Chapter 9
American Professors' Support of Chinese International Students' Reading and Writing in Subject Courses

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Abstract The presence of Asian students can be strongly felt in U.S. universities these days. As non-native English-speaking (NNES) students, many of them face challenges in reading and writing in English, inside and outside the classroom. Research suggests that challenges specific to Asian students include indirection in making points, lack of personal voice, and discomfort in collaborative work. While some studies have examined these students' difficulties and strategies in academic literacy, very few have explored how university subject teachers accommodate these students' reading and writing abilities to facilitate learning. We studied American professors' practices in using writing to facilitate learning at an English-medium summer school in China, a school which constitutes part of transnational American higher education. All professors came from well-ranked American universities and taught a variety of courses typically offered to freshmen and sophomores in their home institutions. The majority of students are Chinese international students returning home from North America for the summer. Focusing on humanities and social sciences professors, who made up the majority of the faculty, the study has identified several key accommodation strategies that these professors adopted for their Chinese students. We conclude the study by discussing implications for assisting Asian students with their written English in English-medium university content courses. The professors' practices also raise questions about higher education in the United States.

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Introduction

The presence of Asian students can be strongly felt in many U.S. universities these days. As non-native English-speaking (NNES) students, many of them face literacy challenges, challenges in reading and writing, inside and outside the classroom. Researchers have identified an array of challenges that NNES students often encounter in content courses, including limited command of written English, restricted goals for writing (e.g., writing for regurgitating rather than for generating knowledge), and mismatches in expectations for writing between students and teachers (Enright and Gilliland 2011; Kibler 2011; Kong 2010; Leki 2007). Challenges specific to Asian students also include indirection in making points, lack of personal voice, and discomfort in collaborative work (Carson and Nelson 1994; Connor 1996). While numerous studies have examined NNES students' literacy challenges, very few have explored how university content teachers have accommodated these students' writing abilities in English to facilitate learning. Among the available studies on academic English literacy, most have focused on secondary school and university English for Academic Purposes (EAP) courses. The widespread English-medium instruction fueled by the internationalization of higher education requires that we understand how content teachers may accommodate NNES students' written English in the university.

To explore content teachers' accommodations, as we first reported in You and You (2013), we studied American professors' practices in using writing to facilitate learning at an English-medium summer school in China. All professors came from well-ranked American universities and taught a variety of courses typically offered to freshmen and sophomores in their home institutions. The majority of students are Chinese international students returning home from North America for the summer. Such an institutional setup makes the summer school an extension of American higher education. Studying a context where NNES students constitute a majority may offer us a view on the extent to which American teachers may accommodate NNES students' literacy challenges. Focusing on humanities and social sciences professors, who constituted the majority of the faculty, the study has identified several major accommodations these professors made for their Chinese students. We conclude the chapter by discussing implications for assisting NNES students with their written English in English-medium university content courses. The professors' practices also raise questions about higher education in Anglo-American nations.

Adapting to NNES Writers in Content Courses

Due to less exposure to and less experience with various academic genres in English, NNES students may have less in-depth lexical, grammatical, and rhetorical knowledge than native-language students. Compared with the latter, they are likely to have less intuitive textual knowledge or to lack what Leki (2007) has described as a

"backlog of experiences with English grammatical and rhetorical structure to fall back on" (p. 59). In addition, Kibler (2011) found that some adolescent NNES students "shared a frustration that they do not have 'backlog' of vocabulary knowledge, saying they did not understand or know how to use the more 'formal', 'good', 'difficult', or 'big' words they felt were expected in content area writing" (p. 223).

Like some NES students, NNES students are often found to have restricted goals for writing. For instance, rather than a mode of expressing, consolidating, and constructing disciplinary content, they may view writing as a medium for reproducing information (Enright and Gilliland 2011; Kong 2010; Liu 2008; Liu and You 2008; Wilcox 2011; You 2004). For example, Kong (2010) examined the written English in biology and history classes at a Hong Kong high school; the students were all native speakers of Cantonese. Although they had received much of their instruction in English, their class writing was limited, geared more toward answering exam questions than to exploring subject matter. Rather than supporting content and language learning, writing largely served as a means for students to regurgitate memorized information and a tool for teachers to check students' retention of factual information in preparation for standardized tests. In an American school district, Wilcox (2011) also found that the attention given to preparing students for high-stakes tests was detrimental to learning, as it overrode other writing goals and stressed restricted types of knowledge and forms of writing.

Like NES writers, NNES writers are sometimes found to have difficulty aligning with their teachers' expectations for writing across the curriculum. Writing is affected by the unique instructional niches shaped by a teacher and his or her students in a particular classroom. When teacher and student expectations for writing assignments are identical or similar, the students' literacy activities can be the most effective (Harklau 1999). However, studying a linguistically diverse high school in California, Kibler (2011) found that there the NNES students' understanding of genre, such as summary, essay, and lab report, varied and only partially overlapped with that of their teachers. In addition, the students' revisions to their essays suggest that teachers' intuitive notions of content area writing, like being "clear," may be shared by adolescent NNES students but are difficult to achieve.

For NNES students, teachers are probably the most important literacy sponsors. Brandt (2001) defines literacy sponsors as "any agents, local or distant, concrete or abstract, who enable, support, teach and model, as well as recruit, regulate, suppress, or withhold, literacy" (p. 19). From a socially situated view toward academic literacy, other important sponsors include parents, school administrators, examination systems, and educational policies among others (Johns 1997). Most scholarship on how teachers sponsor NNES students' academic literacy development in the aspect of written English has focused on bilingual or immersion programs at K-12 levels in North America and Asia (Cummins 1995, 2001; Kong 2010; Parks et al. 2005; Swain and Johnson 1997), university EAP courses (Belcher and Braine 1995; James 2010; Liu 2008; Spack 1997; Tardy 2009; You 2007, 2010; Zamel 1995), writing center tutorials (Bruce and Rafoth 2009; Williams 2002, 2006), and mainstream secondary school subject courses in the United States (Chval and Khisty 2009; Enright and Gilliland 2011; Fránquiz and Salinas 2011; Gorgorio and Planas

2001; Kibler 2010, 2011). A handful of studies and reports have focused on university content courses in North America and Europe (Fisherman and McCarthy 2002; Fortanet-Gómez 2011; Harder 2009; Janopoulos 1992, 1995; Kam and Meinema 2005; Zamel and Spack 2004).

Among the handful of studies and reports, an edited collection by Zamel and Spack (2004) has provided the broadest perspective on how content teachers accommodate NNES students' literacy needs. In six personal narratives, American professors representing anthropology, philosophy, nursing, literature, sociology, and Asian American studies revealed their adaptive strategies in the areas of language, communication mode, and culture. For example, one literature professor tried to overlook the NNES students' surface-level language issues by focusing on the ideas expressed in their writings. One philosophy professor used dialogic activities to help an Indian student grasp class readings and complete writing assignments. The anthropology and Asian American studies professors encouraged the NNES students to incorporate their diverse cultural experiences into their writing. These narratives shed important light on how individual teachers engage multilingual students in subject learning using writing assignments.

Despite their rich information on how to engage NNES students, however, these narratives are limited in their ability to explicate or uncover content teachers' adaptive strategies. First, these first-person narratives have each focused on one or two case scenarios in which the professors successfully engaged the NNES students. There is no dialogue between these professors or between Zamel and Spack and the professors to explicitly address adaptive strategies in writing assignments. Second, as the NNES students were the minority in their classes, the professors hardly found it necessary to adapt their assignments to these students' literacy challenges. Almost all of the professors conclude their narratives by emphasizing how their assignments promoted learning and thus fit all students. In contexts where the NNES students are the majority, adaptive strategies may be needed. Third, the professors focused on courses at different levels, a choice which makes it hard to generalize about their adaptive strategies. Research has shown that NNES students encounter different literacy challenges in different stages of their university education (Leki 2007; Spack 1997).

Among the studies in secondary schools, content teachers were sometimes found to accommodate the NNES students by allowing them to use their first language. For example, Kibler (2010) observed NNES students using Spanish to broker English interactions at a Northern California high school. She analyzed oral interactions among five adolescent Spanish-speaking students during an extended history-related writing activity in a humanities course. Her analysis indicates that Spanish use offered strategic opportunities for student-teacher conversation and blurred traditional boundaries between "expert" and "novice" writers. The students used Spanish to assert expertise in rhetorical, academic, linguistic, or procedural elements of the task, moving between expert and novice roles. Similarly, (Fránquiz and Salinas 2011) found that when allowed to use their home language in a social studies class at a Texas high school, newcomer NNES students became engaged in their history papers and created their identity texts. Identity texts refer to artifacts that

students produce whereby they take ownership of their learning and their identity is reflected back in a positive light.

Most studies on content teachers' literacy sponsorship have either focused on the North American context or secondary school classrooms. However, English is increasingly used as a medium of instruction in higher education in non-English-dominant nations. Numerous initiatives have been implemented in Asian, European, and North American (Mexican) universities to help content teachers transition from local languages to English in their instruction (Craig et al. 2010; Fortanet-Gómez 2011; Harbord 2010; Harder 2009; Kam and Meinema 2005; Poe and Craig 2011; Wilkinson 2004). In initiatives that focused on writing across the curriculum, faculty in subject areas and language typically worked together to identify and deal with issues in English-medium instruction. For example, before implementing the Bologna Agreement (a set of reforms intended to harmonize higher education in Europe), a team consisting of content and language teachers at Universitat Jaume I of Spain discussed the results of university-wide surveys on students' needs for courses delivered in English and disciplinary differences in modes of teaching and pedagogical strategies (Fortanet-Gómez 2011).

Despite the widespread English-medium instruction in universities in non-English-dominant nations, as our review has shown, only a few studies have tangentially examined content teachers' literacy sponsorship in these contexts. Most studies have focused on either K-12 levels or Anglophone universities where the NNES students are the minority. What about teachers' adaptive strategies in university classrooms where the NNES students are the majority? Their adaptive strategies may bear implications for content teachers and academic programs in American universities, who need to instruct an increasing number of NNES international students. To understand their literacy sponsorship in university classrooms where multilingual writers are the majority, we pose the following research questions: (1) What challenges do university professors perceive in NNES students' use of written English in subject learning in non-English-dominant contexts? (2) What adaptive strategies do the professors adopt to help students achieve the standards set in their courses?

Methodology

Context and Participants

We studied American professors' perceptions and practices in using writing assignments at a summer school in Shanghai, China, in 2011. Over the last decade, fueled by economic growth and a desire for better education, a large number of Chinese students have gone to English-dominant nations for university, leading to an economic loss and brain drain. To counter these tendencies, like their peers in some Asian and European nations, Chinese universities started offering English-taught courses in the humanities, business, and medicines to both domestic and

international students at the turn of the century (Hayhoe et al. 2011; Kirkpatrick 2011). Meanwhile, some Anglo-American universities have established offshore programs in China. Internationalization of higher education has meant for China not only the global exchange of ideas, technologies, and educational practices but also a fight for a share of the highly lucrative education market. The summer school that we studied was conceived as a for-profit institution in response to these economic forces in Chinese higher education. Established by a group of U.S.-educated Chinese nationals in 2009, the school offers entry-level courses typically found in American universities. The school targets Chinese international students returning from North America for the summer, promising them that they would be able to transfer the credits gained back to their universities. Thus, the summer school constitutes an extension of American higher education.

The professors, tenured or tenure-track, come from top American universities, as determined by the *U.S. News and World Report* ranking (U.S. News 2012). In the year of this study, three professors, all in social sciences, had taught at the summer school in the previous year. Most courses offered are general education courses typically taken by U.S. students in their freshman and sophomore years, including American Culture and Society, American Government, Calculus, Classical Philosophy, English Writing, Public Speaking, Introduction to Finance, Introduction to Psychology, Introduction to Sociology, Introduction to Statistics, Introduction to Western Art, and World Politics. Having professors from reputable U.S. universities teach in the school is a way to make the courses compatible with those offered in the United States. Each professor is provided with Chinese undergraduate teaching assistants in the same or related area of study, who have studied at least one year in American universities. They are expected to help the professors prepare for everyday teaching, answer student questions, and grade papers and examinations. In the present study, we will only focus on nine professors (and their teaching assistants) in the humanities and social sciences. Among them, two are of an ethnic minority and multilingual speakers: Professor Chang originally came from Taiwan and Professor Walker is African American.[1] The rest are Caucasians and primarily English speakers, except Professor Smith, who also spoke fluent Chinese.

The summer school attracts mostly Chinese students who have enrolled or plan to enroll in American universities. The students are multilingual, typically speaking English, standard Chinese, and a local Chinese dialect (such as Mandarin, Wu, Min, Cantonese, and Hakka) or a minority language (such as Korean, Mongolian, and Tibetan) (also see a sociolinguistic profile of Chinese university students in You 2011). To ensure that students have adequate English proficiency, the school has adopted admission standards comparable to those of American institutions: the students must have a valid Test of English as a Foreign Language (TOEFL) score higher than 80 (Internet-based test) or equivalent scores in other forms of TOEFL, have a valid International English Language Testing System (IELTS) score higher than 6.0, or have studied at or graduated from an institution where English is the primary language of instruction. As most American universities allow study abroad

[1] The names of the professors used in this paper are pseudonyms.

credits for fulfilling graduation requirements and the students are able to transfer most, if not all, credits gained in the summer school to their home institutions, the school attracted more than 500 students during the year of this study.

Data Collection

The data came from several sources, including interviews (with the professors, their teaching assistants, and their students), class observations, faculty meetings, course materials (syllabi and handouts), and the students' written work. We conducted our interviews starting from Week 3 and continued until the end of the semester. We first interviewed the professors on their use of writing tasks to facilitate student learning at the summer school and their customary practice in the United States. We interviewed each of them two or three times during the four weeks. Second, we interviewed the teaching assistants about their professors' use of writing in facilitating student learning and how they graded the quizzes and exams. Third, we also interviewed seven students for their opinions about writing in content courses, their attitude toward the professors' writing assignments, and their evaluation of their own writings (see the interview questions for both the professors and their teaching assistants in You and You 2013).

We also collected student writings, observed classes, and attended faculty meetings. We collected student writings performed in and outside class in the summer school. We intended to investigate, on the one hand, how students performed the writing assignments and whether their performance had lived up to the expectation of their professors and, on the other hand, whether the writing assignments accorded with the professors' beliefs about writing in content courses. We did not collect the professors' U.S.-based assignments and had to trust their own descriptions in the interviews. We also collected the course materials, such as syllabi and handouts, which these professors used in the summer school. We observed the professors' classes (11 classes in total) each at least twice during the semester, totaling 25 observations. We attended three faculty meetings and multiple informal faculty gatherings to further understand their concerns in teaching Chinese students.

Data Analysis

To identify the professors' adaptations, we adopted the following procedure in the data analysis. First, we examined their claims about how they taught the courses and assessed student learning in both China and the United States. Second, we triangulated these claims with our class observations, interviews with their teaching assistants, course materials, and student writings; then we identified the differences in their pedagogical practices across the two locations. The differences could exist in their beliefs, perceptions of their students, pedagogical techniques, and assessment

techniques. Third, we marked the differences with codes. We then grouped the codes into similar concepts in order to make them more workable. From these concepts, categories of pedagogical adaptations gradually emerged.

The professors' adaptations could be viewed as part of a concerted effort to build a transnational learning community, where the summer school teachers and students worked together to foster learning. To build the community, both parties brought in their cultural experiences, values, and symbolic resources. To better understand their community building practice, it is worth examining their language styles and strategies. When we listened to the recordings of the interviews, classroom observations, and faculty meetings, we first noted the styles and strategies used by both parties. Then, we closely analyzed the linguistic features (such as words, syntax, formality, register) of their styles. These styles and strategies then shed light on how different styles of English are at work in the summer school.

Results

Students' Literacy Challenges as Perceived by the Professors

Our interviews and the faculty meetings reveal perceptions of multiple challenges in the students' use of English, particularly written English, in subject learning. However, we have to remember most of these challenges are also found among American college students. These challenges include limited vocabulary knowledge, unfamiliarity with thinking and communication in the disciplines, and lack of personal voice. The professors also recognized the students' low English proficiency in general and difficulty in organizing thoughts into a coherent passage, challenges we will elaborate on when discussing the professors' adaptive strategies.

A common challenge identified by the professors was the students' limited vocabulary knowledge. At the second faculty meeting held in Week 3, the professors concurred that a majority of the students lacked vocabulary knowledge, particularly that of special terms, which hindered not only their comprehension of lectures but also their classroom participation and written work. At the same time, some professors expressed the understanding that lacking knowledge of special terms was not an issue unique to multilingual students but common to freshmen who were new to a subject area. A few professors not only recognized the issue but also took every opportunity to help the students enrich their lexical knowledge. For example, Professor Jones, an art history faculty member, shared at the meeting her efforts in integrating language lessons into her teaching:

> I put *a lot* of emphasis on language here. Like I put up a sculpture today of a dying soldier. Usually in the States I will talk about pathos and things like that. And here I said okay, what does pathos mean? We have sympathy, empathy, these kinds of closed-in syndromes. What's the difference between sympathy and empathy? What's the difference between sympathy and finding something pathetic? And I feel like at the end of the language lesson,

> they've learned some subtleties of language but also they can apply these notions they identified to the work of art in the end. (July 21, 2011)

This is a first instance of a professor brokering her students' subject learning through literacy practices. She juxtaposed global concepts (pathos, sympathy, empathy, and pathetic) with a local example of art appreciation (a sculpture of a dying solder). Without understanding those global concepts as marking various types of emotional identification, the students would have a difficult time comprehending Professor Jones' lectures, demonstrating art appreciation, or expressing criticisms in their writing tasks.

Another area that the professors recognized as hindering the students from performing quality written work was their unfamiliarity with disciplinary thinking. New entrants to subject areas, the students were strangers to the reasoning patterns expected therein. Thus they sometimes could not fully comprehend the writing assignments. Several professors shared this observation in our interviews. For example, Professor Smith, a history professor, noted this transitional issue in a midterm exam. In his Chinese history course, the class studied a peasant rebellion in the late Ming Dynasty (1368CE–1644CE). In an interview, Prof. Smith commented on his students' failure to grasp the historical significance of this event in an exam question: "A lot of them have learned this, but they have learned it in a high school way, in which it's black and white, it's good, bad, without looking at the social context or the historical context in which these developments happened" (July 30, 2011). Without knowing the disciplinary ways of reasoning, the students tended to answer questions in a more simplistic manner or by ignoring the prompt.

In comparison with American academic conventions, the students were also viewed as lacking individual voice and personal reflection in their written work. Several professors expressed this opinion in our interviews. They noted that the students were good at imitating and memorizing materials but poor at expressing their perspectives on issues. For example, Professor Taylor, a political science professor, touched on this point when describing a research paper assignment in her World Politics class:

> Take a problem in contemporary world politics, global warming, or, you know, nuclear weapons, anything they want to study. Take a problem and then research, find at least two articles on each side of a controversy, evaluate them and write a paper, giving those sides and then giving your side. Giving your side is something that they have trouble with. (August 4, 2011)

The professor emphasized the importance of weighing an argument on both or multiple sides and then taking one's own stand. Like Professor Taylor, a few other professors characterized their Chinese students as feeling reluctant to state their perspectives on issues.

The professors did not simply identify their students' literacy challenges. Proactively, they developed adaptive strategies to help the students learn, and now to these strategies we turn.

Providing Support for Major Writing Assignments

Several professors provided explicit instruction for the major writing assignments. They tended to focus on helping students develop ideas and structure their essays. However, they did not feel comfortable helping students with surface-level language issues and typically asked their students to use the writing center services. The professors' in-class activities included workshops, group discussions, introducing worksheets, and providing detailed feedback on student writings.

These activities trained the students to reason and communicate within various academic fields. For example, one of the philosophy professors, Professor Chang, designed worksheets to guide her students in their reading and writing process. The purpose of these worksheets was to teach the students how to engage in an argument in philosophy. When the students read a passage, they needed to answer three heuristic questions in the reading worksheet:

- What is the thesis?
- What are the premises?
- Possible objections?

To answer these questions, the students were pushed to elevate from the local details of the passage to a global, conceptual level. When they wrote a short essay responding to a philosophical passage, they were expected to be able to address similar questions. In the draft worksheet, the students were asked to include the following sections in their essay:

- Introduction
- Summary of the author's argument
- My objection to this argument
- Response
- My reply

Clearly the second and the third bullet points in the draft worksheet were a synthesis of the three bullet points in the reading worksheet, intending a conversation with the author. The fourth and fifth bullet points encouraged the students to further their philosophical engagement with the author. To perform these five rhetorical moves, the students had to navigate between local, personal experiences and global, philosophical concepts. The draft worksheet helped the students transition from reading to writing; it also provided them an organizational frame for their essays. Throughout the semester, Professor Chang's students composed four short essays by using the two worksheets. If necessary, the professor would conference with them to improve both the substance and style of their essays.

Professor Chang attributed this regimental method in teaching reading and writing to her awareness of the students' challenges. When she taught at a private university in California, she did not use these worksheets because she team taught with a writing instructor who took care of the writing component. Later, when teaching independently at a California State University, where her students were not as strong

in reasoning and writing, she designed these worksheets to help them. Code-switching in an interview, she offered two reasons for adopting these worksheets in the Chinese context: First, philosophy papers are written differently from those in other disciplines in terms of reasoning pattern and style ("Philosophy 的 paper 与其他的学科的paper不一样" [Philosophy paper is different from paper in other disciplines]). The students needed to receive special training to be able to think like philosophers. Second, the Chinese students' English proficiency was relatively low, and they typically did not value analysis and logical reasoning in their writing ("比较低level, 不重视分析、逻辑、思考这样的东西" [low level, don't value things like analysis, logic, and thinking]). Professor Chang believed that these worksheets would assist the Chinese students and the California State University students to think and communicate like philosophers.

When the professors offered support in student writing, most of them did not feel comfortable discussing surface-level language issues. Philosophy professors Grieco and Chang offered the most written feedback to their students' writing. For example, Professor Grieco extensively commented on his students' short essays in the Introduction to Philosophy midterm. He circled or underlined various items in the essays and numbered them. In the margins or at the end, he offered several numbered comments that corresponded to the numbered items in the essays. Seldom did the professor comment on surface-level language issues, either in grading the essays or when returning them in class. For the prompt "In the lion's share of your essay, explain the argument discussed in class for why free will and determinism are incompatible," Professor Grieco offered the following comments on one student's essay, which received a B−/C+ grade:

1. But this is not what the question asks for.
2. You need to explain this.
3. What do you mean by "choice"? Why not "many" instead of "none"?
4. Theoretically but not practically predictable. You are supposed to explain this.
5. Explaining this argument is what the question asked for. You stated it, but explained nothing.
6. All this is irrelevant to the question. It is as if you did not read the question that you were supposed to be answering.

These comments strongly indicate the professor's focus on how well the student had answered the essay question. The most used words in these comments are "question" and "explain." The student was urged to explain the argument, as required in the essay question. Offering detailed comments on the students' midterm essays served as a type of instruction in philosophy writing. The students learned what the professor valued in their writing; like Professor Chang, Professor Grieco seemed to value analysis and logical reasoning.

Valuing the Students' Multilingual Resources

About half of the professors allowed, and a few even encouraged, the students to use Chinese in their written work and class discussions. They did not view Chinese as an obstacle or interference to student learning. Professor Taylor was one of them, allowing her students to use Chinese in group discussions. For example, when she assigned her students a group paper in her American Government course, she let them sit in groups to discuss how they would carry out this collective project. The students were asked to examine the movement of the Affordable Healthcare for America Act, passed in March 2010, through the American political system. In the political system chart that the professor presented in a PowerPoint slide and repeatedly referred to later, there are four components—the inputs, the decision-making core, the outputs, and the feedback. In the group that we sat with, assignment sheet in hand, the students discussed the following items predominantly in Chinese:

1. How to divide up the different sections of the group essay for each member
2. How to write up the sections suggested in the assignment sheet
3. The weight of the group essay in the final grade and the professor's practices in designing exams
4. The students' preference for short essays over multiple-choice questions on the midterm
5. The meanings of some bullet points in the assignment sheet
6. The motivations for choosing this course and the unexpected challenges
7. The structure and the length of the group essay

The list indicates that students stayed focused on the writing assignment throughout most of the group discussion; Chinese enabled them to accomplish the major goals of the group discussion. To gain a better sense of how Chinese mediated the discussion, we may examine a scenario under Item 5, when the group was discussing some bullet points on the assignment sheet:

> M: 后面的那个理论是, 利益集团、竞选、国会、 judicial、 还有那个, 还有那个官僚集团那些… [The latter part of the theory involves interest groups, election, parliament, judicial, and that, and that bureaucracy and so forth…].
>
> W: 官僚干吗啊?它到底是什么? [Why bureaucracy? What is it?]
>
> M: Bureaucracy它其实就是……就相当于代表政府的 Department of State. Bureaucracy就是一个机构, 为了去serve 某个 purpose。[Bureaucracy actually is…actually equals to Department of State, which represents the government. Bureaucracy is an organization, designed to serve a certain purpose.]
>
> W: 但是没有很大用途…… [But it is not very useful…].
>
> M: 你要理解它的…… 超三角关系, 其实就是帮政府服务的一个机构。就是把这些大的concept 解开。[You need to understand its… super triangular relationship. It is an organ to serve the government. We need to dissect these broad concepts]. (August 4, 2011)

In this brief exchange, Chinese, or an English style with Chinese syntax in dominance, performed several pragmatic functions. First, a male student directed the group's attention to the different components of the political system. Second, he clarified a difficult concept, "bureaucracy," for a female student. Third, in the last sentence, he commented on how to write the group essay—to identify the major

components of the political system and analyze how each worked in the movement of the Healthcare Act. Chinese enabled the students to delve deep into the political system chart and the writing assignments. The students effectively used their mother tongue, code-switching between Chinese and English, to achieve the purposes of the group discussion.

Professor Taylor allowed Chinese in group discussions but not in class discussions. In an interview, she said that this was because she would not be able to understand them. In the United States, she taught at a liberal arts college where the majority of her students were native English speakers. She did not allow her students to use languages other than English in class, but she was aware of bilingual professors in her college who used Spanish or allowed their students to use Spanish in content courses:

> We have had courses though in [college name] because some faculty who were bilingual in Spanish and English who worked with things like Introductory Economics in Spanish, and it was offered that way so students who were Spanish majors could get some credits towards their Spanish language. So it wasn't just heritage speakers who took this course but American students whose first language is English also took the course. And Latin American History too, I think, speaks the same language. (August 12, 2011)

Professor Taylor's remarks indicate that she had been exposed to the idea of using languages other than English in content courses. However, she viewed herself and her students in the United States as monolingual, and therefore she did not use or let her students use other languages in class. She made the change in China simply because she found herself a minority in a multilingual classroom.

In addition to allowing Chinese in group discussions, a psychology professor also allowed it in written exams. In the quizzes of his two courses, the instructions stated that "If you cannot remember the English word for a concept, you may use the Chinese word." Apparently, he wanted to accommodate students who had limited knowledge of special terms. The professor usually asked his teaching assistant to grade the quizzes; therefore bilingual answers did not pose an issue. However, while the instructions only allowed Chinese for concepts whose English equivalents the students did not remember, neither the professor nor the teaching assistant penalized the students if they used Chinese for more than these concepts and answered the question correctly. For example, a question was asked in the second quiz of the Principles of Psychology course: "How is Life Expectancy defined?" The teaching assistant placed a check mark on the following answers by two students, giving both full credits:

> Life Expectancy mean 平均寿命, or预期寿命. Life expectancy is the expected number of years of life remaining at a given age, and from birth is a frequently utilized and analyzed component of demographic data for the countries of the world.
>
> Life expectancy means how long you can expect to live, when you live, 根据测量之前人能活多长时间,以你的健康状况衡量你能活到多少岁 [To estimate how many years you will live based on, first, measuring how long the older generations have lived and, second, your health condition].

While the first answer uses a complete English sentence, the second one contains an incomplete one, with a subordinate clause being crossed out, followed by a

complete Chinese sentence. The incomplete English sentence offers an inaccurate and partial definition, which was then improved on by the Chinese sentence. In an interview, the teaching assistant explained that short-answer questions were typically used in low-level psychology courses for nonmajors in the United States. When she graded them, she looked for main points and keywords: "几个main points, 几个keywords 我看到就算对 [When I spotted several main points and keywords, I would mark the answer as correct]" (August 12, 2011). She further indicated that she might take a few points off if a student made errors in English spelling or syntax. Mixing English with Chinese was not an issue as long as the students could explain themselves clearly to her. In another interview, a student confirmed the possibility of extensive use of Chinese in the psychology exams:

> You can write Chinese in your exam… But like, it depends on what the definition of a special term is. Like, like, the questions asked, you can write in a sentence. And it can be in Chinese because the sentence contains about seventy percent of special terms... Lots of the students are, they are like, not proficient in English (August 2, 2011).

The availability of the Chinese-speaking teaching assistant allowed the psychology professor to be able to value and evaluate Chinese students' thoughts expressed in their native tongue, in spite of limited English proficiency.

Central to the professors' accommodations was the diverse English styles they shared with their students. Their fluency with these styles enabled them to appreciate and mobilize the students' multilingual resources in subject learning. A linguistic analysis of the recorded data reveals different styles among the professors' English, and the same analysis evidences the professors' variegated linguistic skills. For example, Professor Taylor's comment on her colleagues' teaching in both English and Spanish sounds formal, using multiple-layer subordinate clauses. She opted to speak formally probably because it was a sit-down interview. In contrast, in the "Students' Literacy Challenges as Perceived by the Professors" section, the professors' comments sound informal, marked by pauses, colloquialisms, and fillers, such as "like," "feel like," "things like that," "okay," and "you know." Professor Taylor, for example, exhibits these traits in the comment pointing out her students' difficulties in taking sides. On her way to class, she made the remark in an informal style. Knowing that we understand Chinese, both Professor Chang and the psychology professor's teaching assistant blended English and Chinese when addressing us. Once each of these English users' speech is transcribed as done in that section of the book chapter, it can clearly be seen as having deviated tremendously from standard English, the stylistic norm expected in student writing. Instead, their speech resembles that of students in Professor Taylor's class. Mihut (2014) argued that literacy brokering implicates emotional work or what she calls "literacy as affinity—a discursive repertoire comprised of language of empathy, personal experiences, and even social relations embedded in the literate experience" (p. 58). These nonstandard styles of English not only mediated teaching and learning but also created affinity and empathy crucial for building this transnational learning community, felt among some professors for their students as evidenced by their understanding of and efforts to help students struggling with standard written English.

Connecting to the Students' Home Cultures

In addition to the students' native language, the professors also connected the students' home culture to their teaching. For example, the art history professors arranged a day trip to the Shanghai Museum. One of them assigned her students to compare two pieces of Chinese artwork for their term paper. Professor Taylor, when assigning one of the papers in her American Government class, asked her students to "compare and contrast American and Chinese political systems by examining at least two of the following: political culture, political participations, political parties, legislatures, executives, rights, and the role of the media in the political system" (American Government Essay Assignments, p. 1).

The extent to which a professor could bring Chinese culture into his or her teaching had much to do with what the course was. There were a few courses that focused on China, such as Chinese History: Late Imperial China, Investment in China, and East Asian Economic Development. Among the courses that did not deal with China directly, Professor Walker's Principles of Sociology class used Chinese cultural materials the most extensively. The textbooks and the handouts used were published in the United States and thus largely drew upon American cultural examples. However, in our observations of her class, for nearly every concept and principle introduced, she encouraged her students to find examples in Chinese society. She assigned them to collect materials published in China for class discussions, such as newspaper articles, picture books, and advertisements. She invited guest speakers from local communities to speak to them. She asked her students to design questionnaires on sexual harassment and conduct a survey on the summer school campus. In her quizzes, Professor Walker would always ask one short-answer question related to China. In an interview, she explained the importance of local context in enabling student learning:

> Can you apply this to something? And there is a question, that's always like, about China. I explained that in the American context. Can they show me how this idea might fit China? … And more than half of the students will pick that one [question]. More than half of the students will pick something that they can then apply to China, which I appreciate. There's learning for me. But also I don't care if they have applied to Venezuela. Just show me that you have been applying with the ideas. (July 27, 2011)

The professor's remarks indicate an emphasis on her students' ability to apply ideas discussed in class to actual social phenomena in China or elsewhere. The short-answer question enabled the students to think and learn rather than to reproduce information. The option of examining their own cultures apparently was inspiring as "more than half of the students" would pick the China question.

Connecting to their home culture enabled the students to make connections between Chinese and English. When her Introduction to Sociology class discussed issues of education and human development, Professor Walker let her students watch a video online, followed by a guest lecture by a Chinese woman writer, also a former middle school teacher. Then she asked her students to discuss, in writing, the connections between the video and the lecture. The video was an animated

lecture given by a British education and creativity expert Sir Ken Robinson on changing education paradigms. The guest lecturer discussed her unique approach to teaching: Instead of teaching to the standards set by educational authorities, she encouraged her students to find their true desires and to think about the value of life. One of the students described how the guest lecturer encouraged them to take hold of their lives:

> In response to the second and third questions she brought to us, she told us several traditional Chinese concepts and sent my classmates some of her calligraphy that could embody those concepts. By "处下" (Chu'xia, literally meaning stay in low position), she said that we should keep a low profile to get adapted to our (social) environments. Also, we need to treat the changing world with inner peace ("静", Jing). She then mentioned that we should "never say 'I am busy'" ("勿称忙") because the character 忙is a combination of "忄 (meaning hear/mind) and 亡 (death/loss)", which means that if you always say busy, you will lose your mind. Besides she reminds us to think about ourselves everyday and get an insight of anything we encounter from superficial level.

The guest lecturer drew on Chinese cultural concepts as principles to deal with everyday situations. The above passage indicates that in this writing assignment, the students' composing process was multilingual and multimodal. After watching an animated lecture in English and attending a live lecture in Chinese, the students articulated the connections between the two sources in written English. In the above passage, the student synthesized the lecturer's key points in translation and transcribed the key Chinese cultural concepts. When composing for Professor Walker, who knew little Chinese, they had to adopt translation, transcription, and exposition strategies in their essays. The students came to experience, and perhaps to perceive, the importance of being able to function competently in multiple languages in the academic disciplines.

The ability to meet the students' literacy needs correlated positively with some professors' previous multilingual and multicultural experiences. These experiences had furbished the professors with necessary accommodating skills. For example, Professor Walker, an African American, studied language, gender, and identity issues in her own scholarship. She was married to an African man, and she had travelled to and worked in multiple nations. Professor Chang received academic training in Taiwan before pursuing doctoral studies in the United States. She taught for seven years in multilingual university classrooms in California before coming to the summer school. Professor Taylor was familiar with colleagues who had taught content courses in Spanish at her college. However, our observations also reveal that, which is not reported in this chapter, not every multilingual and multicultural professor showed willingness to accommodate Chinese students' literacy challenges. Those who failed to accommodate in their teaching tended to emphasize the predominance of the monolingual and monocultural mentality in American higher education, which the Chinese students had to face.

Discussion and Conclusion

The professors recognized that the Chinese students faced challenges in their English writing. However, their perceptions were typically limited to the idea that some students had a hard time constructing coherent passages and expressing personal voice, and some professors were unsure how to help students with their English. In addition to the linguistic challenges, some noted the students' unfamiliarity with the ways that scholars reason and communicate in their disciplines. They felt more comfortable addressing disciplinary conventions in the student writing. Roberts and Cimasko (2008) made a similar observation that social science and engineering professors tend to edit semantic gaps as opposed to grammatical items in NNES student writing. Previous studies in the United States have revealed that undergraduate students generally do not view academic writing in the same ways as disciplinary specialists, especially for nonmajors in general education courses (Geisler 1994; Haas 1994; Russell and Yanez 2003). They tend to view writing as a means to demonstrate their understanding rather than to consolidate and construct subject knowledge. Therefore, the Chinese students' difficulties in reasoning and communicating in specific courses may or may not be related to their NNES status (Casanave 2002). Scholars can examine how NNES students perceive and practice writing in their early years versus their later years of college, when they will focus on the required courses of their majors. Such studies will help identify the differences between the student perceptions and the content teacher expectations of academic writing in different stages of the students' university studies.

Like some subject teachers in secondary school classrooms (Fránquiz and Salinas 2011; Gorgorio and Planas 2001; Kibler 2010, 2011), a majority of the professors capitalized on the students' multilingual and multicultural resources to facilitate teaching and learning. They managed "teaching to their [students'] strengths," as Professor Walker remarked in one of the interviews. Some allowed Chinese in group discussions and in quizzes, making it an important scaffolding tool for the students to consolidate and construct their subject knowledge. In addition to recognizing the importance of their mother tongue, by connecting the students' home culture to the subject matter, the professors further attached a positive tag to local cultures and languages, a practice highly valued in English-medium instruction in non-English-dominant contexts (Harder 2009; Kirkpatrick 2011). Even in courses that did not explicitly focus on China, the students were encouraged to bring Chinese publications into class discussions and use those materials in their writing assignments, which confirmed the importance of their home cultures and languages while helping to establish important connections between Chinese and English.

Although the study has focused on American professors teaching predominantly Chinese international students, the findings bear implications for teaching NNES students in English-medium higher education. First, writing played a central role in facilitating learning. Content teachers can design a variety of writing tasks, such as personal narratives, poetry, article summaries, and research reports in their teaching, as suggested by Young (2006) and conscientiously practiced by Professor Walker in

our study. Second, content teachers are familiar with the ways of reasoning and communication in their disciplines; therefore, they can explicitly teach the disciplinary conventions through workshops, worksheets, and feedback on student writings. Third, a significant space should be given to the students' use of their other languages—not only in their writing process but also in all aspects of their literacy activities (Kibler 2010; Jäppinen 2005; You 2016). We should train our students to shuttle between their first and second language academic communities (Canagarajah 2006; Casanave 1998; Cho 2010; Gentil 2005; Jarratt et al. 2006). Encouraging the students to make connections between the subject matter and their home culture will motivate them and develop their multilingual academic abilities, such as translation skills and personal voice.

In addition to these implications for English-medium higher education in general, the study also raises questions for American universities. First, as international students continue to flood U.S. higher education, to what extent should universities and colleges also adjust their assignments to meet the needs and skills of these students? Second, if they are going to adjust their assignments, how does that change curricular objectives, course expectations, and learning outcomes? Third, if we recognize that students, both international and domestic, are able to draw resources from multiple languages and cultures to facilitate subject learning, should learning and assessment of learning be performed solely in English or based on Anglophone academic conventions? These questions beg in-depth research on how content teachers and academic programs in these institutions are adjusting or can adjust their curricular objectives, course expectations, and assignments for the increased number of NNES students (Matsuda et al. 2006).

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