar label for writing from non-dominant Discourse groups. This growing presence of alternative Discourses within academia consequently lends greater credence to the danger of *not* valuing alternative Discourses and their particular classroom identities; Hybrid Discourse pedagogy specifically aims to combat this, especially where the language-minority student is concerned.

While the traditional skill set for language-minority students has been code switching, the possession of two discrete Discourses (and identities) that can be used at different times, Hybrid Discourse pedagogy advocates code meshing: the fusing of

these dominant and non-dominant Discourses which, when enacted through writing, is Stuart Hall's articulation. This skill invokes a purposeful inclusion and exclusion of certain portions of language *and* identity, therefore the agency relegated to the writer is much greater than that of code meshing or standard academic writing. The techniques used when code meshing being used are often composed of both the traditional variety, such as citation and textual engagement, as well as the non-traditional variety, such as personal experience, subjectivity, and intuition. The emphasis is upon range, multiplicity, and experimentation, for Stuart Hall's articulation of the post-modern identity is quite literally mimicked by the pedagogies of hybrid Discourses; the articulation of identity through interlanguage is composed of new and better descriptions of the self with a 'craft-person attitude' that allows access to Discourses typically excluded from classroom writing. This inclusiveness also extends to pop culture, for in another example of Jeremy's writing, Judith Hebb discovers that her student mirrors a familiar cultural reference to express sentiments, such as humor and rebelliousness, that he can't access through academic writing. In a subsequent example, Jeremy also asserts his awareness of the politicization of language through slang, a type of non-traditional diction that is intensely personal and cultural, and which is normally banned from Composition classrooms. The inclusiveness of the hybrid Discourse classroom may lead to connotations of lax academic standards, for Lisa Delpit contends that any classroom that ignores the need for functional knowledge of the dominant Discourse by its students will be ineffectual. This contention is not valid, however, due to the requirements of code meshing: students must enact rhetorical movements that mimic those of the 'contact zone,' and to do so, they must have functional knowledge

of both their primary non-dominant Discourse and their secondary dominant academic Discourse. The literature advocated by authors of Hybrid Discourse pedagogy, such as Patricia Bizzell, can be found in Mary Louise Pratt's contact zone: the space in which cultures are able to define themselves and the 'other' within a system of dominancy. The contact zone contains literature that engages representations of group identity in a complex and extended debate, therefore it contains rhetorical maneuvers and ideological arguments of dominant and non-dominant Discourse groups that are appropriate material for the hybrid Discourse classroom. Therefore students will excerpt and imitate rhetorical strategies of the contact zone while also paying particular attention to academic Discourse in order to utilize it in their own articulated writings. This process, at its most productive, leads to the articulation not just of disparate Discourses, but also of different aspects of students' identities.

When discussing Hybrid Discourse pedagogy, the question is not whether it is generally helpful or useful, but rather whether it is the best way to address the many issues surrounding language-minority students in the classroom. I would assert that Hybrid Discourse pedagogy is best because it embraces the Discourses *and identities* of students in danger of falling through the cracks of dominant Discourse-centered classrooms; it does so by valuing writing that incorporates non-dominant Discourses, by increasing the agency of students, by addressing students as holistic entities, and by factoring in the range of student ability levels. By enhancing the value of interlanguage, the hybrid Discourse classroom denies the binary of not-learner or scholarship boy for language-minority students. Instead of rebelling against a classroom that sees no integrity in one's identity (as a not-learner), or conversely denying one's background in

favor of a purely academic identity (as a scholarship boy), language-minority students have the opportunity to pursue a third path in which functional dominant Discourse knowledge and personalized writing styles are paired, and this in turn increases their agency within academia. The key is to utilize the opportunity, despite its temporary nature, to show students that Discourse *can* be explored with equanimity within academia even if the rules are normalized once more when the course is over. By equalizing dominant and non-dominant Discourses the teacher is also including the student's multiple identity kits, and thereby opening the classroom to the personal narrative of each student within a process of identity formation and transformation. Hybrid Discourse classrooms consequently have value due to their holistic view of the student and subsequent ability to disrupt the traditional progression of language-minority students into scholarship boys or not-learners. When considering the applicability of hybrid Discourses, code meshing, and interlanguage within the classroom, it is important to note that there is an essential divide amongst language-minority students between those who can code switch and those who cannot. In response, Hybrid Discourse pedagogy addresses the primary needs of each of these groups: the hybrid Discourse classroom can teach language-minority students to code switch due to its emphasis upon teaching functional use of the dominant Discourse, and it can teach those who can already code switch how to mitigate feelings of identity fragmentation through articulation of the post-modern identity. Pedagogies of articulation therefore act as a cohesive framework for enacting a shift in the way academia addresses language-minority students and increases their agency in accordance with the agency granted to students from mainstream backgrounds. It is my

hope that greater attention will be paid to minority students in the classroom, whether their minority status is a product of language or some other factor, and that this attention will turn to action by educators.

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