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Helping NSU's Multilingual and International Students Overcome Language Limitations: A Recommendation Report

Ana Theresa Benavidez Hernandez
Nova Southeastern University

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Thesis of Ana Theresa Benavidez Hernandez

Submitted in Partial Fulfillment of the Requirements for the Degree of

Master of Arts Composition, Rhetoric, and Digital Media

Nova Southeastern University
Halmos College of Arts and Sciences

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Approved:
Thesis Committee

Thesis Advisor: Molly Scanlon

Thesis Reader: Kelly Concannon

Helping NSU's Multilingual and International Students Overcome Language Limitations:

A Recommendation Report

A Thesis

Submitted in Partial Fulfillment of the

Requirements for the Degree

Master of Arts in Composition, Rhetoric, and Digital Media

Ana Benavidez

Halmos College of Arts and Sciences

Department of Communication, Media, and the Arts

Nova Southeastern University

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The world of multilingual international students is unknown for many people in the academic environment, but I have faith that this document is a door for much more research to come, thanks for believing in me and my brain.

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“We need to develop leaders in all fields who can take on our toughest challenges. We need people who can find solutions that keep us secure and make us more prosperous. We want to send a message that international education makes us stronger as a country.”

Marie Royce- Assistant Secretary of State for Educational and Cultural Affairs

- Open Doors 2018

Executive Summary

The recommendation report is a consultative research based on primary and secondary sources that study multilingual learning in the international community of NSU. The project is divided into three chapters. The first chapter presents an analysis of best practices regarding multilingual learners and international students in the field of composition. The second chapter explores NSU's current practices with international students and multilingual learners. And finally, the third chapter offers recommendations specific to NSU, but which may be useful for any institution of higher education that wishes to support their population of multilingual international students:

- **Classify Multilingual Students:** The classification of multilingual learners plays an important part in their academic and cultural development; how we identify learners impacts how we, in turn, perceive their needs and respond with resources.
- **Identify Multilingual Writers' Needs:** before addressing institutional reforms, NSU must better understand the needs of their unique multilingual international student population.
- **Collaborate with Writing Programs:** The current support mechanisms for these learners include the Office of International Affairs (OIA), the Department of Communication, Media, and the Arts' (DCMA) general education college writing course series, and the Writing and Communication Center (WCC). Collaboration and resource discovery among these pillars are promising and recommended.
- **Enhance Faculty Professional Development:** Once those needs are identified, faculty who instruct students in Composition (part-time or full-time) should be supported in learning and applying second-language writer pedagogies, including the option to audit DCMA's course on second-language teaching and tutoring.

- **Expand Graduate Student Education:** The Halmos College of Arts and Sciences currently offers a Master's in Composition, Rhetoric, and Digital Media (CRDM), including an elective course on second-language teaching and tutoring, as well as a Master's in College Student Affairs (CSA) which brings a student development lens to best practices in higher education. Additional graduate student education comes directly from assistantship opportunities in the WCC.

Chapter 1 Best Practices

The United States has become the number one most competitive destinations of international students according to the announcement *Number of International Students in the United States Hits All-Time High*. in the website *iie.org*. The website belongs to Institute of International Education, (IIE) one of the “largest and most experienced higher education exchange agencies in the world” and they have been conducting statistical surveys of international students in the US with the State’s Bureau of Educational and Cultural Affairs for more than 50 years (IIE). Every year, the results of the *Power of International Education* survey are published as an *Open Doors Report*. According to Open Doors 2018-2019, the number of international students in the United States surpassed one million for the third consecutive year. The Assistant Secretary of State for Educational and Cultural Affairs, Marie Royce, shared in the announcement *Number of International Students in the United States Hits All-Time High* from *iie.org* that “international students studying alongside Americans are a tremendous asset to the United States,” for many reasons (IIE). For instance, the Bureau of Commerce reported in 2017 that international students contributed \$42.4 billion to the US economy. Institutions and instructors have diversified their academic progress due to the presence of international students. Additionally, many institutions tout that their classrooms are now enriched with a cultural and academic exchange that contributes to values of diversity. In this announcement, Royce also argued that “meeting the needs of international students is also challenging for U.S. institutions because research on international students’ goals and learning outcomes are deficient...” due to the different linguistic and cultural differences between US students and international students (IIE). Regardless of the positive impact, international students nonetheless face all kinds of struggles throughout

the process of adapting to the culture of higher education in the US. Chapter 1 frames how international students in higher education compare to native English learners in the US, as supported by composition and rhetoric scholarship. This section also exposes the academic challenges of multilingual international students and the best practices to support them in overcoming those challenges.

1.1 Language Limitations of International Students

During the 20th century, the British philosopher Ludwig Wittgenstein stated, “The limits of my language mean the limits of my world” (Koppelman 4). Today, many international students might identify with Wittgenstein due to the challenges they experience during their studies of higher education. Recent statistics collected by the US Census Bureau indicated that almost 20% of the US population speaks a language other than English at home (*American FactFinder*). Wei Lui, in his study *Conceptualising Multilingual Capabilities In Anglophone Higher Degree Research Education: Challenges and Possibilities For Reconfiguring Language Practices and Policies*, defines language as “a product of the deeply social and cultural activities in which people engage” for meaning-making (8). In other words, the analysis of English language by international students in comparison to English speakers cannot be the same because of the different types of social and cultural activities they encounter during their academic learning. The field of social sciences analyzes numerous perspectives regarding international students. For example, “The Linguistic Inaccessibility of U.S. Higher Education and the Inherent Inequity of U.S. IEPs: An Argument of Multilingual Higher Education,” by Joan E. Friedenber, argues the lack of accessibility of higher education for Hispanic and other minority students. Friedenber analyzes how “multilingual higher education makes a positive political step toward making higher education accessible to language minority

population in the United States as well as helping to advance *diglossic* globalization...” (316) and the ways multilingual education builds capacities for areas like science, medicine, technology, agriculture, and education. Furthermore, Friedenbergr levels up her argument by transferring the “theories of cultural and linguistic hegemony [. . .] deeply embedded in institutional structure and practices...” (313). The studies of Liu and Friedenbergr are a clear example of how social sciences question the responsibility of higher education institutions in the academic performance of international students.

In 2016, Margaret M. Lieb published the article *Meeting the Needs of International Students*. According to Lieb, in addition to the average difficulties pursuing college education, international students have an entire world of challenges that domestic students do not face, exacerbated by distinct linguistic and cultural differences. “Ensuring the satisfaction and learning outcomes of international students is challenging for many institutions” (401). Her analysis suggests that as a result of the institutional efforts to satisfy international students' needs, few universities in the US are recognized as leading institutions for attracting international students. The needs native English speakers develop as students in college differ from international students and multilingual learners. According to Lieb, some of the needs of international students are improving language proficiency, engaging new cultural experience, achieving personal and academic growth in other words the acquisition of cultural and linguistic ground in a foreign country. Their needs can be classified into cultural and academic needs, nevertheless the academic environment plays an important role in the satisfaction of all their demands.

Institutions provide educational services to satisfy academic needs of all types of audiences. In their institutional case study, “Writing teachers’ perceptions of the presence

and needs of second language writers,” Paul Kei Matsuda, Tanita Saenkhum, and Steven Accardi explained as part of their results that “Multilingual students are as smart as native English speaking students[. . .]. They just need time to adjust themselves to the US academic discourse [. . . .] Once they understand how the discourse works, they will be able to excel in it” (75). Academically, second language writers and international students might have similar needs like, acquiring a second language skills, learning how to compose content in a second language, being able to communicate in a second language among others. Due to the dissatisfaction of their academic needs, second language writers can be categorized as having *deficient* academic skills, Matsuda, Saenkhum, and Accardi go furthermore to this approach, by explaining that their writing is seen deficient when it is evaluated in comparison to NES writers. The scholars Yasuko Kanno and Manka Varghese in their article *Immigrant and Refugee ESL Students’ Challenges to Accessing Four-Year College Education: From Language Policy to Educational Policy*, identified four different categories of obstacles for second language learners: linguistic challenges, structural constraints, financial struggles, and self-censorship. In terms of academic progress, the linguistic category revolves around reading, listening, speaking, and writing. They found that reading and listening, for example, involved the understanding of the content and specialized vocabulary assigned in academic work. The scholars compared English as second language learners (ESL) to students who are native English speakers. Consequently, they discover that the lack of understanding of the content and specialized vocabulary of ESL students resulted in a time-consuming process during the development of academic tasks. Language plays an important role due to the level of English proficiency required to satisfy the academic demands of higher education.

The Executive Committee of the Conference of College Composition and Communications (CCCC) agreed with this predicament and extended the challenge beyond academic study, saying, “the acquisition of a second language and second-language literacy is a time-consuming process that will continue through students’ academic careers and beyond [. . .]” (Matsuda and Cox 6). CCCC goes further by stating that “second language writers are still in the process of acquiring syntactic and lexical competence—a process that will take a lifetime” (Matsuda and Cox 6). As the largest academic organization that researches and teaches composition, the CCCC is periodically developing position statements based on grounded research, recognizing the importance of second language learners in composition courses.

According to Martha Koln, writing scholar, each individual develops a particular lexicon as a result of different learning experiences. International students are second language learners that analyze the lexical features of a sentence or phrase differently from NES. The common variable in the approaches of scholars like Koln, Varghese, Kanno, Matsuda, Accardi, and Saenkhum is language. Multilingual international students are not NES with the same linguistic needs and language rhetorical analysis. The acquisition of syntactic and lexical competence will consume a significant number of hours during their student’s life, but the institution can help multilingual international students overcome the linguistic barriers that challenge them every day.

The diversity in a classroom may enrich the academic encounter but at the same time bring up challenges to the table of learning. Through a position statement of principles and example of effective practices for Online Writing Instruction, the CCCC established, “all writing teachers should be prepared to address pedagogically the

linguistic and cultural diversity of the multilingual students in their classes (Hewett and DePew 39). Nevertheless, in publications like *Multilingual learners and foreign language acquisition: insight into the effects of prior linguistic knowledge*, by Anahi Alba De La Fuente and Hugues Lacroix instructors of higher education are exposed, because of the lack of awareness of multilingualism and language learning in heterogeneous and linguistically diverse classrooms. Likewise, Paul Kei Matsuda describes in *Myth of Homogeneity* that educators only see privileged homogenous audiences and fail to recognize the presence of second-language writers in composition courses, challenging the assumptions of writing programs and rhetoric and composition. Matsuda stated, “[The] myth of linguistic homogeneity—that is, to demand that all students meet the standards that can be expected only of life-long users of the dominant variety of English, [. . .] led teachers to outsource language-specific help that students need in writing classes to other places such as Intensive English Programs, remedial courses, and writing centers...” (637). Rather understanding the linguistic needs of students relevant to their classrooms and disciplines, Matsuda explained how faculty in higher education have traditionally relegated multilingual learners into other spaces due to the teachers’ narrow definitions of linguistic skills—often a homogeneous space where regardless of proficiency levels all students with linguistic diversity are considered the same. When faculty is not aware of the type of students, they have in a composition classroom, the particular needs of second language learners are not properly addressed. Therefore, if staff and faculty outside the composition courses are not providing the academic resources for the acquisition of the language, the writing skills of students can be limited, and their academic demands dashed.

In a move to resist linguistic homogeneity, in 2014 CCCC recognized the growing number of second language writers in institutions of higher education and how they are “becoming an integral part of writing courses and programs” (CCCC). According to Ferris and Hedgcock, due to dramatic changes in the demographics of classrooms of all levels, the need of expanding the ESL concept was mandatory. In their book *Teaching L2 Composition*, Ferris and Hedgcock defined second language learners or L2 writers as those “born and raised in homes in which the primary language spoken by parents and other adult caregivers was not English” or was not *only* English. They categorized L2 writers as: international students, EFL students, and resident immigrants for 1.5 generations.

- International students travel from another country to study in the United States. Usually they pursue an undergraduate or graduate degree. Not all international students can be considered L2, because some have English as their first language.
- EFL derives from the L2 writing literature as *foreign language* (FL). The difference between ESL and EFL relies on the location where these two populations interact. ESL writing studies focus on “writing in English in English-dominant contexts,” while FL writing “occurs around the world in a broad diversity of languages and contexts” as a subject in school where most of the times it is not elective.
- Resident Immigrants or 1.5 generation are those who have relocated, usually permanently, to the new SL/L2 context. In the United States and elsewhere, their legal status is different from that of international students.

The categorization of Ferris and Hedgcock is a great reference of the diversity of international and multilingual students that can interact with NES in universities like NSU. The categories of students in higher education institutions play an important role in the classification of needs of a diverse student population. The educational practices and strategies are based on the needs of the students. The demands of those needs are linked to the satisfaction and consequently the acknowledgement of English proficiency. Many studies have demonstrated how the BICS (Basic Interpersonal Communication Skills) and CALPS (Cognitive Academic Language Proficiency) affect the academic bridge between students and institutions. Jose Macias, a current consultant in NSU writing center, refers to the academic relation between students and institutions and how they are linked to the BICS and CALPS in its doctoral dissertation. Macias' project infers how institutions need to be the bridge between students and the acquisition of English. The instructors, faculty and staff are the hands that build up the institutions' bridge.

1.2 Institutional Practices

Throughout the adaptation in the educational system international students will emerge as multilingual learners in a unique form due to their cultural background. Institutions need to execute the best practices in order to help them with the transition and the preparation of the instructors can mark the difference with multilingual learners. A composition course can have educators that are not aware of the diversity of a classroom or the background of multilingual learners. The course might also be designed for only native English speakers, making it poor in resources and tools for multilingual learning. The lack of awareness and poor courses are clear examples of how unprepared an instructor can be in a composition course. Fortunately, institutions and instructors can access useful research that can help with most of the struggle. The CCCC released a

Position Statement of Second Language Writing and Writers (CCCC). This statement is a short summary of grounded research approaches about the different education of second language learners, implying the best practices for writers, instructors, writing administrators and above all higher education. The following section is derived from the CCCC's Position Statement and supported with theory of the field of composition and communication. The content is classified into four main interdependent areas of study: Second Language Writer's Needs, Teacher Training, Graduate Student Curriculum and Writing Programs that imply the work that institutions should focus when managing multilingual learners.



1.2.1 Second Language Writers' Needs

Institutions must recognize and be responsible for second language writers in writing classes to understand their characteristics and needs. The CCCC position statement explains that prior to the development of the courses for a diverse classroom,

instructors need to be “prepared to address the linguistic and cultural needs of second language writers” (CCCC). Undergraduate students in FYC courses require special attention due to transition into higher education, and then there are also the challenges that a new language can present for multilingual international students. De La Fuente and Lacroix argue the importance of needs and characteristics by explaining how teachers should be aware of the “specific characteristics of second language learners and take advantage of such characteristics in order to assist them in their language learning process” (51). During the first years of encountering composition courses, second language learners are able to evaluate themselves, their course and the instructor. Depending on their academic performance, minorities like second language writers are going to identify the academic resources offered by the institution. In many cases both undergraduate and graduate multilingual international students have academic backgrounds that can help other multilingual learners or even other NES. The academic exchange inside and outside classrooms is part of the global experience that many institutions offer dominant populations. It is important that institutions, faculty and staff are aware that NES have different academic demands compared to multilingual international students as a result of their first language and culture. To aid in these diagnostic efforts, Ferris and Hedgcock introduced the Need Assessment (NA), “that examines what learners know already and what they need to know” (151). A recognition of what a multilingual international student knows regarding a course can benefit a teacher because they can turn out into opportunities of academic growth for all the course participants. At the same time the flaws of the multilingual learner can help guide instructors with the tasks and content they should pay close attention. Ferris and

Hedgcock also discuss that the “process targets a course’s goals and content”, that will help instructors establish “relevant and useful things to learn” (151). Instead of developing a course with irrelevant content for the participants, the NA allows instructors to establish the best learning outcomes with the most efficient content based upon the needs of the students. This process helps create a theory and practice environment where students are more familiarized with the application of the content because the course’s goals are tightly linked with their needs.

1.2.2 Graduate Student Curriculum

Institutions need to offer graduate courses in second language writing, theory, research and instruction. Many institutions offer intensive language programs, mainstream composition courses or specialized sections for second language composition.

- **Mainstream Courses versus Specialized Courses:** For decades scholars have debated if the needs of ESL students can be satisfied in mainstream courses or specialized courses, due to the differences between them and English native speakers. Matsuda, Accardi, and Saenkum presented “Those focusing on the differences between L2 students and their native English-speaking counterparts often argue that L2 writers should be placed into a separate section of first-year writing courses; while those focusing on the similarities often argue against the separate sections. To address this apparent conflict, Silva (1994) examined placement models for L2 students in first-year writing programs. He proposed cross-cultural composition, a section of the first-year writing course in which native and non-native English-speaking students are systematically integrated to promote *international and intercultural understandings for both US and*

international students” (69). Instead of arguing for one option or another, Silva recommended creating as many placement options as *resources permit*. Braine also suggested that L2 students should be able to choose the type of course offered by the institution.

1.2.3 Teacher Training

Institutions have to offer teacher preparation for instructors working with writers in higher education in the context of second language composition. The teaching of writing occurs in multiple contexts, from the type of course to the media through which the course is taught. During their preparation instructors should consider some pedagogical assumptions to inform their practices:

- **Second Language Writing Pedagogy:** Writing instructor preparation needs to expand instructors’ knowledge of writing issues in general, as well as how to specifically work with second language writers. For example, borrowing from case study methodology, faculty could conduct preliminary research with second language writers at their own institutions.
- **Cultural Beliefs Related to Writing:** Teacher preparation should include information about cultural beliefs related to writing. Second language writers often come from contexts in which writing is shaped by linguistic and cultural features different from their NES peers. For example, if the instructors are aware of the cultural background of their students, then they can use writing examples that include the different cultural beliefs of the students and not only of the dominant population in the course. In the article *Reading an ESL Writer*, Matsuda quotes an ESL student: “People always pay attention to *how* I say things, and

never listen to *what I say*” (12). His paper focuses on the distinct features of text between ESL writers and NES writers. He motivates the tutors to “suspend judgments, focus on meaning, and be aware of their own preferences and biases” (12).

- **Assignments:** Writing instructors should gain experience in reflecting on how writing assignments may tacitly include cultural assumptions or tacitly rely on knowledge of culturally specific information. Writing instructors should also gain experience designing writing assignments with second language students in mind, considering topics that are culturally sensitive to second language writers and including directions easily understandable to multiple audiences. For example, an instructor is not considering multiple audiences when the instructions of an assignment include content of local historical issues with which NES may be familiar but international students have never heard about before. At the same time, the terms in the assignment might be unknown for some of the students, contributing to the international students’ limitations. The article *Cultural Differences in Online Learning: International Student Perceptions* of Xiaojing Liu explains how “A well-balanced use of diversified activities can alleviate the language barriers as well as allow the students opportunities to improve their English proficiency in a variety of ways. The use of audio and visual aids can be of significant help to international students” (187).
- **Building on Students’ Competencies:** Teacher preparation programs should encourage instructors to identify strengths second language writers bring to the classroom. Instructors should look for opportunities to use students’ current

literacy practices as a foundation for teaching the expectations of academic literacy. 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. Scholars have recommended the use of technology in higher education for years. A proof of that is a warning from Cynthia Selfe about “the risk of perpetuating social and educational inequalities by failing to attend to the interconnectedness of technology, literacy and literacy education” (Griffin and Minter 156). 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. Adding to this, Ferris and Hedgcock explain how knowing the cultural background of the students creates a bridge between the teacher and the students. The importance of teacher training surrounding the cultural background of their students helps instructors acknowledge the diversity and expertise of all their students.

- **Feedback:** The CCCC explained how it might take time for an instructor to “hear” what a second language writer is attempting to communicate through a piece of writing. Second language students may require more conferencing time with their teachers, so that teachers can discuss global issues first, and then attend specific issues. In like manner, Kara Mitchell, in her publication *English Is Not All that Matters in The Education of Secondary Multilingual Learners and Their Teachers* explains that students do not get to learn what they need to learn due to a lack of teacher feedback or explicit instruction regarding both language and content learning (14). Students develop unique rhetorical features for the analysis

of writing. Consequently, the production of text comes with a style and composition choices. Teachers are responsible for the identification of the rhetorical features and mechanical or stylistic issues. In 2012 Matsuda stated that “in the writing classroom, the best way to address language issues that are situated and relevant to individual students is to address them through feedback on student writing” (152). Determining what type of feedback a student needs is an issue that a professor should understand. The institution needs to provide the tools to address language issues in the writing classroom in order to give the most appropriate feedback to multilingual students.

1.2.4 Writing Program Administrators

The CCCC recommends all WPAs to investigate issues surrounding second language writing and writers in the context of writing programs. It is important that the writing programs consider the different linguistic backgrounds and experiences with academic English of the students from the specialized courses, mainstream courses, and intensive writing courses.

Writing programs should encourage instructors to help students develop their academic literacy by identifying the strengths and the issues that need the student’s attention. Matsuda, Saenkhum, and Accardi encourage “writing teachers and writing program administrators not only to recognize but also to take responsibility for the regular presence of L2 writers in writing classes, to understand their characteristics, and to develop instructional and administrative practices that are sensitive to their linguistic and cultural needs” (68). To this end, second language writing pedagogy should be integrated throughout the professional preparation and development programs of all

writing teachers, whether through a practicum experience, through WAC workshops, or through writing center training. The following practices can help WPA be more efficient with the management of multilingual learners. Purely monolingual efforts in the professional enhancement and the writing programs interfere with the recognition of second language writers in composition courses.

- **Awareness:** La Fuente and Lacroix considered that “the lack of awareness about the realities of multilingualism and language learning on the part of teachers is an even more pressing matter, and one that absolutely needs to be addressed before we can tackle the challenge of dealing with a heterogeneous and linguistically diverse classroom” (54). Writing programs need to familiarize themselves with the multilingual populations surrounding their institutions in order to address their needs constantly.
- **Collecting Information on Language Use and Language Background:** Writing programs should actively seek to determine the language use and language backgrounds of their students. Yearly surveys conducted across the sections of first-year writing could provide writing programs with insight into the language needs of students in their courses. Regarding this practice, Ferris and Hedgcock described as an example, “In addition to assessing students’ prior knowledge about formal language issues, it can be useful to ask them about their own strategies for monitoring language use in their writing” (316). Language issues can be the forms in which instructors assess a paper for its grammar mistakes. On the other hand, an example of how international students monitor their writing

could be coding colors and marking the paper depending on the progress he wants to achieve.

- ***Encouraging Cross-Institutional Collaborations.*** Writing teachers and writing program administrators would benefit greatly from developing a better understanding of these students' experiences prior to entering the college or university setting. Mitchell concluded her case study *English Is Not All That Matters in the Education of Secondary Multilingual Learners and their Teachers* by extending an invitation to policy makers, teacher educators, educational researchers, administrators, to examine until what extent are they collaborating with the “labeling and essentializing students only according to their level of English proficiency, and overlooking their assets, strengths, and abilities in terms of what students bring to school communities” (15). Both the CCCC and Mitchell explained the importance of focusing on cross-cultural outside writing classrooms.

Writing centers offer crucial resources to second language students. These students 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. Writing centers that hire multilingual tutors will have someone who can provide second language writing students with first-hand writing strategies as well as empathy. In her book *ESL Writers* Bruce explained how “Tutoring ESL students is one of the most rewarding aspects of working in a writing center, but it can also be one of the most challenging...because a tutoring session is never limited to the student’s text.

Instead, it extends into the culture of the tutor, the writer, and the institution, often revealing new values and perspectives” (xiii). The importance of the resources the institution offers students and the writing center staff establish the strategies that can be used for international multilingual students.

Chapter 2 NSU: International Students

Today NSU is classifying multilingual learners into their international population.

Many international students are NES, but most of them are second language learners.

Due to the existence of multilingual international students in NSU, this section analyzes their importance in composition courses. The following section is based on NSU's website and different consultative interviews practiced to faculty and staff that work with multilingual international students.

2.1 NSU and International Students

According to NSU's website, they (NSU) are a not-for-profit organization serving education since 1964. They have a main campus in Fort Lauderdale/Davie Campus, an Oceanographic Campus in Hollywood, Florida, North Miami Campus in North Miami, Florida and regional campuses throughout Florida and in Puerto Rico.

- Jacksonville, FL
- Miami, FL
- Orlando, FL
- Tampa, FL
- Palm Beach, FL
- Fort Myers, FL
- Miramar, FL
- San Juan, Puerto Rico

NSU's colleges, centers, schools encompass all education levels, including childhood education, college preparatory school, undergraduate & graduate degrees as well as professional programs, for a total of 18 colleges and 241 degree programs.

NSU's mission is to offer a wide range of "innovative academic programs that complement on-campus educational opportunities and resources with accessible distance learning programs [...]" (Smiley). Their core values include Academic Excellence, Student Centered, Integrity, Innovation, Opportunity, Scholarship/Research, Diversity, and Community. By promoting the practice of their core values among their students and faculty members, NSU expects a "dynamic" and enduring learning experience that engages with the community simultaneously.

With one of the most diverse populations in the USA, Florida is home to an impressive number of minority groups/communities. With more than 28,000 students, NSU is a microcosm of Florida's multicultural exchange and having Diversity as core value is not a coincidence. According to their website "Diversity includes, but is not limited to, race, ethnicity, culture, religion, philosophy, gender, physical, socioeconomic status, age and sexual orientation" ("Vision, Mission and Core Values"). The university extends a welcoming environment to all minorities and multicultural groups. For NSU, the importance of diversity relies on the contributions to the enrichment of the learning encounter due to "differences in views, interpretations and reactions" that allow students to be better prepared academically and professionally in a globalized society ("Vision, Mission and Core Values"). NSU's international student population is composed of 1,213 students holding an F-1 visa that were enrolled in classes as of the Fall Term or were on Post Completion Optional Practical Training (OPT)-a program that allows students to remain in the country to seek employment in their field of study (see table 1). The F-1 visa is a type of student visa assigned to a citizen of a foreign country who studies in the

United States. Student visas are categorized according to the course of study and type of school. F visa is the category of foreign students attending universities (“Student Visa”).

| International Student Academic Breakdown (Fall 2018) | |
|---|--------------|
| Education Level | Total |
| Bachelors | 281 |
| Doctorate | 106 |
| Masters | 351 |
| Post Completion OPT (All Academic Levels) | 288 |
| Graduate Unspecified | 6 |
| Professional (e.g. JD, MD, DDS, DVM, etc.) | 181 |
| Grand Total | 1213 |

Table 1: International Student Population at Nova Southeastern University (NSU), by Education Level: bachelors, doctorate, masters, post completion, graduate unspecified and professional. Source: The Office of International Affairs NSU, International Student Enrollment, Aug. 2018.

NSU’s website touts the value of international students through the words of Professor Dolores Smiley of Abraham S. Fischler College of Education. Smiley highlights the importance of NSU’s “minority majority status” explaining how “the number of ethnic groups enrolled in NSU speaks of the dedication to inclusiveness” (Smiley). She concludes by saying that the school is moving towards “hous[ing] all the efforts’ focus on addressing diversity in an office or division in the main campus” (Smiley). The Committee of Diversity and Inclusion works in the training of NSU’S staff about the awareness of the diverse population on campus, but there still remains no designated center for equity, diversity, or inclusion within administration.

International students are part of NSU’s diverse population, with a diverse range of multilingual English speakers originating from regions all over the globe (see table 2).

The non-native speaker international students are considered by the field of composition and by the institution as multilingual learners. On NSU’s website, the college’s Quality Enhancement Plan (QEP) that establishes “NSU is a complex, primarily graduate and first professional institution with a diversity of programs and audiences [...]” (“QEP”). The university’s institutional core values and their investment through the QEP are both substantial evidence that the University recognizes and values the different audiences within their student population (see table 2). All students come to NSU to seek education, but bring with them, and continue to develop different academic needs.

| Region | Total |
|---------------------------------------|--------------|
| Latin American & Caribbean | 452 |
| Asia | 266 |
| Middle East and North Africa | 173 |
| Europe | 142 |
| North America | 119 |
| Africa | 55 |
| Oceania | 6 |
| Grand Total | 1213 |

Table 2: The breakdown of the 1,213 students based on the region from which international students originated. Source: The Office of International Affairs NSU, International Student Enrollment, Aug. 2018.

NSU’s *Vision 2020* is to be an institution that, “through excellence and innovations in teaching, research, service, and learning gets recognized by accrediting agencies, the academic community and general public as a not-for-profit university of quality and distinction” with the production and engagement of students that serve professional and personal lives with integrity and purpose. NSU’s “institutional priorities, resource

decisions, and planning” are directed toward meeting students' needs, supporting academic success, and prioritizing professional development. It is clear, then, that the academic success of all students, including international students, is fundamental for the realization of both the university’s vision and its mission.

2.1.1 Office of International Affairs, OIA

NSU offers services to international students through the Office of International Affairs (OIA), which “fosters campus internationalization and serves as a central support, advisory, and information center for all students,” functioning as a base for the university’s international initiatives and student services.

The OIA indicated that they manage the academic experiences of international students by working with faculty and staff s at the main campus, regional campuses and international instructional sites to promote and facilitate:

- International education programs and initiatives
- Celebrate diversity
- Promote multiculturalism
- Create opportunities for students that encourage a global mindset
- Global network

According to NSU’s website, within the OIA the university has the Office of International Students and Scholars, (OISS) that works to provide immigration, orientation, counseling and overall assistance to all international students, visiting scholars and faculty in on and off campus facilities. Their website assures students, “We are here to answer your questions and help you with any immigration-related problem that you may have [. . .]. OISS offers immigration assistance for the NSU community and serves as a liaison between our office and U.S. Citizenship and Immigration Services

(USCIS) in matters related to international students and scholars studying and working here” (NSU, “International Students”). The traffic of international students attending only for immigration inquiries is currently high. Director of the OIA, Jeannie Jaworski, explains that the office has an average of “50 appointments per week” illustrating a fundamental need for international students: immigration assistance.

Neither the OIA nor the OISS provides academic counseling to international students. Jaworski explains how they work as a “bridge” for other student services like the academic advisors, and undergraduate as well as graduate program officers, depending on the programs. Jaworski points to several resources on campus that are much better equipped to address academic support, including the Writing and Communication Center and the university’s libraries. The problem is that the different services are primarily focused on the needs of students in a monolingual environment, and an international student might not be familiar with the forms in which the university offers academic help.

Nevertheless, Jaworski targets the future development of the OIA towards academic services. Expanding the service would change today’s form of functioning as just a “base for student services” such as the WCC. Having the expertise and “the availability of staff” is another one of their goals, which will not only allow them to help international students, but also prepare faculty and staff with workshops regarding all processes that international students undergo. Jaworski recalls that international students need to be pulled into a more comprehensive orientation and how many programs work for the academic progress of international students but that the OIA needs more resources to monitor that progress and evaluate the efficacy of the help provided by the faculty and

staff. In her interview, Jaworski gave a clear example of a challenge that international students face, such as how to address your professor or email a faculty member—“things that US learners take for granted” (Jaworski). However, international students can “miss them entirely,” Jaworski says. As director of OIA, she finds it essential that the university provide all the resources that international students need and rely less on assumptions that the faculty are helping them with all needs that extend beyond basic immigration counseling. In order to perform all these roles, Jaworski notes that the OIA staff’s “commitment from the beginning is required” and that is an ongoing effort.

Organizations like the Association of International Educators, NAFSA can be of great help for the development of staff. Current collaborators of the OIA can be trained to work with international students and address many of their academic limitations. Graduate students in CRDM and CSA can expand their knowledge regarding multilingual learning by assisting the training of NAFSA.

2.2 NSU’s Institutional Practices

In addition to the OIA, OISS, and the Committee of Diversity and Inclusiveness, the Department of Communication, Media and the Arts, (DCMA) also facilitates courses and resources to help with the academic progress of multilingual international students. Within the Halmos College of Arts and Sciences, the DCMA offers programs in composition, or college writing. The Composition Program is run by an Associate Professor, Star Vanguri, PhD, as well as the Assistant Dean for the Halmos College of Arts and Sciences and Chair of the Department of Communication, Media, and the Arts, Professor Shanti Bruce, PhD. NSU also has the “Write from the Start” Writing and Communication Center (WCC), directed by Associate Professor Kevin Dvorak, PhD. The WCC assists all student populations, including multilingual learners and international

students with a range of writing, communication, and literacy-related support and resources. Drs. Vanguri, Bruce, and Dvorak were each consulted in order to better understand NSU's institutional practices to welcome and support international and multilingual students.

2.2.1 Importance of Writing

The Southern Association of Colleges and Schools (SACS) is the accrediting body for NSU. As such, SACS requires institutions to propose and implement a Quality Enhancement Plan (QEP) every 10 years. NSU's QEP Committees conducted internal institutional research and facilitated focus group interviews with faculty members and students to conclude that the university's second QEP needed to be the enhancement of student writing. The QEP committee learned from the faculty and student's perspective that writing is essential to academic success, but at the same time that writing support across campus was disconnected and not adequately available to students at all levels and in all formats" ("NSU's QEP" 20). "Write from the Start" is the name of the QEP. Another finding of the QEP were the results from John N. Gardner Institute for Excellence in Undergraduate Education to enhance the first-year experience of undergraduate students. They indicated conclusive recommendations that provide opportunities for raising awareness of student support services, particularly those focused on writing.

The QEP also highlights the complexity of acquiring writing skills and how according to Burney is underestimated due to its' "sequential process that combines the use of many interrelated components such as fine motor control, attention, language, memory, logistics, and organization" ("NSU's QEP" 12). In the QEP, the argument of the

importance of writing is sustained by different scholars. For example, Bean explains how effective writing can influence the academic growth of students through critical thinking and learning.

The QEP also describes the importance of the interaction between student and faculty for the development of fundamental concepts and work with specific mechanical issues White contributes with the finding in the QEP by giving another example of the significance of writing by stating how it can build up the confidence and skill level of students by reinforcing communication concepts. And tightly linked to this project, The Chronicle of Higher Education finds “essential for students to develop strong writing habits to communicate to a variety of audiences...employers consider it is the *responsibility of colleges and universities* to improve their students' written communication skills” (“NSU’s QEP” 12). The classrooms of colleges are characterized by the constant interaction between students and teachers, but the communication between both parts can sometimes be distorted by the lack of strong writing habits. It is fundamental that an instructor understands that regardless of the field, the understanding of composition in students marks their academic progress in a course.

Nevertheless, writing is a movement that can build up the academic life of an international student, but the *writing enhancement* is full of struggles in the road to success. Communication problems are born as a result of competing contexts. Citing Nancy Grimm, the QEP argues that “[m]ultilingualism and bidialectalism are understood as norms rather than aberrations. Literacy learning is recognized as a profoundly social and transformative undertaking in which learners shuttle among discourses” (“NSU’s QEP” 14). Today multilingual writers within international students enrolled in NSU,

have the right to be considered in composition courses syllabus, the student's preparation and teaching instruction.

The establishment of a university-wide Writing Center was improved as part of the QEP, the latest Quality Enhancement Plan of NSU. The QEP's overall purpose is to improve the quality of the education of NSU for continuous accreditation of the DCMA. The QEP is informed by the underlying philosophy that multilingual international students are valued by the institution. Nevertheless, this section focuses on the way the WCC is currently helping multilingual international students achieve the academic English proficiency necessary to succeed in higher education.

Multilingual speakers who are enrolled in the variety of programs of NSU have the opportunity to visit the Writing and Communication Center for one-on-one and group writing assistance. Dvorak explains that with the objective of helping multilingual international students, "the WCC provides one-one-one assistance on any writing- or communication- related project. Students are also welcome to work with consultants on non-project related literacy skills" (Dvorak). With this they can benefit from writing consultants with expertise in academic writing development. The innovative workspace offer to all NSU students allows all types of students to experience 45 minutes of individualized writing services through online or face to face encounters. The consulting practices are part of the strategies proposed by the QEP Committee, in which Dvorak has participated since 2016, and was then appointed Executive Director of the center in 2018.

In the QEP, the university NSU's "Write from the Start" Writing and Communication Center is the foundation upon which sit the plan's strategies to improve the writing skills of multilingual international students. The research of the QEP

recognizes the importance of WCC for multilingual students in several sections of the plan, claiming that the:

WCC, also complement campus diversity initiatives. As Grimm (2009) noted, in the 21st-century writing center, the core value is productive and flexible engagement with linguistic, social, racial, and cultural diversity. (p. 15) [. . .]

Writing centers also provide critical services to multilingual students and English language learners (ELL) (Bruce & Rafoth, 2009; 2016). Writing centers with multilingual staff members can offer specialized assistance to multilingual students (Dvorak, 2016; Ronesi, 2009), as well as discipline-specific assistance to ELL students.

In addition to the Office of International Student Affairs and the Writing and Communication Center, a series of courses in college writing also serve as a supporting resource for undergraduates, including multilingual international students: COMP 1000, COMP 1500, and COMP 2000.

2.2.2 Composition Courses at NSU

Today NSU is aware of the student population for academic purposes, but how are international students considered for the development of composition courses and teaching instruction. In the QEP, the writing-related survey of the National Survey of Student Engagement, NSSE, advocates for undergraduate participation and engagement in different areas. Although the results of the survey indicate that NSU's students have a writing preparedness above national average, the faculty members in focus groups reported that academic writing "tends to be a hurdle for students" ("NSU's QEP" 4). Due to the inadequate writing support units in terms of depth and the limited access to writing support. According to the QEP "two-thirds of NSU students are enrolled in colleges that

do not offer formal one-to-one writing support to their students” (“NSU’s QEP” 22). This means that 66% of the student population is not granted the opportunity to have a conference with their instructor. Considering the significant number of students that are not supported in their academic writing, the need to develop the QEP and integrate all the staff and writing collaborators appears to be a logical direction for the institution.

2.2.3 *Composition Courses*

Vanguri explains that the Composition Program offers service courses for the undergraduate student population, and one of the main characteristics is the “longevity in transfer”, in other words the writing skills that students acquire can continue to support them during their studies, professional life, and personal life. She also argues that having students learn about the literacy of language is part of the program's goal, in order to ensure that students understand the value of their “own writing, reading, language practices, and have those validated” (Vanguri).

Furthermore, she explains “whatever you (students) are bringing to the classroom is helpful, useful and valid.” (Vanguri). Students’ bringing their academic background to the table of learning will help them acquire the institutional literacy required for the success not only in the Composition Program but as students go on to write academically in other disciplines.

Undergraduate Level. The QEP found that academic writing courses are currently only mandatory in undergraduate curriculum and really only in their first year of study. First-year composition (FYC) courses are part of NSU’s general education program. The two required courses in FYC include: COMP 1500 College Writing and COMP 2000 Advanced College Writing, typically taken during a student’s first two semesters,

respectively. The program also offers COMP 1000 Basic Writing for students unprepared to take COMP 1500.

Vanguri explained that multilingual international students are normally placed in COMP 1000 or COMP 1500. Both composition courses are mainstream, meaning that they include learners of all language backgrounds. In her interview Shanti Bruce explains that NSU doesn't not have classes specific to multilingual learners, ESL students, or international students with unique academic needs.

NSU assigns students into either COMP 1000 or COMP 1500 based on their TOEFL grades. Once the student is placed in a course, the instructor will apply a diagnostic test and decide if the student is in the right composition course. If the student does not agree with the institution or the instructor, they have the right to appeal with the collaboration of the composition program director (Vanguri) and the instructor. This last appeal will be conditioned to the results of a challenge exam.

Student Learning Outcomes. The syllabi of all composition courses in NSU contain learning outcomes based on the team work with:

- QEP Proposal Writing Team
- Department of Writing and Communication (now part of the Department of Communication, Media, and the Arts)
- Feedback from faculty and students
- Council of Writing Program Administrators

Due to the efforts of the Writing Program Administration and the QEP committee, NSU is implementing in all syllabus the following areas for the Composition Program's primary focus:

- Rhetorical Knowledge
- Critical Thinking, Reading and Composing
- Processes
- Knowledge of Conventions

COMP 1000 Learning Outcomes

- 1) Practice writing as a recursive process that includes prewriting, drafting, revising, and proofreading.
- 2) Produce writing for various audiences using appropriate conventions.
- 3) Respond constructively to peer writing.
- 4) Produce critical reflections on individual writing processes and growth as a writer.

COMP 1500 Learning Outcomes

- 1) Write recursively for a variety of purposes and audiences.
- 2) Use primary and secondary sources effectively.
- 3) Apply appropriate rhetorical conventions in multiple media.
- 4) Respond constructively to peer writers throughout the writing process.
- 5) Produce critical reflections on one's writing and research processes.

COMP 2000 Learning Outcomes

- 1) Use effective strategies for integrating inquiry-based research into the writing process.
- 2) Employ multiple research methods.
- 3) Apply appropriate rhetorical conventions for various academic and professional communities.
- 4) Present research effectively in multiple media.

5) Produce critical reflections on individual and peer research projects.

2.2.4 Faculty Development

Vanguri explains that there is no specific training for instructors who are teaching multilingual international students. “NSU has so many international students that for better or for worse there are not really a lot of isolated programs as you are finding, and so are treated as undergraduate students and graduate students” (Vanguri). International students are not all multilingual learners, but how can instructors help them with their academic needs if teachers are not trained to aid them. In the QEP, NSU noted different strategies to fight the writing deficiencies in all educational levels (see table 3). The WCC plays an important part in the implementation of the strategies, as spelled out in the QEP Proposal:

Strategy 1. General Writing Assistance for Students at All Levels in All

Formats. With the help of “NSU Write from the Start Writing and Communication Center” commonly known as WCC, individual writing assistance will be offered to all levels, all programs and all formats.

Strategy 2. Expanded Undergraduate Writing Fellows Program, WFP.

NSU’s Halmos College of Arts and Sciences currently facilitates the WFP, but the NSU Write from the Start Writing and Communication Center will take the program across the undergraduate programs that teach writing within all disciplines. This will allow writing enriched courses beyond the FYC, also referred as writing-intensive courses. The QEP committee worked with faculty members to develop the following criteria for writing-enriched courses at NSU:

- Multiple Discipline-Specific Writing Assignments
- Revision providing formative feedback
- Rubrics to evaluate writing assignments
- Syllabus that encourage students to works with writing fellows
- Faculty support and pedagogical assistance from the NSU Write from the Start Writing and Communication Center
- Assessment

Strategy 3. Graduate Student Writing Workshops and Events. The NSU Write from the Start Writing and Communication Center will provide NSU graduate students with a variety of opportunities to improve their writing, providing programs to meet their needs: General Writing Assistance, Dissertation Boot Camps, Discipline-and Profession-Specific Writing Retreats, and Graduate Writing Workshops.

Strategy 4. Faculty Support for Teaching Discipline-Specific Writing. On Campus and online support to all full time and part-time faculty members.

- NSU Write from the Start Faculty Writing Delegates
- Writing Pedagogy Learning Communities
- Teaching Writing in the Disciplines Series
- Writing Dialogues
- Writing Pedagogy Symposium

Strategy 5. Online Writing Resources. NSU Write from the Start Writing and Communication Center staff members will work with faculty members and

students to develop discipline-specific online writing resources to assist faculty members and students. These online resources will be available on the center’s website. NSU Write from the Start Writing and Communication Center staff members will also provide synchronous online writing assistance to students at a distance who cannot visit the physical center on campus. Online resources and assistance will be especially critical to the success of the QEP, as almost one-third of NSU students are online.

- Discipline- and Course-Specific Resource Pages
- General Writing Resource Pages
- Synchronous Online Writing Assistance

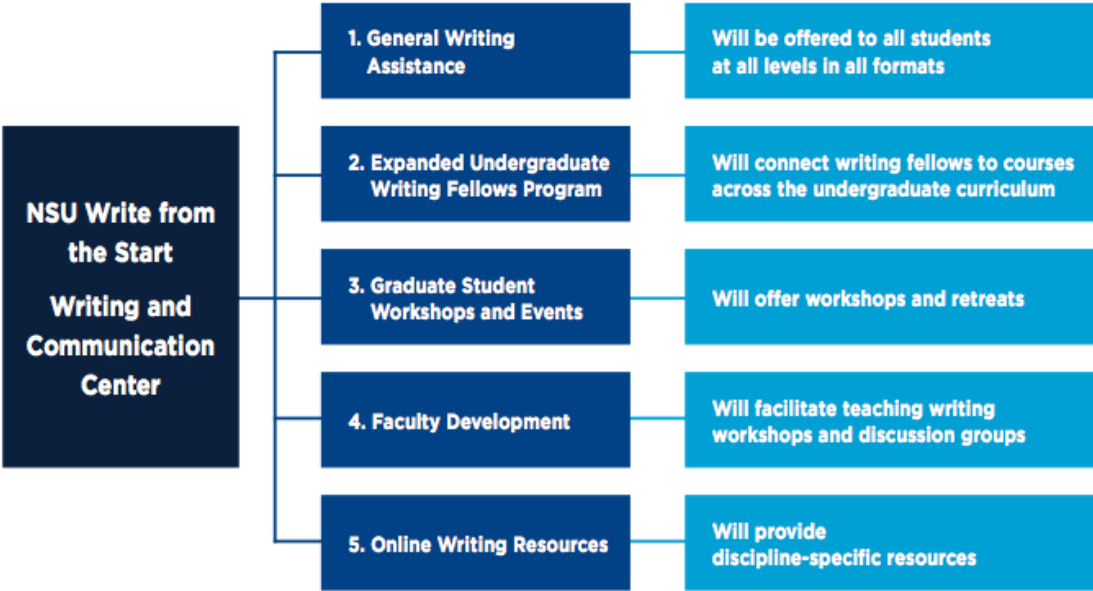


Table 3: A synthesized figure of the QEP strategies with the participation of the WCC at Nova Southeastern University. Source: Nova Southeastern University, *Quality Enhancement Plan*, April 2017, table 9.

The QEP lacks references addressing pedagogies for international students or multilingual writers. Even though it plans to go across-disciplines and the WCC is currently supporting writing consultants and faculty, in terms of non-native speakers' pedagogical needs present in NSU, the QEP committee is not presenting specific strategies at this initial stage to manage those needs. The strategies of the QEP are based on the feedback of students and faculty members. Neither the explanation of the student learning outcomes and the Write from the Start Writing Center strategies recognizes the writing needs of second language writers in NSU. Some sections of the QEP acknowledges the importance of addressing the writing challenges through writing centers. Yet, the strategies and assessment plan of the QEP are not providing any type of details regarding the writing needs of second language learners, internalization, second language learners staff or multilingual learning. Vanguri explains how language diversity is a “given for comp faculty, all our pedagogies incorporate appreciating difference, different types of language experiences,” she explains how non-native students have rich exchanges of experiences and knowledge (Vanguri).

Bruce supports this predicament by stating how colleagues are not applying specific pedagogies for international students, multilingual learners. She questions the awareness of international students in faculties outside the DCMA and that faculty development across disciplines should include how to work with multilingual learners.

The QEP is clear in giving the impression that the writing challenges unbeknownst to and unaddressed by leadership and faculty outside of the DCMA are revealing: “Based on faculty member focus-group responses from across the institution, there is also limited support for faculty members teaching those courses outside the

[Department of Communication, Media, and the Arts] in the [Halmos College of Arts and Sciences]” (Vanguri). Vanguri further explains that faculty and instructors in her department provide international students with one-on-one consultations. Once somebody is hired, they talk about the priorities of the program, outcomes that students should leave with, partner work, and diverse learning styles, among other pedagogical methods.

In addition to concerns about writing instruction across the university, the *feedback* given to students regarding writing may also be deficient. The QEP exposed students’ position regarding assessment and feedback during the gathering of results of course surveys. Students pointed out: “that some faculty members did not provide sufficient or specific feedback for performance improvement” (“NSU’s QEP” 4). Additionally, the QEP reports that “While various colleges and departments provide writing support services to their students, from tutoring and mentoring to workshops and events, the services are not consistent with one another; there is limited, if any, formal assessment of these programs; and there are large numbers of students who are in colleges that do not offer such services” (“NSU’s QEP” 22). Vanguri explains that writing faculty could train faculty outside the composition field about “cultural importance, workshops plagiarism, workshops on writing pedagogy, appreciating difference and positive comments and letting students brainstorm in native languages and all of that is validated as a field” (Vanguri).

The QEP informs that “Unlike the undergraduate curriculum, there are no graduate-level programs that focus solely on writing. The Department of [Communication, Media, and the Arts] has revised its M.A. in Writing program into an M.A. in Composition, Rhetoric, and Digital Media” (“NSU’s QEP” 19). Perhaps the

graduate faculty focus on discipline-specific content, they are not normally trained to teach students in how to “communicate effectively” through writing in their disciplines.

Overall, the faculty development in NSU is periodically evaluated by the faculty members of each school, but the QEP suggests in terms of writing the university needs to work more collaboratively and organized. The initiatives promoted through the QEP recognize the importance of preparation of instructors regarding the field of composition. The strategies of the QEP include the assessment for students, the pedagogical practices, the WCC assistance to faculty, staff and students, discipline-specific writing support and the incorporation of asynchronous and synchronous writing activities.

2.2.5 Diverse Language Backgrounds

This section is entirely based on a developing publication of Dr. Shanti Bruce cross-institutional research study, *We Don't Have the Language to Talk About Language: Finding Complexity in Language Identity Surveys*. According to NSU's website The National Council of Teachers of English, NCTE granted awards to faculty members, like Bruce of the Department of Communication, Media, and the Arts, (DCMA). All the faculty members involved in the grants are conducting the research because it will “help to advance NCTE's mission of *improving the teaching and learning of English and the language arts at all levels of education*” (“DWC Faculty Members Conducting New Research, emphasis original”). Bruce's collaborative research project gives the current investigation a significant contribution in understanding how language influences multilingual learners in NSU.

The paper starts off behind the scenes of the research. The argument of the research study is based on the CCCC statement on Second Language Writing and Writers that asks scholars to “actively seek to determine the language use and language

backgrounds of their students” (Bruce, Leonard, and Vinyard 1). Aware of this call and in collaboration with three higher education institutions, Bruce et al. designed the study to “understand the complexity of our students’ language repertoires and thereby enhance our writing programs’ abilities to support student writers from a range of language backgrounds” (1). First, they designed a survey to understand how student population changes over time and capture students’ experience in the curriculum and support systems. The survey was informed by contemporary research and theory that studies language and literacy backgrounds because multilingual writers draw on resources formed through life experiences inside and outside school; drawing on “their multicompetence rather than switching among individually-bounded languages” (Bruce et al. 1). In other words, they adapt their language skills into the different daily tasks; they also develop literacy skills and practices from different on and offline sources; institutions use different terms to identify them from student’s population with labels like ESL, international, multilingual, second language, non-native, native and they also use these labels to identify themselves, causing an impact to their writing experiences and school writing. The developing article recognizes the use of “static identifiers like labels but also offers strategies for a more accurate mapping of the dynamic language practices that students carry around educational institutions” (Bruce et al. 2).

The conversation with scholarship taken place in the study establishes how identity “impacts multilingual students’ writing development in college” (Bruce et al. 2). Nourished by the long-lasting debate on student labeling, the research study presents substantial evidence demonstrating that labels are not serving the best interest of students. Furthermore, the labels are not an accurate reflection of the students’ language

background. “Importantly, scholars also show that language identifications are not stable or linked to any consistent writing course, residency status, length of time studying English or spent in the country, but instead shift over time and can vary based on students’ differing interpretations of the terms in the labels” (Bruce et al. 2). For example, the label *international* is a general description of a student holding a F-1 Visa, missing the students’ current exposure to English, his composition instruction and prior studies in and outside the U.S. The study explains how contemporary theory in various fields demonstrate the complexity of language identity, finding it hard to capture it in “institutional language labels” (Bruce et al. 8). The approach of language labels in their study is informed by language, identity (who writers are) and language repertoires (what writers do).

The projects’ research was informed by two research questions:

Question 1. What are the discursive resources that comprise our first-year writers’ literate repertoires?

Question 2. How do these discursive resources map onto those that are assumed by our institutions?

The questions served different purposes. The first question works as a census function and question two placed the institutional resources in context, which included multiple contexts since the study was cross-institutional:

- University of Massachusetts, Amherst
 - Student Population 46,000

- Public Land Grant Institution
- Nova Southeastern University in Fort Lauderdale, Florida
 - Student Population 28,000
 - Private, not-for-profit university
- Emily Carr University of Art and Design in Vancouver, British Columbia
 - Student Population 1,850
 - Public Art and Design School

The research followed Cheryl Geisler’s (2003; 2018) systematic qualitative analysis, analyzing responses to a single survey question, synthesizing “Costino & Hyon’s (2007) list of language labels, the question asked students to check whether they identified as a *second language writer*, *ESL*, *multilingual writer*, or *monolingual writer*” (Bruce et al. 6). Due to the coexistence of the participants’ languages, they answered more than the percentages the survey offered them, demonstrating how language surveys are not always afforded the ability to capture all the resources used by students. One of the most important results showed that 25% of respondents checked that they “do not identify with any of these terms” and 11% checked that they “do not know what these terms mean” (Bruce et al. 7). As shown above, these results are proof that a language survey is incapable of capturing the complexity of language labels. How, then, do writing program administrators and their faculty discover students’ needs and the ways in which students already use resources for support?

Furthermore, the study reveals “how ideological affiliations contribute to positive or negative self-evaluations, which in turn add up to a seemingly simple language label like *second language writer...*” turning into a *functional distribution* of the resources

students use for composition and at the same time anchored in their language identifications, “it also prompted student resistance to that functional distribution” (Bruce et al. 8). In other words, the way an institution labels students, also classifies the distribution of resources that help students resolve writing challenges. The following case example belongs to this research and it is a detailed proof of diverse language backgrounds.

The study presents an example of L2 and a basic writer case study via a student named Chi, who completed primary and secondary education in his home country. In his survey responses, Chi reported average writing and speaking skills in English but strong/excellent listening and reading abilities. He noted that he split the use of his two languages (English and Chinese) equally during the day, with 50% marked for each. Indeed, of the eleven language activities queried in the survey, he identified only three contexts of language use (Chinese for communicating with family; English for use at school and work). Chi addressed language identification labels in expected ways as well, selecting “second language writer” Chi’s remarks echoed his survey:

He identified as a Chinese international student who used English primarily in instrumental ways. He repeatedly used the descriptors “Chinese” and “international” to locate his identity. He also described the pressures for native-like English, insights from his individual schooling history, and opportunities to call on his full repertoire in certain situations. Chi recounted feeling pressured by his parents to excel in these English studies, which were seen as key to professional success...reiterating the ways that multilingual writers’ identities are informed by sometimes hidden or idiosyncratic schooling histories (such as Chi’s

Canadian school in China) and not just by proficiency. His results prove that his language identity is dynamic and variable.

More significant, perhaps, is Chi's description of his two languages working together throughout his writing process, something not present in the survey at all. Linking his "Chinese logic" to "who [he is] as a human being" sets his Chinese language identity squarely in the mix of his dynamic linguistic self. Similarly, Chi's description of his academic writing process partially contradicts the way he described his language use on his survey and even in his opening comments in the focus group.

Results. The quantitative and qualitative results display the "rich literate activity" of FYC literate repertoires. The surveys' results established a general representation of the students' language backgrounds. (Bruce, 2019, p. 8-10)

Chi is an example of an international student in NSU. He labels himself with the same label that the institution gives him, but his academic development is limited by a label due to his second language learning condition. The use of both his native language and English in daily activities gives the researcher an idea of the ways a multilingual learner develops BICS and CAPS. The case study also shows how a survey with closed questions is unable to present the complexity of multilingualism. The language label question demonstrates how "writers' discursive resources are indeed overlapping, inter-animating, active, and emergent, but also are named or described by participants in the monolingual ideologies and affiliations institutions supply and students mirror. In other

words, students' discursive resources are fluid in use, but fixed in representation" (Bruce et al. 8-9).

The cross-institutional research studies the discursive resources of first year writers like Chi and discovers that FYW's performance exceeds the assumptions of institutions like NSU. The case states: "For example, all three of our institutions increasingly promoted a *global* or *international* campus while carrying out deficit attitudes toward linguistic diversity that promoted monolingual English as the academic standard of the campus. Institutional language labels, such as those used by language surveys, and subsequent course placement or program names, miss much of the discursive activity that comprises what students are actually doing with their literacy repertoires" (Bruce et al. 11). A final takeaway of this research is the way it highlights "often-unrecognized discursive resource of responding to an institution that doesn't fully recognize you" (Bruce et al. 11).

Chapter 3 Recommendations

Based on the field scholarship of Chapter 1 and the information collected from NSU in Chapter 2, Chapter 3 will examine NSU's current institutional practices in light of disciplinary best practices in order to offer recommendations that may help multilingual international students overcome language limitations at NSU. The recommendations have a critical, objective, and interdisciplinary approach due to the purpose of the project and are preceded by an acknowledgment of the institution's context found in the consultative research (e.g., organizational structure, leadership, fiscal matters, etc.). In order to maximize applicability, the recommendations are classified into

practical areas of improvement based on best practices in the field of Composition and Rhetoric for enhancing the writing instruction of multilingual international students.

3.1 Nova Southeastern University: Current Institutional Efforts

The institutional efforts of Nova Southeastern University reflect several innovations in the evolution of writing pedagogy in higher education. The online, face-to-face, and hybrid learning systems (asynchronous or synchronous) provide an ambitious educational environment throughout the different campuses. For example, Adobe recently partnered with NSU and hosted an event on Davie Campus, allowing students and participants to learn about multimodality and online instruction with the help of different software. Faculty, staff and all the student population of NSU are periodically invited to this type of activities where experts share the most advanced use of technology in learning scenarios. Consequently, NSU consistently looks for opportunities for improvement to meet the needs and expectations of their students. Recent efforts of improvement have resulted from the college's Quality Enhancement Plan (QEP): "Write from the Start." The QEP, launched in 2018, is orchestrated from the university's Writing and Communication Center and is informed by its core values, mission, and vision to provide both undergraduate and graduate students a student-centered environment--and that includes its multilingual international student population.

3.2 Recommendations for Future University Efforts

Although the QEP recognizes various opportunities of improvement regarding the writing of NSU's students, the research indicated that the institution could be implementing more intentional practices in an effort to serve their multilingual international students. This section compiles possible/potential action items that NSU might consider using in order to help multilingual international students overcome

language limitations. The recommendations are organized into five overarching categories regarding the classification and needs of multilingual students, the collaboration of the faculties, and the expansion of the graduate program. Each section evaluates the current efforts of the university, acknowledging the positive actions and proposing possible actions. Finally, the purpose of these recommendations is not to place a critical magnifying glass over the work of the institution or its collaborators, but to support a non-profit organization such as NSU with the demanding yet rewarding labor of educating future global leaders:

- **Classify Multilingual Students:** The classification of multilingual learners plays an important part in their academic and cultural development; how we identify learners impacts how we, in turn, perceive their needs and respond with resources.
- **Identify Multilingual Writers' Needs:** before addressing institutional reforms, NSU must better understand the needs of their unique multilingual international student population.
- **Collaborate with Writing Programs:** The current support mechanisms for these learners are the Office of International Affairs (OIA), the Department of Communication, Media, and the Arts' (DCMA) college writing general education course series, and the Writing and Communication Center (WCC). Collaboration and resource discovery among these pillars are recommended.
- **Enhance Faculty Professional Development:** Once those needs are identified, faculty who instruct students in Composition (part-time or full-time) should be supported in learning and applying second-language writer pedagogies specific to

NSU students, including the option to audit DCMA's course on second-language teaching and tutoring.

- **Expand Graduate Student Education:** The Halmos College of Arts and Sciences currently offers a Master's in Composition, Rhetoric, and Digital Media, including an elective course on second-language teaching and tutoring, as well as a Master's in College Student Affairs which brings a student development lens to best practices in higher education. Additional graduate student education comes directly from assistantship opportunities in the WCC.

3.2.1 Classify Multilingual Students

NSU consistently serves a bigger population of graduate students, but recent recruitment and retention efforts ensure that every year more undergraduate students enroll in the university, including minorities like international students and multilingual learners who are an enriching part of NSU's student population. In general, all members of the University's staff, faculty, and administration acknowledged the value of international students, reflecting a lived expression of the institution's core value of Diversity. The classification of multilingual learners plays an important part in their academic and cultural development; how we identify learners impacts how we, in turn, perceive their needs and respond with resources. The placement of multilingual international students within composition courses is limited to undergraduate courses. The university uses the scores of the TOEFL exam to determine what composition course works best for all non-native English speakers, who are categorized as international undergraduate students. Multilingual international graduate students are also required to take the TOEFL exam, but once admitted it is not required to take composition courses, regardless the program.

In other words, multilingual learners within the international community of NSU are limited to the classification of international students and the score of the TOEFL exam.

According to research from Bruce, Lorimar Leonard, and Vinyard shared in Chapter 2, labels placed by institutions have the potential to affect not only how we see students as well as how they see themselves, but also the academic performance of multilingual international students. The results of Bruce et al.'s qualitative research are a helpful review of factors at play in serving multilingual students, including: identity, language background, and institutional efforts and it is recommended reading. Bruce et al. explain: "When it comes to the second research question, then, first-year writers' discursive resources map onto but also exceed those that are assumed by institutions. For example, all three of our institutions increasingly promoted a *global* or *international* campus while carrying out deficit attitudes toward linguistic diversity that promoted monolingual English as the academic standard of the campus. Institutional language labels, such as those used by language surveys, and subsequent course placement or program names, miss much of the discursive activity that comprises what students are actually doing with their literate repertoires" (Bruce et al. 11). The complexity of multilingual learning among international students is not only a language issue for international students but an educational movement in which institutions of higher education should always play the leading role. NSU needs to improve the classification of their multilingual international students in order to embrace all the academic attributes of their international student population. The diversity among the international community and the rapid growth of undergraduate and graduate students demands resources to meet learning and linguistic needs that are as specific as they students themselves."

Recommendation: Classify Multilingual Students – Possible Action Items:

- NSU should classify international students based on the languages they were educated in and English writing proficiency.
- NSU needs to develop or at least promote more research about the types of multilingual learners and international students.
- Due to the limitation of services offered by the OIA, it is necessary to hire more trained staff and expand the services for international students in order to achieve the academic excellence that the university is constantly seeking within their institutional efforts.

3.2.2 Identify Multilingual Writers' Needs

The CCCC and theorists of composition recognize that institutions are responsible for providing the resources for academic language proficiency of multilingual international students. Through grounded research and years debating the dynamic world of international students in higher education, they recognize writing and language as important means to acquire the academic excellence that NSU seeks for all their students. Paul Matsuda advocates for heterogeneous classrooms in some of his studies used in this research. One of his biggest arguments is based on the differences between the needs of NES and multilingual learners. NSU as a student-centered nonprofit organization is still transitioning homogeneous classrooms into heterogeneous classrooms, although they have been admitting all kinds of international and multilingual learners. The QEP explains how native speakers, the dominant population in NSU, are not receiving the proper assessment to satisfy their writing needs. Consequently, I draw the question: How could NSU be looking after the writing needs of multilingual international students?

Satisfying the needs of native English speakers is crucial for the academic progress of multilingual learners. Before addressing institutional reforms, NSU must better understand the needs of their unique multilingual international student population.

Margaret Lieb presents in her studies an important number of universities that have several years working with international students' welfare. Lieb exposes how both co-curricular events and social activities events between the diverse populations in higher education have impacted positively the attraction of international students into their campuses. NSU is a university with many events that reach out for the community and promote the cultural exchange. Nevertheless, the lack of organizations, groups or any entity for international students causes a low impact within the international community all over the campuses. NSU possesses a high number of online students, therefore the efforts to reach out for international students can also be held under a virtual scenario. International students demand both face-to-face and online resources for their academic enrichment. The incorporation of multilingual resources to the university's virtual environment is a two-way benefit transaction for the institution and students. NSU is currently offering all their activities for the general public and there is no organization, department or committee in charge of being a bridge between the university's activities and the multilingual international students. More than 1000 international students without a voice.

Recommendation: Identify Multilingual Writers' Needs – Possible Action

Items:

- Designate a team of collaborators that help international students adapt into college life. All the faculties who have international students need to have a

representative in this team or committee, similar to the Experiential Education and Learning (ExEL) Council.

- Establishment of a language center for all non-native speakers, a space where students can exchange their background, weaknesses and expertise. Language partner as conversational partner.
- Creation of an office for multilingual or international students that are not NES, necessitating academic and cultural interaction among multilingual international students. NSU can develop more activities and services for international students.

Lieb gives the following examples:

- Programs and events designed to help students meet other international students, learn professional skills, and attend leadership conferences.
- Services oriented to practical matters essential to adjustment in the U.S. like opening a bank account or finding off campus housing.
- Encourage the participation of multilingual international students on clubs, sports service projects, leadership and exploration of the city where they study.
- A magazine and/or newsletter oriented for multilingual international students.
- Development of an online platform for international students to get support for specific needs: academics, cultural, language or any area around navigating the demands of higher education learning. Similar to the online component of the WCC, this platform could be a space where students go for help. Additionally, the university's existing resources, like the OIA and OISS, can facilitate forums—spaces where discussion and interaction among students is encouraged.

3.2.3 Collaborate with Writing Programs

Regarding writing programs administration, the scholars Matsuda, Saenkhum, and Accardi encourage “writing teachers and writing program administrators not only to recognize but also to take responsibility for the regular presence of L2 writers in writing classes, to understand their characteristics, and to develop instructional and administrative practices that are sensitive to their linguistic and cultural needs” (68). The WPA have a responsibility with second language writers in the international community of NSU and the collaborative efforts with faculty and staff are part of the equation for the efficient writing assessment to international students.

The current support mechanisms for multilingual international learners are the Office of International Affairs (OIA), the Department of Communication, Media, and the Arts’ (DCMA) college writing general education course series, and the Writing and Communication Center (WCC). Collaboration and resource discovery among these pillars are recommended. Due to the limited number of staff working OIA, the office only helps students with immigrational services for long term outcomes. The OIA only offers immigrations services and acts like a bridge between other academic services, not going beyond reports of the statistics of international students and multilingual learners in NSU.

The challenges lie in the way NSU sees its multilingual international students, but also in the ways in which such perceptions influence their understanding of students’ specific linguistic needs. First, while the OIA offers immigrations services and acts like a bridge between other academic services, Director Jeannie Jaworski shared her desire to expand the services and add more collaborators to the international department.

The way the WCC are leading the needs writing consultants who help multilingual international students but is deliberately not well organized to instruct the students about instructors who can help multilingual students with their language limitations. NSU lacks investigations surrounding second language writing and writers in the context of writing programs, including first year writing programs, undergraduate and graduate technical, creative and theoretical writing courses, writing centers and Writing Across the Curriculum programs.

Recommendation: Collaborate with Writing Programs - Possible Action Items:

- The WCC, faculties, and composition program can support the expansion of the OIA with language, writing and cultural adaptation programming.
- After its initial phase of implementation, the WCC should move toward a specific effort to identify the needs of multilingual international students, leaning on the OIA for support.
- The WCC and OIA/OISS could increase its hiring of multilingual staff to help multilingual international students.
- The present placement of international students based on TOEFL scores can be combined with other language and composition examinations to provide a more multidimensional assessment of language ability.

Metaphorically speaking, the staff and instructors of the university need to be the hands that construct the bridge between all students and the university, but what if the hands are not prepared to work with multilingual international students. If the hands are not ready, trained or prepared to work with the writing needs of a dominant population, how are international multilingual learners going to satisfy their composition demands?

3.2.4 Enhance Faculty Professional Development

The metaphor of the hands building the educational bridge between the institution and the students is reinforced in this section. The hands that build the bridge are made up of the staff and faculty. At this point the institution has identified the needs of multilingual international students with the help of their collaborators. The awareness of the needs among faculty determines the effectiveness of their practices. In depth on the field, students in Composition (part-time or full-time) should be supported in learning and applying second-language writer pedagogies specific to NSU students, including the option to audit DCMA's course on second-language teaching and tutoring.

NSU identifies or sees students as international students, without going beyond TOEFL score, composition course placement, F-1 status or simply acknowledging the label of international student in a classroom. This label translates into a foreign student who is not a native English speaker and that in many cases is seen as an academic challenge due to its language limitations. The label plays an important role limiting the academic and professional background of many multilingual international students. With undetermined BICS and CALP, an instructor works with a label, an accent, and plenty of language and cultural limitations. If the instructor needed the counseling, assessment, and guidance with any of these challenges, which academic international department would they address their inquiries? Would the WCC or the OIA offer the faculty the resources to help multilingual international students?

Vanguri, Jaworski, and Bruce all shared concerns of the approach that many faculties are giving to international students. They all admitted that there is no certainty that faculties working with international students are implementing the best pedagogies for this type of students. Vanguri explained in her interview that the writing department

worked diligently with the awareness of diversity in the classrooms and definitely more work was necessary to satisfy the needs of multilingual international students. The QEP recognizes that the efforts to improve the writing within faculties was not organized, but rather independent and not related to one another. This means that the faculties are separately addressing the writing needs of students, instead of working with the WCC or the DCMA. The QEP seeks an integration of the WCC and the DCMA in faculty efforts to improve the writing of all the students in their respective disciplines.

Through the lens of the position statement of the CCCC, faculty must take responsibility for the presence of “second language writers in writing classes, to understand their characteristics, and to develop instructional and administrative practices that are sensitive to their linguistic and cultural needs” (“CCCC Statement”). These practices can be seen in the development of the courses and syllabus, as well as all the academic activities that seek to enrich the English proficiency of multilingual international students. Vanguri explained how the syllabus in the department of writing have a predetermined format that the faculty use as reference every term. Unfortunately, this syllabus is not sensitive to the linguistic needs of multilingual international students. NSU needs to offer teacher preparation and graduate courses in second language writing theory, research, and instruction in the forms of graduate courses, faculty workshops, relevant conference travel in higher education.

Recommendation: Enhance Faculty Professional Development – Possible Action Items

- The OIA has the expertise to provide insight to instructors about international students and their international background. A means of sharing this expertise

with faculty should be established in collaboration with DCMA faculty and WCC leadership.

- The faculty of the DCMA possess the expertise to provide professional development and training for faculty colleagues regarding multilingual learning. Faculty who take on this effort could receive course releases and/or summer stipends to facilitate workshops and programming.
- The WCC can aid instructors of all faculties with workshops oriented in CALP and BICS for international multilingual learners. The WCC should also guide MIS towards consultants with expertise in multilingual learning.
- The WCC can offer workshops on how to develop inclusive syllabus and courses activities. These workshops could be optional or mandatory for certain faculty. The workshops can also be face to face and online.
- The Department of Writing can offer more online resources to all faculties in NSU in improving skills for the management of multilingual students, multilingual international students and international students. They can combine efforts with the OIA or a committee designated to the academic progress of the international community in NSU.
- Mandatory workshops of multilingual learning for the faculties with the highest populations of multilingual international students. The workshops can be offered online and assessed by multimodality experts for innovative and interactive presentations.

3.2.5 Expand Graduate Student Education

NSU recognizes the importance of multilingual international students in the Halmos College of Arts and Sciences by promoting different graduate academic

experiences to anybody interested in expanding their knowledge in multilingual learning. Anyhow, due the NSU's commitment to the diversity on campus and to any educational experience center in the progress of students, more efforts focused on multilingual learning are necessary to improve the quality of education. A recognized research university like NSU needs to promote more investigations surrounding second language learning to be able to achieve the inclusion of a second language perspective in developing theories, the designing of multilingual studies and the discussion of the implication of studies of writing.

The HCAS is currently offering the Master's in Composition, Rhetoric, and Digital Media that gives students the opportunity to enroll in an elective course on second-language teaching and tutoring. This ESL course is relatively new in the CRDM, but the theory and practices help students expand their comprehension of multilingual learning. The faculty in charge of this course needs to be assessed by experts on campus like Bruce or perhaps the WCC director Dvorak. Why is there only *one* course regarding multilingual learning in the graduate program?

The CCCC recommends research of second language learning and who better to develop these tasks than the graduate students of NSU.

As part of their academic offer, the HCAS also has a Master's in College Student Affairs, that allows students get closer to the diversity in NSU's educational setting and develop skills about the management of student affairs. This graduate program can develop more courses activities regarding diversity, specifically multilingual international students in NSU. Faculty unite efforts with the WCC and the Department of Writing to

improve the writing skills of the second language learners in the international community.

The WCC combines efforts with the HCAS through assistantship opportunities for graduate students in the writing center. Graduate students that work in the WCC are able to experience the language limitations that affect the writing skills of many multilingual international students but if the WCC had a better organization regarding specialized staff for multilingual learning perhaps the CRDM graduate students could embrace multilingual learning in a more efficient manner.

Recommendation: Expand Graduate Student Education - Possible Action

Items:

- In collaboration with the OIA, the WCC can facilitate workshops of diversity, multilingual learning, international students for graduate students in any discipline.
- Encourage graduate students in a variety of disciplines—Composition, Rhetoric, and Digital Media, College Student Affairs, etc.—to develop more research projects surrounding multilingual learning in higher education. Scholarship or grant programs can provide incentives.

3.3 Report Conclusion

The approaches of the recommendation report are bilateral—there is an analysis of students on one side and the institution at the other side. A limited number of previous studies with this type of insights, draw the unique arguments of each chapter. Through the implementations of the recommendations, the academic experience of many multilingual learners can exceed the existing demands that are not being met. An ideal

second language learning experience can develop many productive practices inside and outside composition classrooms. For example, an international student is aware of the specific writing needs because he has a consultant or a fellow writer that has help him address their academic challenges. For either undergraduate or graduate level, any multilingual international student is finishing his first year and has adapted culturally and academically effectively to the campus of NSU. The second language writer also has online resources provided by the WCC and the website of his school in order to access all kinds of student-centered information, including academic services and newsletter. The different workshops provided to his instructors and even to some of his classmates have informed them about the diversity of language backgrounds, the admission of international students, the academic offer of courses related to ESL and the various activities of cultural and academic exchange.

The research enlightens the gaps in the QEP that recognizes the need of improvement in the writing of their students, but demonstrates the lack of academic resources for specific populations in NSU. The QEP also identifies current independent practices among faculties, but the lack of integration of the DCMA and WCC with faculties that have a large population of multilingual learners. Although the WCC trains their staff to address second language learners, consultants are not identified as providers of multilingual assessment or consultants for multilingual learners. The QEP is a well-structured plan to implement strategies to improve writing in NSU's undergraduate and graduate population. Unfortunately, minorities like multilingual international students, are vaguely considered in the research and strategies. The QEP is first working with the

needs of the dominant population, but in a parallel form it could reach out to multilingual students' writing needs.

For future investigational purposes, researchers can help the WCC embrace their resources for second language learners by analyzing how many multilingual learners and international students that are not NES are using the WCC for writing assessment. This analysis can lead to evaluations of services, staff and structure of the WCC, as well as the accessibility of the WCC for the diverse populations of NSU. Another idea for future investigations could be the study of how necessary and feasible for the WCC to reach out to faculties with the largest number of multilingual students. The interaction between the WCC can lead to the integration of the DCMA, WCC and faculties for the improvement of writing skills of multilingual learners in NSU. A researcher might also value how to audit the DCMA second language pedagogies and faculties with the highest populations of second language writers. A constant evaluation of pedagogical practices in higher education always leads to ways of improving the academic environment.

The Statement of Second Language Writing and Writers of the CCCC is one of the best references of the pedagogies that faculties working with second language learners should acknowledge. NSU could periodically train their faculty with the collaboration of the DCMA and the WCC in order to address specific writing needs of second language students. Recognizing the growth of the international community in NSU that are not NES, proves the importance of the collaborative efforts of the DCMA, the OIA and the WCC in order to embrace the academic resources offered by the institution and find opportunities to expand the academic resources. At the end this will allow the staff and faculty to be more directly responsible for the writing needs of

multilingual international students. One more time, the collaboration of this university's branches needs to unify and repurpose their actions to be able to participate in the academic success of multilingual international students.

A reevaluation of the expansion of the curriculum is an opportunity of research for graduate levels. One course of ESL and one Masters of Student Affairs is clearly leaving too many questions of multilingual challenges among instructors and students. The academic offer of an institution like NSU, says much of the kind of investigation their students can achieve. A deeper embracement of multilingual studies in the curriculum might even place the university in a more competitive place in comparison to peer institutions.

During the investigation of this project, the findings of both Matsuda and Bruce emphasize the importance of gaining a better understanding of second language learners' needs and developing more effective terms to define language backgrounds. One of the report's most significant contributions to NSU and any other private non-profit organization is the recognition that the ways in which students are viewed by the institution affect how they move through—and often their level of success at—that very institution. The placement of multilingual learners into composition courses and the different needs that each type of student demands during their academic lives is linked to the recommendation of needs and enhancement of faculty. The lack of options for the acquisition of writing needs and invisible academic structure for multilingual international students are not only inferred in the project, but reasons for further investigation of multilingual resources in private higher education institutions. The university labels multilingual students with diverse language backgrounds as

international students, as noted in Bruce et al.'s cross institutional study, which identified the problems associated with an "often-unrecognized discursive resource for responding to an institution that doesn't fully recognize you" (11). Not only the mapping of discursive resources but the limitations that a label like *international student* can affect the academic performance of any student. A multilingual international student may become more aware of the discourse-related resources due to the label provided by the institution and the lack of resources for their linguistic challenges. This project hopes to open a door of valuing multilingualism in NSU and all other higher education institutions that are still acknowledging second language pedagogies. An open door leads to improvement in academic practices, graduate research and to further questions; it is a call for critical thought and intentional institutional practices that include and embrace minorities like international students and multilingual learners.

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