

7 Tips for Supporting International Writers

Intro: Things that impact second language writing

1. Teach Western essay structure
2. Recognize cultural bias
3. Write better prompts
4. Consider different grading approaches for conventions
5. Provide feedback effectively
6. Coach timed writing
7. Encourage ongoing use of the Writing Center

Closing: Some considerations for online settings

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Slides online: bit.ly/ECTL-Apr2020

Some discussion questions

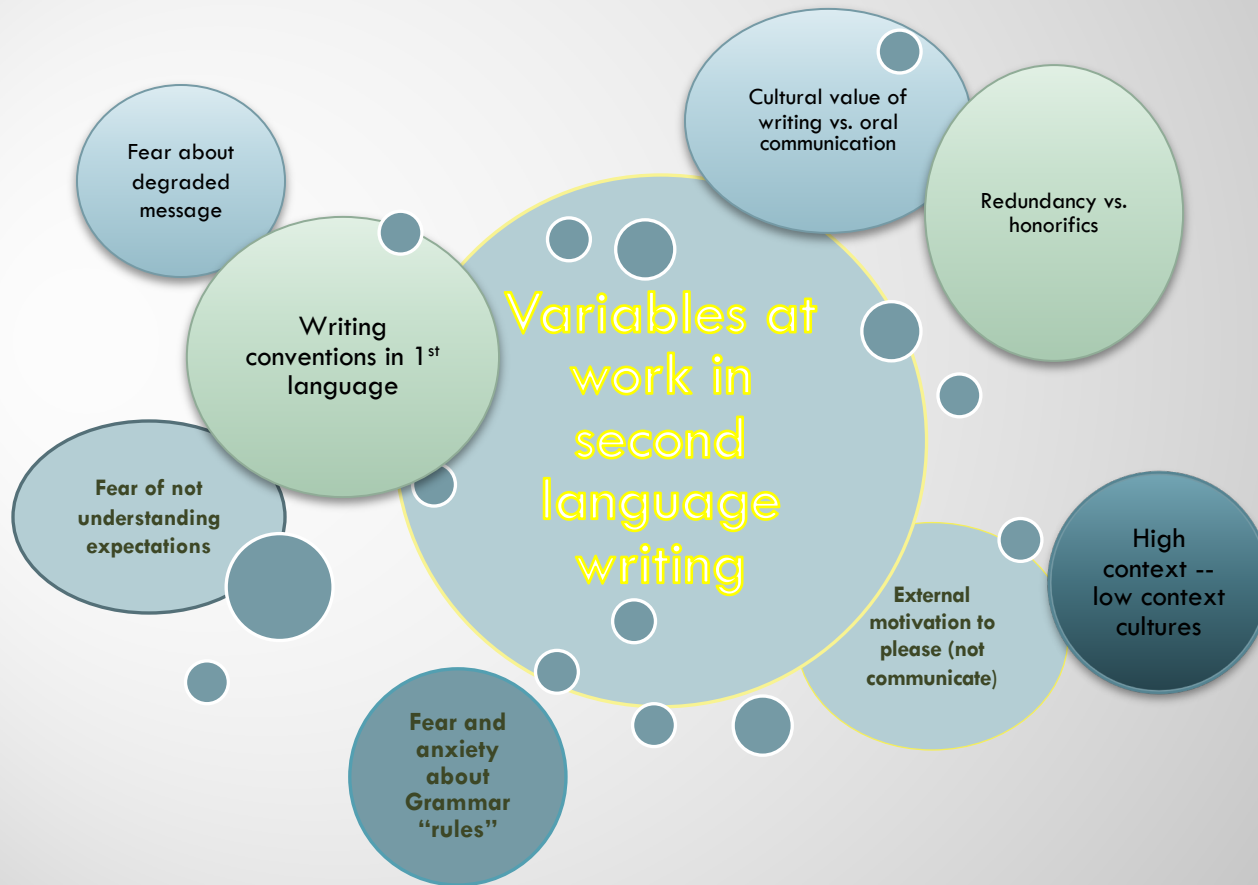
- What is your experience teaching international writers/speakers?
- What specific successes and challenges have you had teaching these students?
- Has teaching online caused you to change your approaches to working with international speakers/writers?

Intro:

Variables at work in second-language writing

- Writing conventions in 1st language
 - Cultural value of writing vs. oral communication
 - High context -- low context cultures
 - Redundancies and honorifics
 - Fear and anxiety about grammar “rules”
 - Anxiety about degraded message
 - External motivation to please not to communicate
 - Fear of not understanding expectations
- *I should start with 3 pages about why this topic is important before I actually describe the topic!*
 - *Why do I have to restate the obvious?*
 - *It's not real yet because we haven't talked about it.*
 - *I don't have to explain it because it is already known.*
 - *I don't want to insult the professor by repeating any information.*
 - *I'm afraid to make mistakes so I am going to copy what the book says.*
 - *The reader won't understand my ideas because the thoughts don't translate.*
 - *I just want to put down what the professor wants—my own ideas are unimportant.*

Accommodating Neurodiversity !!



1. Teach Western conventions

- Most students know and have had exposure to the **classic 5 paragraph essay structure** for humanities constructs.
- Structuring components of the essay through useful **topic sentences** is usually the most challenging part.
- Remember that **plagiarism** is a cultural construct!
- Don't be afraid to give template sentences as training wheels.
- Make organizing support for coherency a public discussion

2. Recognize cultural bias

- Identify your pet-peeves: What mistakes can you tolerate, which ones make you sick, due to your academic “up-bringing”?
- To what degree does your cultural bias influence your grading or your attitude towards a (groups of) student(s)?
- Double-check your assumptions about certain cultures: Are they really justified?
- Find out how important “deviations” from English conventions are for each assignment.
- Monitor your assumptions and your peeves, so they won't get the better of you!

Cultural bias: The interpretation of any phenomena based on one's own cultural standards.

3. Write better prompts

- Be aware of culturally embedded knowledge
- Be explicit about your expectations (with rubric, template, models)
 - Write a typical one-page application letter and a typical resume. Be sure to use power verbs, specific examples, and effective tone to present yourself positively.

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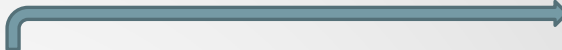
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- As part of the “war on drugs” and in reaction to an increase in school violence, many schools across the nation now conduct targeted searches of student lockers and backpacks. Although the Supreme Court has ruled that public-school officials have the right to search students’ persons and property when they have reasonable cause to suspect weapons or drugs, many people feel this is a gross violation of students’ right to privacy. Others feel that school officials are responsible for the well-being of students during school time, so they have the right to search for drugs or weapons. Argue your position on this issue.

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4. Provide effective feedback

- Focus on higher-order issues first (and learn to read through error)
- Don't over-focus on grammar in preliminary drafts
- Focus on errors, not mistakes
- Minimal marking/indirect corrective feedback is (probably) better than editing



Focus/Thesis, Organization, Development, Tone

- **S/V**: Subject-verb agreement
- **VT**: Verb tense
- **VF**: Verb form (*was eat*)
- **S/P**: Singular/plural
- **WF**: Word form (*democratic v democracy*)
- **SS**: Sentence structure
- **Voc**: Vocabulary

5. Coach timed writing

- When non-native speakers have to write in a timed environment they usually:
 - Hit the panic button and write everything down as fast as they can with no devices or coherency, OR
 - Write 3 perfectly crafted sentences for a 40-minute essay question.
- Q: Online, how can you tell if they are google translating ????

Teach or make available reference pages with structural templates for factual, synthesizing, and opinion questions.

What 3 processes are most important in viral gene sequencing?

Template: There are several processes involved in _____. The three most important are _____ and _____ because _____. This is evident in the way _____ has to occur in order for _____ to happen.

Compare theory A to theory B. Which theory do you think is more accurate or useful in context C ?

Template: Theory A says _____ while in contrast theory B says _____. Both theories describe _____ as being _____. In context C, it is clear that _____ is the better fit because _____.

6. Consider new approaches for grading

- Think of all students' writing as “accented,” and learn to accept accented writing as normal.
- Develop rubrics that keep you in check and that focus on YOUR goals/priorities (!)
- Grade conventions as rhetorical rather than absolute

Deductions for Rule-Based Errors in Grammar, Punctuation, Usage, or Spelling								
Positive ethos			Annoying noise			Errors destroy ethos		
+5	0	-3	-5	-8	-10	-12	-15	

Q: Is it okay to hold nonnative writers to a different grading standard?

7. Encourage use of UW Writing Center



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WELCOME, RICK ▼

April 16 - April 22, 2020

Spring 2020



◀ PREVIOUS WEEK | CURRENT WEEK | NEXT WEEK ▶



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Apr. 16: Thursday	9:00am	10:00am	11:00am	12:00pm	1:00pm	2:00pm	3:00pm	4:00pm	5:00pm	6:00pm
Alex Rickert ONLINE & ETUTORING										
Ashley Burchett ADMINISTRATORS ONLY ONLINE & ETUTORING										
Barbara Bogart ONLINE & ETUTORING										
Caroline Fleischauer ONLINE & ETUTORING										
Emily Smith - UNDERGRADS ONLY ONLINE & ETUTORING										

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University of Wyoming Writing Center

uwyo.mywconline.com/reserve.php?id_d=1587013200&id_s=sc5e0e52818bff4&id_r=sc5e0e55914f998&id_t...

Appointment Date

Thursday, April 16, 2020:

4:00pm



to 5:00pm



Show REPEAT Options

Staff or Resource

Alex Rickert (Spring 2020)

APPOINTMENT LIMITS: Appointments must be 1 hour in length.

STAFF/RESOURCE EMAIL: arickert@uwyo.edu

Alex finished his BAs in English Literature and French at the University of Wyoming in 2015 before embarking on the Japanese Exchange and Teaching (JET) Programme, and taught ESL in a rural community close to Tokyo, Japan for 3 years. During this time, he also wrote about LGBTQ issues in the popular Japanese travel blog *Gaijinpot*. His graduate interests include shared Japanese-American queer identities and spaces, and queer phenomenology. He also enjoys bouldering, podcasts, reading on the train, and his precious Nintendo Switch.

Meet Online?

☒ Yes. Schedule **eTutoring** appointment.

If you choose an eTutoring appointment, upload your paper after making this appointment. Then, watch your email for notification that your appointment has been modified or that someone has responded to your paper.

☐ Yes. Schedule **Online** appointment.

If you choose an online appointment, log back in to this website approximately five to ten minutes before the start of your appointment. Then, open this appointment and click "Start or Join Online Consultation."

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Online writing concerns / Q+A?

- Formal and informal contexts
- Message boards
- Reflection homework
- Peer help
- Accuracy vs Fluency debates
- Formal writing assignments
- Due dates – progress check points

Other questions ??

Some ideas for online writing

- Make assignments peer-reviewed online before submission; require a peer to sign-off on the assignment before submission
- Make peer-reviewing someone else's paper part of their participation grade
- Post assignment outlines/drafts – anonymously - on the discussion board and ask the class:
 - Is this the best organization pattern for these ideas?
 - Is there enough support, is it useful, does it fulfill the assignment?