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Peiying Yang April 3, 2023

Global Anglophone-centrism: A Multiculturalist and Decolonial Critique of English Dominance in Cosmopolitanism

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Abstract

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In this thesis, I inquire into the issue of English dominance in contemporary cosmopolitanism via a multidisciplinary approach with a focus on the intersection of philosophy and education. Particularly, the increase of international students who are English-language learners (ELLs) on US college campuses has given rise to my questions as to (1) whether the trend for Global South families to send their children abroad to study in developed English-speaking countries perpetuates the dominion of the Global North, which takes the form of linguistic and cultural assimilation, and (2) what could be done to propel equal mutual recognition between native and non-native speakers of English, so we may attain a truly more inclusive, egalitarian form of cosmopolitanism. I first begin with an investigation into the theory of multiculturalism as a premise of cosmopolitanism, tracing its origin back to Herder and Hegel's views of "foreign," non-Western cultures while elaborating on Charles Taylor's contemporary interpretation of it. I then draw on Marxist class theory, Foucauldian power relations, and Fanonian decolonial thought to unearth and criticize the neoliberal and neocolonial implications within today's Anglophone-centric cosmopolitanism as a discourse that is circulated and preserved by the international education industry. Finally, I relocate my research to the pragmatic context of college writing centers. By revisiting the Freirean critical pedagogy and incorporating the use of humor creatively, I attempt to devise a dialogue-based pedagogy that can not only reinstate ELLs' confidence and agency as non-native speakers and writers of English, but also promote equal conversation and mutual understanding between the cultural and linguistic majority and minorities in the broader field of global education.

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Introduction

What Is It Like to Be a Cosmopolitan?

Having been born and grown up in Shanghai, China's largest city, during the age of globalization, I still remember that the public elementary and middle schools that I attended were able to hire English native speakers in addition to Chinese, non-native English teachers to fully immerse us in the language; that quite a few middle school classmates of mine either transferred to international schools or migrated to developed, English-speaking countries like Singapore and Australia with their families; and that my own family also made the decision to let me transfer from the top public high school in Shanghai to a private US high school, so as to relieve me of the highly stressful competition with other students and to prepare me for studying in a US college as I had wished. The Anglosphere, particularly represented by the US, had been a familiar *other* for me in my childhood and teens, yet became my new foreign home right before I turned 18. Similar experiences are clearly shared worldwide among my peers born at the turn of the 21st century, as is shown by recent statistics on the ever-growing international student population in the US.[1]

Studying canonical figures in Western philosophy and working at the Emory Writing Center as a writing tutor, especially as an English-language learner (ELL) specialist, I always find it engaging yet challenging to work with my peers who, like me, are non-native English speakers, but often mistake me for a native speaker and take it for granted about the authority of the tutor's and the course instructor's views on their papers. Their obedience to Standard English has usually not only led to their preoccupation with prescriptive grammar rules, but also inhibited their confidence in English writing in general. This observation, along with the aforementioned globalizing trend towards studying abroad in English-speaking countries, has

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[1] Institute of International Education, "Number of international students in the United States from 2003/04 to 2021/22," Chart, November 14, 2022, Statista, accessed March 7, 2023. https://www.statista.com/statistics/237681/international-students-in-the-us/

led me to question my role as an international student and English writing tutor: What does it mean to engage in a multicultural global society as an English-speaking cosmopolitan?

To answer the question, I shall first begin with an investigation of multiculturalism, or the normative ideal that different cultures deserve equitable recognition by the whole society, as a presupposition of cosmopolitanism. The notion of multiculturalism dates back to German philosopher J. G. Herder's advocacy for multilingualism and cultural diversity, as he outlines the unique qualities of world civilizations and their influences on one another.[2] Herder's call for mutual recognition across cultures, however, is problematized by Hegel's phenomenology and philosophy of history, where recognition necessitates both interpersonal and intercultural struggles. By tracing Hegel's impact on Charles Taylor's account of multiculturalism, namely his "politics of recognition," I shall reveal that today's multiculturalism still presupposes the superiority of the cultural majority as "judges" of minority cultures, and that a more inclusive multiculturalism will require further linguistic diversification to be practiced by the majority.

I will then relocate my inquiry back to our contemporary global context, focusing on the phenomenon of international education as well as the emergence of the English-learning international student as a cosmopolitan elite. Incorporating the Marxist critique of the global bourgeoisie, the Foucauldian method of analyzing power dynamics, and Fanon's observation of language's role in colonization as well as its influences on cultural identity, I will examine the neoliberal and neocolonial implications of our cosmopolitan globalization, namely in the field of English-oriented international education designed for and pursued among non-native English speakers. I shall thereby be able to answer my earlier question by demonstrating that contemporary cosmopolitanism maintains the vast inequalities between the Global North and South; that when non-native English speakers choose to pursue an international education and

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[2] Johann Gottfried von Herder, "This Too a Philosophy of History for the Formation of Humanity (1774)," in *Herder: Philosophical Writings*, ed., trans., Michael N. Forster (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2002), 272-358. doi:10.1017/CBO9781139164634.

become English-speaking cosmopolitans, they are inevitably subjected to cultural oppression in the form of linguistic assimilation, while unknowingly perpetuating the global dominion of the Anglosphere by upholding the worldwide hegemony of English.

Now my question has turned into a more pragmatic one: If to be an English-speaking cosmopolitan means to participate in and preserve a neoliberal and neocolonial world order, then what could both native and non-native speakers of English do to create a more inclusive form of cosmopolitanism that lives up to its commitment to an egalitarian multiculturalism? This will bring me to the last section of my inquiry, where I aspire to develop and present a theoretically-informed method for tutoring English-language learners (ELLs) in the writing center. Drawing on previous scholarship in the field of writing center studies while adopting a multiculturalist and decolonial perspective, I will reevaluate Paulo Freire's critical pedagogy and introduce Simon Critchley's view on humor to discuss their instructional values for us to reflect on typical ELL tutoring practices, as well as to rediscover the writing tutor's role as the mediator between the ELL writer and their English writing.

My scholarly project, overall, is an attempt to retrieve language as an indispensable yet overlooked aspect of multiculturalism and as a viable complement to emerging decolonial perspectives. Furthermore, I endeavor to apply my findings to the philosophy of education by proposing a pedagogy for writing tutors to create an atmosphere of equality and reciprocity that will promote cultural and linguistic confidence among ELL writers. I therefore hope that my inquiry will not only expose the various drawbacks of contemporary English-dominant cosmopolitanism through theoretical critiques based on the history of philosophy as well as my first-hand experiences, but also forward a practical solution that can respond to the issue of English dominance and contribute to a broader multicultural and decolonial pedagogy in our real-life educational contexts.

Chapter I

Unearthing Hegel's Heritage: A Genealogy of Multiculturalism

As the international student population increases again in the post-pandemic era, the US higher education institutions continue to underline their multiculturalist values and their commitments to diversity, equity and inclusion. This nearly utopian, cosmopolitan picture, where each student's cultural background is respected and celebrated, seems to resonate with Herder's dream of "a *natural history of humanity*," where everyone is "*unbiased*" and there is no "*order of rank*" among cultures.[3] Herder's vision is nevertheless soon eclipsed by Hegel, his more famous successor, as the latter elucidates the advancement of consciousness in his *Phenomenology of Spirit* and correspondingly founds a hierarchy of spirituality across world cultures in his *Lectures on the Philosophy of World History*. Not only does Hegel complicate the notion of mutual recognition by proposing a master-slave dialectic that turns interpersonal and intercultural interactions into power struggles, but he also views Germanic Christianity as the most spiritual, superior culture, precisely against Herder's stance that European culture is merely one part of the broader "culture of humanity."[4] Hegel's influence on contemporary theory of multiculturalism is, however, quite evident as Charles Taylor develops his "politics of *recognition*" to solve intercultural conflicts in our society today.

In this chapter, I will demonstrate that Hegel's master-slave dialectic and philosophy of world history, especially his view of Africa and Asia, have permanently distorted Herder's apparently more egalitarian ideal of multiculturalism. By portraying interpersonal contact as inevitably biased and by arranging world cultures in an order that is marked with colonialist connotations, Hegel's vision forms contemporary multicultural discourse, where the cultural majority impose their presence upon the minorities but fail to recognize them in return. I will

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[3] Herder, "[Letter] 116," in *Herder: Philosophical Writings*, 393-5.

[4] Herder, 396.

then scrutinize Taylor's theory of multiculturalism, argue that his presumption of equal value still entails the Hegelian power imbalance between cultures, and finally propose linguistic diversification as a plausible way to ameliorate his solution.

1. Recognition Problematized in Hegel's Master-Slave Dialectic

I shall begin with a brief exegesis and an evaluation of Hegel's master-slave dialectic, where he claims that recognition can only come from a "life-and-death" struggle between two conscious entities, where the winner or the "master" is recognized by the loser or the "slave" and dominates the latter. I will then illustrate that it is the necessity of such a "life-and-death" struggle, as well as the unresolved tensions between the master and the slave, that precludes the authentic mutual recognition between the two individuals.

Having highlighted that consciousness cannot certify its own existence by indulging in the realm of desire, for it will become reliant on external objects as it keeps consuming or destroying them,[5] Hegel deduces that self-consciousness "exists only in being acknowledged" and consequently sets up a situation where two conscious individuals encounter each other.[6] Instead of just recognizing each other equally ever after, however, the two individuals must show that they are "not attached to any specific existence, not to the individuality common to existence as such, [and] not attached to life."[7] To illustrate its unlimited, spiritual willpower that is not seen in, say, a rabbit escaping from a voracious dog, consciousness according to Hegel has to put its own life at stake, to detach itself from its sensual, physical body as a rational, enlightened individual, rather than to frankly admit its need for recognition from the other individual. A win-win situation therefore turns into a zero-sum game, a "life-and-death struggle" where "just as each stakes [its] own life, so each must seek the other's death, for it

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[5] Georg Wilhelm Friedrich Hegel, "The Truth of Self-Certainty," in *Hegel's Phenomenology of Spirit*, trans., A.V. Miller (New York: Oxford University Press, 1977), 109-10.

[6] Hegel, *Phenomenology of Spirit*, 111-2.

[7] Hegel, *Phenomenology of Spirit*, 113.

values the other no more than itself … and must rid itself of its self-externality."[8] Afraid that the other conscious being will despise it as inferior, consciousness thus sets out to combat this opponent in order to deny their "life" or their willpower to dominate others as an independent individual. Hence at the end of the struggle, "there is posited a pure self-consciousness, and a consciousness which is not purely for itself but for another, … in the form of thinghood."[9] A Hegelian master-slave relation is now formed as the winner claims power to the loser's "life" or their formerly independent willpower, while the loser is objectified in submission to the winner and has to acknowledge their master's spiritual superiority over them.

However, Hegel moves on to clarify that the master-slave relationship is more than the unilateral recognition of the master by the slave. Since the slave is now a dependent being in service of the master, the latter "has the pure enjoyment of [consuming external objects]" yet remains uncertain of "being-for-self as the truth of [themself]."[10] As the slave continues serving them and fulfilling their desire, the master grows more reliant on their slave as a tool and thereby becomes unsure of their own spiritual independence, which is recognized not by an autonomous individual but by an enslaved object. The master, therefore, remains in the realm of desire, as they rely on their slave's service and recognition. On the other hand, the slave upon their defeat experiences "the absolute melting-away of everything stable," which is nonetheless the "essential nature of self-consciousness."[11] Under their master's dominion, the slave realizes not only their inferiority to and difference from their master, who they now recognize as independent of their consciousness, but also the limitations of their willpower, that they *cannot* hubristically subjugate everything external according to their desire. As the

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[8] Hegel, *Phenomenology of Spirit*, 114.

[9] Hegel, *Phenomenology of Spirit*, 115.

[10] Hegel, *Phenomenology of Spirit*, 116-7.

[11] Hegel, *Phenomenology of Spirit*, 117.

slave works for the master by "form[ing] and shap[ing]" external objects, furthermore, they now understand that "the object[s] [have] independence" and thus undergo a "rediscovery of [themself] by [themself]" as "someone existing on [their] own account."[12] In appreciating the value of each object they have worked on, the slave reestablishes a constructive relationship with the world and reaffirms their own self-consciousness as independent of not only external objects but also their master. In other words, the slave is now capable of recognizing themself without relying on the master.

Although Hegel's master-slave dialectic seems to have a rosy ending, his views of the "life-and-death" struggle as necessary and of the master as a continuously dominating figure appear to devastate Herder's ideal that one shall treat another with no biases. Whereas Herder calls, "Let one still less contemptuously insult any people that [have] never insulted us,"[13] the Hegelian individuals anxiously enter a duel once they view one another as a conscious being, who might secretly mock and disdain their opponent in their mind. When the battle ends up with an unequal master-slave relationship, such an imaginary, uncertain insult will then have become a *de facto* one as the result of a self-fulfilling prophecy. Although Jon Stewart in his evaluation of the master-slave dialectic praises Hegel for observing that individual identity is fundamentally defined by social interaction,[14] the Hegelian individuals' inherent self-interest and hostility toward others, as well as their tendency to separate spirituality from physicality, remain characteristic of modern European Enlightenment thought that values rationality and individualism. Besides, just as Hegel dooms the master to endless desire and reliance on the slave without mentioning their possible pathway to genuine recognition, Cynthia Willett in

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[12] Hegel, *Phenomenology of Spirit*, 118-9.

[13] Herder, 394.

[14] Jon Stewart, "Hegel's Account of Alienation in *The Phenomenology of Spirit*," in *Hegel's Century: Alienation and Recognition in a Time of Revolution* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2021), 30-1. doi:10.1017/9781009019828.

her discussion of the futility of the master-slave dialectic in American slavery points out that "[h]owever much the slave may serve as mirror for the master, the master hardly serves as mirror for the slave."[15] Even though the slave may, in the end, achieve higher spirituality and autonomy via a more proper and comprehensive recognition of the self, the external world, and even the master, the imbalanced power dynamics within the master-slave dialectic stay untouched, and it seems that the master may continue to declare their control over the slave regardless of their endless indulgence in sensual desires. Positioning itself as the essence of interpersonal relations, therefore, the Hegelian master-slave dialectic still remains formally unequal while eliminating the possibility of sincere mutual recognition and equitable collaboration among individuals who might be less selfish but more cooperative.

2. The Hegelian Colonialist World Order and Its Continuing Impact

Having tilted the balance in interpersonal relationships as secondary to the elevation of the one independent, ultimately Absolute spirit, Hegel continues to develop an idealistic account of world history, where cultures, like the individual spirit that is first enslaved by a master but then finds its own freedom, exhibit higher levels of interior spirituality when they emerge from and finally surpass their less spiritual predecessors. Just as the sun rises in the East and moves to the West,[16] Hegel concludes that the greatest spiritual freedom culminates in his own European, Germanic culture. To justify his hierarchy of the cultures, Hegel writes "The Old World," an appendix article in his *Lectures on the Philosophy of World History*, where he elaborates the natural environments and ethnicity of Afro-Eurasian cultures based on contemporary expedition records and travel diaries. Nevertheless, as I will demonstrate, Hegel's prejudiced descriptions of Africa and Asia have contributed to the stereotypes against

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[15] Cynthia Willett, "The Master Slave Dialectic: Hegel vs. Douglass," in *Subjugation and Bondage: Critical Essays on Slavery and Social Philosophy*, ed., Tommy L. Lott (Lanham, MD: Rowman and Littlefield, 1998), 159.

[16] Hegel, "The Phases of World History," in *Lectures on the Philosophy of World History*, trans., Hugh B. Nisbet (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1975), 196-7.

people of African and Asian origins and reinforced Eurocentrism and colonialism, nullifying Herder's relatively more egalitarian view of world cultures and shaping the power dynamics of Euro-American multicultural society today.

Hegel first spends the most space describing the "barbarism" of Africa as a result of its tropical environment, perhaps in an attempt to eliminate the continent altogether (except North Africa and Egypt because of their contact with Mediterranean Europe[17]) from his sun analogy of cultural spirituality, given that Africa and Europe are aligned at roughly the same longitudes. Comparing "Africa proper" to "the land of childhood,"[18] Hegel asserts that local Africans "[have] not yet reached an awareness of any substantial and objective existence" and are "yet unconscious of [themselves]" in "a state of animality."[19] Unable and unwilling to comprehend the African consciousness using his prototype of the European Enlightenment spirit, Hegel rather denounces it as too "naive" and "savage" to establish its own civilization. To consolidate his portrayal of Africa, Hegel then relies on expedition anecdotes of sorcery, fetish, cannibalism and local slavery in the continent,[20] arguing for Africans' "intractability," or their "[incapability] of any development or culture," and the "lack" of history in Africa.[21] A close scrutiny of Hegel's choice of historical materials by Robert Bernasconi, however, reveals that the well-known German philosopher has not only opted for diaries written by pro-slavery travelers of his time,[22] but also exaggerated the gruesomeness of several scenes

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[17] Hegel, "The Old World," in *Lectures on the Philosophy of World History*, 173-4.

[18] Hegel, *Lectures on the Philosophy of World History*, 174.

[19] Hegel, *Lectures on the Philosophy of World History*, 177-8.

[20] Hegel, *Lectures on the Philosophy of World History*, 179-85.

[21] Hegel, *Lectures on the Philosophy of World History*, 190.

[22] Robert Bernasconi, "Hegel at the Court of the Ashanti," in *Hegel After Derrida*, ed., Stuart Barnett (New York: Routledge, 1998), 50.

depicted, some of which could even have been made up by these travelers or Hegel himself.[23] Allying *de facto* with his pro-slavery contemporaries, Hegel's view of Africa as "uncivilized" and "ahistorical" leads him to conclude that the continent "deserves" to be colonized, like the slave in his dialectic, in order to attain "spiritual freedom" that is nonetheless defined in the context of the European Enlightenment. Hegel's philosophy of world history hence provides a "rational" basis for the Atlantic slave trade,[24] which by the time his complete *Lectures* was published in 1837 had been going on for more than three centuries, while preventing African cultures from being properly recognized even nowadays.

Upon setting Africa as the "null-point" of culture and history,[25] Hegel continues to describe temperate Asia as the origin of "the consciousness of a universal," which though still at its preliminary level is now at least capable of interpersonal connections and the formation of political, cultural collectives.[26] Given the continent's drastic divergence between rich river plains and steep mountainous areas, however, Hegel determines that Asia with its primordial spirituality is stuck in an "antithesis" between "the universal rational essence which remains solid and substantial" and "egotism, infinite desires, and boundless expansion of freedom."[27] The former mode of consciousness, according to Hegel, has raised cultures like China and India that however "[remain] enclosed within themselves" and isolated from other cultures,[28] which insinuates their "passivity" and "lack" of self-consciousness. The latter, on the other

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[23] Bernasconi, 46, 48-50.

[24] For a more detailed account of Hegel's changing attitudes toward slavery, which arguably have coincided with the Haitian Revolution and impacted his master-slave dialectic and his philosophy of world history, see Susan Buck-Morss, "Hegel and Haiti," *Critical Inquiry* 26, no. 4 (2000): 821-65. http://www.jstor.org/stable/1344332.

[25] Bernasconi, 51.

[26] Hegel, *Lectures on the Philosophy of World History*, 190-1.

[27] Hegel, *Lectures on the Philosophy of World History*, 173.

[28] Hegel, *Lectures on the Philosophy of World History*, 193.

hand, suggests that such "unreflective" nature of Asians has led to their "self-indulgence." Hegel's description of Asia in his *Lectures* thereby makes the continent as "deserving" of European colonization as the "childish" Africa, just years before the First Opium War began in 1839 and only decades before the institution of British Raj in 1858.

Yet similar to his distortion of Africa, Hegel misunderstands the process of mediation in Asian philosophy, particularly Zen Buddhism, as an "immediate," "mindless" surrender of the spirit to nature. Qingyuan Weixin, a Chinese Zen Buddhist monk from the Northern Song Dynasty (960-1127 CE),[29] delivered a famous short lecture on individual consciousness and nature that was recorded in *Xu Chuandenglu* ("*Sequel to The Transmission of the Lamp*"), a Ming Dynasty Buddhist anthology first published in 1404.[30] Despite mistaking Qingyuan for a Tang Dynasty monk with the same last name and the anthology for its prequel, Alan Watts has translated the lecture quite accurately from Ancient Chinese to English:

> Before I had studied Zen for thirty years, I saw mountains as mountains, and waters as waters. When I arrived at a more intimate knowledge, I came to the point where I saw that mountains are not mountains, and waters are not waters. But now that I have got its very substance I am at rest. For it's just that I see mountains once again as mountains, and waters once again as waters.[31]

To some extent, Qingyuan's spiritual journey resembles Hegel's account of the evolution of the spirit as a continuing dialectical synthesis. The monk immerses himself in the external world unconsciously before separating his mind from it, and he finally retrieves a harmonious relationship with the world upon active meditations. The only difference between the two is that Hegel advocates the Christian individuation of an idealistic and Absolute spirit, while

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[29] "Qingyuan Weixin" 青原惟信, Buddhist Studies Person Authority Databases, accessed December 19, 2022. https://authority.dila.edu.tw/person/?fromInner=A020691.

[30] "*Xu Chuandenglu*" 續傳燈錄, Authority Database of Buddhist Tripitaka Catalogues, accessed December 19, 2022. https://authority.dila.edu.tw/catalog/?fromInner=CA0003638.

[31] Qingyuan Weixin 青原惟信, "Zen, Mountains and Waters." in *Xu Chuandenglu* 續傳燈錄, vol. 22. ed., Ju Ding 居頂, CBETA Online, accessed December 19, 2022, https://cbetaonline.dila.edu.tw/en/T2077_022, **translated and quoted in** Alan Watts, "Empty and Marvelous." in *The Way of Zen* (New York: Vintage, 2011), 94, 126.

Qingyuan contends that one's spiritual unity lies in their reconnection with nature. Regardless of his more mature spiritual interiority, Qingyuan's choice to view nature as it is would likely be misconstrued by Hegel as a "passive" regression into the "unreflective," "sensuous" realm. In other words, the "primitive" spirituality of Chinese and other Asian cultures[32] portrayed by Hegel is but an inaccurately compressed image of their unique forms of consciousness, which in fact could have been viewed as equal alternatives to the European one.

Hegel's applause that "Europe is the land of spiritual unity" now seems hubristic, only compatible with his European rational consciousness that seeks Absolute individuality.[33] His note that America must consequently be of "incompleteness or constant non-fulfilment" also resonates with the fate of local indigenous peoples, which was similar to that of the African and Asian inhabitants.[34] Hegel's praise for European spirituality becomes increasingly ironic as he attributes the European "principle of individual freedom" to the continent's "links with the sea … the outlet which enables life to step beyond itself,"[35] for such European freedom was essentially based upon overseas enslavement and colonization of the rest of the world. More problematically, Hegel's own master-slave dialectic would paradoxically marks these free European slaveholders and colonizers as *unfree*, for they assume the role of the desirous, self-indulging master, who refuses to fully recognize their "slaves" even as the latter develop their own senses of self-consciousness and definitions of freedom. While Herder suggests the possibility that Africans, Native Americans and Asians may well regard European culture as "eccentric" in comparison to their home cultures,[36] the Hegelian masters would simply deny

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[32] Japanese Zen, for instance. See Ha Tai Kim, "The Logic of the Illogical: Zen and Hegel." *Philosophy East and West* 5, no. 1 (1955): 19-29. https://doi.org/10.2307/1397105.

[33] Hegel, *Lectures on the Philosophy of World History*, 173.

[34] Hegel, *Lectures on the Philosophy of World History*, 172.

[35] Hegel, *Lectures on the Philosophy of World History*, 196.

[36] Herder, 394-5.

this possibility by waving these grievances aside as "whinings" made by their "slaves," who are not "conscious" (i.e. "European") enough to fully appreciate their superiority. However, it is precisely the master, the colonizing Europe, that is enslaved in its own illusion of Hegelian spirituality, which precludes it from holistic recognition of other world cultures. With Hegel's account of world history, therefore, the postcolonial multicultural society today is no longer a Herderian idyll where all cultures can equally participate in creating a diverse community, but a Hegelian battlefield between a Euro-American "master" comfortably relaxing with its sense of superiority, and cultural minorities striving to overthrow this constructed cultural hierarchy by reinstating their due recognition from this "master."

3. Revisiting Taylorian Multiculturalism and the Role of Language

Such then is the scene that Taylor has portrayed in his account of multiculturalism, in which the cultural majority's outright recognition of the equal value of the minority groups is in dire need to help correct historical oppressions and build an inclusive liberal community.[37] He suggests the majority adopt the presumption that "all human cultures that have animated whole societies over some considerable stretch of time have something important to say to all human beings."[38] This premise certainly appears Herderian as Taylor himself has admitted,[39] and it seems to fulfill multiculturalists' goal of challenging the Hegelian historical hierarchy by admitting the uniqueness of each culture. As I will further investigate Taylor's elaboration on the presumption and re-apply it to his example of the Francophone population in Quebec, I shall explain that this account of multiculturalism still has not fully disposed itself of Hegel's master-slave dialectic, which keeps interpersonal and intercultural tensions unresolved and retains the formally superior status of the master. A return to his account of language and the

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[37] Charles Taylor, "The Politics of Recognition," in *Multiculturalism: Examining the Politics of Recognition*, ed., Amy Gutmann (Princeton: Princeton University Press, 1994), 63-4.

[38] Taylor, 66.

[39] Taylor, 72.

dialogical aspect of human life, however, seems to reveal that a multilingual mindset, rather than an Anglophone one, may help address this problem and better facilitate cross-cultural, mutual recognition in contemporary Euro-American society.

Upon accepting the presumption that all world cultures must have their own worths, the cultural majority, according to Taylor, will be able to openly study other cultures and go through a transformation of their standards, where they learn to juxtapose their own culture with others.[40] He nonetheless further elucidates that the presumption does not guarantee any "actual judgments of equal worth" for other cultures,[41] and that "favorable judgment[s] made prematurely" and too easily by the majority for other cultures can appear "condescending," "ethnocentric" and "homogenizing."[42] While the former clarification makes more sense, just as a modern secular state would hardly embrace aggressive forms of religious extremism due to their potential threat to its stability, the latter precaution seems more vague as to the extent of *prematurity* of such judgements and to the agent of such *homogenization*. European artists in the past bought and studied artifacts extensively from the Middle East and East Asia, but their hard work did not prevent them from misinterpreting the local cultures, as they created Orientalist and Japonisme paintings using their own ethnocentric standards. The majority's epistemological limitations can thus still inhibit the transformation of their mindset and their recognition of the minorities. Furthermore, many cultural minorities have been assimilating themselves into mainstream culture long before the latter came to realize the importance of multiculturalism, just as the Hegelian slave pampers their master and makes the latter reliant on yet incognizant of them. A "gourmet" of American Chinese cuisine may support Asian American immigrants financially as a frequent visitor to their restaurants but unknowingly

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[40] Taylor, 67.

[41] Taylor, 68-9.

[42] Taylor, 70-1.

misunderstand Chinese food culture as a lover of General Tso's chicken, a dish designed for Americans by the immigrants.[43] The premise proposed by Taylor is thus only the first step towards authentic recognition, and much remains to be clarified by the majority themselves.

Although Taylor proposes that the presumption of equal value be an attitude taken by the majority rather than a right demanded by the minorities,[44] his implication that the premise is but a prelude to the majority's actual *judgments*,[45] which can be biased or unfavorable due to their own limitations or preferences, still seems to subjugate the minorities to an objective position of being judged by the mainstream culture. As a result, it appears that the cultural minorities shall still either assimilate into the majority, like the example of American Chinese restaurants I illustrated above; or justify themselves in front of the majority and explain their need for differentiated treatment, so as to prove themselves as "worthy of recognition" and hopefully receive a favorable judgment. The instance of Francophone Quebecois in Canada, which Taylor views as a case where the minority group "defend[s] [itself] within reasonable bounds,"[46] exemplifies the latter situation. As the Quebecois strive to demonstrate that their collective goal of cultural survival is a legitimate one before Anglophone Canada, whose legal principles are more liberal, focused on individual rights, they have to arduously clarify their cultural and linguistic differences while falling subject to the judgment of the majority.[47]

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[43] Besides cultural assimilation into the majority group, this example also highlights divisions that can occur within minority cultures, as there *can* be Asian immigrants who are proud of their home cultures *and* the adapted Asian American cuisine. For an extensive discussion on Taylor's omission of the issue, see Amelie Oksenberg Rorty, "The Hidden Politics of Cultural Identification." *Political Theory* 22, no. 1 (1994): 152-66. http://www.jstor.org/stable/192136.

[44] Taylor, 72.

[45] For a thorough examination of this act of judgment, along with the legitimacy of the notion of equal value, see Lawrence Blum, "Recognition, Value, and Equality: A Critique of Charles Taylor's and Nancy Fraser's Accounts of Multiculturalism," in *Theorizing Multiculturalism: A Guide to the Current Debate*, ed., Cynthia Willett. (Malden: Blackwell, 1998), 73-99.

[46] Taylor, 63-4.

[47] Taylor, 52-61.

While Taylor's exposition of the case aims at refuting the liberal politics of equal respect for each individual in issues regarding preservation of the minority cultures, his presumption of equal value for each culture would not have exempted the Quebecois from being judged by Anglophone Canada either, except that they might have been viewed in a more understanding way. The imbalanced relation in Hegel's master-slave dialectic hence stays mostly intact in Taylor's account, as the cultural majority remain in the role of judge over the minorities.

Taylor concludes that the problem of recognition is "perhaps after all a moral issue," that the majority "only need a sense of [their] own limited part in the whole human story" to adopt the presumption of equal value.[48] As I have illustrated, however, what the majority need is more than a sense of humility, but the active renunciation of their role as a cultural judge and the consensus that their *knowledge*, rather than judgment, of the minorities is not fixed but ever-evolving as the intercultural dialogue proceeds. My claim is, in fact, coherent with Taylor's initial assertion that human life is "fundamentally dialogical," where we come to ascertain our identity "through our acquisition of rich human languages of expression," with "languages" in the broadest meaning (i.e. not only speech but also gesture, art, etc.).[49] Yet I would like to take one step further here: these "languages" shall not be limited to our cultural in-groups or our home cultures, but extended to foreign modes of communication as well. The presumption of equal worth in other cultures is not enough, as one may still remain a passive spectator, a judge who continues relying on their home culture standards. Instead, one should take a more avid and active attitude in learning foreign "languages" to become an equal interlocutor with other cultures. Just as the Hegelian slave reconnects themself with the world by actively working on external objects, so should the master, the cultural majority, leave their comfortable throne of hegemony by acting as unassuming, respectful learners of

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[48] Taylor, 73.

[49] Taylor, 32.

the minorities. Instead of judging one as poor in English due to their confusion with different tenses and thereby viewing their home language as "less clear and developed" than English, for instance, a native speaker of English may want to understand why the language learner's home language may have caused such confusion and how tenses are defined in that language, which will expand their horizons beyond an Anglophone mindset and enrich their conception of temporality in general. By actively extending the range of interlocutors from mainstream society to alterity, in addition to their presumption of equal worth, the cultural majority may transcend the master-slave dialectic and enter a more equal conversation with the minorities.

4. Conclusion

This then is my excavation of Hegel's heritage in contemporary multicultural society and Taylor's theory of multiculturalism. Based on the prototype of Enlightenment individuals seeking full spiritual independence, Hegel's master-slave dialectic emphasizes the conflictual aspect of interpersonal and intercultural interactions, concluding that such interactions must end up in absolute, unilateral dominance over one ("the slave") by the other ("the master"). His account of world history, namely his bias against non-European continents and cultures, endorses the ongoing global colonization by Europe of his time, and effectively shapes the contemporary stereotypes against cultural minorities in Euro-American society. Hegel's view of interactions as power struggles, along with his ranking of world cultures according to their "spirituality" defined according to the European mode of consciousness, has devastated his predecessor Herder's multiculturalist vision, where intercultural conversations involve equal interlocutors who all contribute to humanity in diverse and unique ways. Derived from Hegel, Taylor's multicultural politics of recognition attempt to restore the Herderian ideal by calling on the cultural majority to accept the premise of equal worth in world cultures. This premise, however, is only a starting point, and it may well fall back into the dichotomy between "we" and "them" in the Hegelian master-slave dialectic, unless the cultural majority cease trying to

prove the premise with fixed judgments about the cultural minorities, but join in a continuous dialogue with these groups as well as learn alternative modes of thinking and communication actively from them. Returning to the setting of the US higher education institutions depicted at the beginning, it seems that while the Herderian goal is not yet achieved, universities and colleges still endeavor to challenge the Hegelian hierarchy of cultures by adhering to Taylor's more inclusive multicultural principles.[50] As I will examine in the next chapter, however, the future may not look as bright given the rise of neoliberalism and neocolonialism, which have been synchronized with the economic, cultural and educational globalization.

[50] Just as Taylor's critics have pointed out, however, there are other problems (besides the one I have outlined) that need to be addressed as educators apply his theory of multiculturalism in practice. For more details, see Rorty, 161-3; and Blum, "Recognition and Multiculturalism in Education." *Journal of Philosophy of Education* 35, no. 4 (2001): 539-559. http://dx.doi.org/10.1111/1467-9752.00244.

Chapter II

Sketching the English-Learning International Student:

The Neoliberal and Neocolonial Backdrop to English-Dominant Cosmopolitanism

Just as I have argued in the previous chapter, Taylorian multiculturalism could better achieve its goal of retrieving Herder's egalitarian cosmopolitanism by prompting the cultural majority to become learners (rather than judges) of minority cultures. As US universities and colleges incorporate foreign language courses into their graduation requirements, provide an increasing variety of study abroad opportunities, and continue to admit more international students in the aftermath of the pandemic, it seems that domestic US students have already taken up their roles as avid learners of foreign cultures across the globe when they enroll in French 101, travel to China for a semester as an exchange student, or, even easier, talk with the Turkish student in their math class.

Whereas domestic US students have more or less been equipped with such an open, cosmopolitan perspective on other cultures in these ways, little has been asked as to whether international students from non-English speaking countries have similarly gained a global education experience equivalent to those of their American peers. When these international students immerse themselves in an English-dominant environment as English-language learners (ELLs), use the language to converse not only with native speakers of English but also with other non-native speakers, and eventually master the language and its underlying logic, do they truly receive a global education, or an Anglo-American education instead?

To illustrate the status quo of ELL international students in today's global educational context, I shall first examine the worldwide boom of studying abroad as a result of economic globalization through the lens of Marxism, namely its critique of the bourgeoisie. I will then utilize the Foucauldian approach to power dynamics to highlight that the neoliberal discourse perpetuates itself in the realm of global education by molding ELL international students into

entrepreneurial selves with excellent commands of Standard English, a key skill for them to ace the job market both back at home and abroad. Finally, I will review Fanon's account of Francophone linguistic assimilation and connect it with the Anglophone-centric reality of our contemporary global education to reveal the latter's neocolonial implication. I therefore argue that the English-learning international student is both a beneficiary and victim of present-day cosmopolitanism. When the international student achieves professional and financial success as a global elite, they are nonetheless inculcated with the neoliberal worldview along the way and are thereby impelled to uphold the neocolonial world order.

1. The Cosmopolitan Bourgeoisie and International Education: A Marxist Survey

Before inquiring into the figure of a typical ELL international student, it is important to first explain why international education, or the choice to adopt the educational system in developed, mostly English-speaking countries (whether by studying abroad or by enrolling in local international schools), has become an increasingly popular trend in the Global South where English is much less prevalent. By returning to Marx and Engels's prediction about globalization and their observation of the cosmopolitan character of the bourgeoisie, I shall argue that international education as a globalized form of the commodified education industry is not only a luxury or a sign of wealth among bourgeois families in developing countries, but also a means for them to circumvent domestic educational inequalities and thus to maintain and even elevate their socioeconomic status in global society.

In *The Communist Manifesto*, Marx and Engels points out that while the bourgeoisie has attained political dominance with the rise of privatized modern industry, it "cannot exist without constantly [revolutionizing] the instruments of production, and thereby the relations of production, and with them the whole relations of society," which results in its "need of a constantly expanding market for its products … over the whole surface of the globe."[51] In

[51] Karl Marx and Friedrich Engels, "Bourgeois and Proletarians," in *Manifesto of the Communist Party & Principles of Communism* (Paris: Foreign Languages Press, 2020), 36.

order to retain and strengthen the political power of its capital against domestic and overseas competitors, the bourgeoisie must continue renewing its means and relations of production to minimize the cost and maximize the benefit. Remote, unexploited foreign countries with rich raw materials, cheap labor, and massive potential consumers hence become the ideal markets for bourgeoisie expansion, which is exactly what we have seen in the globalization of various industries in the past few decades.[52] Long been commodified as an industry to be invested in,[53] the US higher education has also joined the trend of globalization with the hope of recruiting more international students, who as consumers can usually pay full tuition and thus constitute a firm source of revenue for both public and non-profit private institutions. By hiring more professionals to assist international students and scholars with their life in the US, striving to stay at the top of global and national rankings for higher education institutions,[54] and building international branch campuses one after another, elite universities and colleges in the US are thereby able to attract students and scholars across the world and further solidify their global hegemony in academia and the higher education industry.

Marx and Engels continue to portray the homogenizing impact of the bourgeoisie on the globe, as it "compels [other civilizations] … to become bourgeois themselves" and hence "creates a world after its own image," centralizing "loosely connected provinces … into one nation, with one government, one code of laws, one national class-interest, one frontier and

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[52] For more about Marxism and globalization, see Peter Urmetzer, "Marx, Globalization, and Modernity: What Is Old Becomes New Again," in *Globalization Unplugged: Sovereignty and the Canadian State in the Twenty-First Century* (University of Toronto Press, 2005), 38–47. http://www.jstor.org/stable/10.3138/9781442675391.6.

[53] See Larry L. Leslie and Gary P. Johnson, "The Market Model and Higher Education." *The Journal of Higher Education* 45, no. 1 (1974): 1–20. https://doi.org/10.2307/1980645.

[54] For the role and implication of university rankings in the education industry, see David D. Dill and Maarja Soo, "Academic Quality, League Tables, and Public Policy: A Cross-National Analysis of University Ranking Systems." *Higher Education* 49, no. 4 (2005): 495–533. http://www.jstor.org/stable/25068082; and Michelle Stack, ed., *Global University Rankings and the Politics of Knowledge* (Buffalo: University of Toronto Press, 2021). http://www.jstor.org/stable/10.3138/j.ctv2sm3b3t.

one customs-tariff."[55] As the increasing and evolving supplies keep stimulating new demands in the expanding global market, a cosmopolitan bourgeoisie arises across national borderlines with similar tastes for luxurious commodities. The bourgeoisie's worldwide prevalence then allows for political and cultural integration to form the suprastructure of global society, with little cross-regional variations that, if exist at all, remain superficial and inconsequential. As higher education institutions in the US and other English-speaking countries (especially the UK, Canada and Australia) boast their growing worldwide alumni network and subsequently amplified global reputations, they have become the destinations which bourgeois families in less developed countries dream of sending their children to. Consequently, the centralization of higher education in these countries has taken place to standardize not only the admissions processes for international students, but also the pre-college curricula for them.[56] The English proficiency requirement for college admissions, for instance, can usually only be fulfilled by taking the TOEFL or IELTS test. Furthermore, college-preparatory international schools in non-English-speaking countries are hardly recognized unless they are accredited to offer the International Baccalaureate Program. Even students enrolled in regular secondary schools in their home countries have to rely on private test preparation and college counseling services to get stellar SAT and AP scores, navigate the Common App system and polish their personal statements. To this extent, a Chinese international student, even before they come to the US, has more common language with a US domestic student or a Thai international student than with their Chinese peers who are preparing for *gaokao*, the Chinese College Entrance Exam.

While Marx and Engels further assert that the petit bourgeoisie, "[t]he lower strata of the middle class," will inevitably lose their capital and "sink gradually into the proletariat,"[57]

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[55] Marx and Engels, 37-8.

[56] See Nadine Dolby and Aliya Rahman, "Research in International Education." *Review of Educational Research* 78, no. 3 (2008): 676–726. http://www.jstor.org/stable/40071141.

[57] Marx and Engels, 41.

I shall illustrate that in the contemporary context of globalization, the option of sending their children to local international school and eventually abroad for a global education has instead given petit bourgeois families in the Global South a precious and practical opportunity to not only avoid proletarianization in their competition with the domestic upper class, but also to ascend to greater prosperity. Though principally meritocratic, China's education system for instance is still regionally inequitable as its world-ranked universities are all concentrated in its biggest cities, especially Beijing and Shanghai. As for *gaokao*, the two direct-controlled municipalities are also notorious for having smaller examinee populations and easier exam questions, in contrast to the more heavily populated provinces that administer much tougher exams.[58] Moreover, because high school education is not compulsory in China, about half of the middle school graduates would fail *zhongkao* or the High School Entrance Exam, and the statistics remain the same even in the city of Shanghai.[59] However, if a Chinese student could earn at least a bachelor's degree from an accredited foreign institution, they would be entitled to not only overseas job opportunities, but also the prestige to move their *hukou* or household registration to metropolises like Shanghai and Shenzhen if they decide to return to China. For rural *and* urban Chinese families who cannot see the possibility of their children succeeding in the country's exam-oriented education system but at least have enough money to replace it with an international liberal arts education, the choice for them then becomes evident. Instead of descending into the proletariat, the Global South petit bourgeoisie is now rather capable of mingling with and even merging into the Global North by sending its offspring abroad, which thus maintains the existing class division on both domestic and global scale.

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[58] See Qiang Fu and Qiang Ren, "Educational Inequality under China's Rural–Urban Divide: The *Hukou* System and Return to Education." *Environment and Planning A: Economy and Space* 42 (March 1, 2010): 592–610. https://doi.org/10.1068/a42101.

[59] See Note 4 in Duoduo Xu and Xiaogang Wu, "Separate and Unequal: *Hukou*, School Segregation, and Educational Inequality in Urban China." *Chinese Sociological Review* 54 (January 11, 2022): 1–25. https://doi.org/10.1080/21620555.2021.2019007.

2. The Birth of International Student, or the Neoliberal Elite: A Foucauldian Recap

Having given a broad overview of the international higher education industry, where the English-speaking Global North as the supply side and the non-English-speaking Global South as the demand side collaborate with each other to strengthen the global network of the bourgeoisie, I now move on to sketch the figure of the English-learning international student as a cosmopolitan individual. Utilizing Foucault's view of American neoliberalism,[60] namely his depiction of the human capital, as well as his approach to analyzing power mechanisms,[61] I will demonstrate that the English-learning international student, as soon as they begin their journey of studying abroad and eventually blend into the English-dominant environment of the US college campus, inevitably acquires and internalizes principles of neoliberalism as the ruling discourse of today's Anglophone-centric global society.

Presented in March 1979, Foucault's two lectures on American neoliberalism clarified the theory's core notion of human capital precisely by drawing on the example of education. Rather than viewing the worker as a passive object that solely offers labor power, neoliberals consider the worker as "an active economic subject" who works to earn a wage, or an income of their skill set as a capital that is inseparable from them – thus the term "human capital" is

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[60] While there has been much debate on whether Foucault supports neoliberalism or not – see Daniel Zamora, ed., *Foucault and Neoliberalism* (Malden: Polity, 2015); David Newheiser, "Foucault, Gary Becker and the Critique of Neoliberalism." *Theory, Culture & Society* 33, no. 5 (September 1, 2016): 3–21. https://doi.org/10.1177/0263276415619997; Stephen W. Sawyer and Daniel Steinmetz-Jenkins, ed., *Foucault, Neoliberalism, and Beyond* (Lanham: Rowman & Littlefield International, 2018) – this paper merely concerns the circulation of neoliberalism according to Foucauldian power mechanisms and will not touch on the debate.

[61] My turn from Marxism to Foucault may seem abrupt, for the latter criticizes the former as a "scientific" discourse – see Michel Foucault, "Two Lectures," in *Power/Knowledge: Selected Interviews and Other Writings 1972-1977*, ed., Colin Gordon (New York: Pantheon Books, 1980), 84-5. My goal here, however, is to provide a holistic explanation of cosmopolitan neoliberalism by combining the two schools of thought. This move is inspired by Wendy Brown, *In the Ruins of Neoliberalism: The Rise of Antidemocratic Politics in the West* (New York: Columbia University Press, 2019), http://www.jstor.org/stable/10.7312/brow19384; and Simon Springer, "Neoliberalism as Discourse: Between Foucauldian Political Economy and Marxian Poststructuralism." *Critical Discourse Studies* 9, no. 2 (May 1, 2012): 133-47. https://doi.org/10.1080/17405904.2012.656375.

invented, and the worker as a neoliberal *homo œconomicus* has become "an entrepreneur of [themself]" who is in charge of their own capital and income.[62] To further problematize the idea of human capital and delineate its composition, which according to American neoliberal thinkers consists of innate and acquired elements, Foucault invites his audience to envision their child to be a "future human capital," in which the parent may make genetic, affective, and more importantly "educational investments" to earn "economic and psychological profit" as the child matures into a healthy, financially successful adult.[63] The neoliberal individual thus not only manages themself as their own literal personal business via self-investment in and self-advertisement of their skill set, i.e. their human capital, but by turning the practice of nurturing their child into a form of future investment also passes down the neoliberal mindset through the generations.[64] Just as Foucault's observation of the globalization of neoliberalism coincides with Marx's prediction about the rise of the cosmopolitan bourgeoisie,[65] the trend of international education in the Global South, outlined in the previous section, is exactly an instance of the local bourgeois families' neoliberal educational investments in their offspring. By exiting the domestic public education system, using private tutoring to enhance their skill at taking English proficiency tests, and exaggerating their unique, even hyper-individualistic personality (or persona) in their college applications, the ELL international student is *de facto*

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[62] Foucault, "14 March 1979," in *The Birth of Biopolitics: Lectures at the College de France, 1978-79*, ed., Michel Senellart, trans., Graham Burchell (New York: Picador, 2004), 219-26.

[63] Foucault, "14 March 1979," 227-30; "21 March 1979," in *The Birth of Biopolitics*, 243-44. Note that my use of "child" instead of "children" is an attempt to correspond with Foucault's explanation of the lower birth rate in upper-class families based on the idea of human capital – see *The Birth of Biopolitics*, 244-5.

[64] For more on neoliberalism's impact on education, see also Bronwyn Davies, and Peter Bansel. "Neoliberalism and Education." *International Journal of Qualitative Studies in Education* 20, no. 3 (May 1, 2007): 247–59. https://doi.org/10.1080/09518390701281751.

[65] Foucault, *The Birth of Biopolitics*, 232. Also see Kelly, M.G.E. "International Biopolitics: Foucault, Globalisation and Imperialism." *Theoria: A Journal of Social and Political Theory* 57, no. 123 (2010): 1–26. http://www.jstor.org/stable/41802469.

already a preliminary neoliberal investing in their own human capital at the time they start to prepare for studying abroad according to their parents' plan or out of their own desire.

Some might refute that given the prevalence of neoliberalism due to globalization, a non-English-speaking student studying at the top university in their home country should be as much a neoliberal elite as an ELL international student who is of the same nationality but attends a university (one that is not necessarily prestigious) in an English-speaking country; in other words, the two should possess an equal value of human capital. As Foucault points out, however, a crucial component of human capital is "mobility," or "an individual's ability to move around," which is most evident in the example of migration:

> Because migration obviously represents a material cost, since the individual will not be earning while he is moving, but there will also be a psychological cost for the individual establishing himself in his new milieu. … All these negative elements show that migration has a cost. What is the function of this cost? It is to obtain an improvement of status, of remuneration, and so on, that is to say, it is an investment. … [T]he migrant is an investor. He is an entrepreneur of himself who incurs expenses by investing to obtain some kind of improvement.[66]

Although the international student is technically not a migrant, for they only hold a temporary student visa which does not change their nationality,[67] their experience of studying abroad is still highly reminiscent of the process of migration. Both the international student and the migrant have to travel across the globe, be interrogated at the border customs as foreigners, and navigate themselves through housing, healthcare, insurance and other aspects of life all on their own, with very limited help from local international student associations and migrant communities. Particularly, for an English-learning international student or migrant who goes to college or work in an English-dominant country, the psychological cost to merge into the new environment is significantly higher, as they are further alienated by the real-life language

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[66] Foucault, *The Birth of Biopolitics*, 230.

[67] In fact, for studying abroad in the US, the student must show the "intent to depart [the US] upon completion of the course of study," as is judged by the US consular officer at the visa interview. See U.S. Department of State Bureau of Consular Affairs, "Student Visa," accessed March 10, 2023. https://travel.state.gov/content/travel/en/us-visas/study/student-visa.html.

barrier that is nonetheless absent in the fictional settings of English textbooks, lectures and TOEFL/IELTS tests – for instance, they would hardly know what a *kleenex* is until they see it. As the English learner interacts more with the native speakers and finally gets accustomed to the Anglophone environment with much improved fluency in the language (although they can still be ignorant of slangs, idioms and jargons), they will attain greater mobility not only in a spatial sense, i.e. being able to travel to a foreign country and settle down comfortably, but also in a linguistic sense, i.e. being able to blend into other English-speaking countries or regions more confidently. Contrary to the domestic student, who considerably relies more on their family and local network as their comfort zone, and is only able to shortly immerse in a foreign environment even if they have got the chance to study abroad as an exchange student, the ELL international student, having afforded overseas education at much heavier material and psychological costs, has achieved greater mobility and resilience to navigate through the Anglophone-centric global space with their English skills, which thus indicates their higher human capital under the cosmopolitan and neoliberal standard from the job market's view.

As we rely on neoliberal terminology like "human capital" and "mobility" to explain the ELL international student's success as a global elite, their competitiveness in comparison to their peers, and their attractiveness to future employers, it is entailed that the discourse of American neoliberalism, circulated through Foucaudian power mechanisms,[68] has ascended to the level of a systematized truth that is capable of dominating and totalizing reality on a global scale. Particularly, the emergence of the ELL international student as a cosmopolitan elite figure has precisely manifested the power that is at work in solidifying and globalizing the neoliberal discourse, just as Foucault has argued: "[It] is already one of the prime effects of power that certain bodies, certain gestures, certain discourses, certain desires, come to be identified and constituted as individuals. … The individual which power has constituted is at

[68] Foucault, *Power/Knowledge*, 93, 98-102.

the same time its vehicle."[69] Having gone through the selective college application process and survived the estranging English-dominant environment, even thriving with an excellent command of English, the international student is, in a sense, not a foreign import to the US college campus, but a native product and producer of the globalized American neoliberalism. To reduce the material cost (i.e. tuition and fees) of the 4-year bachelor's degree and protect their GPA, the international student may choose to enroll in third-party summer schools and transfer the course credits back to their home institution to fulfill the graduation requirements more efficiently.[70] To increase the value of their degree and consequently their human capital, the international student may also decide to apply for transfer to a more prestigious institution (typically according to the US News Ranking) as long as they think a degree from their home institution would not make them competitive enough. Furthermore, to think and communicate more effectively (which is a key selling point of the human capital in a neoliberal context), or to get higher grades from their instructors who are English native speakers, the international student is mostly willing to acquire and master the rhetoric styles and manners of reasoning that are typical of English writing in addition to the language's prescriptive grammar,[71] even though this might lead to more Anglicism when they speak their first language. Finally, this preference for the English or Euro-American way of thinking is brought back to the home country of the graduating international student, who may choose to work at a local studying

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[69] Foucault, *Power/Knowledge*, 98.

[70] For more on this phenomenon, see Mini Gu, "The Rise of International Summer Schools in China," November 15, 2018, World Education News & Reviews, accessed March 11, 2023. https://wenr.wes.org/2018/11/the-rise-of-international-summer-schools-in-china; and Jabbar Al-Obaidi and Chien Wen Yu. "A Triple Helix Case: Innovative and Sustainable International Summer School in China." Journal of Advanced Research in Social Sciences and Humanities 7, no. 1 (March 3, 2022): 10–23. https://jarssh.com/ojs/index.php/jarssh/article/view/178.

[71] It seems to be taken for granted among college students that it is necessary for non-native English speakers to master the language, but not much so for native English speakers to learn a foreign language. See Christof Demont-Heinrich, "Linguistically Privileged and Cursed? American University Students and the Global Hegemony of English," *World Englishes* 29, no. 2 (June 1, 2010): 281–98, https://doi.org/10.1111/j.1467-971X.2010.01643.x.

abroad agency as a test prep instructor or college application counselor and will thereby keep nourishing new generations of international students as bi/multilingual neoliberal elites.

3. The International Student and a Reviving Colonialism: A Fanonian Critique

From a Foucauldian perspective, then, the English-learning international student is born to be a cosmopolitan global elite who will flourish in both their home country and the Anglosphere, with their fluency in English as the key component of their human capital, and their prosperity will preserve the global hegemony of American neoliberalism. As I will dive from the ELL international student's academic and linguistic success into their psychology, particularly their new cultural identity as a liminal being between their home and the US as a foreign country, however, a question arises as to whether they can still accept themself when they use the English language only "to exist absolutely for the other" (i.e. the native speaker) as *an other* (i.e. a non-native speaker and a foreigner).[72] By rereading Chapter 1 of Fanon's *Black Skin, White Masks*, where he describes the French West Indian people's identity crisis in relation to their use of the French language, I shall demonstrate that the English-learning international student as a nominal cosmopolitan is covertly victimized by neocolonialism, which seduces them into abandoning their home culture through linguistic assimilation.[73]

As is almost always the case with learning foreign languages, one tends to view the native speakers as their role models and strives to speak like them in a "standard" accent as closely as possible.[74] On the other hand, the accent of the language learner, often influenced

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[72] Fanon, Frantz, "The Negro and Language," in *Black Skin, White Masks*, trans. Charles Lam Markmann (London: Pluto Press, 2008), 8.

[73] For the origin of the term "neocolonialism" and its evolution over the last half century, see Nagesh Rao, "'Neocolonialism' or 'Globalization'?: Postcolonial Theory and the Demands of Political Economy." *Interdisciplinary Literary Studies* 1, no. 2 (2000): 165–84. http://www.jstor.org/stable/41209050; and Uzoigwe, Godfrey N. "Neocolonialism Is Dead: Long Live Neocolonialism." Journal of Global South Studies 36, no. 1 (Spring 2019): 59–87. doi:10.1353/gss.2019.0004.

[74] See Sue Fraser, "Perceptions of varieties of spoken English: implications for EIL," in *Language, Culture and Identity in Applied Linguistics*, ed., Richard Kiely, Pauline

by their mother tongue, is despised by the learner themself as inaccurate while exoticized by the native speakers as part of their stereotypes about "foreigners" of other races, nationalities and ethnicities. In particular, Fanon elaborates on the inner turmoil of the French West Indian people (namely the Martiniquais) against their own accents as they speak French in mainland France. They "react against the myth of the R-eating [person]" and "practice not only rolling [their] R but embroidering it" by "[f]urtively observing the slightest reactions of others [and] listening to [their] own speech," while being "suspicious of [their] own tongue—a wretchedly lazy organ."[75] Even if they manage to combat the stereotype by mastering Standard French, they will, "exasperating[ly]," still be judged by the European French people when the latter unknowingly yet condescendingly ask how long they have been in France and commend that "[they] speak French so well."[76] Though the English-learning international student may come from a country that is *not* formerly colonized by an English-speaking nation, they could still develop a sense of inferiority when their peers and course instructors who are native speakers ask them to repeat what they have said due to confusion, explicitly correct their grammar and word choice, or simply pay less attention to their deliberate speech that is usually longer and slower compared to that of a native speaker. They can feel suspicious of and embarrassed by not only their tongue, but also their brain, when they forget their chosen word to utter – is the word "apocalypse" or "acopalypse"? – and only end up mumbling in their conversation with native speakers. When the international student finally earns praise from native speakers that they speak or write English so well, they would, unlike Fanon's assertion, feel more satisfied as a language learner rather than exasperated as a formerly colonized person. This feeling of

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Rea-Dickins, and Gerald Clibbon (London: Equinox Publishing Ltd, 2006), 79-97. https://search-ebscohost-com.proxy.library.emory.edu/login.aspx?direct=true&db=e000xna&AN=547812&site=ehost-live&scope=site.

[75] Fanon, 11.

[76] Fanon, 23.

satisfaction, however, solidifies the international student's approval of the native speaker's accent and writing style as Standard English and further binds them to the linguistic hierarchy where English variants used by non-white and/or non-native speakers are "innately inferior." A subconscious contempt for their fellow English-learning classmates who still have accents is then developed as the student identifies themself with the hegemony of Standard English.

Moving beyond the dimension of language to reveal its impact on cultural identity, Fanon sharply declares that "[t]he colonized is elevated above his jungle status in proportion to his adoption of the mother country's cultural standards," highlighting that "[i]n the French colonial army, and particularly in the Senegalese regiments, the black officers serve first of all as interpreters [who] are used to convey the master's orders to their fellows, and they too enjoy a certain position of honor."[77] By learning Standard English with respect to not only its pronunciation and grammar, but also its argumentation and rhetoric styles, the international student endeavors to speak and think like a native speaker to counter the stereotype that they speak in exotic accents and write "illogically," while consequently assimilating themself into the English-dominant, Anglo-American culture in the place of their home culture. When they travel back to their home country as a cosmopolitan elite and join, for instance, the education industry (as I have imagined in the previous section), with a preference for Standard English used by white native speakers,[78] what has been circulated and perpetuated in the Foucauldian sense is not only the neoliberal principle that one is responsible for maximizing their human capital by increasing their spatial and linguistic mobility, but also the neocolonial belief that the Euro-American lifestyle and way of thinking are "essentially superior" to those of other cultures – a retrogression to the Hegelian world history. Furthermore, the colonized returnee,

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[77] Fanon, 9.

[78] For the situation in China as an example, see Yan Guo, and Gulbahar H. Beckett. "The Hegemony of English as a Global Language: Reclaiming Local Knowledge and Culture in China." *Convergence* 40, no. 1/2 (February 2007): 117–31.

or "the newcomer" according to Fanon, "no longer understands [their hometown's] dialect [and] adopts a critical attitude toward his compatriots."[79] Similarly, for the cosmopolitanized international student returning to their home country in the Global South, what is commonly known as reverse cultural shock does not solely consist in the phenomenological experience that their home has become a foreign land, but the fact that it has become almost impossible for them to empathize with the "culturally backward" people there.[80] Having fully accepted the universalizing Euro-American view of the Global South at the cost of giving up their own regional perspective, the international student now ironically loses sight of their peers' lives and struggles back in their home country. Such epistemic ignorance, therefore, would prevent them from understanding and solving the plight of their homeland while encouraging them to embrace the foreign Global North as their new home and to rejoin the overseas job market, where they might be recruited for their linguistic competence as an accomplice in the ongoing neocolonial exploitation of the Global South.[81]

The English-learning international student, then, is different from a foreign national described by Fanon, "a Russian or a German who speaks French badly" but "has a language of [their] own, a country … [where] perhaps [they are] a lawyer or an engineer," and different standards.[82] Coming to the US as a college student, a high schooler or even a middle schooler, the international student is nobody to their home country until their higher education degree is certified. In other words, their identity as a student is rather defined by the US as a foreign

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[79] Fanon, 13.

[80] Note, however, that it might *not* be self-contradictory for some students to support their home country's neoliberal governmentality (which has allowed them to study abroad) *and* criticize their compatriots who are political dissenters. For instance, see Yuan, Li. "Trapped Abroad, China's 'Little Pinks' Rethink Their Country." *The New York Times*, June 24, 2020. https://www.nytimes.com/2020/06/24/business/china-nationalist-students-coronavirus.html.

[81] See Douglas MacKay, "Are Skill-Selective Immigration Policies Just?" *Social Theory and Practice* 42, no. 1 (2016): 123–54. http://www.jstor.org/stable/24575778.

[82] Fanon, 21.

country to them. On the other hand, the international student also differs from the colonized French West Indian black people, who according to Fanon have "no culture, no civilization, no 'long historical past'" at all,[83] for they still fortunately have a home culture as their origin. In the context of studying abroad in the US, nevertheless, this home only exists as an appeal for colleges and universities to fulfill their commitment to the cosmopolitan multiculturalism, and/or as a scapegoat to for the international student themself to blame when their ambition to master Standard English and become an "authentic" cosmopolitan has been obstructed. In order to merge into the foreign, i.e. the Anglophone-centric First World, the English-learning international student hence must formally cling to their home culture to display their cultural and linguistic hybridity,[84] while alienating themself from their home to prove that they are by no means a provincialist that is limited by the less developed Global South. Neither an utter foreigner or a fully naturalized/colonized person, then, the international student is rather an "adventurer," who "finds the homely precisely in what is constantly and merely not-homely, in the foreign taken in itself" and hence totally forgets "[the] distinction between the homely and the unhomely," as is criticized by Heidegger.[85] By identifying the foreign, cosmopolitan First World as their academic and professional home via their mastery of Standard English, while reducing their cultural home to just a label of origin, the international student becomes not only rootless for undervaluing the cultural imprint of their home, but also insensible to the linguistic and cultural hegemony of the Anglophone-centric Global North for internalizing its neocolonial presumption and discrimination against the non-English-speaking Global South.

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[83] Fanon, 21.

[84] See Ryuko Kubota, "The Multi/Plural Turn, Postcolonial Theory, and Neoliberal Multiculturalism: Complicities and Implications for Applied Linguistics." *Applied Linguistics* 37, no. 4 (August 1, 2016): 474–94. https://doi.org/10.1093/applin/amu045.

[85] Martin Heidegger, "Further essential determinations of the human being," in *Hölderlin's Hymn "The Ister,"* trans., William McNeill and Julia Davis (Bloomington: Indiana University Press, 1996), 75.

4. Conclusion

While not indicated in the chapter title or the introduction, this chapter actually seems to be more genealogical in comparison to the previous chapter, since it primarily relies on the "subjugated," "naive" knowledges, which are "located low down the hierarchy [and] beneath the required level of cognition or scientificity," to reveal the Anglophone-centric "tyranny" of the contemporary cosmopolitanism as a literal and figurative "[globalizing discourse]."[86] By diagnosing the emergence of the English-learning international student, i.e. starting from their middle-class socioeconomic foundation to their personal growth as a neoliberal individualist, and ending with their psychological mutation into an unconscious neocolonialist, I have just outlined the contour of non-native English speakers as cultural and linguistic minorities in the global education context and their ambivalent position in today's discourse on global justice. Based on the experiences of myself and other international students from the Global South, then, my "ascending analysis of power" begins from "its infinitesimal mechanisms," i.e. how the phenomena of linguistic and cultural assimilation might take place at individual level, to unveil that the prevalence of English-dominant cosmopolitanism as a power mechanism, and the circulation of Standard English as a hegemonic knowledge, have "become economically advantageous and politically useful" by upholding the neoliberal and neocolonial dominance of the Global North.[87] While the cultural majority should dispose of their prejudices and start to learn other cultures' modes of communication (as I have argued in Chapter I), therefore, the minorities should also reflect on their roles in the global reproduction of injustice as both victims and exploiters in present-day cosmopolitan society. A collaboration for global justice between the majority and the minorities will then be possible with the facilitation of a revised critical pedagogy based on equal conversation, which I set out to depict in the final chapter.

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[86] Foucault, *Power/Knowledge*, 82-3.

[87] Foucault, *Power/Knowledge*, 99-102.

Chapter III

Reimagining a Critical Pedagogy of Mutual Recognition:

Writing Center in the Face of Anglophone-centrism

Since Chapter I discusses the English-speaking majority's responsibility as learners of other cultures, while Chapter II depicts the plight of non-native English speakers as linguistic minorities in today's English-dominant cosmopolitan society, my third and last chapter now strives to bring the majority and the minorities together for an intercultural conversation that is aimed at authentic mutual understanding as the pathway towards inclusion and liberation. While the setting of a US higher institution in general may well facilitate such conversations, I will rather zoom in on the writing center as a site that ultimately concerns college students' mastery of writing, rhetoric and communication primarily using the English language.[88] With its continuous evolution over the past century along with that of the college writing program, the writing center in most US universities and colleges now features one-on-one peer tutoring sessions, in which the student writer converses with their peer tutor about a specific piece of writing.[89] International students who are English-language learners (ELLs) thus often choose to visit the writing center, either according to their instructors' suggestions or simply out of their own ambition to enhance their English skills. As tutoring sessions may focus on either the global or local issues in writing – some instances of the former include thesis statement and structure, while the latter usually refer to grammar and punctuation – how the English language is used, projected and analyzed, therefore, becomes crucial for both the tutor and

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[88] See Lauren Fitzgerald and Melissa Ianetta, "Tutoring Writing: What, Why, Where, and When," in *The Oxford Guide for Writing Tutors: Practice and Research* (New York: Oxford University Press, 2016), 19-26; Stephen M. North, "The Idea of a Writing Center." *College English* 46, no. 5 (1984): 433–46. https://doi.org/10.2307/377047; and Elizabeth H. Boquet, "'Our Little Secret': A History of Writing Centers, Pre- to Post-Open Admissions." *College Composition and Communication* 50, no. 3 (1999): 463–82. https://doi.org/10.2307/358861.

[89] For the tutor-tutee relationship in the writing center, see Muriel Harris, "Talking in the Middle: Why Writers Need Writing Tutors." *College English* 57, no. 1 (1995): 27–42. https://doi.org/10.2307/378348.

the writer to rethink their relations to the language as well as the identities of themselves and their interlocutors. An opportunity for challenging the cosmopolitan Anglophone-centrism may consequently arise in these cross-cultural conversations about English and its *others*.

To outline an English language tutoring pedagogy that can not only fulfill the goal of equipping ELLs with fluency in English, but also inspire them to question and challenge the global Anglophone-centrism, I will first review existing scholarship on ELL pedagogy in the writing center by connecting it with my own experience as a non-native English writing tutor. Given the infinite variety of the pragmatic educational contexts where this pedagogy may be applied and revised, I will then mainly focus on the use of the Socratic method by returning to Paulo Freire's critical pedagogy, especially his notion of the "problem-posing" education, as an inspiration for tutors to reflect on their framing of guiding questions. Finally, I attempt to introduce the use of humor into the pedagogy by drawing on Simon Critchley's discussion of the phenomenon, arguing for its roles in bonding native and non-native speakers against English dominance and in reconnecting ELL writers with their own writing process.

1. English Language Learners in the Writing Center: A Brief Overview

Historically established in English-speaking institutions while commonly working with ELLs, the writing center is often viewed as an amplifier of Anglophone-centrism, for it is usually supposed by non-writing faculty to improve ELLs' academic English writing skills or even "correct" their so-called "deficiency" in English writing. In other words, ELLs' lack of mastery in English is often diagnosed as a disability that requires remediation,[90] while the connection between the ELL writer and their peer tutor is hence perceived as a Foucauldian patient-therapist relationship by both the non-writing course faculty and the ELL themself.[91]

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[90] Inspired by Joel Michael Reynolds, "What is 'Disability' For?" (The William J. Edwards Lecture, Emory University Department of Philosophy, Atlanta, GA, October 27, 2022).

[91] See Foucault, "The means of correct training," in *Discipline and Punish: The Birth of the Prison*, trans., Alan Sheridan (New York: Vintage Books, 1995), 184-94. The use of session summary in the writing center, for instance, may well be a tracking report of ELLs' progress.

On the other hand, the arrival of ELLs at the writing center has since challenged many of its common practices designed for native English speakers.[92] ELL writers' preoccupation with grammar and vocabulary, as a result of their English educational background, may divert them from more serious issues such as their arguments and analysis. More importantly, their global-level aspects of writing are often influenced by their habits of thinking and writing in their mother tongues, whose grammar and logic can differ drastically from those of English.[93] Having developed a broad classification for ELLs, later studies on ELL pedagogy have thus proposed various agendas that all similarly urge the need for: acknowledging ELLs' diverse cultural and linguistic backgrounds;[94] combining didactic methods and facilitative scaffolding strategies to help ELLs acquire and transfer English writing skills;[95] balancing ELLs' voices and needs with the writing center's instructive goal of enhancing students' writing abilities;[96] and hiring more writing tutors who are also ELLs themselves,[97] etc. The list goes on and on.

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[92] See Judith K. Powers, "Rethinking Writing Center Conferencing Strategies for the ESL Writer." The *Writing Center Journal* 13, no. 2 (1993): 39–47. http://www.jstor.org/stable/43441929.

[93] For more comprehensive accounts on ELL tutoring in writing centers, see Thonus, Terese. "Tutors as Teachers: Assisting ESL/EFL Students in the Writing Center." *The Writing Center Journal* 13, no. 2 (1993): 13–26. http://www.jstor.org/stable/43441927; and Muriel Harris and Tony Silva. "Tutoring ESL Students: Issues and Options." *College Composition and Communication* 44, no. 4 (1993): 525–37. https://doi.org/10.2307/358388.

[94] See Susan Blau, John Hall, and Sarah Sparks. "Guilt-Free Tutoring: Rethinking How We Tutor Non-Native-English-Speaking Students." *The Writing Center Journal* 23, no. 1 (2002): 23–44. http://www.jstor.org/stable/43442160.

[95] See Sharon A. Myers, "Reassessing the 'Proofreading Trap': ESL Tutoring and Writing Instruction." *The Writing Center Journal* 24, no. 1 (2003): 51–70. http://www.jstor.org/stable/43442189.

[96] See Jane Cogie, "ESL Student Participation in Writing Center Sessions." *The Writing Center Journal* 26, no. 2 (2006): 48–66. http://www.jstor.org/stable/43442249; and Christian Brendel, "Tutoring between Language with Comparative Multilingual Tutoring." *The Writing Center Journal* 32, no. 1 (2012): 78–91. http://www.jstor.org/stable/43442383.

[97] See Lucie Moussu, "Let's Talk! ESL Students' Needs and Writing Centre Philosophy." *TESL Canada Journal* 30, no. 2 (September 26, 2013): 55. https://doi.org/10.18806/tesl.v30i2.1142.

What has been discussed on ELLs in the scholarly field of writing center studies for the past three decades, nevertheless, still seems to remain much the same as I have seen at the Southeastern Writing Center Association Conference in February 2023. While an increase of non-native speakers in the writing tutor population have indeed diversified the pedagogical approach to tutoring ELLs and challenged the dominance of Standard English's prescriptive grammar in the writing center, the stereotype of the English-learning international student – one who dare not speak up in classrooms, has no idea about independent research and proper citations, relies on translations from their first languages, and prefers native English speakers for checking their grammar – stays persistent for generations not only in research by writing tutors and professionals,[98] but also in our daily tutoring sessions in the writing center. In other words, English language learners in the writing center still largely remain passive objects to be studied and "cured" according to normative paradigms defined by fluent English users.

While this is not fully the fault of the writing center alone, given the prevalence and perpetuation of English dominance across the globe (as is portrayed in the previous chapter), much still needs to be done if the writing center is to transform itself into a site of liberation that assists ELLs to bolster their confidence in English writing and to retain their cultural and linguistic identities.[99] Although the writing center continues to function and be perceived as a corrective site for academic English writing within the higher education system, it can and

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[98] For more recent instances in addition to the earlier ones, see Holly Bauer and Madeleine Picciotto. "Writing in America: International Students and First-Year Composition." *Writing on the Edge* 23, no. 2 (2013): 75–86. http://www.jstor.org/stable/43158914; Carol Severino and Shih-Ni Prim. "Word Choice Errors in Chinese Students' English Writing and How Online Writing Center Tutors Respond to Them." *The Writing Center Journal* 34, no. 2 (2015): 115–43. http://www.jstor.org/stable/43442807; and Yelin Zhao, "Student Interactions with a Native Speaker Tutor and a Nonnative Speaker Tutor at an American Writing Center." *The Writing Center Journal* 36, no. 2 (2017): 57–87. http://www.jstor.org/stable/44594851.

[99] See Harry C. Denny, "Facing Nationality in the Writing Center," in *Facing the Center: Toward an Identity Politics of One-to-One Mentoring* (University Press of Colorado, 2010), 117–38. https://doi.org/10.2307/j.ctt4cgqnv.12; and Shirley K. Rose and Irwin Weiser, eds., *The Internationalization of US Writing Programs* (University Press of Colorado, 2018). https://doi.org/10.2307/j.ctt22h6qmq.

should encourage its visitors, whether native or non-native speakers, to reflect on their own writing as a creative process and further ascertain their subjectivity as an author and creator. What ELL writers need is thus not just detailed instructions on the English grammar and its argumentative rhetoric, i.e. ways to write an A+ paper according to their course instructors' grading criteria, but also opportunities for them to maximize their potential as independent writers and original thinkers with agency. While the latter goal is also shared among native English writers, it is further entailed for ELL writers that they would not rely on English as the sole language with which they could think and communicate effectively, but reintroduce their unique cultural and linguistic identities actively into their writing process and view the English language as equal (rather than superior) to other modes of communication.[100]

Though the task of self-liberation must only be accomplished by ELLs themselves, writing tutors as peers might well facilitate this process as ELL writers' equal interlocutors during the one-on-one tutoring session as an open, ongoing conversation. However, due to the implicit authority of the tutor's role as a reviewer of the writer's work, certain strategies commonly used in tutoring sessions, such as the Socratic guiding questions, could have been revised to better encourage ELLs to share their thoughts on their writing and to affirm their voices as writers. To better illustrate my argument for such an updated critical pedagogy for ELLs, I now return to Paulo Freire's definition of the "problem-posing" education to discuss its implications for writing center tutors to identify and combat English-dominant modes of thinking as well as to understand and embrace multilingual means of communication.

2. Reconstructing Guiding Questions: A Freirean Socratic Method

Inspired by the Marxist notion of class struggles and Fanonian anti-colonial thought, Paulo Freire's *Pedagogy of the Oppressed*, first published about half a century ago, has been a source of inspiration for both philosophers of education as well as practitioners of critical

[100] See bell hooks, "Democratic Education," in *Teaching Community: A Pedagogy of Hope* (New York: Routledge, 2003), 45.

pedagogy.[101] His emphasis on humanization as the core of a liberating education, and on the agency of the oppressed to fight for their own freedom as equal human beings rather than as new oppressors,[102] has been widely applied in various educational contexts (including that of the writing center) to address and combat issues of oppressive discrimination.[103] In particular, Freire proposes a "problem-posing" education as the key of his critical pedagogy in contrast to the rigid "banking" education, highlighting that the former, in "responding to the essence of consciousness—intentionality—rejects communiqués and embodies communication" and "epitomizes the special characteristic of consciousness: being *conscious of*, not only as intent on objects but as turned in upon itself in a Jasperian 'split'—consciousness as consciousness *of* consciousness."[104] No longer a passive receptacle of knowledge that thoughtlessly pours out (as is the case with teachers) or receives (as is the case with students) preformulated doctrines and worships them as "truths," as is seen in "banking" education whose goal is to perpetuate oppression through "deposit-making,"[105] consciousness in its communication with another individual now recognizes both its interlocutor and itself as intentional, active beings,

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[101] For more details about Fanon's impact on Freire's thought, see Stephen Nathan Haymes, "Race, Pedagogy, and Paulo Freire," *Philosophy of Education Archive* (2002): 151–59. https://educationjournal.web.illinois.edu/archive/index.php/pes/article/view/1807.pdf. For Freire's Marxist imprint as well as his influences on education in general, see Peter Roberts, "A Philosophy of Hope: Paulo Freire and Critical Pedagogy," in *A History of Western Philosophy of Education*, ed., Megan J. Laverty, and David T. Hansen (Bloomsbury, 2021). https://proxy.library.emory.edu/login?url=https://search.credoreference.com/content/entry/bloomwpe/a_philosophy_of_hope_paulo_freire_and_critical_pedagogy/0?institutionId=716.

[102] Paulo Freire, *Pedagogy of the Oppressed: 30th Anniversary Edition* (New York: Bloomsbury Academic & Professional, 2014), accessed March 8, 2023, ProQuest Ebook Central, 43-9.

[103] For Freirean pedagogy in the writing center, see Carol J. Singley and Holly W. Boucher, "Dialogue in Tutor Training: Creating the Essential Space For Learning." *The Writing Center Journal* 8, no. 2 (1988): 11–22. http://www.jstor.org/stable/43441861; and Greg Lyons, "Validating Cultural Difference in the Writing Center." *The Writing Center Journal* 12, no. 2 (1992): 145–58. http://www.jstor.org/stable/43441902.

[104] Freire, 79.

[105] Freire, 72-4, 79.

who are capable of directing their actions at their own will. Such a rise of self-consciousness via communication in "problem-posing" education thus resonates with Hegel's master-slave dialectic, where consciousness ascertains itself through confrontation with its opponent. Note, however, that Freire does not underline the Hegelian life-and-death struggle as necessary for the awakening of self-consciousness – he might well argue that the master-slave relationship more resembles the teacher-student hierarchy in "banking" education. Rather, he implies that the open encounter between the two interlocutors during their conversation is alone sufficient for them to recognize themselves and each other as independent beings who are nonetheless interdependent. The communication-based "problem-posing" education, then, is by no means goals-oriented like the "banking" education that teaches students by rote, but lays emphasis on the process of conversation where both the teacher and the learner retrieves their agency.

The writing center's one-on-one peer tutoring method hence apparently derives from Freire's ideal of "problem-posing" education.[106] On the one hand, the tutor utilizes strategies like praising, posing guiding questions, and giving metacommentaries to motivate the writer in reviewing their work, while reflecting on their own writing process as well; on the other hand, the writer in responding to the tutor's question is able to design their own agenda for both the tutoring session and their post-session revision, thus also obtaining a clearer vision of their writing abilities and styles. This precisely matches Freire's description that a new relation, "teacher-student with [student-teacher]," arises via dialogues in "problem-posing" education, where the teacher "is [themself] taught in dialogue with the [student], who in turn while being taught also teach," and together the two will "become jointly responsible for a process in which all grow[, and] arguments based on 'authority' are no longer valid."[107] For

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[106] For application of "problem-posing" education to traditional English classrooms, see also Ira Shor, "Problem Posing: Situated and Multicultural Learning," in *Empowering Education: Critical Teaching for Social Change*, (Chicago: The University of Chicago Press, 1992) 31-54.

[107] Freire, 80.

ELL writers, however, the authority of tutors as native speakers or fluent users of English is covertly retained in tutoring sessions that are conducted fully in English, and the so-called "arguments based on 'authority'" are, quite contrary to Freire's expectation, often desired by ELL writers, especially when they plan to fix the grammar mistakes in their papers. In these cases, the Socratic guiding questions may well be interpreted as rhetorical questions by ELL writers, which can often imply that they have "done it wrong" and should correct the part of the writing that is being questioned according to the tutors' instructions. This phenomenon, however, does not mean that ELL writers "deserve" a more directive tutoring method similar to the "banking" education for learning English writing,[108] but that writing tutors should use their authority "on the side of freedom" and remind the ELL writers of their roles as "critical co-investigators in dialogue with the [tutors]" rather than "docile listeners," as Freire would probably argue.[109] Rather than formalistically ask the ELL writer what they think about their grammar errors or give a mini-lecture on grammar straightforwardly, for example, the tutor may invite the writer to share why they have written in a nonstandard, "ungrammatical" way. By exchanging what they know about the English language with the tutor, the ELL writer may then reflect on what Standard English writing rules they would choose to adopt, and what they would rather keep in their original writing as their unique communication style.

It is in posing Socratic guiding questions, which do not presuppose the hegemony of Standard English but questions its very authority, that the ELL writing pedagogy can, like the Freirean "problem-posing" education, "affirms [tutors and writers] as beings in the process of *becoming*—as unfinished, uncompleted beings in and with a likewise unfinished reality."[110]

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[108] For a debate on this issue, see Jean Kiedaisch and Sue Dinitz. "Changing Notions of Difference in the Writing Center: The Possibilities of Universal Design." *The Writing Center Journal* 27, no. 2 (2007): 39–59. http://www.jstor.org/stable/43442271.

[109] Freire, 80-1.

[110] Freire, 84.

Just as the tutor-writer relationship is not a strict dichotomy (e.g. a tutor may decide to meet with another tutor at the writing center to improve their writing, while a writer may one day choose to work as a tutor), the linguistic hierarchy that discriminates the English language learner in favor of the fluent (or native) English speaker is also a reversible construct. When this hierarchy is dissolved through cross-cultural conversations that radically challenges the presuppositions about Standard English, not only will the ELL writer obtain a more holistic view about the English language, but the tutor who are fluent in English will also be exposed to alternative modes of thinking and communication from foreign cultures and languages that would otherwise not have been available to a Standard English user. My earlier proposal that Taylorian multiculturalists act as learners rather than judges of other minority cultures, then, is achievable in the context of English writing tutoring, if the tutor frames nonjudgemental guiding questions that will not only familiarize the ELL writer with the traditions in English writing, but also prompts them and the tutor themself to rethink these traditions in contrast to those of other languages and cultures. Both the tutor and the writer, therefore, can constantly learn from each other, while reaffirming and renewing their identity and relation to the world that is also "a reality in process, in transformation."[111] To be proficient in English writing and speaking, then, is no more privileged than being fluent in other modes of communication; and just as the English language itself has undergone significant changes such as the Great Vowel Shift and Latinization, so is the dominance of English a contemporary reality of cosmopolitan society that is subject to future reformation. By reinvigorating traditional tutoring practices with the Freirean principles of "problem-posing" education, then, tutors working with ELL writers in the writing center may pose Socratic guiding questions not in a condescending, directive manner, but with an earnest attempt to learn from ELL writers' ways of thinking and to creatively broaden their own horizons beyond an English-dominant one.

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[111] Freire, 83.

3. Laughter as Bond and Weapon: A Critical Pedagogy of Humor

The Freirean Socratic method outlined above, therefore, may serve as a practical ELL pedagogy that challenges Anglophone-centrism at individual level by affirming ELL writers' cultural and linguistic identity as well as encouraging both writers and tutors to reflect on the normative aspects of the English language.[112] However, recall that the writing center is still part of the higher education system, whose emphasis on academic success is directly related to the global perpetuation of neoliberalism, and that many ELLs come to the writing center according to their course instructors' advice in order to improve their essay grades. In other words, to combat the neocolonial discourse of Anglophone-centrism also requires that we consider and tackle the issue of neoliberalism as its essential precondition. I therefore aspire to introduce the use of humor into my proposed critical pedagogy for ELLs by first referring to Simon Critchley's view of humor as both a *sensus communis* and a *dissensus communis*, and then linking his observation of the locality of humor with the idea of cosmopolitanism.

In Chapter Six of his *On Humour*, Critchley argues that humor is "a form of *sensus communis*" or "common sense," that "jokes are the expression of sociality and possess an implicit reasonableness," because they "bring us back to a social world that is common and shared" among us as "a specific community, with a common language and shared cultural assumptions and life-world practices."[113] Humor is, therefore, essentially culture-specific, yet the definition of "culture" here is not merely limited to national or ethnic cultures but much broader – a business, a college and even a family can each have their own cultures and their

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[112] For more on Freirean pedagogy and social justice, see Henry A. Giroux, "Paulo Freire and the Politics of Postcolonialism." *Journal of Advanced Composition* 12, no. 1 (1992): 15–26. http://www.jstor.org/stable/20865825; Lara M. Trout, "Attunement to the Invisible: Applying Paulo Freire's Problem-Posing Education to 'Invisibility.'" *The Pluralist* 3, no. 3 (2008): 63–78. http://www.jstor.org/stable/20708948.

[113] Simon Critchley, "The Joke's on All of Us – Humour as *Sensus Communis*," in *On Humour* (Florence: Taylor & Francis Group, 2002), accessed March 8, 2023, ProQuest Ebook Central, 79, 86-7.

unique sense of humor, which consequently serves as a bond among their members.[114] More generally speaking, the worldwide systemic prevalence of neoliberalism also seems to have turned itself into a culture that is shared among the bourgeoisie in both the Global North and South. A cosmopolitan sense of humor, therefore, arises simultaneously across the globe, as is seen in the ubiquity of Internet memes, like the woman yelling at the cat, and prototypical personages, such as the whining pop star, the alpha male and the college student tortured by deadlines. When we zoom back into the setting of the writing center as but a tiny part of the international higher education industry, then, a shared culture and sense of humor between the writer and their peer tutor is still highly probable even if the former may be an ELL.[115] Through humorous, rapport-building small talks, such as venting their frustration at picky course instructors and joking about words that are difficult to spell, the ELL writers and the tutors may thus establish a culture among student writers who similarly undergo the college writing curricula and share a general knowledge of the basic procedures in English writing. Narrated from a first-person perspective, then, jokes circulated in the writing center reminds us of "who 'we' are" – college student writers; "who 'we' have been" – high school students

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[114] For the use of humor specifically as a tool for bonding in the setting of a college classroom, see Debra Korobkin, "Humor in the Classroom: Considerations and Strategies." *College Teaching* 36, no. 4 (1988): 154–58. http://www.jstor.org/stable/27558304; Avner Ziv, "Teaching and Learning with Humor: Experiment and Replication." *The Journal of Experimental Education* 57, no. 1 (1988): 5–15. http://www.jstor.org/stable/20151750; Ron Deiter, "The Use of Humor as a Teaching Tool in the College Classroom." *NACTA Journal 44*, no. 2 (2000): 20–28. http://www.jstor.org/stable/43765313; Sarah E. Torok, Robert F. McMorris, and Wen-Chi Lin. "Is Humor an Appreciated Teaching Tool? Perceptions of Professors' Teaching Styles and Use of Humor." *College Teaching* 52, no. 1 (2004): 14–20. http://www.jstor.org/stable/27559168; and R. L. Garner, "Humor in Pedagogy: How Ha-Ha Can Lead to Aha!" *College Teaching* 54, no. 1 (2006): 177–80. http://www.jstor.org/stable/27559255.

[115] For humor and the writing center, see Steve Sherwood, "Humor and the Serious Tutor." *The Writing Center Journal* 13, no. 2 (1993): 3–12. http://www.jstor.org/stable/43441926. For humor and ELL pedagogy, see Douglas Wulf, "A Humor Competence Curriculum." *TESOL Quarterly* 44, no. 1 (2010): 155–69. http://www.jstor.org/stable/27785074; and Anne Pomerantz and Nancy D. Bell, "Humor as Safe House in the Foreign Language Classroom." *The Modern Language Journal* 95 (2011): 148–61. http://www.jstor.org/stable/41413424.

selected from competitive educational systems; and "who 'we' might come to be" – efficient writers and communicators who will succeed in the neoliberal job market.[116]

Critchley then clarifies that while humor as a *sensus communis* may "[reinforce] our sense of cultural distinctiveness and superiority" and can be "reactionary and conservative," it may also "return us to … the background meanings implicit in a culture" by questioning our shared practices, "showing them in a new light, … taking the comedy of recognition and turning the whole thing on its head."[117] Whereas humor relying on the feeling of superiority is often abused by oppressors, jokes that reveal the incongruity of social constructs challenge the unequal status quo and offer cathartic relief for the oppressed.[118] In the case of the writing center as a student writer community, it is more likely (and advisable) for tutors and writers, native and non-native speakers of English, to unearth incongruities about Standard English and overturn its hegemony linked with GPAs through the use of humor. Oftentimes, a writer who has English as their second language or uses Black English anxiously visits the writing center for improving their "clarity" or "coherency," as is suggested by their course instructor. As the session proceeds, however, it turns out that the writer communicates clearly with the tutor, while their writing is mostly coherent except a few minor typos and run-ons. "Perhaps, then," the tutor may conclude at the end of the session, just as they have shared with other tutors at the staff group meeting, "it is the professor who needs to visit the writing center and learn more English variants." While this joke might not be very entertaining (hopefully it is)

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[116] Critchley, 87.

[117] Critchley, 87, 90.

[118] For three theories of humor (i.e. superiority theory, relief theory and incongruity theory), see Critchley, "Introduction," 2-3. For humor's role in social justice, see Joseph Boskin and Joseph Dorinson. "Ethnic Humor: Subversion and Survival." *American Quarterly* 37, no. 1 (1985): 81–97. https://doi.org/10.2307/2712764; E. M. Dadlez, "Truly Funny: Humor, Irony, and Satire as Moral Criticism." *The Journal of Aesthetic Education* 45, no. 1 (2011): 1–17. https://doi.org/10.5406/jaesteduc.45.1.0001; and Jonathan P. Rossing, "A Sense of Humor for Civic Life: Toward a Strong Defense of Humor." *Studies in American Humor* 2, no. 1 (2016): 1–21. https://doi.org/10.5325/studamerhumor.2.1.0001.

when I write it here, it may well serve as a humorous punchline in an actual tutoring session to relieve the writer of their anxiety about their writing, revealing that professors, too, have their own mental grammars they believe to be Standard English; that the neoliberal standard for an "effective communicator" may well also be arbitrary, even illusory. Such humor then projects "a *dissensus communis* distinct from the dominant common sense" by showing "how [our shared] practices might be transformed or perfected, how things might be otherwise."[119] By discovering incongruities about Standard English and the grading system that relies on it, the writing center may evolve from a corrective site that remediates "problematic" writing to a liberating site that can unveil the fluidity of languages, retrieve writing as a creative process and promote cultural diversity and linguistic inclusion among tutors and writers.

Let's now return to the case of ELL writers, especially the international students who are lost between the home and the foreign as I have portrayed in Chapter II. Right before he discusses humor as a *sensus communis*, Critchley argues that humor, namely ethnic humor, "returns us to our locale, to a specific ethos which is often identified with a particular people possessing a shared set of customs and characteristics … [that it] puts one back in place in a way that is powerfully particular and recalcitrantly relative."[120] Although ethnic humor about foreigners who are humorless and funny can be at times discriminative and xenophobic,[121] it may, like the study of anthropology,[122] also entail and endorse a cultural relativism as a cure for a homogenizing, neoliberal and neocolonial cosmopolitanism – foreigners are funny just as we are also funny, but in different ways. For ELL writers whose home cultures' rhetorical traditions differ from those of the Anglosphere, tutors who are fluent English users or native

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[119] Critchley, 90.

[120] Critchley, 73-4.

[121] Critchley, 68-9.

[122] Critchley, 65-6.

speakers may try adopting a humorous, self-mocking attitude when familiarizing them with Standard English writing. Here is a joke about the reader-based prose style commonly used in academic English papers, namely argumentative essays: “American readers are smart – only if you put your thesis statement at the end of the introduction; they won’t get it if it’s in your conclusion.” Though not very funny when I have explained it here beforehand, the joke has been proven quite useful and amusing when I tell it to ELL writers who are used to writing in the writer-based prose style (whose characteristics often include extensive use of aphorisms and metaphors, as well as scattered, indirect thesis statements) back in their home countries. With the help of linguistic ethnic humor, then, the ELL writer would be able to re-recognize Standard English not as a normative mode of thinking that is “inherently superior” to their mother tongue, which they “had better” give up instead, but a *foreign* language that happens to be a world language, has its unique, “eccentric” characteristics, and is subject to change as well. Such a humorous, culturally relativist and egalitarian view of Standard English and their home language may then secure and bolster the ELL writer’s cultural and linguistic identity, allowing them to re-embrace their home culture, reclaim their belongingness to their mother tongue, and recover their confidence as multilingual writers with unique perspectives.

4. Conclusion

Above, then, is a brief glimpse of a critical pedagogy that reinstates the ELL writer’s role as an active creator with alternative modes of communication, rather than as a “patient” to be treated with the Standard English paradigm, and brings them into an equal conversation with the English-speaking tutor, who is designated in the linguistic hierarchy as “therapists” of “defective” English writing. Through revolutionary problem-posing methods as well as rebellious use of humor, the goal of this pedagogy is to attain authentic mutual recognition between English native speakers and/or fluent users, as the cultural and linguistic majority; and non-native English learners, as the oppressed cultural and linguistic minorities. Just as

the majority could properly recognize the foreign through active learning and self-reflection, the minorities would also realize their state of self-alienation and consciously challenge it to find their way home. A cross-cultural coalition for linguistic diversity and social equity may therefore arise against worldwide English dominance that is synchronous with globalization led by the Global North. A more inclusive form of cosmopolitanism, one that is equitably multicultural and free from neoliberal competitions and neocolonial oppressions, may also come into reality as this critical pedagogy evolves and enters various educational contexts.

Conclusion

Toward an All-Inclusive Cosmopolitanism

As I have portrayed, therefore, our contemporary cosmopolitanism ironically remains Anglophone-centric and is thereby homogenizing, as English-speaking individualist elites are massively produced on a global scale via the mechanism of international education. Since the issue is multifaceted and even interdisciplinary, I have resorted to a variety of philosophical traditions, such as the history of philosophy and phenomenology, and borrowed knowledge from other disciplines such as sociology, linguistics and writing center studies, to provide a comprehensive yet still developing solution – an application of multiculturalism theory and decolonial thought to the philosophy of education. This move might appear Deweyan at the first sight, but it essentially diverges from the American pragmatist's goal of using education to pave the way for a politically-informed democratic community and rather returns to the dichotomy between the home and the foreign, as well as its implications about our identity.

Unlike the Hegelian consciousness, who must destroy something or enslave someone else to prove itself, and unlike the neoliberal individualist, who must strive for the better to become the best, a child as a *tabula rasa* simply *is*. It knows its home *as* its home, and views the foreign *as* the foreign – Africa *is* Africa; Ivy Leagues *are* Ivy Leagues; "humo(u)r" *is* "humo(u)r," though it has two different spellings; and a teacher *is* a teacher. These foreign entities are different from one another and from itself, its own home, but there is no need for it to conquer or surrender to them. The child still thinks and acts on its own, knowing where its home is.

If one asks which home the English-learning international student shall return to after realizing the neocolonial essence of the English-dominant cosmopolitanism (i.e. potentially setting up an accusation that I am advocating provincialism, nationalism or chauvinism – you name the bad words), I will reply in homage to Qingyuan's lecture that they should ideally

return to the home of the child's, just as the native English speakers should when they clear their acquired presuppositions about other cultures. Neither does this mean that we should take a culturally-blind (or racially-blind, gender-blind, etc. – you name it) approach toward one another, but that as we understand the historical struggles and oppressions that we have gone through or exerted upon others, we can recognize each other truly as we are, with due respect for the foreign *as* the foreign.

This then is my definition of the "more inclusive form of cosmopolitanism" that I have mentioned at the introduction and the end of Chapter III, and I concede that it is a brief, figurative and incomplete explanation that requires future revision and clarification, just like the critical writing pedagogy I have outlined earlier. Hopefully, still, it may provide a more updated blueprint of how we should view world cultures and languages as well as ourselves in comparison to those of Herder's, Taylor's, and definitely Hegel's, and inform us of how to use our power creatively for the liberation of self and others.[123]

[123] Inspired by hooks, "Changing Perspectives on Power," in *Feminist Theory: From Margin to Center* (Boston: South End Press, 1984), 83-93.

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