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Academic Language Development and Linguistic Discrimination: Perspectives from Internationally Educated Students
Développement du langage académique et discrimination linguistique : perspectives d'étudiants formés à l'étranger

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Language use within Canadian postsecondary institutions reflects ongoing neocolonialism and the privileging of European and North American English varieties. This article shares student perspectives of interactions with faculty on themes of language development and linguistic discrimination, discovered in qualitative interviews using Appreciative Inquiry methodology. Participants' stories reveal both appreciation for supportive practices that facilitate the development of academic language skills and frustration with linguistic discrimination. Practices valued by participants include using simple and clear language, creating a comfortable environment for non-native English speakers, honouring multilingualism, and providing supportive instruction in discipline-specific language. Students also identified experiences of linguistic discrimination that resulted in academic and personal harm. In students' stories, a tension between encouraging academic language development while avoiding discriminatory practices emerges. Paths forward in navigating this tension while challenging colonial language hierarchies may include integrating pedagogies using an academic literacies framework while also creating space for translingual practices in classrooms and institutions.

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Abstract
Language use within Canadian postsecondary institutions reflects ongoing neocolonialism and the privileging of European and North American English varieties. This article shares student perspectives of interactions with faculty on themes of language development and linguistic discrimination, discovered in qualitative interviews using Appreciative Inquiry methodology. Participants' stories reveal both appreciation for supportive practices that facilitate the development of academic language skills and frustration with linguistic discrimination. Practices valued by participants include using simple and clear language, creating a comfortable environment for non-native English speakers, honouring multilingualism, and providing supportive instruction in discipline-specific language. Students also identified experiences of linguistic discrimination that resulted in academic and personal harm. In students' stories, a tension between encouraging academic language development while avoiding discriminatory practices emerges. Paths forward in navigating this tension while challenging colonial language hierarchies may include integrating pedagogies using an academic literacies framework while also creating space for translingual practices in classrooms and institutions.

Résumé
L'utilisation des langues dans les établissements postsecondaires canadiens reflète le néocolonialisme continu et la préférence des variétés d'anglais européennes et nord-américaines. Cet article présente les perspectives d'étudiants envers les interactions avec le corps enseignant sur les thèmes du développement linguistique et de la discrimination linguistique, découvertes lors d'entretiens qualitatifs utilisant la méthode de l'Interrogation appréciative. Les récits des participants révèlent à la fois une appréciation des pratiques de soutien qui facilitent le développement des compétences linguistiques académiques et une frustration face à la discrimination linguistique. Les pratiques appréciées par les participants incluent l'utilisation d'un langage simple et clair, la création d'un environnement confortable pour les personnes dont l'anglais n'est pas la langue maternelle, la reconnaissance du multilinguisme et la prestation d'information de soutien dans un langage spécifique à la discipline. Les étudiants ont également fait état d'expériences de discrimination linguistique ayant entraîné des préjudices scolaires et personnels. Les récits des étudiants font apparaître une tension entre le fait d'encourager le développement de la langue académique tout en évitant les pratiques discriminatoires. Les voies à suivre pour naviguer cette tension tout en remettant en question les hiérarchies linguistiques coloniales peuvent inclure l'intégration de pédagogies utilisant un cadre de littératie académique tout en créant un espace pour les pratiques translinguistiques dans les salles de classe et les institutions.

Keywords: academic language, academic literacies, linguistic discrimination, intercultural teaching, translingualism, neocolonalism in higher education
Mots clés : langage académique, littératies académiques, discrimination linguistique, enseignement interculturel, translinguisme, néocolonialisme dans l'enseignement supérieur

Multilingual students who speak English as an additional language (EAL) are a significant population in Canada's postsecondary institutions. At the end of 2021, 621,565 international students held visas to study in Canada, a number that has increased 135% since 2010 (Canadian Bureau for International Education, 2022). The number of multilingual students is further augmented by new Canadians who undertake education after immigration as adults, and English language learners who completed only a part of their education in Canadian secondary schools before entering postsecondary programs. For many multilingual users of EAL, completing postsecondary education in English brings tension between a desire to acquire the benefits arising from professional English communication skills and experiences of linguistic discrimination where linguistic identities are invalidated and academic progress may be hindered.

Internationalizing postsecondary institutions are shaped by an often unspoken modern/colonial imaginary (Stein & Andreotti, 2017); within this imaginary, Western knowledges are privileged, and Western native-speaker varieties of English are valued over other languages. This modern/colonial imaginary also positions users of EAL within a deficit framework (Davis & Museus, 2019), which labels these students as lacking, and individually responsible for failures to succeed within a system that marginalizes them. Deficit thinking, according to Davis and Museus (2019), serves to uphold hegemonic norms, and tends to be both pervasive and implicit in policy creation systems.

As a result of both the modern/colonial imaginary and the ongoing presence of deficit discourses, international students and other multilingual learners experience linguistic discrimination in postsecondary institutions (Dobinson & Mercieca, 2020; Dovchin, 2020; Page, 2022), resulting in both academic and psychological harms. At the same time, however, institutional failure to support English language learners can result in decreased academic outcomes, including reduced opportunities to proceed to graduate education or postgraduate professional programs (Roessingh & Douglas, 2012). This creates a tension, where there is a need to proactively support students' development in English language and academic literacies, while at the same time avoiding linguistic racism and challenging modern/colonial discourses.

Literature Review

Linguistic Discrimination

The practice of conferring unequal status and resources on groups on the basis of language has been referred to as linguicism (Skutnabb-Kangas, 2016), linguistic discrimination (Dovchin, 2019), and linguistic racism (De Costa, 2020). Linguistic discrimination occurs in contexts where individuals are expected to conform to the linguistic norms and practices of the dominant culture. Lippi-Green (2012) emphasizes that linguistic discrimination positions those whose language use differs from the dominant norm as subordinate, creating barriers to the status and privilege afforded to dominant language speakers. Universities, particularly through implicit practices that replicate the modern/colonial imaginary, often function as sites of linguistic discrimination against Indigenous, international, and immigrant student populations (De Costa, 2020). The role of the colonial imaginary in perpetuating linguistic racism can be understood through the lens of Kachru's (1996) three-circle paradigm illustrating the colonial and neocolonial diffusion of English in its rise to status as a global language: "inner-circle" varieties are those used in the United Kingdom, the United States, Canada, Australia, and New Zealand. "Outer circle" varieties developed as a direct result of British and American colonialism in countries such as India, Kenya, Nigeria, and the Philippines. "Expanding circle" English varieties are spoken in nations that have adopted English as a high-status lingua franca, such as Japan, Indonesia, and Iran. International

students who study in "inner circle" countries as speakers of "outer circle" and "expanding circle" English varieties often find their language use marginalized, criticized, or rejected, regardless of actual proficiency and communicative skills (Lippi-Green, 2012; Sah, 2019). The modern/colonial imaginary, as a force shaping both language use and university education, gives rise to pervasive, though often implicit, linguistic discrimination on university campuses.

Linguistic discrimination has a range of impacts on international and other multilingual students on campus. In their study of Canadian domestic students who learned English upon arrival to Canada during their elementary and secondary school years, Roessingh and Douglas (2012) found that while these students were successful in graduating from 4-year degree programs, their grades were lower than native English-speaking peers, potentially preventing further graduate-level study. In addition to academic impacts, experiencing linguistic discrimination may result in negative mental health consequences for international students, including social withdrawal, anxiety, depressive symptoms, and suicidal ideation (Dovchin, 2020). Asian international students who experience linguistic and racial microaggressions may cope through withdrawal into familiar and safe cultural contexts, limiting opportunities for belonging and intercultural connectedness (Houshmand et al., 2014). Linguistic discrimination results in a wide variety of negative consequences, including reduced academic performance, disrupted social connections, and significant mental health impacts.

Academic Literacies

One challenge in confronting linguistic discrimination is the need to counter harmful practices, while at the same time facilitating students' access to academic and professional linguistic resources. Mahboob and Szenes (2010) explore the relationship between linguistic racism and academic literacies. While continuing to question the role of linguistic racism in assessing student writing according to dominant culture norms, Mahboob and Szenes, through careful analysis of the linguistic features of student writing, link a lack of access to the features of the "language of power" (p. 350) to low grades given by assessors. They conclude that identifying and naming linguistic discrimination is insufficient, and that structured pedagogies that provide access to the linguistic power readily available to dominant-culture, middle-class students is critical to addressing barriers to successful communication in academic environments.

The academic literacies model, articulated by Lea and Street (1998), takes a non-deficit approach to the process of student writing development within academic disciplines. The academic literacies model posits that traditional understandings of student writing in higher education fail to account for knowledges of disciplinary ways of knowing, communication strategies, and power relationships that are implicit in different forms of academic writing. Wingate (2018) argues that academic literacies require knowledge of both disciplinary ways of knowing and genres, and that these can only be acquired within the context of the disciplinary community that uses these ways of knowing and communicating knowledge. Wingate (2006, 2018) contests that rather than offering remedial, deficit-based programming based on the implicit assumption that learners are missing core skills, academic literacies support is relevant for all students, and is best delivered within the context of core disciplinary learning within courses.

In summary, the reality of linguistic discrimination, both as a theoretical construct (Skutnabb-Kangas, 2016) and as a lived experience of multilingual students is clearly documented (Dovchin, 2020). Focused programs for multilingual EAL students based around an academic literacies model have been documented as beneficial to learners (Baik & Greig, 2009), and provide a potential remedy to internationally educated students' unequal access to linguistic structures that

facilitate recognition of their knowledge (Mahboob & Szenes, 2010). This paper seeks to build on the existing literature by bringing together the often-separated discussions of linguistic discrimination and academic literacies, noting that both areas are often simultaneously reflected in the lived experiences of multilingual postsecondary students.

Methodology

The present study explores experiences of linguistic discrimination and acquisition of academic literacies through the experiences of internationally educated[1] students at a western Canadian postsecondary institution. These themes are explored by drawing from a broader qualitative-dominant exploratory, mixed methods study that followed a taxonomy development model (Creswell, 2015; Onwuegbuzie et al., 2010). Methodology was also drawn from the transformative paradigm for mixed methods research (Mertens, 2007). The study's primary research question was "what are faculty ways of being, knowing, and doing that effectively demonstrate faculty interculturality, as understood by internationally educated students? This paper reports and discusses data from the qualitative phase of the broader mixed methods study. The study received ethics board approval both at the institution where the study was conducted and institution to which the research was affiliated.

As a Canadian-born, White, mother-tongue English speaker, I entered my research with the awareness of the need for a theoretical framework and methodology that facilitated the centring of internationally educated student voices. The transformative paradigm (Mertens, 2007) used in this study provides a model for conducting mixed methods research in support of social change. Research shaped by the transformative paradigm aims to include participant voices at all phases of the project and views the integration of qualitative and quantitative analysis as a powerful means of engaging those with change-making power with data that speaks to their needs. The transformative paradigm can also provide a strong basis for cultural relevance in research (Chilisa & Tsheko, 2014).

The findings reported and discussed in this paper are drawn from the qualitative phase of the broader study. Qualitative data were gathered through in-depth interviews of 12 participants recruited by email via the international office of the western Canadian institution where the study took place. India was the country of origin for nine of the 12 participants; Saudi Arabia, Nepal, and Brazil were the remaining countries of origin represented. Seven of the study participants studied in traditional undergraduate programs, while the remaining five were students or alumni of post-baccalaureate diploma programs, offered by the institution to students with an undergraduate degree seeking an additional qualification in a business program. All participants were in their second year of study and above; this inclusion criteria ensured participants' experience in a variety of courses with a number of faculty. Participants are identified with pseudonyms.

[1] In this study, the internationally educated student category includes both students on international student visas and other students who completed secondary school outside of Canada but who are institutionally classified as domestic students.

Table 1

Pseudonym	Level of Study at Time of Interview	Program	Country of Origin
Agam	Undergraduate (Year 2)	Psychology/ General Studies	India
Karampreet	Undergraduate (Year 2)	Psychology/ General Studies	India
Harseerat	Undergraduate (Year 2)	Biology/ General Studies	India
Isha	Undergraduate (Year 2)	Psychology	India
Loveen	Undergraduate (Year 4)	Math/Psychology	India
Tavleen	Undergraduate (Year 5)	Health Sciences	India
Jasveen	Post-Baccalaureate	Accounting	India
Matthias	Post-Baccalaureate	Human Resources	Brazil
Sadia	Alumni (Undergraduate)	Psychology/ Counselling	Saudi Arabia
Ranveet	Alumni (Post-Baccalaureate)	Accounting	India
Ashi	Alumni (Post-Baccalaureate)	Operations and Supply Chain Management	Sri Lanka
Ikbir	Alumni (Post-Baccalaureate)	Accounting	India

I conducted the interviews using principles and methods from Appreciative Inquiry (Cooperrider & Srivasta, 1987; Whitney & Trosten-Bloom, 2010). Appreciative Inquiry seeks to create positive change by identifying strengths present in an environment, rather than focusing on deficits (Cooperrider & Srivasta, 1987). Practices that shape involvement with an Appreciative Inquiry process for participants include being known in relationship, being heard, dreaming in community, choosing to contribute, acting with support, and being positive (Whitney & Trosten-Bloom, 2010, p. 270).

Because of pandemic restrictions, interviews were conducted online, using Zoom software. Interviews were not time restricted and averaged 1 hour. Participants were first provided with an introduction to the topic of faculty interculturality to facilitate discussion through the provision of stimulus materials and common vocabulary (Liamputtong, 2011). Next, participants were invited to respond to prompts about faculty interculturality on three topics: faculty appreciation of cultural diversity, intercultural relationships in the classroom, and the provision of equitable learning opportunities. Each topic began with a brief lead-in paragraph to stimulate participants' memory of relevant stories. Participants then shared stories of their interactions with faculty, and the impact of these experiences on their learning. While Appreciative Inquiry prompts encourage the generation of good practices, in order to facilitate increased change towards the positive, participants were given space to share all relevant experiences, whether positive or negative. Within an Appreciative Inquiry framework, this can be viewed as critical appreciation of all knowledge (Alvesson & Deetz, 2000; Grant & Humphries, 2006). The next interview questions shifted to the dream phase of the Appreciative Inquiry process (Whitney & Trosten-Bloom, 2010). Participants were asked to describe their idealized intercultural classroom. All responses were

shared verbally and recorded using the Zoom software. Finally, participants were invited to create a mind-map on the topic of faculty intercultural teaching using either Padlet software or the whiteboard tool in Zoom.

Each interview was transcribed, and the transcript was presented to participants for member checking. Then, transcriptions were thematically coded, first using marginal notes and inductive, eclectic first cycle coding (Saldaña, 2021); in this first step, broad, potential themes were identified. Next, I moved to refine the coding framework using QSR NVivo software. I then engaged in member checking with participants, asking for feedback on the relationship between the codes and their interview statements. The mind-maps were not coded, but rather were placed alongside the interview transcripts as an additional data source (Brinkmann, 2014).

Following coding of all interview data, I identified 23 themes. These themes were developed inductively, emerging from student statements. Codes were narrowed into the 23 themes by combining related codes with relatively few mentions. Additionally, where pairs of positive/negative codes were identified (e.g., demonstrate respect/ avoid disrespect), these were grouped into a single theme, worded according to the positive desired practice (e.g., demonstrate respect).

The 23 themes included practices that facilitate connection between students, practices that provide knowledge about the Canadian academic system, and practice that recognize non-academic factors in students' lives. This paper reports on the subsection of these themes that touch on the area of linguistic discrimination and practices that support student language development.

Results

The experience of studying as a developing multilingual user of English was both helped and hindered by faculty teaching practices. Additionally, students' responses reveal a tension between practices that support academic and professional language development, which is welcomed, and practices that diminish students' multilingual identities and directly discriminate. The five language-related themes that emerged from participants' stories are (1) use simple language; (2) create a comfortable environment for non-native English speakers; (3) demonstrate respect for multilingualism; (4) support student language development; and (5) avoid linguistic discrimination. Each theme will be discussed below, alongside the student stories that illustrate both participants' challenges and their preferred future.

Use Simple Language

Several participants highlighted the importance of simple and clear communication. This includes straightforward word choices and a recognition that both speed and accent create barriers for student understanding. Ashi shared her observations about the importance of simple communication, explaining,

> From what I see . . . maybe 30% of the students are very comfortable with whatever language the instructor uses. It makes it so much easier for them with the simpler language. Some instructors tend to use more complicated language, even when it's not necessary.

As they study in a second or third language, participants noted the challenge of keeping up with complex academic and discipline-specific terminology. Ikbir described his experience with this challenge.

> Another thing that I think I prefer in instructor[s] is when they try to simplify complex things by using simpler words, because most of the international students' English isn't in their first language

> and so they have trouble understanding complex words. And again, some students who are international they do know what these complex words mean, but again some don't.

In addition to linguistic complexity and academic vocabulary, the pace and timing of delivery can create additional challenges; simplicity of communication also requires attention to pace. Ranveet emphasized that the speed of faculty communication may create additional challenges for students. "Language is the barrier, but the speed is also a barrier, because [the] professor is teaching. We are coping up with the speed the professor is having." A few participants also mentioned the challenge of adapting to a new accent. Isha explained, "the accents are also really important, because due to different [instructor] accents, it's really hard sometimes to understand." Simple language and well-paced delivery, as the participants described, facilitates access to the course content as presented by instructors.

Create a Comfortable Environment for Non-Native English Speakers

Several participants mentioned the challenges of participating orally in class discussions using English, expressing the anxiety that this may present for students. Isha shared the thoughts and feelings that she, and other students, often experience related to class participation. "It's just that sometimes what happens is, in my experience only also, it's not that they don't want to participate, it's just that they are not comfortable in that environment. Obviously, everyone is afraid of being judged from others." Ikbir explained the importance of instructors' efforts to ease this challenge for students during their first months in Canada:

> When international students come in for the first time or there is the first semester, second semester, most of the time they feel out of place and they don't feel comfortable. I think making the students feel comfortable, at least in the first semester. I think that's the biggest job instructors have and the way of doing it is by easing them into these different kinds of topics and again making them more comfortable in it. I think by providing simple explanations, giving examples, or having group discussions, it slowly makes them more susceptible to group discussion. Because most of the students, when they come in, they are shy because they don't know or they don't have fluent English or anything, so they don't want to do group discussions or talk too much. But again, if they are included in group discussion, although they just talk one or two words, just making them more comfortable.

Ashi shared an example of an instructor's direct encouragement to students who were engaging in class as non-native English speakers. "He would tell the students, you are doing this in your kind of third language. I speak no other language but English, and you are not expected to be perfect. And this put the students at ease." In addition to supporting students' comfort with verbal participation, instructors' flexibility with the mode of student engagement and participation in class was valued by Isha:

> I mentioned this to the instructor as well. She said that instead of typing, she encourages students to maybe speak during the sessions cause it's more easy. And then I mentioned [to] her that I'm not that fluent in English, 'cause I am an international student. I really feel uncomfortable because of this; the domestic students are fluent. It's just that I have so many breaks during my conversation, so it makes me feel really uncomfortable. That's why I'm typing right now. And she said I'm totally comfortable with that. You can speak whenever you are comfortable. I think that's really important that teachers should know that maybe sometimes students do know the answers. They do want to deliver their ideas. It's just that the environment is not that comfortable at the moment.

The participants' examples illustrate the value that they place on instructors' recognition of the challenge of classroom participation in English. This includes both linguistic and affective factors: the practical challenge of spontaneously communicating complex concepts in a second or third language, and the fear of being judged by others. Easing this challenge involves both facilitating comfort with verbal participation and maintaining flexibility with other modes of engagement.

Demonstrate Respect for Multilingualism

As multilingual learners, several participants expressed their appreciation for faculty members' openness to the use of other languages in academic contexts. Tavleen explained, "Some [faculty] really follow the diversity and connection thing. They allow us to explain and make statements in our own language." For Tavleen, using the full resources of multiple languages is a tool for facilitating learning by promoting deeper understanding than can be achieved by using English alone. Other participants expressed appreciation for opportunities to bring their languages and cultures into the learning environment. Speaking of an anthropology assignment, Isha shared,

> The professor was welcome[ing]; he mentioned that you can take any movie. It could be Punjabi; it could be any language, even from India. It's not just that you have to take any English movie or English series only. I really appreciated that.

Similarly, Agam recounted his music instructor's promotion of multiple languages and cultures in class assignments:

> The professor told us we can write the lyrics in any language. It's not mandatory to write the lyrics in the English. So that's, I think, a good example of interculturality he is showing. At [the] last day I recorded my song in my language, and he was pretty happy with that.

In both Isha's and Agam's stories, their instructors' promotion of multilingualism reflected value placed on all languages and cultures, allowing students to bring their full linguistic and cultural identities into their learning.

Support Student Language Development

Several participants identified specific incidents where they appreciated instructor actions that fostered development in English language skills when this was delivered in a positive and non-punitive manner. Ranveet, speaking of a specific instructor she appreciated, mentioned "he really helped us, each and every student, by telling them what are the grammatical mistakes, what are the structure mistakes, how they can be improved." Agam identified formative feedback as a particularly helpful strategy, noting how it helped him succeed in an English course that often proves challenging for internationally educated students:

> The professor, she told me that "Yeah, I know it's not your first language, it's your third language. English is your third language. So, I will give you opportunity that you will firstly submit [your] rough drafts for the assignment. I will check that rough draft, and I will give you your mistakes and then you can edit it. And then you can post the final assignment." That really helps. I got a C+ on that course. But if, imagine if there wasn't any rough draft; I know I would have failed that course.

Agam noted his appreciation for the direct acknowledgement of the additional challenges he faced as a multilingual developing English writer, and the specific way that developmental formative feedback aided his success.

In other participant conversations, mentions of desirable English language support were contrasted with practices that participants considered discriminatory. In these cases, participants shared the faculty practices they would consider more supportive. In contrast to less helpful

feedback, Tavleen provided an example of how she wished developmental feedback would be offered:

> She can say "Yeah, it maybe, yeah, okay I understand you came from other culture, or you have another language that you speak. But it's okay, you can try to connect with other friends or other people from the university or try comic cartoons or something. Or try to read something", instead of saying that "yeah, that's why you are doing bad." So, on the other hand, that's more respectful.

In Tavleen's view, encouraging and concrete suggestions from an instructor would be welcome.

Two participants expressed a desire that language support be more clearly provided, particularly if instructors had specific linguistic forms that they desired students to use during a course. Harseerat expressed, somewhat ambivalently, the challenges faced by students who desire to improve, but lack clear direction, explaining, "ESL is a requirement to get into university, so yes, students should also do their best at their end. How else can we improve the language? I don't really know." Tavleen indicated that, rather than punitive feedback, she felt that it was desirable for instructors or the institution to provide specific language training and support in the context of the course:

> If she [the instructor] is very specific to writing, she should give a week or two-week classes; this is [what] I am expecting, and this is how your English should work for this course, and maybe try to recommend them to some tutors or some basic courses that are done online.

As Tavleen noted, support in academic English can be viewed as supportive when provided in a contextual, clear, and respectful manner. Isha noted that for many students, it is most helpful when this support is provided in the classroom context, rather than asking students to rely on campus support services:

> Teachers should know that they can help students during the class time only, instead of telling students to just take those facilities. Because I think in the three-hour time limit, they can teach international students how they can do their assignments well, because there is some phobia regarding English courses and international students.

Bringing together participants' suggestions, a combination of clear direction and support early in a course, combined with supportive formative feedback, may be viewed by students as a positive contribution to their growth as English language writers.

Avoid Linguistic Discrimination

While participants noted appreciation for instructors' efforts to support the development of academic English skills through respectfully delivered supports and feedback, several participants also noted the impact of linguistic discrimination by faculty. Participants' experiences of linguistic discrimination occurred in written assignments and exams. Tavleen shared an experience of grading she considered discriminatory:

> And she [the instructor] does negative marking for everything, even the multiple-choice questions, even in the compare and contrast question . . . If you forgot to put the comma, she cut 1.5 marks. The question is for three marks, and she cut 1.5 marks, just for the comma. And if you put extra 'the-s', 'a-s', because you are in time pressure as well, as you are writing all the stuff down that you learned from the last week. Because that's not the only way to test it.

Sadia recounted a challenging experience where her writing was rejected as "ESL" by an English instructor:

> I remember handing the instructor the first assignment, the first essay. And he was handing every student, and then when he got to me, he looked at the paper and then he looked at me and then he said, out loud, in front of everybody, he said, "how do you feel about your paper? Because I don't feel that it's an academic level; it's an ESL level." And then before handing the paper to me, he actually asked a student to take the paper, because that student was an international teacher at Japan, and he handed the paper to her and he told her "if you have time, you can help her out." So that specific incident was actually really extreme to me, and shocking in a way, because during all of my ESL classes I have never heard such a comment, or I have never actually expected that I'm this bad in English, right? I was hoping if I am to go back, or to openly discuss this with the instructor, again, at that time I wasn't very confident in myself, I wasn't sure how to approach with all of the cultural lenses and teaching approaches and all of that. So, I kept it to myself.

As Sadia explained, not only was her work characterized as "ESL," but she also experienced her instructor's disrespect in front of her other classmates. As the conversation continued, Sadia explored what she would have done if faced with the situation again:

> But anyways, if I am to go back, I would, I would openly speak to the instructor and ask them to, you know what, it might have been better if we took this in private, first, and if we had, if I had, if you gave me as a student a chance to reflect more, or to see the paper first, and then we make a decision from that. Right? Whether I'm suitable to this class or not, right? I wished from the instructor to be more private about it. I wished from the instructor to use different language from the ones that he used, or different judgements that I got, or I sensed. And maybe recommendations of how to navigate through my challenges as an international student, or somebody who speaks English as a third, fourth language. That's what I, I hoped for, maybe? I ended up dropping the course after his comment. I dropped the course completely. And I retook it again and I got B+.

As Sadia's experience illustrates, linguistic discrimination undermines students' confidence, and in this incident, demonstrated clear disrespect for her as an equal participant in the learning environment alongside native English speakers. In both Sadia's and Tavleen's stories, linguistic discrimination prevented them from receiving recognition for the value of their ideas and contributions.

Discussion

Academic Literacies and Student English

The space for academic language development in multilingual and translingual institutions requires holding tension. While rejecting the marginalization of students' Englishes, educators can still support academic communication and access to discourses of power (Mahboob & Szenes, 2010). Several participants expressly mentioned a desire to improve their academic and professional writing skills, such as Ranveet's comments of appreciation for instructor feedback in this area. Too often, however, for multilingual non-native English speakers, their status as emergent writers in academic and professional genres is tied to their status as "ESL," as illustrated in Sadia's experience. Instead, it could be viewed as a common experience of acquiring new genres that all students experience in educational contexts (Lea & Street, 1998).

As Mahboob and Szenes (2010) highlight, creating equitable opportunities for students may require direct instruction using methods that systematically address linguistic structures that afford high communicative power in academic contexts. For example, Harseerat's ambiguity over how to actualize growth in communication skills may also reveal a need for more specific, direct, and focused academic literacies initiatives. Similarly, Isha's desire that this support be provided within the classroom context illustrates why the application of an academic literacies model, where

discipline-specific instruction on academic and professional communication conventions is provided in the context of the course, is important.

When viewed within a postcolonial framework, the academic literacies model may also be a way to question colonial mindsets that position Western knowledges and ways of communicating as normative, universal, and translocal. Practitioners following the academic literacies approach emphasize that academic and professional communication conventions cannot be universalized, and that they can only be acquired through participation in a particular knowledge community (Lea & Street, 1998). Practicing academic literacies through a critical sociocultural lens can create space for students to access "genres of power," while at the same time critiquing the role of dominant discourses (Trigos Carrillo, 2019). Providing students with the access to the power offered by dominant forms of academic and professional communication, while at the same time critiquing them as contextually and culturally bound, may be viewed as a hospicing intervention (Stein & Andreotti, 2017), which seeks to minimize harm while acknowledging that long-term change to colonially driven language hierarchies is still needed.

The Potential of Translingualism

Participants felt affirmed in their multilingualism when the classroom linguistic repertoire expanded beyond English to include their other languages. While in participants' experiences, this primarily occurred in arts-based contexts (e.g., music, film study), translingualism offers potential to enrich student learning more broadly. In the context of higher education, translingual practice incorporates openness to students using all of their linguistic resources in academic communication, fostering metacognitive and metalinguistc awareness about language use and language choices (Cavazos & Musanti, 2021). Canagarajah's (2018) study of translingual language use among STEM scholars illustrates that successful academic communication encompasses the fluid use of multiple languages for different purposes, the integration of linguistic and visual resources, and the strategic employment of language resources in social contexts. The translingual paradigm shifts focus away from languages as discrete and bounded resources that are used in separate spheres, opening possibilities for fluid and integrated use of communicative resources from multiple languages. Cavazos and Musanti (2021) note that for practical implementation of translingual pedagogies, further exploration into discipline-specific translingual approaches would be valuable. Translingualism challenges the modern/colonial imaginary that views languages as fixed and bounded and that positions them in hierarchical relationships. When combined with academic literacy pedagogies in an integrated manner, translingual pedagogies may offer an additional window to critique the hegemony of dominant language "genres of power," allowing students to use a range of linguistic resources more fully for communication in a multilingual, culturally diverse society.

Linguistic Comfort and Perceived Competence in Classrooms

Several participants mentioned issues of comfort and competence in English in classroom contexts. The majority of participants (10/12) are speakers of "outer circle" Englishes, as defined by Kachru (1996). In the context of the in-depth research interviews, I experienced each participant as a clear, confident English speaker capable of discourse on complex topics. Yet, even from student participants, a discourse of insufficient English persists. For example, Ikbir mentioned that international students "don't have fluent English," while Isha contrasted herself with domestic students, whom she described as "fluent." This discourse is often connected with students' stated discomfort and fear of classroom communication. As Sah (2019) emphasizes, the authority

ascribed to the dominant, "inner circle" English variety can result in Othering of racialized speakers of other English varieties, creating feelings of inferiority that inhibit active participation in the classroom. This is illustrated by Isha's experience of a fear of being judged for what she perceives as inferior communication. This may reveal an outworking of discourses about global English varieties. While Indian English, for example, may be accepted as a local variety, North American Englishes dominate and are perceived as translocal, and more normatively correct (Blommaert, 2010). Participants' comments rarely reveal confidence in their own abilities; rather, they have seemingly absorbed discourses that label their English communication as insufficient. A colonial imaginary that positions "outer circle" Englishes as local, and native-speaker Englishes as global pervades institutional norms, powerfully shaping students' own self-perception and undermining confidence. This can further limit students' academic growth as they may choose withdrawal and silence as coping strategies (Sah, 2019). This pattern reveals a need for greater understanding of global Englishes, and a shattering of colonial hierarchies that maintain the dominance of some varieties of English over others.

Linguistic Discrimination and its Impacts

Participants' mentions of overt linguistic discrimination demonstrate its academic and personal harms. Tavleen's experience of harsh grading in a timed environment, which typically penalizes multilingual non-native English speakers significantly, causes obvious academic disadvantage. In Sadia's story, an experience of extreme linguistic discrimination resulted in withdrawal from the course. Linguistic discrimination is likely a contributing factor to the lower academic performance of non-native English speakers as compared with native English-speaking peers (e.g., Roessingh & Douglas, 2012). As Mahboob and Szenes (2010) explain, not all differences in academic performance can be attributed directly to linguistic discrimination. While initiatives that support academic language development may be appropriate and welcomed by students, as illustrated by several participants' comments in this study, the presence of discriminatory practices also requires a response of direct challenge. While many Canadian postsecondary institutions are implementing dialogues and strategic efforts to counter racism (e.g., Blackett et al., 2022; Toronto Metropolitan University Faculty of Arts, 2021), challenging linguistic racism is often not yet explicitly included in these efforts. Presently, linguistic racism may be considered as an "acceptable" form of discrimination in postsecondary institutions, connected with ongoing and unquestioned dominance of "native-speaker" forms of English in academic spaces.

As Dovchin's (2020) study of international students in Australian postsecondary institutions illustrates, linguistic discrimination may result in persistent feelings of inferiority and a sense of unbelonging. Psychological impacts include anxiety, depression, and suicidal ideation. Surtees (2019) highlights the ways in which the international student label is often used to reinforce deficit conceptions of multilingual non-native English speakers, reinforcing patterns of Othering. The significant consequences of linguistic discrimination on students' well-being indicates that greater efforts to counter these institutional practices is needed.

A limitation of this study is its location within a single postsecondary institution. Additionally, most participants were speakers of a single English variety (South Asian/ Indian English), and so it is not possible to determine whether these findings would be representative of participants speaking other English varieties.

Conclusion

Participants' discussion of their interactions with language in academic environments reveals interrelated desires for respect and support and identifies potential paths forward. Several participants indicated their appreciation for instruction and feedback that focused on building academic and professional English skills when it is delivered in a respectful and constructive manner. This suggests that strong pedagogical approaches built upon academic literacies may be valued by students, particularly because of pragmatic needs to perform the professional communicative tasks that can open access to the Canadian employment market. At the same time, students' experiences of linguistic discrimination as they are overtly expressed, alongside expressions of a lack of confidence that arise from colonially driven language hierarchies suggest that institutional shifts challenging dominant norms are also needed. These shifts may include more direct naming of linguistic discrimination alongside increased faculty education on the value of translingual pedagogies and perspectives.

Supporting students' thriving within a respectful multilingual classroom and institutional environment cannot be achieved through a single-strand approach. Challenging linguistic discrimination requires intentional awareness of how neocolonialism continues to shape postsecondary environments, privileging a few high-status English varieties, while positioning students' and their languages within a deficit framework. Supporting students involves both providing access to dominant communication strategies through pedagogy and embracing a decolonial vision of language and communication that places value on all global Englishes.

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