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Learning to do Better: The Anti-Racist English Composition Classroom

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"If people are dying you can't wait a week or two, you have to do it tomorrow…We ask so many people to wait to get justice, because we don't—we may not be experiencing it directly ourselves, but if we were experiencing it we'd want it tomorrow." — Vershawn Ashanti Young

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This opening quote by Young comes from a response to an audience member who was verbally grappling with their inability to see the violence taking place and enabled through the promotion of a standardized English in the college classroom. Notably, this aspect of "justice" is immediately connected to the violence done to Black lives as Young is presenting "Making Black Lives Matter in Online Spaces: Lessons for Critical Literacy Education" at the Symposium on Writing at the University of Washington Tacoma. For Young the oppression and dominance of white literacy is a real violence upon Black lives as he connects this enforcement to portrayals of physical attack on Black lives in educational settings and the use of African American Vernacular to the justification of criminalizing Black identity. It is important to note that the physicality of this violence is merely one layer to the systematic integration of oppression created through the enforcement of a white education. The criminalization of Black lives too is a violence that continues white colonial missions to maintain a devaluing society which vilifies and makes subservient. While the physicality of violence created from a white education will be connected throughout this essay, it is this systemized violence that will mainly be illustrated to deconstruct and reconstruct an illustration for an anti-racist English composition classroom. While this violence is explored throughout, it is critical to make this violence immediately connected to the educational system. Paulo Freire defines this relationship stating, "Any situation in which some

individuals prevent others from engaging in the process of inquiry is one of violence. The means used are not important; to alienate human beings from their own decision-making is to change them into objects." (85). Young's statement speaks to the educator's desire to maintain the historical authority that has allowed educators to continue colonial missions of assimilation and erasure. This position is not new, as many scholars discuss this state of inaction where educators insist, that they, as a teacher in a classroom, can not take action because their training has not taught them to risk their authority and power (hooks; Freire; San Pedro). The same types of confusion and inability are portrayed in the audience member attending Young's talk: "What in the meantime, right? Because I'm a professor here, I got, I've developed this way of being, and I can start to do better, you know, learn new things, and develop new skills, and act, change my own participation in this kind of dominance. That's not gunna [sic], I can't do that tomorrow?" ("UWT Symposium on Writing," 1:17:46 - 1:18:26). It is evident from this audience member's statement the continued clinging to authority has become so essential to their identity and role as an educator that even when one can envision the necessary paths to take in order to make change, "do better," "learn new things" "develop new skills," there is an outright refusal to place themselves in the position that are asked of students. The key difference, in particular within the context of the lecture done by Young, but also in what I speak to throughout this discussion, is that when marginalized students are asked to take on this role to "learn new things," "develop new skills," "do better," the "better," and the "new" are all too often white colonial norms that negatively impact a student's identity. When Young asks this audience member to put themselves in a learning position to their students, in order to learn a marginalized student's practices, the aspect that is appropriately devalued and undermined is the teacher's authority to maintain the dominance of a white colonial

set of practices. This inability and the violence enabled and created through it is at the heart of the discussion outlined within my argument for an anti-racist composition classroom.

I know all too well the type of systemic violence promoted through this intention. Focusing on just the promotion of a standardized English, my own experiences speak to the ways in which families are assimilated into white society. I am part of the first generation in my family to be born in the United States. My mother came to the United States from Mexico when she was 14 and my father came to the United States from the Philippines when he was 16. Both of my parents sought a better future by coming to the United States. In my parents' upbringing and immigration, both already experienced the dominance of education promoting white colonial practices. In particular, my mother experienced the stigma and othering created by the expectation that she speak English. Even though my mother came to the United States when she was 14, it was not until she was 18 and got her first job as an adult when she actively tried to learn English. In her first job she learned the English words that would help her earn an income and support her extended family who was also migrating to the United States. My father, even before he migrated to the United States, was exposed early on to the expectation to not only learn English, but in particular, the standardized English and cultural practices of the United States. At the time my father was raised, the immediate impacts of a militarized attempt of colonization by the United States could still be felt half a century since its occupation. The education system my father attended in the Philippines maintained efforts of this colonial mission. As part of the little schooling my father attended, he was required to learn and speak English as a priority to his other languages. For my mother, the English language was one which served as a barrier to financial security and living and for my father the English language was always placed as superior and more desirable because of the colonial imprint in the Philippines. Because of these expectations and framings around learning

English they felt weary and cautious towards using and maintain their home languages. Because both of my parents learned English as a non-primary language, they both developed accents which were not typical of primary English speakers. Even more so, my parents' appearance would clearly denote them as immigrants and as such their accents would further be seen as a way for people to discriminate them. In their day to days they both experienced prejudice in people increasingly suggesting that they either could not understand them, or that still they learn English, when indeed they were speaking English.

The interactions my parents had with English were shaped further as they had children. They saw that their children had an opportunity to learn in a way they did not have. Because the United States imposed that they learn English in such a violent and ostracizing manner, they saw that the possibility of having their three children learn English in the United States as an opportunity to avoid the barriers they encountered as speakers of multiple languages. However, because my parents would continue to be seen as foreign, no matter how much they spoke English and practiced with different people, they still incorporated their various languages in raising my siblings and I, even if they meant to hide these aspects away from us children. When my father spoke on the phone to relatives, I would hear him slip in and out of his three languages. My mother would take me to see my relatives who also moved to the United States and who, like her, had difficulties in assimilating holistically, so they too spoke Spanish. Moreover, with my older sister born four years before me, and my younger brother being born only one year after me, we each developed differences in the relationship we held towards our parents languages as they developed their command over English. Although English is my first language, I learned enough of both my parents' languages to become mindful of when they were speaking it and to listen carefully to discern meaning. As a child I wanted to learn more of my parents' languages but because they had

experiences such difficulties in learning English and the perceptions of them as immigrants and speakers of multiple languages, they insisted that I not focus on not learning. Still, being able to pick up on the moments they spoke, my own relationship to English shifted away from what teachers and educational environments expected. In attending school as a kid, I was placed in a speech class because of the accented way that I spoke that was difficult for teachers and other kids to understand. Most likely this was developed from listening to a combination of both my parents, and ultimately was deemed ill fit for learning or communicating. I still remember clearly how I was not allowed to leave for lunch when I was sent to these speech classes until I was able to pronounce a number of words in a row or tell the instructor how many syllables were in a sentence. While this experience was from such an early age, this type of discrimination still operated as I continued my education and the impacts of such experiences are still carried with me. Speaking and writing any of my parent's home language comes with an extreme sense of anxiety and fear that has been fostered by the same system that imposed that my parents limit their language use and that I shift my ways of speaking. Still, much like my parents, I learned to continue to operate within the educational systems, even now, at the cost of my family's identities. With these narratives, my point is this: the promotion and enforcement of the idea of a standardized English actively seeks to assimilate marginalized cultures such as my family's. It is the perception and value placed on such Englishes, and not necessarily the ability to perform them, that continues to other cultural values and perspectives. And lastly, that these dynamics are rooted in racism. Because my own narrative has its own complexities, I hope that it can serve as an example for the same complex histories that students enter the classroom with. To move towards a classroom that seeks to not only recognize oppression but help recuperate from it, such complexities must be recognized.

The structure of this essay is designed to help illustrate, deconstruct, and ultimately problematize the lack of anti-racist practices and instruction within the teaching of English composition. To do this the different actors within the composition classroom space will be discussed: the teacher, students from marginalized positions, and students from privileged positions. I draw from a wide scope of scholars who speak of their own experiences in the classroom and discussions about language and student identity. My own experiences have been incorporated to recuperate the silencing and impositions I have faced in my life, and just as my narrative serves to present a link between the racist expectations within society, other narratives which are not explicitly located within the English composition classroom are presented to further complicate the relationship the college English composition classroom has to histories and experiences brought into the space by students and teachers. While the early sections of this essay are meant to give a breadth of the discussion surrounding language and identity and the particular manners in which non-dominant languages are undervalued and further oppressed, the remaining discussion focuses on providing an analysis on the dynamics in which the different actors of the classroom have traditionally been imposed upon and how the anti-racist focus can disrupt the barriers that enable oppression.

For the purpose of this discussion anti-racism is defined as an action which opposes the promotion and sustainment of racism and produces an impact so that racism is disrupted. Most recently, Ibram X. Kendi has led conversations on voicing for antiracist framings and change in his book *How to be an Antiracist*. In his acclaimed book he emphasizes that the focus of framing antiracism is on the actions of one who seeks to be an antiracist or for an environment which seeks to produce antiracism. He states that an antiracist is, “One who is supporting an antiracist policy through their actions or expressing an antiracist idea” (14). It is critical to note here how Kendi

does not center or even mention the notion of intentionality. Intentionality is a barrier to making visible the impacts of racism. Just as the audience member in discussion with Young understood and had the intention "to do better," ultimately, even with all of their intentions, they still felt an inability to take action, falling back into practices that would maintain harm to their students. In a different focus of this discussion more time would be dedicated to illustrating the promotion of racist dynamics within the writing classroom, the particular history and manners in which it has been made paradoxically visible to those it oppresses but invisible to those that enable its reproduction. Notably, writing scholars have long been describing such racist instances and the particular ways it has maintained its strong presence in the classroom but to no avail. Still too many instances, such as the interaction between Young and the audience member, have proven that a lack of evidence for racism in the classroom is not what maintains its presence, rather it is the continued inability for educators, and educational systems, to jeopardize their authorities or privilege.

In briefly referencing the histories of racism within the writing classroom, and by connection education, it is crucial to acknowledge the violent colonial histories that are still mitigated in not only the acknowledgment of marginalized lives but even in radical movements and pursuits, such as anti-racist scholarship. The promotion and enactment of racism has always maintained a history in anti-indigenous and anti-black dehumanization. Particularly when holding conversations on education it is critical to pay mind to the histories of forced assimilation imposed upon indigenous communities, the theft of lands, and the continued pursuit to oppress the lives of indigenous peoples. As Lawrence and Dua state "there is something deeply wrong with the manner in which, in our own lands, antiracism does not begin with, and reflect the totality of Native peoples lived experiences—that is, with the genocide that established and maintains all of the settle states

within the Americas." (qtd. in McFarlane 124). It is here that I take effort to include such acknowledgment and work towards including the voices of Indigenous peoples. Part of this is recognizing that no amount of my own voice can recuperate this "wrong" fully or even in a matter that is partially sufficient. The movement towards anti-racism and anti-oppression is one which has started with Indigenous communities because they are those which have and continue to resist since the start and thusly a discussion of combating racism should have an integration of such efforts. This is all to say that, the discussion of and for anti-racism is not one which is new, and it is one which has a history which must be recognized. While I have included the voice of a few scholars who speak to these histories and ways of knowing, I must admit that the amount included is still too few. Any work which seeks to deconstruct, and resist oppression is never made whole without the explicit action and impact that would lead to Indigenous lands being returned and without the inclusion of Indigenous communities to permit ways of deconstruction that align with their cultures and their paradigms. My own work is not excused from such necessities, and while it is the hope that this discussion leads to further dialogue, it is one that I must actively carry, adjust, retell, and enact to create progress.

Different scholars and their students have been incorporated within for various reasons. In one aspect they serve to help understand the histories behind conversations about writing, language, identity, and by relationship the manners in which race and racism interact with these points. More significantly, I introduce various conversations and ideas to help illustrate the limited positionings scholars, in particular the manner in which many white scholars, have discussed identity but too often avoided discussion of race and racism. It is in presenting and analyzing these moments that readers are queued to reflect on the manners in which they have fallen short to create spaces that confront and seek to discriminate oppression. Different incorporations may affect one

differently. A piece of conversation in which an educator criticizes the language of a student can seem obvious for its ability to maintain a racial dominance in the classroom. However, it is in the discrimination of these scenarios and unpacking of the different connections such interactions can have on various spaces, that readers should find themselves confronted by ideas they did not consider in their initial reading or reflection.

Before delving into the relationship in which an anti-racist framing will help upend oppressive dynamics enabled in the composition classroom it is foremost important to illustrate how students experience violent acts of oppression which seek to erase their identities and continue to other. Because the composition classroom is uniquely positioned to discuss manners of language through its emphasis on writing and communication the following sections are dedicated to describing the intersections of language, violence, and education.

Leading scholars in composition studies have long described the difficulties students face in the way their language is viewed negatively within the classroom. George Hillocks is one such scholar who has been critical to the field's enforcement of standardization and advocated for an understanding of reflective practices for not only students but teachers as well. In his book, *Teaching Writing as Reflective Practice* Hillocks gives an overview of the importance of reflective practices in the teaching of writing. Included within Hillocks discussions are also the findings and data from the years of observing schoolteachers in the Chicago area with a team of researchers. He states the "teachers' negative responses to student language suggest the possibility of a much more harmful impact. These involve teachers' failure to understand students' meanings and their corrections that suggest the students' inability to think." (17). Hillocks is able to distinct that the negative perspectives teachers hold to their student's language is particularly harmful in the way it is linked to teachers correlating what they view as less intelligent language to an idea that the

student too is less capable of thought. While Hillocks spotlights that this manner is created through the lack of space created for reflection based practices which ask students to share aspects of their identity, he takes a relatively conservative approach to unpacking such dynamics by focusing too much on solely the role of teacher and student, and does not intersect the very particular, and moreover exponentially important, ways that aspects of race are involved in the undermining of student language. As he continues to note, "Without the increasing complexity, there would be no absorption in the task, for what was once challenging becomes easy and routine…In the reflective practice, assessment asks the extent to which the teaching and goals have been appropriate and effective for students" (21). Hillocks continues to advocate for an increased consideration to teaching practices as he specifically addresses that instruction of writing must involve an assessment to consider the alignment between the approach and perspectives brought into the classroom by the teacher and those brought in by students. Still, this framing only mandates a broad sense of "increasing complexity" and pushes for the reflection of everyday practices without explicit care for manners of oppression that education enables through the enforcement of a white standardization. It is in this manner that Hillock's framing is conservative in comparison to scholars who explicitly bring up aspects of marginalization when discussing aspects of identity. When the many aspects of marginalization, such as race, and the intersections of multiple impositions are not emphasized in calls for complexity, they are violently made invisible once more through their exclusion. A reproduction is created in making the characteristics of marginalization hidden in such discussions that mimics the societal denial and ignorance of oppression.

Similarly, to Hillocks, other scholars who have led the field's conversations on writing practices have also lacked in explicit attention to the sacrifice of identity which students are

assimilated into carrying out in the classroom space as they write. Peter Elbow too has created a foundation for which educators and students draw from to position their teaching and learning processes. Like Hillocks, Peter Elbow's pedagogy has emphasized aspects of reflection and identity consciousness; however even in moments where this practice is recognized for its potential to call attention to racism in the classroom Elbow still, imposes and reverts back onto traditional understandings of language and writing. Young specifically seeks to problematize Elbow's thoughts citing him stating: "Elbow says 'so Young and Canagarajah are right to pursue the value and importance of what might be called 'in your face' code-meshing, but,' he cautions, 'writers at this cultural moment will have a much easier time writing for conventional readers, especially teachers and employers, if they learn to 'fix' the few features of their vernacular that set off error alarms'" (7). While Elbow praises Young and Canagarajah for theorizing and implementing practices that radically detract from the histories of assimilation in the teaching of writing, as Young points out, he is still seeking to promote the conservative assimilation that asks students to 'fix' not just "features of their vernacular" but ultimately what these "features" embody: their cultural and racial identities.

The specific lack of attention to marginalization in discussions of writing and identity or the promotion of assimilation because it is "easier" minimizes the lives of marginalized students in the composition classroom. If alternatives to the current framing of compositions are ignored because there is a perception that students are at less risk if they comply with oppressive dynamics, the maintained position that students are placed into is one that still compromises their lives for that of a system and relationship that devalues their identities. In particular, Young speaks to the specifics in which the languages students bring into the classroom have continuously been oppressed by promoting the idea that languages, such as African American English (AAE), should

be used sparingly in place for the expected and made dominant English. Young expresses concerns over such compromises especially considering his own history in education as well as various research that has recorded the psychological trauma experienced by students who code-switch: "Because Whites are assumed to be the prototypical speakers of Standard English, their language is never subjected to this sort of scrutiny. This causes many African Americans to be overly self-conscious about their language use, producing the emotional and psychological trauma that those who resist Standard English are trying to avoid." (51). What Young refers to as "scrutiny" is specifically related to the bias and discrepancy that educators hold in viewing non-dominant Englishes as inferior to standard English. While Young spotlights African American English, a similar scrutiny is applied to other speakers of non-dominant Englishes and languages, such as with my own upbringing and the experiences my family carry with us that affect how we navigate spaces.

The framing and incorporation of sustaining multiple languages in the writing classroom will be explored later in a more detailed discussion for anti-racist practices, however, it is imperative that the significance that practices, such as codemeshing, have in connection to recuperating from and dismantling racism through the manner in which it creates space for students of color to write must be noted. These practices must not be removed from the connections they hold to identity and its navigation within the classroom. Just as codeswitching is connected to the continued oppression of students of color, and the lack of discussion of marginalized identity continues to silence, there must be a vigilance for radical practices that seek to overturn. They must not be viewed as a means to simply recreate the same ends that the traditionally oppressive perspectives and practices have emphasized to focus on communication as a unidirectional assimilation. This framing has traditionally maintained that the direction communication is framed

towards and catered to is the white dominant audience which, as Young notes, continues to create space for the scrutiny of African Americans. A shift must be noted and enacted when considering such practices that center marginalized identity. A discrepancy to create space so that the typical white audience, that have too often fit the academic expectations enforced in the classroom, must themselves experience a scrutiny in student's considering how they wish to dictate how their identities and language are situated. This is to say that the frustration, confusion, and inability to understand aspects of writing is not, in of itself, an aspect to be avoided when such dynamics are not markers of the writer's ability to communicate or comprehend, but rather should be seen as a instance where the racist perceptions of writing, that devalue the identity of students of color, limit the markers of communication, comprehension, and ability.

The Marginalized Student

In learning to sustain and make room for the voice of students to assist in the disruption of oppression it is imperative that educators position themselves so that they are able to shift their authority so that it does not impede students shaping the classroom. The notion that educators should be mindful of their authority and the need to release their grip in the classroom has long been discussed by scholars in writing. bell hooks radically reiterated such points in 1994. She described a need to recognize and find value in all classroom actors stating, "the professor must genuinely value everyone's presence. There must be an ongoing recognition that everyone influences the classroom dynamic, that everyone contributes...before this process can begin there has to be some deconstruction of the traditional notion that only the professor is responsible for classroom dynamics." (hooks, 8). What will continued to be explored in the following sections is how this deconstruction is specifically able to take place, what it means for marginalized students

as they grapple with the disposition they have traditionally been placed in, what it means for a student who holds privilege within society to find the means to support their peers, but also refine their own sense of self, and lastly what it means for the teacher to make their authority fluid within the classroom so that it is used to discriminate racism.

It is foremost important to detail the role and significance marginalized students can have to the anti-racist classroom. As expressed previously, students of color have been subjected to a classroom space which minimizes and seeks to assimilate their identity so that it fits a white standard. This racist imposition is not one which can easily be removed simply through the actions of the teacher, but must also be a part of the student's own will and desire to unlearn the ways of internalized hate and means of performing to a standard that has sought to erase them. By large designating the classroom as a space for marginalized students to explore this dynamic means acknowledging the manners in which writing theory and pedagogy excludes the voices of students, particularly those who have been made most at risk of failing within the classroom space. Amy Lee describes this dynamic within the context of critical pedagogy as she states, "The students' role is largely ignored, so that while they are described—invested with specific qualities and capabilities—they are not actively represented in the discourse of critical pedagogy. Teachers are centered in this framework, while students are presented as subjects of and subject to critical pedagogy." (7). In this same manner, the classroom space is designed and enforced through the teacher's practices so that students are still "invested with specific qualities and capabilities" but ignored in the manner in which they may bring forth practices and ways of communicating that do not fit the typical white standard. The aspect of racism in this particular dynamic takes place when not only is the student's voice excluded from the pedagogy but if that such dismissal and silencing at large would come at the cost of marginalized voices whose experiences and languages are seen

as non-compatible with the potential pedagogy and structure of the teacher. Often if spaces are provided for marginalized students to voice within the classroom, they are constructed in a manner which creates a limitation towards their contributions and ultimately the potential shaping of the classroom towards a non-white and anti-racist space. Such examples can be allowing a student to write a literacy narrative and incorporate the organizational structures of their culture, but maintain a more western direct outline for a research essay, or the incorporation of a creative writing assignment where a student can use their home languages but then must shift back fully towards the perception of a standardized English for a argumentative essay. These few compromises often serve as a manner to continue silencing marginalized voices through a form of segregation that deems non-white cultures as illegitimate for what many would perceive as the more rigorous and intellectual work of composition. In continuing to silence and limit marginalized voices the condition of the classroom is not disrupted and therefore it becomes evident that an anti-racist approach be considered for it's potential to create a disruption.

Valarie Kinloch, professor of English Education at Columbia University, reminds educators of the cost of this lack of disruption: "[it] comes at the expense of the lives, literacies, and languages of Black students and other students of color, many of whom are regularly criminalized inside classrooms and assaulted within their own communities." (Kinloch 29). For Kinloch the stakes to disrupt the appeal to white supremacy is a real one which without even attempting to shift comes at the cost of the lives and culture of students. So how does this disruption take place and what is the role of the marginalized student? Such a disruption must be enacted with care and reflection while also being mindful to not be overly cautious as to not produce any action. By integrating some form of recognition of the historical power dynamic which often silences marginalized students, such as that spoken to by Amy Lee or even the more explicit costs brought

up by Valarie Kinloch, all students are able to begin a dialogue and potential recognition for the maintenance of white supremacy. From such acts of transparency, educators and the classroom space then holds the potential for creating change to the degree of imbalance they have recognized. Integrating the marginalized student's participation and voice is rooted in critical pedagogy as a means for shifting dynamics. Freire describes the necessity for such participation by stating, "It is absolutely essential that the oppressed participate in the revolutionary process with an increasingly critical awareness of their role as Subjects of the transformation." (Freire, 127). Once more Freire presents the notion of students as subject, much like Amy Lee, however, what Freire suggests is that through the participation and critical awareness of such a dynamic a change can begin to occur. Such awareness would necessitate the need for presenting such dynamics but also create space for marginalized students to participate to the fullest which they deem appropriate. I bring up the notion of appropriateness in this manner because it is critical to recognize that the disposition and interest of engagement for a marginalized student will range and vary in complexities. Some students may not wish to draw on their own cultural upbringings and seek to assimilate towards a white society, while other students may seek to more openly call upon their heritage and knowledges. In both instances neither student is failing to create change towards an anti-racist space, because ultimately the choice and decision of appealing or shifting has fallen upon them and not the system to dictate. In short, whiteness and the appeal to it is not something imposed upon a student and it does not, or rather should not, come at the cost of the marginalized student's voice. Later in this discussion it will be discussed how aspects of privilege can impact the dynamic of an antiracist classroom but for now it is imperative to prioritize the further development of the role and position for marginalized voices.

With creating these options to push on the dominance of white standards within the composition classroom and shift towards an anti-racist approach it is necessary to name and specifically explore approaches to the potential options which marginalized students could use to help integrate their culture into the classroom. One such practice which has been heavily explored and discussed within the past decade is the idea of codemeshing. Popularized by Young as a means to recuperate from the enforcement of codeswitching practicing in education which maintained the segregation of languages codemeshing seeks to integrate multiple languages into the same context. Young briefly summarizes this practice by stating it is "the combination of multiple dialects or languages in a single sentence" (Young, 18). Notably, many scholars who research practices related to codemeshing or multilingual speakers have historically noted that multilingual students develop a skillset to effectively combine and integrate multiple languages in singular contexts (Young; Canagarajah; Elbow; Inoue). In the home, the store, community center, with friends, students who have effectively developed complex linguistic repertoires are capable of equally complex linguistic feats, yet, such practices are commonly discouraged and often penalized within higher education and even more so within the composition classroom. Still conversations around language use within higher education centers on enforcing that speakers of non-dominant languages use their home languages within their communities and switch to an enforced standardized English in the classroom. Even in classrooms lead by teachers who may be seen as progressive, the integration of student's home languages can be limited to genre based assignments which would maintain that the student's home language is limited and not as intelligent in comparison to a Standardized English. Such activities are allowing students to use their home languages in a blog post but then removing such options in a research paper. Enforcing codeswitching in these manners asserts the lessening of other languages. Young is clear to point

out the harm and maintenance in such practices: “Although many advocates of code-switching claim to be antiracists who would never support racial subordination, they nonetheless translate the logic of separate but equal into 21st-century literacy instruction.” (Young 61). Notably what Young helps further point out is the lack of action in creating a space for marginalized students, even from educators that would align themselves with the radical practices of anti-racism. On a similar note, similar contention has been presented by educators in asserting that by allowing the facilitation and instruction of codemeshing practices within the composition classroom, marginalized students would perform worse. On one hand such scenarios typically neglect to mention that the silencing and abuse which the scholars cited thus far have referenced would continue to be felt by marginalized students as part of the continued assimilation and enforcement of codeswitching practices. Moreover, the notion that marginalized students who codemesh would perform worse also will typically not acknowledge that the criteria for which marginalized students will be judged by under such continued enforcement of codeswitching will be through the expectations of whiteness which marginalized students of color will already be ill fit to perform unless they sacrifice their own identities.

When considering the positionality of the marginalized student within the anti-racist composition classroom it is also necessary to consider that simply creating space for practices such as codemeshing will not completely eliminate the hauntings of systemic racism and the trauma it can inflict on an individual. Even in finding a space within academia and a understanding for their own education marginalized students are likely to become even more reflective of their disposition to the larger discourse of higher education or just as difficult the new position they may occupy within their own communities. Rhetoric and Composition Professor at Syracuse University, Aja Martinez, has heavily explored her own narrative as a means of recuperating and challenging the

common racist practices in higher education. She reminisces on her own experiences describing what it meant for her to advance in her schoolwork even while maintaining some grasps of her community. She states, “Why did I “make it” out of the Southside of Tucson when so many of my classmates were left behind? “Why her” is what I have painfully come to know others—peers, family and colleagues—have wondered about me as well.” (Martinez, 65). The testimony provided by Martinez highlights the necessity for implementations of practices that would disrupt the supremacy of white language and expectation in the composition classroom. Even in her own experience she was able to navigate higher education but even by doing so came at the cost of her communities who she could most identify with as part of her community. To be a person of color and work through a space which demands the shift towards white standards is to carry a weight that one is leaving their community or their people behind. Martinez’s haunting over her capability to “make it” illustrates a psychological violence in which she is unable to entirely accept her efforts and work to become successful in higher education, instead, there is an aspect of regret and guilt over, what can feel like, abandoning one’s culture. While integrating anti-racist approach to the composition classroom will not completely eliminate such traumatic experiences, it will present alternative paths for people to strengthen, imbed, and most critically, carve out space which was previously dominated by aspects of whiteness so that their own cultural practices and perceptions are integrated into their learning. By having supporting such possibilities experiences such as those above would have a potential to be recuperated from while also present an opportunity for an individual to learn how to reconnect to their communities so that they do not feel as though others are in question of their capabilities.

The marginalized student potentially has the greatest to gain from the anti-racist classroom but likely would be positioned to be in the most vulnerable just as topics and discussions present

themselves explicitly related to racism. However, this position is not new to such individuals, being vulnerable is something that marginalized people are imposed upon too often and are often ignored when pointing out the dynamics which exploit their positions. Creating an anti-racist composition classroom would help students of color acknowledge and reflect on their own positionalities to their communities and other discourses they would interact with in the classroom. This is to reiterate that the path of each student will carry their own complexity and approach, not every student will seek to employ aspects of codemeshing, not every student will seek to become explicit in class discussions about racism, but what every student can take part in is some form of understanding and acknowledgment of the typically racist dynamics that take place in the perceptions of language and composition. Critical race and feminist scholar, Sarah Ahmed, unpacks the process of experiencing daily oppression and discrimination. In particular what becomes important to distinguishing the significance of the anti-racist composition classroom is her reflection on the importance of naming and labeling such oppressive interactions:

> We encounter racism and sexism before we have the words that allow us to make sense of what we encounter. Words can then allow us to get closer to our experiences; words can allow us to comprehend what we experience after the event. We become retrospective witnesses of our becoming. Sexism and racism: if they are problems we have given names, the named tend to lag behind the problems. (Ahmed, 32).

Ahmed's value on labeling and learning of words to describe oppressive experiences asserts that in the moment of such experiences there is not enough space to fully comprehend the dynamic which created the oppressive act and its impact. Students who enter the anti-racist composition classroom are likely to have already some words to describe their own experiences from a racially unjust society and through their own navigation of academia. However, what the anti-racist

composition classroom assists in helping "to make sense" is the particular encounters around language, writing, and classroom space. Not every student will understand the racist implications of encouraging codeswitching, but through discussions on such dynamics, they can leave with new words such as codemeshing. Moreover, Ahmed's comment on becoming witnesses to their becoming, helps spotlight the potential for critically thinking about one's own positionality. To reflect on who one is in a context allows for an individual to consider their actions, but most significantly for the marginalized student, how their environment has potentially imposed upon them this "becoming." Through the anti-racist composition classroom marginalized students seek to gain a potential space to help disrupt the racist dynamics in language, writing, and their learning.

The Privileged Student

Continuing to understand and distinguish the different roles in the anti-racist composition classroom it is equally significant to recognize the necessary labor and consideration of privilege. While the previous sections have distinguished the significance and necessity of an anti-racist composition classroom for a marginalized student, it is critical that such positions are not the sole highlight of the classroom space. Prioritizing solely the labor and possibility for marginalized students creates a problematic savior space where the classroom is seen as solely a space to empower such individuals and not one that is also meant to discriminate and work towards having those with privilege and what would be greater power understand the complex dynamics of otherness that establishes their context. Privilege is often a term which can differ in understanding much like racism and general oppression. Often, individuals who would become defensive towards being identified as wielding privilege would assert that they too have experienced hardship and barriers to their circumstances. However, it is critical to note that aspects of privilege, or even marginalization, are not dynamics which exist in a static or non-cohesive state. An individual may

have the potential to benefit from different contexts depending on their own identities and characteristics while also experiencing some degree of marginalization. Sarah Ahmed illustrates the dynamics of privilege by stating, "Privilege could be rethought in these terms: easier to wear…perhaps privilege offers some protection from being questioned or becoming questionable: a buffer zone as a zone without questions." (132). As Ahmed describes privilege as something that makes "easier" it can be understood that the dynamics of privilege in the context of the composition classroom make the tasks of learning easier to wear. The buffer zone in which a person with privilege may encounter is not being asked why their writing does not get to the point, why their writing is not following standardized English, or that they need to improve on their grammatical skills. This dynamic is perhaps best noted by a study by Kang and Rubin cited by Vershawn Ashanti Young:

> "[They] found that listening comprehension drops by an average of 12% when students believe they were listening to a non-native speaker (even though they were actually listening to native English speaker). This extends to writing, as teachers are more likely to find problems with a student's grammar if they believe they are reading something written by a minority child." (20)

What we learn from the above findings is how privilege can operate through racist assumptions and ignorant understandings of language in the composition classroom. Establishing the role of the privileged student within the anti-racist classroom distinguishes that the labor and onus of combating racism or oppression is not on one sole individual. Moreover, clarifying the potential impact for privileged students helps further understand how all actors would seek to benefit from the complex and transparent space necessary for an anti-racist composition classroom.

As previous authors have discussed, privilege largely operates within the composition classroom through the perception of language and the necessity for a standardized English. Developing an anti-racist composition classroom that involves those with privilege would seek to invite discussion and more significantly the questioning of such privilege in language dominance and perception. If the buffer zone which Ahmed illustrates creates a space where an individual can freely navigate without question, then it is the purpose of the anti-racist composition classroom to help students critically think and question such dynamics which would typically be unchallenged. Suresh Canagarajah describes these particular dynamics and the unpacking of them as a game. He states, "If all speech events are language games, the rules of the game that all the players currently share need to be acknowledged. This is important even if the current rules favor one group more than the other and may have come into force as a result of that group's dominance" (Canagarajah, 114). By describing language hegemony as an illustration of a game Canagarajah is initially suggesting that the rule set of what others would perceive as Standardized English must, at the least, be acknowledged. While the particular context of the statement suggests that multilingual students must become aware of such expectations, more importantly, I would suggest that such an acknowledgment also must be conducted on part of those who benefit from such a dominance. The privileged student, just like the marginalized student, must become aware of the histories and particular affordability given to them in being perceived or assumed to be more naturally capable of language and writing skills. While composition classrooms can sometimes ask students to consider their literacy histories, it is not often that such reflections are conducted in parallel to topics related to privilege. To push further on Canagarajah's quote, while the suggestion of having multilingual students understand the "rules of the game" would assist in its eventual deconstruction, by limiting such learning moments to student's who are placed into a marginalized

position there is a lack of equity in the classroom which would further seek to increase the labor of only multilingual students. Students who maintain aspects of privilege within the composition classroom, and in particular one emphasizing anti-racism, it then is also significant for them to learn about their peers and the dynamics of whiteness and oppression which would often make their own positionings go unchallenged.

Continuing to define and understand how the anti-racist classroom positions students with privilege, it is significant to continue unpacking the manners in which privilege can operate and the dangers of privilege that is treated without an aspect of questioning. bell hooks describes how the treatment of voice in the college classroom can silence those from marginalized positions and equally give greater space for those with privilege to maintain a dominance over the classroom. She states,

> “In the privileged liberal arts colleges, it is acceptable for professors to respect the "voice" of any student who wants to make a point. Many students in those institutions feel they are entitled—that their voices deserve to be heard. But students in public institutions, mostly from working-class backgrounds, come to college assuming that professors see them as having nothing of value to say, no valuable contribution to make to a dialectical exchange of ideas” (149).

What hooks initially points out is the dynamic by which all voices are typically treated as potential equals. And while her example of marginalization is specifically related to “working-class” students, this dynamic can become extended further to other marginalized groups who do not immediately align with the white values of the classroom space. Even more so, while marginalized students are likely to feel as though their presence and potential input on a discussion would be inappropriate or unsuited, it is likely that those with privilege, because of the expectation that

hooks describes where “their voices deserve to be heard” there is a possible harm in what that voice can echo or silence. Such internalized perceptions on the value of voice in the classroom, both for the marginalized student and those with privilege, can only be disrupted if they are actively acknowledged and brought up in conversation. The anti-racist classroom must prioritize what some may see as strenuous and difficult conversations on privilege and marginalization. While it will later be described how the role of the teacher within the anti-racist classroom has a position to draw attention to the particular dynamics that silence or are influenced by oppressive dynamics, so too, would it be necessary for student’s to be welcomed to also acknowledge and question the dynamics they witness. Even more so, such dynamics of privileging certain student’s voices at the cost of others is not only evident in the dynamics between students in the classroom, but likewise in the manner in which voice is perceived within writing assignments. Just as I have implemented my own personal narrative and voice in the introduction of this discussion, such narratives are also likely to be written by those who would have a disregard for aspects of privilege. This is to say that, while my own narrative is incorporated to expand and highlight my own marginalization and the artifacts I have encountered of the systemic racism and prejudice around language, a narrative also wields the potential to minimize and conceal such racism and oppression. Sarah Allen reflects on her experience teaching narrative based writing in her composition classroom. In particular she has drawn on both the literature of Peter Elbow and bell hooks to shape the classroom, and ultimately, the manners in which she sees students interacting with their writing. She states, “voice in the essay works by privileging one voice, the individual writer’s voice, over all others.” (41). Allen initially starts to present this idea as a means to become critical of writing which reinforces such dominance. If a writer’s voice becomes privileged in their own writing, then it becomes a question of who the “others” are likely to represent. In the instance of the privileged student it is

likely that if they have not understood how their own positioning is within relationship to oppression or dominance to "others" then their own narrative is likely to perpetuate such disregards. However, while Allen focuses on the use of narratives privileging voice, she does not consider the potential of narrative writing being used to help spotlight marginalization or oppression and how such an action would not only help in decentering the privileging of the writer's voice but also center on the voice related to a community. Ultimately, by having privileged students engage in dialogue about the dynamics of the classroom to understand how different histories and characteristics give them a benefit of feeling as if their voice is of greater value, there remains an opportunity to create a transgression and increased learning moment to unpack, question, and perhaps create space for them to also disrupt the dynamics which would cost students of color their learning experience.

While the privileged student can be in an environment to dialogue about oppressive dynamics within the classroom it must be noted that even creating the explicit space for such conversations and recognition is not enough for someone with a privileged position to actively take part in the deconstruction and removal of racism. A privileged student must also take part in conversation related to allyship. In the same manner that previous authors have noted the good intentions of teachers or the manner in which academics are unable to commit to social justice actions which would help affirm a space for diversity in the classroom, this dynamic is likely to take place with privileged students who become aware of the oppressive dynamics they contribute to but fear possible discomforts in taking action. Indeed, actively working towards deconstructing oppression is to align one's self and their actions in a manner that actively disrupts past benefits of privilege. While the active actions that deconstruct privilege and take actions towards oppression would place someone in a potentially vulnerable position, because they are actively

engaging, questioning, and attempting to lessen racism or other oppressive forces, such a disposition is still not equitable to those that such oppression would specifically seek to devalue. This is to say that potential conflict or tension for someone with privilege, such as a white student, is not equivalent to the discrimination and oppressive dynamics experienced by a student of color. The privileged student would maintain the option to remove themselves from such tensions and impact in being seen as an ally towards anti-racism whereas, even if a student of color were to appeal towards the racist dynamics they still are likely to interact with continued push back.

In describing the notion of allyship in the anti-racist composition classroom the perspectives and discussions of Aja Martinez are likely to serve as a baseline for considering the dynamics by which allyship is not always equivalent and is not always productive towards its contributions to anti-oppression. As Martinez becomes frustrated by allies who claim to support diversity and anti-oppression work but lack action and contributions to such areas she distinguishes between the common term of ally and what she labels as an accomplice. She describes these two stating, “whereas allies are viewed as those who identify as helpers to the oppressed, accomplices are those who will bear the risk of consequences” (Martinez, 31). For Martinez, the distinction is clear in describing allies as “helpers.” The reality of those with privilege moving towards a position that would recognize their position and the disposition of others is that there is a privilege even in making such a move that an individual does have to place themselves with the possibility of facing “consequences.” If a student of color is spoken over continuously the manner of a white student consoling and speaking with the student of color does not do the same work as speaking to those that spoke over. While certainly the actions are not limited to just one, too many moments of allyship involve the former while the latter is what would actively work towards change and shifting a source of the oppression. Such moments of confronting and facing potential

consequences of taking action towards oppressive actions are likely to come the lack of thought for what active anti-racist work means in terms of engaging with oppression. Even more so, the path of consoling an individual requires the least risk as well as energy while simultaneously contributing enough to pass as being in alignment with the marginalized. By pointing out and distinction between being an ally and accomplice in the classroom privileged students are able to reflect and dialogue on how they are positioning and contributing to the undoing of racism in the classroom.

These manners are increasingly significant not only to the further development of the privileged student's critical thinking capabilities but also to shifting the manners in which the safety of privileged students is prioritized over marginalized students. It can not be understated how the comforts of privileged students come at the cost of minoritized students. Timothy San Pedro is a scholar who has worked in varying indigenous communities as well as conducted observations noting the dynamic that Indigenous students experience when in the typical classroom. He describes how the greater value of privileged student's comfort comes at the cost of these students stating, **"**Such pursuits of safety and feelings of comfort often leave Indigenous students and other students of color on the margins of classroom discourse" (102). While San Pedro notes this oppressive dynamic as a barrier for marginalized student's access to their learning environment, ultimately it is the same discourse which seeks to create "safety" and "comfort" for privileged student's that the marginalized student must continue to aim towards. By acknowledging and breaking down the potential for an anti-racist classroom, the typical discourse which would favor privilege and ultimately racist interactions with student's learning, is disrupted. If a privileged student is presented with the possibility to acknowledge and converse about the manners in which they benefit from particular framings and the manners in which they may need

to work towards being an accomplice then the particular gears which would maintain the oppressive classroom's operation become misaligned. In this same manner, by cultivating a space within the classroom that asks marginalized students to see value in the complex and great cultures and experiences that they bring, and to help implement these to further the learning practices of themselves and others in the class, then new gears are created which create movements away from oppressive systems.

The Teacher and Authority

The last role within the anti-racist classroom is the teacher. Specifically, with the understanding of the manners in which marginalization and privilege can operate with students in the composition classroom, it then becomes necessary to understand how the teacher's authority has continued to contribute to racism as well as how it can be implemented to help discriminate and reduce the impacts and presence of racism. Because of the traditional structures of education, the teacher is often seen as the guiding authority within the classroom. The teacher creates and guides students through course work, through discussions, but also through the manners in which such moments would interact and impact the students. In dissecting the teacher's authority it will be discussed how authority can be potentially mishandled within the classroom to perpetuate racism as well as how authority can be implemented and minded of so that it is strategically used to help disrupt racism and support an anti-racism composition classroom. Exploring, the role of the teacher and the impacts of authority is critical to further solidifying an illustration and understanding of the anti-racist composition classroom. Even more so, by becoming mindful of the ways authority can operate, the teacher is able to help bring awareness to their own positionality within the classroom so that the students are able to further develop their critical skills in distinguishing the manners of learning they may be exposed to that recreate or maintain

oppression. For the teacher, they equally gain an opportunity to learn, as by making their authority fluid and transparent, they are able to place themselves in a learning position to both the marginalized student who helps introduce their perspectives into the classroom as well as the privileged students confrontation with the tensions of benefiting from oppressive structures.

The possibility that the authority of the teacher can perpetuate and foster the racist dynamics of an oppressive system is one which is not often identified and made visible within the classroom. Amy Lee points out that by being in the teacher position we maintain the same perceptions and biases of the environments that we have navigated through. As she describes, "We cannot simply step into our teacher shoes and become ideological innocents or agenda-free, neutral coaches." (Lee 37). While Lee suggests an "agenda," the position of the teacher is likely to be informed by the years of education that they have also been a part of and the manners of teaching which they embraced. The "teacher shoes" that the role may distribute are often those worn throughout history and they have been used to maintain the senses of authority which has preserved the lack of discrimination towards racist practices in the classroom. As the established authority within the classroom, the teacher sets a precedent and creates a tone for the perception of oppression. If it goes unacknowledged and is not discussed, then likely the students too would not find a purpose to discuss how it can be made visible or reduced. If the particular manners of teaching in the composition classroom are not acknowledged, then the possibility for marginalized students to understand how they have been exploited by the system goes unchallenged. With the authority to bring awareness to the dynamics of the composition that would maintain oppression, such as the expectation of a Standardized English or the perception of students of color, teachers are able to shift the manners in which all students view their role and purpose in the classroom. In continuing to investigate the dynamics of student narrative essays Sarah Allen notes that often

when students are not engaged with mindful and critical dialogue of their environment then they reproduce it in their work. She states, “Students’ essays reflect the very hegemony that may be oppressing them, precisely because voice privileges “telling my story” for what it means to me over “examining my story” for how it participates in a larger discourse.” (Allen, 42). Notably, what Allen highlights is the cyclical pattern of classroom participation by which student’s perform in a manner that emphasizes only the process of “telling” in an aspect which would focalize the student but potentially decenter the “larger discourse” which maintains the systemic dynamics of racism. So in turn, the teacher’s authority, in moments of instructing and guiding must be purposed to make visible and explicit the connections that the discourse students interact with in the classroom, and those they bring with them, have been formed by oppressive histories and actions.

Just as it was previously discussed with the role of privileged students, someone in the teacher role is also contention with the possibility and benefit of inaction. As earlier scholars such as Young and hooks have already noted, too often there is a hesitation for taking action and wanting to actively discuss the racism within the classroom space. Or, while some aspects may be acknowledged, others, such as the racism with the enforcement of standardized English, may go either unrecognized or explicitly seen as not being linked to imbedded racism within education.

While research has already established how such practices create disadvantage and discriminate towards students of color, teachers may continue and assert that they must have additional training or that they do not wish to escalate the dynamics further by drawing attention to them. These perspectives are in alignment with those described as the potential detriments of privilege in the classroom. Where authority is connected to such a dynamic, is how, the teacher becomes the keeper of such discussions and dynamics. Like the audience member from Young’s seminar who asserted that they could not take action immediately, teachers have the agency

through their authority in the classroom to be patient in deconstruction oppression. Asao B. Inoue is a notable scholar who has written on anti-racist practices and is particularly an expert in assessment. He notes how such inactions affords the continual dominance of white practices in the classroom stating, “Waiting is complicity in disguise. I’ve seen and experienced too much. It ain’t my imagination. Any denial of racism in our writing assessments is a white illusion. It upholds a white hegemonic set of power relations that is the status quo. It is in the imagination of those too invested in a white racial habitus, regardless of their racial affiliation.” (24). Inoue presents multiple complex dynamics in regard to a teacher’s capability to wait on taking action and making change. While he is focused on aspects of racism within assessment his initial position asserts that “waiting” is aligned with complicity. This position is one which would also be in agreement with anti-racist understandings and requirements for action against racism instead of a focus on intention. Perhaps even more complicative is Inoue’s acknowledgment that racial affiliation does not dictate if someone upholds the white “status quo” of the classroom. Such a notion is imperative to understanding the teacher’s authority within the classroom space, because through their own education the teacher is in the closest proximity to the very system that has enforced the oppression of students.

Notably, Inoue’s emphasis on calling out assessment practices also draws attention back to the teacher’s authority in such moments. Within the anti-racist composition classroom assessment practices must be shifted so that the implementation of authority in assessment is disrupted. One such example is the earlier bias that students of color experience when it comes to the perception of their grammar and language skills. Even more critical is the manner in which marginalized students’ cultures are often excluded through lack of encouragement for incorporation or the explicit guidance that writings must align with the perception of a Standardized English. In order

to disrupt such bias an increased support for and space to learn from marginalized students' cultures and languages must be created. And in doing so, the teacher must shift their authority away from themselves and onto their students so that their students grasp an authority for a knowledge set that they can assist the teacher in developing. And in the assessment of students with privilege it must be considered how have they engaged too with such a learning. The teacher's authority can equally be positioned to assert that one with privilege must question further or, as Allen has noted, help students in "examining my story." The significance towards such change is not just apparent in the oppression of marginalized students, but even more so in the potential that maintaining exclusive forms of assessment would equally sustain a future for the oppressive dynamics. Inoue also notes such a significance and need for change in describing the results of racist assessments. He states, "Local white racial habitus make white students, or ideal students, in writing assessment ecologies of the classroom. A white racial habitus exists beyond or outside of bodies, in discourse, in methods of judging, in dispositions toward texts" (46). Inoue is explicit in describing that the continued assessments which rely on white standards and expectations maintain an aspect of assimilation. Critically, he once more notes how such the "white racial habitus" is centralized in the discourse and environmental context of the classroom. This is to say that, Inoue points out that white supremacy is so embedded into the system of education that it can be reproduced with indifference to the racial body that supports it. What this further complicates, and presents is how the teacher's authority must be positioned to shift such components. They must take an approach that acknowledges the systems connection to assessment and learning expectations so that all actors within the anti-racist classroom are able to develop their critical skills.

Continuing to develop an understanding for the manner in which a teacher's authority can be implemented within the anti-racist classroom it is necessary to also discuss how the use of authority can be used to support marginalized students and their experiences. With previous mentions regarding the manner in which marginalized students can experience doubt and as if their thoughts serve to value within the classroom, the teacher's authority has the potential to help create a space and position of the classroom discourse so that participants can learn from their experiences. Both Kinloch and San Pedro reflect on the particular manners in which students often found ways of resisting the violent and silencing impacts of the classroom. For some students, resistance can be seen through lack of class participation and for other students in can be more vocal challenge towards the significance or necessity for assignments. Because such reactions are often originated from the response to systemic oppression it is imperative that a teacher consider how to shift and use their authority to work towards an understanding of the student's positionality and then help create space so that the student can engage in the classroom space through their own cultural positionings. Kinloch presents such notion in combination with the idea that students are in unison with the teacher in imagining the classroom. She states, "One way for teachers to view students' resistances as invitations into learning is by working with students to co-construct classroom spaces that support multiple literacy engagements and perspectives." (38). The invitation Kinloch suggests for viewing resistance asserts that teachers see the resistance as a form of engagement and potential for further development for both parties. The key component related to the developing a shift in authority for educators is understanding the need to "co-construct classroom spaces" with their students. As mentioned in the previous paragraph, because of an educators close proximity to the system it is imperative that students' both privileged and marginalized contribute to the construction of the classroom so that the manners in which

objectives are navigated to and processed is made complex. This shift would be in an immediate opposition to the "white racial habitus" that Inoue describes. By presenting a transparent and explicit consideration to co-construct the classroom space with student's the teacher is able to loosen their authority so that there is space to explore the value of different cultural practices and perspectives that students bring into the classroom as well as the possibility, with this greater complexity, to further engage in critical inquiry towards composition.

Starting to do Better

Now returning to the earlier issue that the audience member of Young's talk presented where they were unsure how to "start to do better." The research and histories of the classroom space continue to show that waiting to obtain some definitive knowledge or training to disrupt racist enforcement within the classroom gives teachers and students who benefit from the system a comfort in inaction at the genuine cost to the lives of students of color. The anti-racist classroom can exist the moment someone commits to the desire they have for change and that change needs to exist in the present. The suggestions and framings I have presented do not hold a singular component to the anti-racist classroom, but what I do offer are these understandings as ways of further complicated and opening a space so that anti-racism can operate. If the classroom can shift so that it disrupts the devaluing of other languages that do not conform to the expectation of a standardized English and expectations of white hegemony, then marginalized students have the potential to contribute to further shifting the expectations of learning. By acknowledging aspects of privilege and the necessity to increase the inquiry of positioning that privileged students maintain then they too have a potential to complicate and even work towards becoming accomplices towards the deconstruction of racist systems. And if a teacher can recognize the position they have often maintained as an authority in the classroom then there

exists a possibility to distribute authority to students so they may assist in further development of understanding the hegemonic expectations of writing in the composition classroom and then create a space so that all members learn from another. These examples and framings for the anti-racist classroom are notable for not only the suggestions and potential guidance that they offer for someone to make the initial steps to do better, but because presenting various evidences and suggestions creates a dynamic that further aligns that inaction and patience means to hide behind the white dominance of the composition classroom. Too many moments and discussions for change circle back around to an intentional desire for change but too much emphasis being placed on precaution and safety. The presented evidence on how the classroom space enforces discrimination towards marginalized students should affirm that safety is not something that would be at an increased risk because they already experience the threats and impacts of a violent system. The only safety that would be compromised in taking action would be the safety of privilege in not having to acknowledge and make change towards an anti-racist composition classroom.

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