CHAPTER 9

MULTILINGUAL WRITERS AND OWI

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Writing programs in higher education are enrolling increasing numbers of multilingual writers, introducing a unique set of considerations for inclusivity to the design and delivery of OWCs. Because so much communication in an OWC occurs through written English, and written English is exactly what a multilingual student is working to master, OWI teachers consistently face an inherent paradox of instructional design. This chapter places the OWI principles in conversation with other scholarship on multilingual writers, specifically the *CCCC Statement on Second Language Writing and Writers*, to provide recommendations for design and instruction in OWI environments that is inclusive of their needs.

Keywords: diversity, ESL, inclusive OWI design, inclusivity, language, multilingual student, second-language learner, second-language writer, universal user

Many of the guidelines that support effective OWI and provide universal access for all students (see especially Chapters 8 & 10) apply equally well to students who are multilingual writers, sometimes referred to as ESL or second-language writers. The specific linguistic challenges that multilingual writers face warrant additional attention, though, when considering how to interpret the OWI principles and to design effective approaches to OWI.

THE NEED FOR LINGUISTIC INCLUSIVITY

In this chapter, I use the term *multilingual* to refer to students who might speak a language other than English as their first language, speak multiple languages fluently, or perhaps speak multiple dialects of English. These students might be proficient in academic writing in their first languages or perhaps in multiple languages but probably not in English. By contrast, some students might not have developed written literacy in their first languages, of which English may be one.

Because of these vast differences in linguistic backgrounds and writing experiences, identifying students who might benefit from a pedagogical approach designed for language diversity can be incredibly difficult. Complicating this task are the many methods we use in higher education to admit and track students who come from a linguistically diverse background. Administrators and teachers in higher education often immediately think of international students when they hear the terms *multilingual*, *ESL*, or *second-language learners*, but multilingual writers also can be resident ESL students who are either citizens of the United States or permanent residents. Patricia Friedrich (2006) explained the importance of understanding these distinctions when she described the unique challenges faced by international ESL, resident ESL, and monolingual basic writers. Depending on how multilingual writers self-identify, they might not recognize the services an institution provides for students who come from linguistically diverse backgrounds as pertaining to them. Christina Ortmeier-Hooper's (2008) case study of three ESL writers complicated the field's understanding of how multilingual writers from varying backgrounds self-identify with or against these labels, and Todd Ruecker (2011) explored this complication further by reporting on multilingual writers' response to such labels in the placement process. A multilingual writer cannot solely be identified by a visa status, Test of English as a Foreign Language (TOEFL) score, skin color, or a spoken accent. Language diversity is present consistently in university writing classes and on college enrollment rosters, and teachers should design writing environments with this diversity in mind.

Paul Kei Matsuda (2006) challenged the assumptions prevalent in writing programs and rhetoric and composition studies scholarship that privilege a linguistically homogenous audience, asking the field to rethink those assumptions and understand that language diversity in writing classes, and on college campuses as a whole, is increasing. Writing programs consistently have ignored these differences, however, by designing courses that assume a threshold of common competency in written academic English (Matsuda, 2006) and hiring faculty who may have expertise in teaching writing but not in working with a linguistically diverse student population. This assumption of "linguistic homogeneity" (Matsuda, 2006) has led teachers (both online and in the classroom) to outsource language-specific help that students need in writing classes to other places such as Intensive English Programs, remedial courses, and writing centers. While such additional help certainly can aid student success in academic writing, especially when the class is taught as a hybrid or fully online OWC, it does not free the instructor of responsibility for designing and facilitating the class in a way that is inclusive of the needs of multilingual writers. Rather, instructors must know their students and understand the language diversity present in

the class. The contextual cues that instructors might rely on to detect specific linguistic needs in an onsite classroom are sometimes absent in an online environment, although other cues might be present. For example, a multilingual writer in an onsite classroom might have a spoken accent or visibly struggle to complete an in-class writing activity on time. Likewise, the student might speak in another language with a classmate to ask for clarification on an assignment or use a translation dictionary to understand instructions or a reading assignment. In an online environment, these cues might be absent, but others might be present, such as transfer-related language issues in the student's writing or challenges with understanding organization and citation expectations in American academic writing. In all contexts, courses should be designed with the assumption that language variety will be present in the class. A linguistically-inclusive approach to OWI from the beginning of the design process can help students navigate a course effectively and prevent students from stumbling over elements of the course not essential to meeting the course objectives.

This chapter aims to bring some common educational principles related to multilingual writing instruction, specifically CCCC's *A Statement on Second Language Writing and Writers* (2009), into conversation with the *CCCC Position Statement of Principles and Example Effective Practices for Online Writing Instruction* (CCCC OWI Committee, 2013). Explicitly, this chapter outlines strategies to help writing programs and individual instructors design courses that uphold OWI Principle 1, that "Online writing instruction should be universally inclusive and accessible" (p. 7). Further, this chapter assumes, as Matsuda (2006) argued and others have reiterated (Miller-Cochran, 2010), that all college writing environments, even those online (Sánchez, 2013), include multilingual writers and must be designed to be inclusive and accessible to a linguistically diverse audience.

UNDERSTANDING THE NEEDS OF MULTILINGUAL WRITERS

If online writing specialists take cues from the scholarship on UDL (see Chapter 8), then OWI should be designed with the assumption that diversity is always present and that effective online courses take into consideration many elements of diversity in their design. Part of the challenge of implementing UDL principles into course design, however, is that the instructor/designer often thinks of a "universal user," essentializing the needs of a diverse group of users into a set of common traits. Jennifer Bowie (2009) encouraged teachers and course designers to think instead of a "universe of users," which allows for a multitude of diversity. This chapter argues that language diversity, especially in

the context of writing classes, is an important element of that context, especially if we consider that individual students, such as the multilingual students with hearing impairment studied by Gary Long and his colleagues (2007), might need multiple accommodations in a class.

Because so much communication in an OWC occurs through written English, and written English is exactly what the multilingual student is working to master, OWI teachers consistently face an inherent paradox of instructional design. What must be acknowledged if a writing program or writing teacher seeks to design a course for a "universe of users" (Bowie, 2009) that takes into consideration the language variety present in American higher education writing classes? What needs do multilingual writers have that the teacher/designer must consider to design an effective OWC?

Understanding how multilingual writers use writing technologies provides an important piece to the puzzle if the field aims to respond to these questions. Several scholars in second language writing studies have explored how multilingual writers use a variety of technologies in their personal writing, in their academic writing, and in social media environments (e.g., Boas, 2011; DePew, 2011; DePew & Miller-Cochran, 2009; Shih, 2011). Developing a deep understanding of how multilingual writers use and navigate specific writing technologies can help teachers design and facilitate more effective writing classes generally and stronger OWCs specifically. This type of exploration and knowledge-building often is left to second language writing specialists, the "ESL Person" that Gail Shuck (2006) described, yet all teachers and writing program administrators (WPAs) need to develop awareness of the unique challenges and needs of multilingual writers (Miller-Cochran, 2010).

The *CCCC Position Statement on Second Language Writing and Writers* (2009) described the benefits to writing teachers of understanding the ways their multilingual students are using technology:

> For example, teaching writing with technology can give second language writing students an opportunity to build upon the literacy practices with which they are already familiar and comfortable. Those students who have access to technology can be relatively proficient with multiple applications, especially second language students who use the technology to keep in touch with home and reach out to people around the world. These students often demonstrate savvy rhetorical strategies, including the ability to communicate with others who write in other varieties of English. With the help of an instructor, second language writers can learn to bridge the strategies they

> use to communicate socially through digital media to the expectations of the academy. Therefore, instructors need to learn how to proficiently work with the writing tools and within the writing contexts that will help second language writers create these bridges ... instructors need to be trained to work with various writing media (e.g., computer programs) so that they can take advantage of these pedagogical opportunities. (Part Four: Building on Students' Competencies)

Writing teachers have an opportunity during the design process to consider the kinds of technologies their students might already be familiar with, or they can leave open the technologies students can use to accomplish various writing tasks (if appropriate) to draw upon students' current literacy practices. Likewise, if a teacher believes it is important for students to master a specific technology, explicit instruction in the use of the technology should be a part of the course design for students who might not already be familiar with it. This need correlates with OWI Principles 2 and 10 (pp. 11, 21-23).

In addition to understanding how multilingual writers use writing technologies, teachers and course designers must understand the nature of the language learning process, realizing that "the process of acquiring syntactic and lexical competence" in a language does not happen in a semester or in a year (CCCC SLW Committee, 2009). Rather, it takes a significant amount of time to reach such competence, so a multilingual student may be mastering various aspects of written English throughout his or her college career. Multilingual writers also might struggle with other expectations in American academic writing contexts. As the *CCCC Statement on Second Language Writing and Writers* (2009) explained, "Some students may have difficulty adapting to or adopting North American discursive strategies because the nature and functions of discourse, audience, and rhetorical appeals often differ across cultural, national, linguistic, and educational contexts." For example, some multilingual students in online environments may struggle with unspoken expectations about participation in online discussions or the type of critiques they should offer classmates during peer review. For them—and to meet the needs of all students, frankly—OWI teachers should provide explicit expectations and instructions for how to participate in particular parts of the OWC. At the same time, other multilingual students already have had considerable exposure to written academic English and to American academic culture, and labels such as *ESL*, *multilingual*, or *international student* might inadvertently cause an instructor to make assumptions about the needs of multilingual students in the class that are not necessarily true. The bottom line is that OWI teachers should design the class to accommodate

a variety of linguistic needs from the beginning—avoiding the need to retrofit the OWC—and make the expectations for course requirements clear, but they also should take the time to get to know individual students to be sure that their questions and needs are met.

To help meet the need for OWI teachers to understand the ways their multilingual writers might work best in an online, technology-rich environment, this chapter provides specific suggestions, drawn from the scholarship on OWI and on second language writing, to help with effective course design, especially in writing programs that enroll a significant number of multilingual writers. *A Position Statement of Principles and Example Effective Practices for OWI* (CCCC OWI Committee, 2013) provided a starting point from specific OWI principles by helping to raise questions particular to multilingual writers:

- What balance should an OWC strike between focusing on writing and providing support for technologies that might be unfamiliar to multilingual writers (OWI Principle 2, p. 11)?
- What unique strategies should be developed to help multilingual writers in an online writing environment (OWI Principle 3, pp. 12-14)?
- What theories of teaching writing should guide the design of a course that enrolls multilingual writers (OWI Principle 4, pp. 14-15)?
- How should faculty be prepared to work with multilingual writers in OWI environments (OWI Principle 7, pp. 17-19)?
- How many students should be allowed to enroll in a single section of an OWC (OWI Principle 9, pp. 20-21) when the course is entirely comprised of multilingual writers? When the course has both multilingual writers and those typically considered native writers?
- For what unique aspects of the technological and pedagogical components of OWI should multilingual writers be prepared (OWI Principle 10, pp. 21-23)?
- How should online communities be developed to foster student success for multilingual writers (OWI Principle 11, pp. 23-24)?
- What additional support—OWL, library, counseling, and the like—should be available for multilingual writers that might be essential to their success in an OWC (OWI Principle 13, pp. 26-28)?
- What selection, training, and ongoing professional development practices for OWL administrators and tutors would support multilingual writers' success (OWI Principle 14, pp. 28-30)?
- What ongoing research should the field pursue to understand the unique needs of multilingual writers in OWI environments (OWI Principle 15, pp. 31-32)?

The remainder of this chapter will respond to these questions by discussing the recommendations of the OWI principles in detail and relating them specifically to a multilingual writing context.

RECOMMENDATIONS FOR INCLUSIVE OWI DESIGN

The principles for OWI in *A Position Statement of Principles and Example Effective Practices for OWI* (CCCC OWI Committee, 2013) are equally applicable for classes enrolling multilingual writers, but a contextualized interpretation of some of the effective practices, paying specific attention to the needs of a linguistically diverse audience, helps guide effective course design. The following sections provide suggestions for effective practices tailored to a multilingual audience that draw on the instructional, faculty, institutional, and research principles provided in the statement.

Instructional Principles

Presenting Content and Choosing Technologies

What balance should an OWC strike between focusing on writing and providing support for technologies that might be unfamiliar to multilingual writers? As OWI Principle 2 reminded teachers, the focus of an OWC needs to remain on writing and not on teaching students to use technology unless a rhetorical knowledge of that technology is an integral part of the course outcomes (see Chapters 1 & 14).

> **OWI Principle 2: An online writing course should focus on writing and not on technology orientation or teaching students how to use learning and other technologies (p. 11).**

When working with multilingual writers, however, a teacher also must consider that some technologies may be unfamiliar to students, or they may be used to using similar but different technologies that are more popular in other social or cultural contexts than the technology the instructor assumes students would use. In such a case, the instructor has as least two options:

- Insist that the students use a specific technology because it achieves an important learning goal in the course.
- Provide students with the option of using a technology the instructor recommends or using a technology with which they are already familiar.

If the first option is chosen—such as the LMS—the instructor should provide information to help students learn to use the aspects of the technology that

are most important for student success. This instruction could be provided in the form of links to videos or online help guides, access to IT support at the institution, or help from the instructor (in the form of instructions or guides created for the course). I recommend searching for resources already available online first before creating new help guides for students; many resources already are available online, but instructors might need to teach students how to find them.

Additionally, instructors should think broadly about the kinds of technologies they might allow students to use in an OWC, so they are using a familiar tool while mastering writing in a new language. For example, Debra Hoven and Agnieszka Palalas (2011) conducted a longitudinal study that investigated the use of mobile technology for language learning with multilingual students. Mobile technologies might provide a familiar anchor for multilingual students for some kinds of tasks, but the instructor must weigh the affordances of specific technologies with the goals of the course and assignment.

Facilitating the Course

What unique strategies should be developed to help multilingual writers in an online writing environment, and what theories of teaching writing should guide the design of a course that enrolls multilingual writers? OWI Principle 3 provided guidance in responding to these questions by reminding teachers that some strategies for OWI are unique to the instructional environment.

> **OWI Principle 3: Appropriate composition teaching/learning strategies should be developed for the unique features of the online instructional environment (p. 12).**

A Position Statement of Principles and Example Effective Practices for OWI (CCCC OWI Committee, 2013) suggested that instruction in writing should be clear, and that oral and/or video supplements also should be provided. When designing an OWC for multilingual writers, providing instruction in multiple modalities is all the more important. As studies by such scholars as Joy Reid (1987) have shown, the learning preferences of multilingual writers can differ significantly from monolingual students and from each other. Providing multiple avenues for understanding instruction, especially when the language of instruction is not the students' first language, makes sense pedagogically. If a student has difficulty understanding written instructions, oral and/or video instruction might provide more clarity.

Furthermore, OWI Principle 4 reminded instructors that established effective pedagogical strategies, while they might need to be adapted for online instruction, are applicable in OWI environments.

> **OWI Principle 4: Appropriate onsite composition theories, pedagogies, and strategies should be migrated and adapted to the online instructional environment (p. 14).**

In addition to considering the theories of teaching writing and teaching in online instructional environments mentioned in *A Position Statement of Principles and Example Effective Practices for OWI* (CCCC OWI Committee, 2013), instructors must consider established effective practices in second language writing studies. The *CCCC Position Statement on Second Language Writing and Writers* (2009) provided several principles for facilitating effective writing courses for multilingual writers. For example, course assignments should avoid relying on specific cultural knowledge to complete the assignment. When possible, an alternative assignment should be given for multilingual writers. When courses meet entirely or partially online, following such principles of course design are even more essential because important face-to-face contextual cues are absent that might indicate to an instructor when more information or an alternate assignment is needed. Multilingual students may not be comfortable from a cultural standpoint in signaling their confusion through direct questions.

Faculty Principles

Preparing Faculty to Work with Multilingual Writers

How should faculty be prepared to work with multilingual writers in OWI environments? OWI Principle 7 explained that instructors in online writing environments must have adequate preparation and professional development opportunities for teaching in online environments:

> **OWI Principle 7: Writing Program Administrators (WPAs) for OWI programs and their online writing teachers should receive appropriate OWI-focused training, professional development, and assessment for evaluation and promotion purposes (p. 17).**

Just as teachers must be prepared to teach in an OWI environment, they also should be prepared to work with multilingual writers in an online setting. WPAs and writing teachers need to have adequate preparation for working with multilingual writers in all instructional environments (Miller-Cochran, 2010; Shuck, 2006). Gail Shuck (2006) described several strategies she used on her campus to strengthen awareness of the needs of multilingual writers across the curriculum. Two of her strategies included publishing multilingual student writing and conducting faculty development workshops for writing instructors across the curriculum (Shuck, 2006). The *CCCC Position Statement on Second Language*

Writing and Writers (2009) suggested the following topics for such faculty development workshops: cultural beliefs about writing, developing effective writing assignments, building on students' competence, and responding to multilingual writing. Workshops addressing these issues and incorporating effective practices for the online writing environment as well would help instructors design courses that are inclusive and accessible.

Course Caps

How many students should be allowed to enroll in a single section of an OWC? OWI Principle 9 provides a clear guideline for course caps in OWCs:

> **OWI Principle 9: OWCs should be capped responsibly at 20 students per course with 15 being a preferable number (p. 20).**

The guideline provided for the OWCs in OWI Principle 9 matches the recommendation of the *CCCC Position Statement on Second Language Writing and Writers* for classes that enroll some multilingual writers in a course that also enrolls students who identify English as their first language (see Chapter 1). The recommendation for courses comprised *only* of multilingual writers, however, is a maximum enrollment of fifteen. Therefore, in a writing program that offers online courses designated only for multilingual writers, the maximum enrollment should be fifteen students. Additionally, institutions that enroll a significant number of multilingual writers in OWCs should consider setting a maximum enrollment of fifteen for all classes, given the preferred recommendation of OWI Principle 9 and the suggestion of the *CCCC Position Statement on Second Language Writing and Writers* (2009).

Fostering Student Success in the Course

For what unique aspects of the technological and pedagogical components of OWI should multilingual writers be prepared? OWI Principle 10 provided guidance for considering what preparation to offer all students who enroll in OWCs:

> **OWI Principle 10: Students should be prepared by the institution and their teachers for the unique technological and pedagogical components of OWI (p. 21).**

In addition to the kinds of preparation described in the effective practices for OWI Principle 10 (see also Chapter 1), multilingual writers might need support to become familiar with technological and pedagogical expectations that are culturally specific. For example, an instructor might need to provide direct instruction with ample examples to students in an OWC about how to address

correspondence to the instructor and to other students, what technology should be used to communicate, and what kinds of questions might be asked (and how frequently). Similarly, multilingual students may have different cultural conventions governing their understanding of such issues as plagiarism. While this is not an OWI-specific issue, it is certainly common in online settings where students do much of their research through the Internet. In such cases, explicit instruction that recognizes the cultural differences in notions of plagiarism would be appropriate pedagogy.

Teachers also should use care to construct online communities in a way that helps to foster success for multilingual writers. OWI Principle 11 underscored the value of online communities for student success:

> **OWI Principle 11: Online writing teachers and their institutions should develop personalized and interpersonal online communities to foster student success (p. 23).**

When following the suggestions for effective practices for OWI Principle 11, however, OWI teachers should keep in mind the unique situation of multilingual writers. For example, Effective Practice 11.2 suggested using icebreakers and other writing activities to familiarize the students with the LMS and with each other (p. 23). While icebreakers can be quite effective, many such activities ask students to reveal personal information or be more familiar with colleagues in a class than some multilingual writers are used to or comfortable with. While it is certainly desirable to help acclimate students to expectations in an American academic setting, sensitivity to the students' familiarity with such activities, especially early in the semester, might help instructors choose activities that will not draw on expected common cultural knowledge or put students in an unnecessarily uncomfortable situation. Explaining the purpose of the activities and the importance of building a strong community in a writing course can also help foster multilingual student success.

Similarly, Effective Practice 11.7, which suggested providing informal spaces where students can discuss course content with or without teacher involvement, should be considered differently in a multilingual writing context (p. 24). Depending on the language backgrounds of the students in the course, instructors might consider whether or not they want to offer a space where students may converse in languages other than English to seek clarification or additional help. While scholars have written about the strategic and effective use of first languages in ESL classrooms (Yough & Fang, 2010), little has been written about the use of first languages in multilingual OWCs. This is a specific area of research that would be of use to the field (see Chapter 17).

Institutional Principles

Linking to Outside Help

The institution also bears responsibility to help foster online student success by providing appropriate resources to support their writing. What additional help should be available for multilingual writers that might be essential to their success in an OWI course? OWI Principle 13 provided a starting point for responding to this question:

> **OWI Principle 13: OWI students should be provided support components through online/digital media as a primary resource; they should have access to onsite support components as a secondary set of resources (p. 26).**

Because of the unique challenges that multilingual writers face in OWCs (that is, working to master written English in a course where nearly all of the instruction and communication is in written English), providing online/digital support for these students is all the more important. OWLs with appropriately trained tutors are especially important. As the *CCCC Position Statement on Second Language Writing and Writers* (2009) stated, multilingual writers use writing centers for a variety of reasons. They:

> often visit the writing center seeking support in understanding writing assignments, developing a piece of writing, and to gauge reader response to their writing. They may also seek input on interpreting teacher feedback or assessment and learning more about nuances of the English language. (para. 18)

Making such support available to students in the primary medium of instruction is essential to their success. Additionally, teachers should provide clear explanation to students about what to expect from writing centers/labs in American educational settings. As Shanti Bruce (2004) described, multilingual writers may experience anxiety about using the writing center because they do not know what their expectations should be. Multilingual writers may misunderstand the nature of what writing tutors will do to assist them because of differing cultural expectations, and preparing them for what to expect from a writing tutor can help facilitate a more useful session. Multilingual writers in OWCs should also have access to support in other modalities, especially if the challenge of communicating in written English about their learning of written English is proving difficult.

Preparing OWL Staff to Work with Multilingual Writers

Because the OWL can be so essential to multilingual writers' success, what selection, training, and ongoing professional development practices for OWL administrators and tutors will support these students' success? OWI Principle 14 outlined suggestions for the preparation of OWL administrators and tutors:

> **OWI Principle 14: Online writing lab administrators and tutors should undergo selection, training, and ongoing professional development activities that match the environment in which they will work (p. 28).**

In addition to receiving training for working in an online environment, OWL administrators and tutors should have access to training for working with multilingual writers. Because the OWL environment may involve both asynchronous and synchronous modalities (see Chapter 5) and because the needs of multilingual learners often differ from those of other students, various types of advice can be combined to develop a thorough training program. The *CCCC Position Statement on Second Language Writing and Writers* (2009) suggested hiring tutors with specific preparation in working with multilingual writers. Specific suggestions for tutors from the Statement included:

- Model and discuss effective approaches for working with second language writers in tutor training.
- Make available reference materials specific to language learners such as dictionaries on idiomatic English.
- Hire tutors with specialized knowledge in second language writing.
- Hire multilingual tutors who can provide second language writing students with first-hand writing strategies as well as empathy.

Beth L. Hewett and Robert Lynn (2007) offered context-focused recommendations for OWL tutors who would be meeting with multilingual students. Knowing that the meetings might occur in a text-based medium either asynchronously or synchronously, they recommended first that tutors should be immersed in the medium and modality as trainees because that would give them practice talking through text and in expressing their advice with precise language. Their first rule of thumb was to be correct in one's advice because being wrong or fuzzy about standard English practices would confuse the multilingual writer especially and might cause a lack of trust. The other ten recommendations were:

1. Know how to "give face"
2. Sell yourself as a tutor

3. Make an art of "clock watching"
4. Find out what the student wants
5. Learn how to talk to a particular student
6. Know what you're talking about
7. Proofread (your advice)
8. Contextualize the conference
9. Use clear language
10. Teach by doing

OWL websites also should be designed with consideration for the needs of multilingual writers. Fernando Sánchez (2013) examined the OWL websites of eight different institutions to determine how well they considered multilingual students' needs. His criteria provided a concise set of guidelines for OWL websites:

- *Intercultural Needs*: clear policies on what is expected of students as well as a description of their role in the tutoring session.
- *Writing Resource Needs*: exercises and handouts that deal with the composing process and which are addressed to ESL students.
- *Plagiarism Resource Needs*: a discussion of the cultural differences regarding the borrowing of other people's work and ideas.
- *Readability*: an average word count of 17 words per sentence. (Sanchez, 2013, p. 171)

CONCLUSION AND RECOMMENDATIONS

OWI Principle 15 asked the writing studies field to consider what kinds of ongoing research to pursue related to OWI:

> **OWI Principle 15: OWI/OWL administrators and teachers/ tutors should be committed to ongoing research into their programs and courses as well as the very principles in this document (p. 31).**

The suggestions in this chapter are derived from a combination of effective practices in OWI and in multilingual writing instruction, but very little systematic research has examined the unique environment of the multilingual OWC or OWL. Much work remains to be done. The field needs to discover what happens when teachers follow recommendations that combine the research in these areas. Who is included, and who has been left out? What remains to be considered?

To that end, this chapter recommends the following approaches for working effectively with multilingual writers in an OWC:

- Design the course to foster multilingual student success by suggesting additional resources already available online, providing instruction in multiple modalities, and avoiding course assignments that rely on specific cultural knowledge to complete the assignment.
- Provide support for students for technological and pedagogical expectations that are culturally specific; for example, explain the purpose of interpersonal activities to help foster multilingual student success.
- Prepare WPAs, teachers, OWL administrators, and OWL tutors both for teaching in an OWI environment and for working with multilingual writers.
- Set maximum course caps of fifteen students for OWCs composed *only* of multilingual writers.
- Consider whether or not to offer a space in the course (e.g., a designated discussion forum) where students may converse in languages other than English to seek clarification or additional help.
- Provide online/digital support for students through avenues such as OWLs, and give students a clear explanation about what to expect from writing centers/labs in American educational settings.
- Design and conduct systematic research examining the unique environment of the multilingual OWC to add to the field's knowledge base.

Michael Moore and Greg Kearsley (2004) have used the theory of transactional distance to describe the unique challenge in online teaching and learning of connecting students to the course, teacher, each other, and the content of the class. In an OWC with multilingual writers, language is an additional element that can create distance in the course because teachers often use language to build bridges intended to span the other gaps in transactional distance. Teachers cannot assume a homogenous level of competence in written or spoken English, so they must consider design elements, uses of technology, and pedagogical principles that can facilitate course objectives without further distancing multilingual writers. Ultimately, the effective practices I have described in this chapter are suggestions that could help facilitate the success of a variety of students, not just multilingual writers. This is the heart of UDL and designing for a universe of users; if teachers design for and teach to the possible needs of a variety of students, OWCs (and OWLs) will be more inclusive and accessible for all.

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