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## Academic Acculturation, Linguistic Diversity, and Inclusivity in Online Adult Learning

Jeannie Elizabeth Headley  
*Walden University*

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# Walden University

College of Education and Human Sciences

This is to certify that the doctoral study by

Jeannie E. Headley

has been found to be complete and satisfactory in all respects,  
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## Review Committee

Dr. Jamie Patterson, Committee Chairperson, Education Faculty

Dr. Crystal Lupo, Committee Member, Education Faculty

Dr. Cleveland Hayes, University Reviewer, Education Faculty

Chief Academic Officer and Provost

Sue Subocz, Ph.D.

Walden University

2023

Abstract

Academic Acculturation, Linguistic Diversity, and Inclusivity in Online Adult Learning

by

Jeannie E. Headley, MEd

MEd, Ashford University, 2011

BS, William Paterson University of New Jersey, 2009

Dissertation Submitted in Partial Fulfillment

of the Requirements for the Degree of

Doctor of Education

Walden University

August 2023

## Abstract

The problem of practice addressed in this study is that online writing tutors in higher education are challenged to support multilingual adult online learners in the development of standard academic writing, including learners of different English dialects. The purpose of the qualitative basic study was to explore the challenges writing tutors face while supporting multilingual adult online learners in the development of standard academic writing. Social constructivism theory was used to bridge the gap between old concepts and new concepts of writing pedagogy used by participants to mitigate linguistic diversity challenges. Seven one-on-one semistructured interviews were conducted with writing center tutors at colleges and universities within the United States. Data were analyzed by coding, categorizing, and finally identifying four themes. The findings highlight the need for a more nuanced and inclusive approach to writing instruction that acknowledges the diversity of language backgrounds among learners. The key take-home message is that online writing center tutors need to be equipped with the knowledge, skills, and strategies to work effectively with multilingual adult learners. The potential impact for positive social change at different levels, including individual, family, organizational, and societal/policy, can be significant when it comes to promoting linguistic diversity in writing instruction for multilingual adult learners. At the individual level, promoting linguistic diversity can enhance the self-esteem and confidence of multilingual learners, who may feel marginalized in academic spaces due to their language backgrounds. By acknowledging and valuing their linguistic diversity, these learners can develop a positive self-concept and a sense of belonging, leading to better academic outcomes and social integration.

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## Dedication

To the multilingual community of Ivy Hill in my hometown City of Newark, New Jersey, including my alma mater Mount Vernon Elementary School, where I took my first steps in language learning. Your support and guidance laid the foundation for my journey as a multilingual learner.

To my alma mater, Arts High School, where I further honed my linguistic skills and embraced the power of language. Thank you for fostering an environment that celebrated linguistic diversity and nurtured my love for learning.

To all multilingual learners around the globe, who courageously navigate multiple languages and cultures. Your determination and resilience inspire me to advocate for inclusive education and empower learners of diverse linguistic backgrounds.

This dissertation is dedicated to the multilingual communities in the United States, and all multilingual learners worldwide. May our collective efforts contribute to creating a world that values and supports the linguistic richness within each individual.

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To my late father, who may not be with us physically but remains in my heart, thank you for your love, wisdom, and the values you instilled in me. Your memory continues to inspire and guide me.

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## Chapter 1: Introduction to the Study

In higher education, online writing center tutors are faced with linguistic diversity challenges among multilingual adult online learners. In recent years, the increase of multilingual adult online learners has contributed to the revision of the role of writing centers in higher education (Entigar, 2020). With diversity differences among adult learners, writing center tutors must consider and implement strategies and methods to support multilingual adult online learners (Okuda & Anderson, 2018). In most cases, adult learners use writing center services to strengthen their writing, and the writing concerns are common in linguistic challenges (Childs, 2018). However, the linguistic challenges among multilingual adult online learners pose a different set of writing concerns, and writing center tutors must use particular techniques and strategies to address these unique needs (Okuda & Anderson, 2018). The general methods and strategies to meet the needs of non-multilingual adult online learners cannot be applied to multilingual adult online learners (Gannon, 2018). When it comes to linguistic challenges among multilingual adult online learners, the notion of one size fits all poses a challenge due to the language barriers and lack of academic acculturation (Entigar, 2020). When writing center tutors do not consider the differences in linguistic challenges among multilingual adult online learners, the lack of inclusivity becomes prevalent in the writing center (Childs, 2018). As a result, writing center tutors struggle to assist multilingual adult online learners with appropriately implementing their scholarly voice in their writing (Ortmeier-Hooper & Ruecker, 2017).

This qualitative basic study focused on how online writing center tutors' approach linguistic diversity challenges among multilingual adult online learners. The qualitative basic study was conducted to mitigate linguistic diversity challenges among multilingual adult online learners. The qualitative basic study focused on the way online writing center tutors use appropriate practices and methods to mitigate linguistic diversity challenges. The potential positive social change implications of the study include the implementation of linguistic diversity in standard academic English and writing, and the mitigation of linguistic diversity challenges among multilingual adult online learners.

### **Background**

Multilingual adult online learners include learners who speak more than two languages, including dialects (Gajo & Berthoud, 2018); include learners born in the United States, immigrant students, and international students (Ortmeier-Hooper & Ruecker, 2017); and include learners of different English dialects (Gajo & Berthoud, 2018). Overall, there are 160 different English dialects in the world and 30 English dialects in the United States (Entigar, 2020). There are four main regions of the English dialect in the United States: The North, the South, the West, and Midland Cities (Entigar, 2020). In the north region of the United States, the subregions include the North Central region, the Inland North, Eastern New England, Western New England, and New York City (Entigar, 2020). In the south region, the subregion includes the North Midland (Entigar, 2020). When it comes to linguistic challenges among multilingual adult online learners, the notion of one size fits all poses a challenge due to the language barriers and lack of academic acculturation (Entigar, 2020). Higher education officials are aware of

the importance of inclusion with multilingual adult online learners and have made efforts to implement the inclusion (Entigar, 2020). The inclusion of multilingual learners in higher education came into existence through critical race theory (CRT; Garcia et al., 2018). After the civil rights era in the United States during the 1970s, CRT was developed in response to racial and linguistic inclusion issues in institutions (Garcia et al., 2018). Early CRT scholars focused on unmasking the negative influence of systemic and institutional racism that prevented equality (Garcia et al., 2018). In the mid-1960s, higher education institutions began to implement affirmative action in their admission process (Garcia et al., 2018). As a result, school officials affirmative action allowed predominantly Black and other minorities in higher education, and specifically, higher education officials implemented affirmative action with multilingual learners to ensure inclusion of all students. In opposition, dominant figures in higher education focused on the assumption that multilingual adult online learners are the reasons for their own failure in academic writing, and not adapting to a prominent White academic culture (Garcia et al., 2018).

Overall, the linguistic complexities of multilingual adult online learners have unique challenges in the classroom, specifically in relation to standard academic English. For decades, writing center tutors focused on how multilingual adult online learners must adhere to the expectations of standard academic English without the awareness of the linguistic racism enforced in such adherence (Negus, 2018). In higher education, standard academic English privileges learners with backgrounds of White decent and whose cultures align with such western traditions (Negus, 2018). As a result, writing center



tutors developed assumptions that label multilingual adult online learners use of their language and culture as incorrect or wrong (Sala-Bubare & Castello, 2018). However, there is an assumption that standard academic English is the only correct English, but instead, it is an academic dialect (Sala-Bubare & Castello, 2018). This specific assumption is grounded in the White racial habitus and has a significant impact on the relationships between writing center tutors and multilingual adult learners.

Through this assumption, most writing center tutors approach linguistic challenges from the lens of multilingual adult online learners needing to assimilate to standard academic English instead of meshing the culture of multilingual learners into standard academic English (Tinsley, 2017). Such assumptions are examples of majoritarian stories, which do not present a solution on linguistic inclusion; instead, these assumptions create linguistic division in the relationship between writing center tutors and multilingual adult online learners (Negus, 2018).

In this qualitative basic study, I focused on challenges online writing center tutors face while working to ensure linguistic inclusivity and the management of spoken languages and cultures among multilingual adult online learners. In addition, I discovered how online writing center tutors use practices and methods to mitigate linguistic diversity challenges.

### **Problem Statement**

Multilingual adult online learners, including learners of different English dialects, experience challenges due to language and cultural barriers related to academic English (Sala-Bubare & Castello, 2018). The interaction between online writing center tutors and

multilingual online adult learners may play a role in the integration of academic acculturation and linguistic diversity and inclusivity in academic writing; these interactions may provide ancillary scholarly guidance to create academic success for online multilingual adult learners in academic discourses (Garcia, 2017). However, writing tutors in writing centers tend to overlook the existence of linguistic challenges in diversity and inclusivity, and some expect multilingual adult learners to adapt to academic English without extra support (Tinsley, 2017).

The problem of practice addressed in this study was that online writing tutors at one higher education institution are challenged to support multilingual adult online learners in the development of standard academic writing, including learners of different English dialects. As diverse adult learners are not fully exposed to standard academic writing, 37.9% of diverse adult learners fail to persist and drop out of the university (University Position Paper, 2019). Sixty percent of all students who use the online university's writing center services are multilingual adult online learners, and there is no structure for how to best work with them (Manager of Writing Instructional Services, personal communication, 2019). Some online writing center tutors are unprepared to serve multilingual adult online learners, and some learners without standard academic writing skills have linguistic challenges in communicating within their writing due to the resulting lack of linguistic inclusivity (Writing Instructor, personal communication, 2019).

### **Purpose of the Study**

The purpose of this qualitative basic study was to explore the challenges writing tutors face while supporting multilingual adult online learners in the development of standard academic writing. An improved understanding of effective learning strategies for multilingual adult online learners within the online writing center tutors/learners' relationship could have a positive impact on student persistence. The role of online writing center tutors is crucial in addressing language diversity and inclusivity in the writing center through a more mindful interaction of cultural diversity with online adult learners (Negus, 2018). This qualitative basic study could improve understanding on how to effectively mitigate linguistic diversity challenges in academic writing.

### **Research Questions**

1. What challenges do online writing center tutors face while working to ensure linguistic inclusivity and the management of spoken languages and cultures among multilingual adult online learners?
2. How do online writing center tutors use practices and methods to mitigate linguistic diversity challenges?

### **Conceptual Framework**

This study was grounded by one theory and one concept related to academic acculturation, linguistic diversity, and inclusivity: social constructivism theory and community of inquiry (CoI). The dropout rate among multilingual adult online learners relates to language and cultural changes while adapting in academic discourse (Kahu & Nelson, 2018). Acculturation represents a challenging time for nontraditional adult

learners and appropriate methods would support multilingual adult online learners throughout the transition into academia (Ellis, 2019). Furthermore, multiethnic communication presents the diversity in the online student body and creates awareness of the need to develop methods to address linguistic diversity and inclusion among multilingual adult online learners.

Within the framework, the study focused on social constructivism theory. Education theorist Lev Vygotsky believed in the connection between students, educators, and problems in education (Picciano, 2017). Through social constructivism, online writing center tutors can bridge the gap between old concepts and new concepts of writing pedagogy to mitigate linguistic diversity challenges. To further explore the framework, CoI can promote the ability to share ideas on how to effectively mitigate linguistic diversity challenges. According to Picciano (2017), CoI creates an opportunity for multilingual adult online learners and online writing center tutors to share ideas, information, and opinions in an online learning environment. Subsequently, multilingual adult online learners and online writing center tutors are able to work together to effectively lessen language discrimination in academic discourses.

### **Nature of the Study**

Through appropriate research design and methodology, I explored answers to the phenomenon in this qualitative basic study. The rationale for selection of design/tradition is the one-on-one interview provided participants with the opportunity to openly share responses related to this qualitative basic study. In basic qualitative studies, participants are able to share responses with greater disclosure (Barr, 2017). The key concept and

phenomenon being investigated is writing center tutors' approach to linguistic diversity among multilingual adult learners. The methodology for this qualitative basic study focused on conceptual framework and social theory to bridge the gap between old concepts and new concepts of writing pedagogy used by participants to mitigate linguistic diversity challenges. The methodology focused on CoI, which encouraged participants to share ideas on how to effectively mitigate linguistic diversity challenges.

### **Definitions**

*Academic acculturation.* The process of inclusion and adaptation of cultures and linguistics in academia (Douglas & Rosvold, 2018).

*Code meshing.* The blending of languages and cultures through the use of one's voice in language and writing (Pacheco et al. 2017).

*Code switching.* The ability to alternate languages or dialects in a conversation or in writing (Ticheloven et al., 2019).

*Cultural responsiveness.* The ability to learn from and relate respectfully with people of one's own culture as well as those from other cultures (Bonner et al., 2018).

*Linguistic diversity.* The inclusion of different languages and dialects of individuals from diverse cultural backgrounds (Athanasas et al., 2018).

*Multilingual learners.* Students who speak more than one language or dialect (Jensen & Thompson, 2019).

*Standard academic English.* A specific form of English used in academia, which consists of unique written language (Lee & Handsfield, 2018).

*Writing center tutors:* Writing center tutors are not editors; they are focused on student development as scholarly writers (Thonus, 2001).

### **Assumptions**

For this qualitative basic study, assumptions were used to demonstrate unproven assertions to move forward in this research (Abrams, 2010). In order to have successful research, it is imperative for researchers to address the assumptions about the study design and conclusions (Bansal & Corley, 2011). For this qualitative basic study, I needed to hold two assumptions. First, I had to assume that participants provided accurate answers in an one-on-one interview. I assumed that participants shared challenges that online writing center tutors face while working to ensure linguistic inclusivity and the management of spoken languages and cultures among multilingual adult online learners.

### **Scope and Delimitations**

Delimitations are boundaries of the study that define the scope and are under my control (Spitzmüller & Warnke, 2011). A delimitation of this study was that participants included writing center tutors within colleges and universities within the United States. I did not consider input from multilingual adult online learners, as the scope of the qualitative basic study was focused on writing center tutors.

### **Limitations**

For the qualitative basic study, the limitation to the study was to locate enough writing center tutors with experience to mitigate linguistic diversity challenges. The sampling strategy consisted of non-probability sampling of writing center tutors who have experience with multilingual adult online learners. The criterion on which

participants selection was based on whether writing center tutors have experience with multilingual adult online learners and linguistic diversity.

### **Significance**

The significance of this study is that an improved understanding of learning strategies used by writing center tutors with multilingual adult online learners could have a positive impact on persistence. Approximately 50% of all college students fail to persist degree completion, and out of the given percentage, adult learners typically have uncontrollable nonacademic circumstances, unlike traditional learners (Pearson, 2019). The findings of this study could lead to positive social change by adding to the body of knowledge that can contribute to understanding how to have a positive impact on multilingual adult online learner persistence, resulting in a greater number of people educated and equipped to serve their own communities.

### **Summary**

Overall, this qualitative basic study explored challenges online writing center tutors face while assisting multilingual adult online learners in standard academic writing through academic acculturation. I explored how online writing center tutors use practices and methods to mitigate linguistic diversity challenges, which could have a positive impact on student persistence. The literature review will focus on the challenges to support multilingual adult online learners in standard academic writing and the implementation of linguistic diversity through academic acculturation.

## Chapter 2: Literature Review

The problem of practice addressed in this study is that online writing tutors at one higher education institution are challenged to support multilingual adult online learners in the development of standard academic writing. The purpose of the qualitative basic study was to explore the challenges writing tutors face while supporting multilingual adult online learners in the development of standard academic writing. Sala-Bubare and Castello (2018) mentioned multilingual adult online learners struggle in academic discourses due to linguistic challenges and the lack of academic acculturation. Writing centers fail to engage in linguistic resources to implement appropriate academic acculturation strategies in academic discourses (Douglas & Rosvold, 2018). It is imperative for online writing center tutors to cultivate cultural rhetoric to support multilingual adult online learners.

### **Literature Search Strategy**

In this qualitative basic study, I focused on effective search strategies to establish support the literature review related to this study. The list of databases used in this study includes Chronicle of Higher Education, Education Source, ERIC, Google Scholar, ProQuest, Academic Search Complete, and JSTOR. The keywords were the foundation of the literature search strategy, which is essential for the literature review in this qualitative basic study. The keywords include *linguistic diversity*, *linguistic inclusion*, *writing center linguistic challenges*, *multilingual learners linguistic challenges*, *academic acculturation*, *language discrimination*, *standard academic English*, *code meshing*, and *code shifting*.



## **Conceptual Framework**

Based on the literature review, the conceptual framework reflects the connection between the literature and the phenomenon related to this qualitative basic study. The literature shows the challenge that writing center tutors face while working with multilingual adult online learners to implement linguistic inclusivity.

### **Social Constructivism Theory**

For this qualitative basic study, I used social constructivism theory as the conceptual framework to accurately understand the challenges that writing center tutors have in terms of linguistic inclusivity with multilingual adult online learners. Vygotsky (1978) mentioned the importance of cultural in learning and how language is the impetus of an individual's culture. Moreover, Vygotsky outlined the importance of individuals learning and expanding on a developmental level as contributors within their communities. Within communities, language tends to development in social settings, which creates an opportunity to socially implement acculturation.

### **Community of Inquiry**

For this qualitative basic study, I used CoI theory as my conceptual framework to explore the importance of intersectionality within diverse communities. CoI creates an opportunity to bring together learning experiences relates to social, cognitive, and teaching (Garrison et al., 2000). For this qualitative basic study, the CoI focused on the importance of social presence to establish critical thinking and discourse between writing center tutors and multilingual online adult learners (Garrison et al., 2000).

### **Literature Review Related to Key Concepts and Variable**

In the literature review, I determined the key concepts and variables focus on writing center tutors' approach to linguistic diversity related to multilingual adult learners. The major themes that emerged from the literature include: online writing tutors in writing centers, the role of the online writing center tutor, tutor-learner relationship, changing demographics in the writing center, suppression in Standard Academic English, bilingual approach to language variety, Standard Academic English, language discrimination, academic acculturation, linguistic diversity, modern equivalences in linguistic challenges, language awareness, code switching versus code meshing, and code meshing as an alternative writing tool.

#### **Online Writing Tutors in Writing Centers**

Online writing center tutors play a significant role in the lives of multilingual online adult learners. Though online writing center tutors have a long experience in theory composition for various multilingual online adult learners, they have failed to systematically influence the teaching of writing at the program level through these theories and leading practices (Lovejoy et al., 2018). In the last 40 years, despite the development of composition and rhetoric in the classroom, most courses are taught by faculty who are not specifically educated in composition/rhetoric (Cavazos, 2019). On the other hand, online writing center tutors may have awareness of language theories (Shapiro, 2020). However, some online writing center tutors may lack the necessary knowledge or competence to properly implement the language theories and rules in

response to linguistic challenges and discrimination among multilingual online adult learners (Chiu & Rodriguez-Falcon, 2018).

### **The Role of the Online Writing Center Tutor**

To make positive change in the relationship between online writing tutors and multilingual online adult learners, it is imperative to examine the role of the online writing center tutor. Online writing center tutors can start by examining their function as liaisons between multilingual online adult learners and composition faculty in higher education (Gibbs et al., 2021). Online writing center tutors can critically interact with their respective institution's reporting procedures and discover methods to advocate for multilingual online adult learners in significant approaches and strategies (Lovejoy et al., 2018). For instance, online writing center tutors can examine their remarks to determine what was covered during the session in post-tutoring session reports (Brinkschulte et al., 2018). Online writing center tutors can remark favorably on how a multilingual online adult learner fully addressed the assignment's prompt, provided new insights throughout the tutoring session, and focus on the multilingual online adult learner's potential as a strong academic (Soundararajan, 2020). This specific strategy mitigates linguistic discrimination by not simply reporting on grammatical and sentence structure mistakes in the multilingual online adult learner's writing (Cotan et al., 2021). Moreover, the online writing center tutor can reiterate their observations with the multilingual online adult learner; thus, the tutor-learner relationship is positively significant and beneficial.

### **Tutor-Learner Relationship**

The relationship between online writing center tutors and multilingual online adult learners can be complicated and complex. Online writing center tutors work in the gaps between the stakeholders of multilingual writers such as composition faculty, administrators, and peers (Bennett, 2020). Online writing center tutors may empathize with multilingual adult learners by examining and accepting their writing academic allies and privately research the marginalization of multilingual online adult learners (Newman, 2017). As a result, multilingual online adult learners continue to carry experiences of racist and xenophobic treatment into spaces of academic writing while online writing center tutors remain in silence (Blazer & Fallon, 2020). Unfortunately, multilingual students can begin to view online writing center tutors and composition faculty as unseeing of their efforts in scholarly writing due to the silence to mitigate linguistic challenges (Caldwell et al., 2018).

### **Changing Demographics in the Writing Center**

With the increase of multilingual online adult learners in higher education, the demographics of learners are changing in the writing center as well. In the United States, some online writing center tutors promote “English only” as a political and policy drive to avoid the acceptance of the culture and language of non-English speakers in academic spaces (Weaver, 2019). However, the history of the United States demonstrates that linguistic diversity is a frequent aspect of life, tolerated at times but often rejected to reduce social inequalities (Lawton & de Kleine, 2020). In recognition of the no longer acceptable conventional methods to address the reality of the classroom, some online

writing center tutors advocate for a new translational approach to writing instruction (Green, 2017). This variety of ethnicity and race brings with it linguistic diversity (Hall & Cunningham, 2020). The most complete 2009-2013 statistics from United States Census Bureau reveal at least 350 languages being said by 60.4 million people over the age of 5 in the United States or about one in five in the United States (Lindahl, 2020). Online writing center tutors already realize the need to respond to this changing reality (Inoue, 2019). However, this need to adapt is uncomfortable with dealing with variations in languages within a historical framework in the United States (Young, 2020). Thus, it is imperative for online writing center tutors to cultivate cultural rhetoric to support multilingual adult online learners.

### **Suppression in Standard Academic English**

Prior to awareness of linguistic diversity among online multilingual adult learners, most online writing center tutors used a suppressive approach to language, specifically Standard Academic English. This method is based on the idea that no standardized language varieties are less valued than the language of school, and online multilingual adult learners are educated that they must adapt their language to be success in scholarly writing (Inoue, 2020). Online multilingual adult learners whose linguistic varieties already reflect the school language, on the other hand, rarely experience such forced transformation (Greenbaum & Angus, 2018). Faculty in higher education defended the eradication strategy by claiming that students' non-standardized characteristics would inhibit their economic and educational performance (Lampi et al., 2018). Online writing center tutors trained African American English (AAE)-speaking adult learners in the

standards of language etiquette and linguistic politeness of the White middle class rather than promoting the use of AAE in their tutoring sessions for evaluation and analysis (Young, 2020). In reaction to the suppression approach's continuing usage and negative effects, it is challenging for online writing center tutors to teach academic writing by scorning, insulting, and forcibly erasing students' first language (Inoue, 2019).

### **Bilingual Approach to Language Variety**

Writing educators started to adopt a bilingual approach to language variety in the late 1960s and early 1970s to contribute SAE and adult learners' linguistic repertoires without eliminating their native languages (Wingate, 2018). The Language Curriculum Research Group, a group of African American scholars, sociolinguists, and writing tutors who developed a textbook manuscript and contrastive analysis exercises for adult learners to make a comparison between AAE and SAE (Hughes, 2020). The exercises included clear instructions on how to modify and rewrite adult learners' writing to suit SAE standards (Olinger, 2020). More significantly, the book allowed students to understand the history of AAE, read creative works by Black writers who used the technique, and do ethnographic research in their local communities about their experiences with the technique (Cushing, 2019). While proponents of additive bilingualism stated that SAE helped non-standard language speakers achieve better educational and economic success, the bilingualism approach did not move one inch toward confronting the inequities of American political and economic life (Kamhi-Stein & Osipova, 2019).

### **Linguistic Discrimination**

Garcia (2017) focused on linguistic challenges related to race within the writing center and the need for writing tutors to listen to diverse adult learners. Through the method of listening, writing tutors can understand struggles around language discrimination in academic discourses and discover methods to incorporate academic acculturation through strategies for managing spoken languages and cultures (MacSwan, 2020). Accurso et al. (2019) revealed the importance of antidiscriminatory practices and methods in academic acculturation for writing tutors. As a result, the practices and methods allow tutors to effectively mitigate linguistic diversity challenges.

### **Standard Academic English**

Jensen and Thompson (2019) discussed how educators can integrate academic acculturation among multilingual online adult learners in academic discourses through critical awareness. Martínez and Mejía (2019) considered appropriation as an appropriate way to dismantle linguistic bias in academic standard English, which would allow diverse learners to adopt and adapt standard English and norms for individualistic purposes and values. Furthermore, multilingual learners became familiar with personal language and norms (Baker-Bell, 2019). Learners were able to use their language identity to culturally communicate in scholar writing within academic discourses (Tanner, 2019). Athanases et al. (2018) explored ways to combat the dominant English dialect as monolingualism through cultural awareness. The authors described the notion of standard English as a hindrance to the success of diverse adult learners. As a result, educators can promote a cultural and linguistic difference in academic discourses.

Discussions on what is “best” language usage exist even though language has evolved through time (Tanner, 2019). In academic writing, so-called “standard English” is universally accepted as the norm, although many individuals disagree on its nature (Olinger, 2020). Linguistic expert Rosina Lippi-Green believes that “standard English” is favored in scientific writing not because it is fundamentally superior to other kinds of English, but because it is “drawn mainly from the spoken language of the [White] upper middle class,” as contrasted to other forms of English (Hughes, 2020). To highlight how White better ways of speaking have become the invisible—or better yet, inaudible—norm, many scholars such as Alim and Smitherman Baker-Bell have used the term White Mainstream English instead of “standard English” to demonstrate how White strategies of speaking have become the invisible—or better yet, inaudible—norm (Tanner, 2019). According to these researchers, people’s perceptions about language usage impact their thoughts about race (and vice versa), which might feed discriminatory and prejudiced beliefs that consider language diversity as a “deviation” from White Mainstream English (Accurso et al., 2019).

It is common for people to see linguistic differences in writing as a “barrier” or a “problem” to be solved or eliminated. Rather, scholars advocate for a different approach to linguistic variations in writing, one that views such variances as a resource (MacSwan, 2020). Scholars recommend that we conceive about language usage in more complicated, engaging approaches following current work in writing studies (Cushing, 2019). Scholars question the assumptions that underpin instructors' demand that pupils code-switch their behavior (Garcia, 2017). The concept of code-switching is advocated by many



instructors, who believe that children from minority backgrounds should be encouraged to speak their dialects of English throughout the classrooms or solely within informal circumstances at school but must switch to Standard English in formal situations (Hughes, 2020).

A growing number of writing scholars, on the other hand, contend that fostering code-switching (or separating linguistic patterns) is a kind of racial discrimination and, as a result, is racist (Kamhi-Stein & Osipova, 2019). The assumption is that some languages or linguistic practices should be confined in specific settings such as the home or community and that particular languages/practices do not relate in academic writing (MacSwan, 2020). This assumption is perpetuated through code-switching (Cushing, 2019). Furthermore, code-switching devalues Black pupils' language practices and absolves instructors of the need to learn about Black Language (Kamhi-Stein & Osipova, 2019).

For this reason, it is advised that tutors learn about and teach the linguistic qualities of Black Language, which he believes will help to reduce prejudice toward Black Language (Moní et al., 2018). With the support of colleges and universities, scholars are asking tutors and educators to provide students the freedom to code-mesh or combine dialects, registers, and languages in any situation or piece of writing (Accurso et al., 2019). As linguists of the English language, tutors and educators can oppose reductive and prejudiced assumptions about individuals and their language usage (MacSwan, 2020).

### **Academic Acculturation**

Garcia (2017) focused on linguistic challenges related to race within the writing center and the need for writing tutors to listen to diverse adult learners. Through the method of listening, writing tutors can understand struggles around language discrimination in academic discourses and discover methods to incorporate academic acculturation through strategies for managing spoken languages and cultures (Ellis, 2019). Tinsley (2017) explored the notion of linguistic challenges in academic discourses within the writing center. Ellis (2019) studied anti-discriminatory practices and methods in academic acculturation for writing tutors. The practices and methods allow tutors to effectively mitigate linguistic diversity challenges.

### **Linguistic Diversity**

Machado and Hartman (2019) explored the theory of translingual writing to address the integration of academic acculturation to migrate linguistic diversity and inclusivity. The pedagogical approach allows learners to combine individual language and Standard English rather than separating the two forms of English (Moní et al., 2018). As a result, the combination will migrate linguistic diversity and inclusivity in academic discourses.

### **Modern Equivalences in Linguistic Challenges**

Despite the strong opposition to the bilingualism method, other writing center tutors are in support of its modern equivalent called code-switching (Acuff, 2018). A prominent proponent of codeswitching in the area of education, said that students must interact with the codes of power in professional settings in order to gain access to and

join in mainstream American society (Reynolds et al., 2020). Some writing center tutors advocated for tutors to understand their students and facilitate the usage of home language varieties in certain situations to promote code-switching (Jordan, 2019). However, code-switching has negative consequences, such as: perpetuates racial tension, increases unfavorable emotions toward home language, and linguistic misunderstanding (Bateman, 2021). Therefore, code-meshing deems as an appropriate alternative to code-switching as a way to mitigate linguistic discrimination.

### **Language Awareness**

In addition to code-switching, some online writing center tutors use language awareness (LA) courses to give students more specific knowledge about language (Myhill, 2021). Since the 1980s, LA has characterized a movement aimed at incorporating knowledge about language into language courses (Werner, 2020). In general, LA aims to educate online multilingual adult learners to interact effectively in a variety of social situations by expanding their working knowledge of several languages (Limberg et al., 2021). When online writing center tutors implement LA in their interactions, multilingual online adult learners often examine the similarities and distinctions of different dialects and how language evolves through time and place (Bell et al., 2020). Unlike code-switching, this method allows online writing center instructors to address discriminatory language beliefs with multilingual adult learners while also increasing their knowledge and understanding of SAE (MacSwan, 2020).

Some online writing center tutors found that most multilingual online adult learners appreciate the differences in language varieties, begin to understand that

language differences are tied to other social identities and gain a basic understanding of sociolinguistics (Wijnands et al., 2021). Although LA may provide multilingual online adult learners with a greater appreciation for non-standardized language varieties as well as access to prestige or standardized language variety, LA invokes an appropriateness ideology, which not only sets one language variety above the rest but also imposes one group's language onto others (Jenkins & Leung, 2019). In most LA curricula, non-SAE varieties are encouraged to be used at home or in other informal settings, whereas the standardized language variety is taught and encouraged in education and other institutional settings—similar to the bilingualism and code-switching approaches (Langum & Sullivan, 2017). As such, the appropriateness stance embedded within LA legitimizes SAE as a symbol of cultural capital and perpetuates the discrimination and marginalization of non-SAE adult learners (Viriya, 2018).

### **Code Switching Versus Code Meshing**

Negus (2018) discovered the difference between code-switching and code-meshing within academic discourse. Code-switching implies the need for the adult learner to suppress their native language in order to adapt to a specific social construct, which relates to racial self-understanding (Ticheloven et al., 2019). Code-meshing creates an opportunity to move beyond code-switching through the inclusion of culture and language (Weaver, 2019). Schreiber and Watson (2018) discussed the relationship between code-meshing and translingual pedagogy. Thomas (2019) explored the overemphasis of language differences in academic discourse. Schreiber and Watson

(2018) emphasized the significance of approaches to appropriately integrate code-meshing and translingual pedagogy to migrate linguistic diversity and inclusivity.

### **Code Meshing as an Alternative Writing Tool**

Lee and Handsfield (2018) discussed the instructional framework on code-meshing in academic writing discourse as an alternative writing tool. The framework focused on the integration of multiple languages in academic discourses and how standard language depends on the speaker rather than popular syntax in communication and writing (Behizadeh, 2017). Alvarez et al. (2017) discussed the distinction between code-switching and code-meshing through its relationship with translingualism in scholarly writing. Alvarez et al. (2017) focused on how code-meshing can promote cultural identity in language. On the other hand, Thomas (2018) explored code-meshing between African American Vernacular English (AAVE) and Standard American English through linguistic identity. Thomas (2018) discussed how multilingual learners are able to develop an individual narrative through linguistic identity to integrate cultural and diverse linguistics in academic discourse. Language users not only have a right to their own linguistic system but also to mesh, combine, and change all of the variants in their linguistic repertoire to perfectly match their communicative needs and objective (Piller, 2019). The resolution on code-mapping, by virtue of its stance, opposes English-Only policies and appropriateness-based ideologies and acknowledges the global spread of English and the blurring of formal and informal, institutional and home, and public private language spaces (Green, 2018). As a result, multilingual adult learners can bring a

plethora of culture and linguistic ideologies in academic discourse to mitigate linguistic diversity challenges.

### **Summary and Conclusions**

After analyzing the literature review, I determined the importance of focus of how writing center tutors use practices and methods to mitigate linguistic diversity challenges and management of spoken languages and among multilingual adult online learners. Online multilingual adult learners are often told that they must adapt their language to be successful in scholarly writing (Inoue, 2020), while online multilingual adult learners whose linguistic varieties already reflect the school language do not experience forced transformation (Greenbaum & Angus, 2018). The use of SAE is defended by claiming that students' non-standardized characteristics could negatively impact their educational performance (Lampi et al., 2018). This defense, however, fails to address how multilingual learners are able to develop an individual narrative through linguistic identity to integrate cultural and diverse linguistics in academic discourse (Thomas, 2018). Language users not only have a right to their own linguistic system but also to mesh, combine, and change all the variants in their linguistic repertoire to match their communicative needs and objectives (Piller, 2019). As a result, multilingual adult learners bring a plethora of culture and linguistic ideologies in academic discourse to mitigate linguistic diversity challenges and enrich the academic environments they inhabit.

The next chapter will include six sections related to the research method: research design and rationale, role of the researcher, methodology, trustworthiness, ethical procedures, and the summary.

### Chapter 3: Research Method

The purpose of this qualitative basic study was to explore the challenges writing tutors face while supporting multilingual adult online learners in the development of standard academic writing. In this chapter, I cover six sections related to the research method: research design and rationale, role of the researcher, methodology, trustworthiness, ethical procedures, and the summary.

#### **Research Design and Rationale**

For this qualitative study, the research questions were the following:

1. What challenges do online writing center tutors face while working to ensure linguistic inclusivity and the management of spoken languages and cultures among multilingual adult online learners?
2. How do online writing center tutors use practices and methods to mitigate linguistic diversity challenges?

The phenomenon of this study showed the challenges that online writing center tutors face while working to ensure linguistic inclusivity and the management of spoken languages and cultures among multilingual adult online learners. In addition, the central concept of the study also focused on how online writing center tutors use practices and methods to mitigate linguistic diversity challenges. In this qualitative basic study, the research tradition to obtain data was one-on-one interviews. The rationale behind the selection of a one-on-one interview was the opportunity to have participants from numerous writing centers within the field of student. The one-on-one interview allowed participants to respond in candidness and in depth.



### **Role of the Researcher**

In this qualitative basic study, I served as the observer. The role of the qualitative researcher includes the ability to understand the exploration of social or human issues; the qualitative researcher develops a holistic overview through analyzation, observe participants, and participants in a study within a natural habitant (Creswell, 1994). Rubin and Rubin (2015) further explained that qualitative researchers work to understand participants through their words and stories to better understand the social phenomena. As the observer in the role of the research, I ensured thorough examination of the social phenomena within this qualitative basic study.

As an observer, I was a manager of writing instruction and I did not have coworkers or affiliated writing center tutors as participants, which avoided any concerns of power over participants. All participants were unaffiliated with my writing center and originated from two separate writing centers based in New Jersey and Minnesota, which allowed me to avoid any biases. My role as researcher included many tasks, including roles as the interviewer, transcriber, and coder. Regardless of my commitment to my responsibilities and many roles as the researcher, I never physically met or interfered with the participants. As the interviewer of this qualitative basic study, I used active listening and notetaking to capture the responses of my participants. I asked Socratic and thought-provoking questions related to their experience in the writing center, which built a rapport and create openness in dialogue. As the transcriber and coder in this qualitative basic study, I was responsible for the transcription of each interview with participants, and I coded and analyzed the transcriptions to identify themes.

Although any researcher's background produces bias, I was thoughtful and purposeful about managing the bias. To eliminate any researcher bias, I implemented bracketing to address any unfairness or favoritism. Epoche and bracketing allows researchers to separate their experiences from the qualitative study (Creswell, 2003). Although bracketing has moved from phenomenology into more qualitative approaches, the process of bracketing allows researchers to mitigate any preconceptions that may contaminate the qualitative basic study (Creswell, 2003).

I did not have an affiliation with the participants. In this qualitative basic study, the participants worked for a college in New Jersey and a university in Minnesota. As the qualitative researcher, I did not work or previously interact with the participants on any level. Therefore, there was no conflict of interest or power differentials because I am not affiliated with the schools of the participants, and I am not the colleague of the participants. However, I was constantly cognizant of any issues that might arise and addressed any elements of researcher bias through bracketing and reflexive journaling.

### **Methodology**

In this qualitative basic study, I established a methodology related to the appropriate strategy, plan, and action for the study. As this qualitative basic study focused on conceptual framework, I focused on the social constructivism theory to bridge the gap between old concepts and new concepts of writing pedagogy used by participants to mitigate linguistic diversity challenges. I also focused on CoI, which can encourage participants to share ideas on how to effectively mitigate linguistic diversity challenges.

## **Participant Selection**

In this qualitative basic study, the participant selection reflected individuals in the writing center field. Participants were writing center tutors at two universities located in New Jersey and Minnesota. Both universities were in the Northeast and Midwest of the United States. I used a sampling to recruit writing center tutors at writing centers within the selected university in New Jersey and Minnesota. These universities were chosen both for the size of their writing centers and accessibility. The participants were currently holding the position as a position of writing center tutor and had some experience with the problem related to linguistic discrimination among online multilingual adult learners. I sought and received seven participants for this qualitative basic study, and I used purposeful sampling strategy. In a qualitative research, purposeful sampling strategy is a sampling technique that consists of non-random selection and implements purpose in the sample (Patton, 2002). The purpose sampling strategy allows the researcher to obtain detailed information from participants (Suri, 2011). In this qualitative basic study, I used typical case sampling.

While using purposeful sampling strategy, I did possibly exhibit signs of bias, which is one of the drawbacks of purposeful sampling. Because the researcher makes subjective assumptions during the participant selection process, bias can become present during this process (Ames, 2019). However, I addressed the bias by establishing clear criteria.

This sampling strategy was best because I investigated the phenomenon writing center tutors relationship with mitigating language discrimination among online

multilingual adult learners. Participants self-identified as meeting the criteria, which were: (a) writing center tutor, (b) writing center tutor at a 4-year university or college, and (c) have linguistic inclusion experience with online multilingual adult learners. In this qualitative basic study, I selected seven participants, which resulted in saturation. Saturation is achieved when the researcher obtains enough data and information for the qualitative basic study (O'Reilly & Parker, 2012).

I used purposeful sampling to recruit participants at two universities in the Northeast of the United States. The recruitment process consisted of a specific strategy for outreach. I sought permission or access from writing center directors (or publicly accessible) to recruit participants for qualitative basic study. I used my Walden email address to contact the writing center directors. Since the writing center directors provided me with email addresses of the writing center tutors, I used my Walden email address to contact the writing center tutors, and directly recruit participants for this qualitative basic study. I used a questionnaire to screen participants to ensure they meet the participant criteria.

### **Instrumentation**

In this qualitative basic study, I used a one-on-one interview and analyze the responses related to the research questions. To retrieve the data in this qualitative basic study, a series of open-ended interview questions were provided to each participant. Each participant had the opportunity to fully address the open-ended questions with the ability to expand on answers. The purpose of the interview protocol is the opportunity to ask specific questions related to this qualitative basic study (Rubin & Rubin, 2012). The

interview protocol increases the outcome of expansive answers from participants (Patton, 2015).

### **Procedures for Recruitment, Participation, and Data Collection**

In this qualitative basic study, the procedure for the recruitment consisted of writing center tutors who would voluntarily participate in a one-on-one interview. I used my Walden email to recruit participants for this qualitative basic study. The universities and colleges provided lists of staff. I gained access by reaching out the writing center directors and following up with the participants.

For this qualitative basic study, I received IRB approval first before a data collection using human participants can begin. IRB approval must occur first to ensure the necessary steps and procedures occur to protect the participants (Grady, 2015). To ensure the protection of all participants, I obtained informed consent. I obtained consent by providing a consent form to each participant. Once I received the consent form, I asked each participant for their interview date and time preference, and I scheduled an interview with each participant over Zoom. Due to the COVID-19 pandemic, which was occurring at the time of data collection, it was best to conduct the interviews via Zoom to ensure the health and safety of all participants. In the role of the researcher, the chosen method of interviewing was an effective way to obtain detailed information related to the participants experience (Rubin & Rubin, 2012). I recorded each participant's interview via Zoom. At the completion of the interview, I transcribed the interview.

### **Data Analysis Plan**

Once all interviews were complete and the transcripts were ready, I began analysis. I completed two rounds of open coding. In qualitative analysis, open coding has the ability to separate the discrete parts of the data analysis and code each associated part (Glaser, 2016). I used Microsoft Excel to organize the open coding in my qualitative basic study. After completing two rounds of open coding, I moved to identify categories from those open codes before finally identifying four themes that answer the two research questions.

### **Discrepant Cases**

In this qualitative basic study, I addressed discrepant cases in the data analysis. Discrepant cases are missing data that cannot be interpret (Bender et al., 2012). After I reviewing the data multiple times, I determined that discrepant cases did not exist.

## **Trustworthiness**

### **Credibility**

Credibility allows qualitative researchers to establish extended interactions with participants to retrieve the necessary data saturation (Cope, 2014). To achieve credibility in this study, I used member checking and reflexive journaling. Member checking created richness in the data collection through participant validation (Harvey, 2015). Reflexive journaling establishes the researcher's intention regarding protocols and decisions and ensure the removal of biases to support credibility (Valandra, 2012).

**Transferability**

Transferability allows researchers to include details with thick descriptions and variation in participant selection (Burchett et al., 2013). Transferability was achieved in this study by adhering to the necessary data collection and obtaining data saturation.

**Dependability**

Researchers established dependability to ensure consistency in findings within the study and serves as the qualitative counterpart to reliability (Rodrigues et al., 2012). Dependability was achieved in this study through appropriate strategies, such as audit trails.

**Confirmability**

Researchers implement confirmability to confirm results in the study, and it serves as the qualitative counterpart to objectivity (Cho & Trent, 2011). Confirmability was achieved in this study through appropriate strategies, such as reflexivity and follow-up to member checking.

**Ethical Procedures**

I adhered to ethical procedures in this qualitative basic study. I ensured the focus on intellectual property, awareness of multiple roles and informed consent with participants, and reiteration of confidentiality and privacy for the participants in the qualitative basic study. For this qualitative basic study, I adhered to ethical procedures by obtaining the IRB approval from Walden University and two universities related to this study. The participants in this qualitative basic study were on a voluntary basis, and I ensured the protection of all participants. I obtained informed consent from each

participant. Each participant was given an overview of this qualitative basic study, the purpose of the study, the reason for their participation, how this study was implemented, and their ability to freely withdraw as a participant.

In this qualitative basic study, I maintained ethics by checking my bias, treated each participant with respect and fairness, and ensured each participant's interview and information remains confidential to ensure privacy. For qualitative basic studies, it is imperative to implement ethics to ensure the protection of participants and eliminate any potential risks (Shaw et al., 2020). In this qualitative basic study, each participant was referred by a pseudonym. Each participant had the opportunity to implement member check to review the data from the study. To ensure appropriate ethics procedures, I stored all data in a laptop with the protection of a personal password. As per IRB policy, I will maintain all data for 5 years and then eliminate data via data scrubbing. If any ethical issues are apparent, I consulted with my capstone committee and IRB committee.

### **Summary**

In this qualitative basic study, I used research methods to determine and establish appropriate measures to approach the research questions. I collected and analyzed data from one-on-one interviews with seven participants to answer the research questions related to the basic study. The research methods in this qualitative basic study contextualized the analysis in the study's phenomenon.



## Chapter 4: Results

In this chapter, I will provide an overview of the purpose and research questions for this basic qualitative study, which explored the challenges writing tutors face while supporting multilingual adult online learners in the development of standard academic writing. I will also preview the organization of this chapter.

The purpose of this study is to contribute to the field of education by exploring effective learning strategies for multilingual adult online learners within the online writing center tutors/learners' relationship. This research aims to address the challenges faced by online writing center tutors when supporting linguistically diverse adult learners in academic writing. By gaining a deeper understanding of these challenges, I sought to identify effective practices and methods for mitigating linguistic diversity challenges and promoting linguistic inclusivity.

To achieve this purpose, two research questions were formulated. The first question aimed to identify the challenges faced by online writing center tutors in ensuring linguistic inclusivity and managing spoken languages and cultures among multilingual adult online learners. The second question was designed to understand how online writing center tutors use practices and methods to mitigate linguistic diversity challenges.

In this chapter, I will provide an overview of the research questions and discuss the methodology used to address them. In addition to discussing the research questions and methodology, I will review relevant literature to contextualize the study and highlight its significance. Moreover, I will describe the setting of the study, the data collection and analysis methods employed, and the results obtained. To ensure the trustworthiness of the

findings, I will also present evidence of the methods used for data validation. Finally, I will summarize the key findings and provide an outline of the dissertation structure, which includes the introduction, literature review, methodology, results, discussion, and conclusion.

### **Setting**

Throughout the course of this study, it was important to consider any personal or organizational conditions that may have influenced the participants or their experiences. Such factors could impact the interpretation of the study results, and it was essential to address them appropriately.

Some examples of such conditions include changes in personnel, budget cuts, and other traumatic experiences. By acknowledging these factors, it was possible to mitigate any potential biases that may have arisen from the participants' experiences.

To further elaborate on the importance of considering personal and organizational conditions that may have influenced the participants' experiences, it is worth noting that these factors can have a significant impact on the study results. For example, if there have been recent changes in personnel, such as a turnover in writing center tutors, this could potentially affect the quality of support that multilingual adult online learners receive. If the new writing center tutors have less experience or training in working with multilingual adult learners, this could result in suboptimal support for these students, which could affect their academic performance.

Similarly, budget cuts or other financial constraints could limit the resources available to support multilingual adult online learners, which could result in reduced

quality of support or a lack of necessary resources. This could, in turn, impact the participants' experiences and ultimately affect the study results.

Traumatic experiences, such as personal or institutional trauma, could also impact the participants' experiences in the writing center. For instance, if a participant has experienced a traumatic event, such as the loss of a loved one or a personal injury, this could affect their ability to engage in academic writing or interact with writing center tutors. Similarly, if there has been institutional trauma, such as discrimination or bias towards certain groups of students, this could affect the participants' perceptions of the writing center and their willingness to seek support.

Therefore, it was crucial to consider these personal and organizational conditions when conducting a study on the challenges that writing tutors face while supporting multilingual adult online learners. By acknowledging these factors and taking steps to address potential biases, it was possible to ensure that the study results are valid and meaningful, providing insight into effective strategies for supporting multilingual adult learners in the online writing center.

To ensure the validity and rigor of the study, it was critical to take a thoughtful and purposeful approach to managing any biases that may have arisen due to these conditions. One strategy that was employed was bracketing, which allowed me to set aside any preconceptions or biases that may have influenced their interpretation of the data.

Additionally, given that I did not have an affiliation with the participants, there was no conflict of interest or power differentials that may have affected the study's

results. However, I remained aware of potential issues and addressed any elements of researcher bias through reflexive journaling. Overall, by taking these considerations into account, it was possible to ensure that the study was conducted in a rigorous and unbiased manner, with a focus on achieving the highest level of validity possible.

The participants in this qualitative basic study were all online writing center tutors who worked with multilingual adult learners. In total, there were seven participants, two of which were male, and five were women. Each participant had a minimum of 2 years of experience working as an online writing center tutor. All participants held at least a master's degree. The participants were selected based on their experience working with multilingual adult learners, as this was the focus of the study.

One of the male participants had a background in education and had experience working with multilingual learners in various classroom settings—both in person and online. Another male participant had experience working as a tutor for a wide variety of subjects, including writing and coding. The female participants had a range of backgrounds, including degrees in English, education, and linguistics. Some of the female participants had previously taught English as a second language, and others had experience working as writing center tutors both in-person and online. All participants were currently employed as writing center tutors at the time of the study.

In terms of cultural and linguistic backgrounds, the participants were diverse. Some of the participants were multilingual themselves, and others had experience working with individuals from different cultural and linguistic backgrounds. The participants worked at two different institutions, one in New Jersey and the other in

Minnesota, which provided a geographical diversity to the study. The diversity of the participants' backgrounds and experiences was important to the study, as it allowed for a rich and varied perspective on the challenges faced by writing center tutors in working with multilingual adult learners.

### **Data Collection**

For this qualitative basic study, a one-on-one interview was used as the primary method to collect data. A series of open-ended interview questions were provided to each participant, and they were given the opportunity to fully address the questions and expand on their answers. The interview protocol was specifically designed to ask questions related to the research questions, and it was intended to increase the likelihood of obtaining expansive answers from the participants. The purpose of the study was to analyze the responses related to the research questions.

To recruit participants for the study, I reached out to writing center tutors who were willing to participate in the one-on-one interview. The recruitment process involved reaching out to the writing center directors and following up with the participants. IRB approval was obtained before data collection began, and informed consent was obtained from each participant before their interview. Due to the COVID-19 pandemic, the interviews were conducted via Zoom to ensure the health and safety of all participants. The interviews were recorded and transcribed to ensure accuracy and confidentiality.

The location of data collection for this study was virtual, via Zoom. Data collection occurred in one session, lasting approximately 30 minutes per participant. As the qualitative researcher, I was the data collection instrument and I used a protocol to

guide the open-ended interview (see Appendix). The frequency of data collection was once per participant. The data were recorded via Zoom and then transcribed. The data collection procedures followed the plan presented in Chapter 3, with no significant variations.

The data analysis plan for this study involved two rounds of open coding. Open coding involved separating the discrete parts of the data analysis and coding each associated part. Microsoft Excel was used for the open coding process. No unusual circumstances were encountered during data collection or analysis.

### **Data Analysis**

Data analysis moved inductively from coded units to larger representations including categories and themes (see Table 1). Four themes emerged from the data, two that answer Research Question 1: What challenges do online writing center tutors face while working to ensure linguistic inclusivity and the management of spoken languages and cultures among multilingual adult online learners? Two themes answer Research Question 2: How do online writing center tutors use practices and methods to mitigate linguistic diversity challenges? These themes emerged after two rounds of open coding of the data culled from seven one-on-one interviews with participants. The first round of open coding yielded 41 codes, and the second round of open coding reduced the codes to 18, which then resulted in 10 categories.

### **Table 1**

### *Codes, Categories, and Themes*

Round 1 coding	Round 2 coding	Categories	Themes	Research question
Participant	Biases	Teaching for enhanced understanding	1: Writing Center Tutors are Challenged with Teaching for Enhanced	1: What challenges do online writing center tutors face while working to ensure linguistic inclusivity and the management of spoken languages and cultures among multilingual adult online learners?
Students	Personal unconscious	Inclusion in academic English	Understanding and Linguistic Inclusion.	
Multilingual	English Speaker	Diversity in English	2: Writing Center Tutors are Challenged by Language Barrier and Implementation of Voice in Standard Academic Writing	
Tutors	Native English Speaker	Linguistic Diversity		
English	American Schools	Breaking the language barrier		
Language	Different languages	Break down the biases		
Cultures	Process	Strengthen student writing		
Linguistic	Teaching moments	Simplifying English instruction for multilingual students	3. Writing Center Tutors use the Practice of Enhanced Understanding for Linguistic Inclusivity	2. How do online writing center tutors use practices and methods to mitigate linguistic diversity challenges?
Writers	Standard academic English	Understand students better	4. Writing Center Tutors use Simplification in Instruction and Relatability to Mitigate Linguistic Challenges	
Background	Writing	Showcase diverse understanding through inclusivity		
Improvement	Participant			
New Languages	Students			
Online Program	Multilingual			
Writing Center	Tutors			
Numerous ways	English			
Smooth teaching moments	Language			
Many different languages	Cultures			
Personal unconscious	Linguistic			
Bias	Writers			
Different situation	Background			
Simple terms	Improvement			
Linguistic inclusion				
Many American schools				
Perfect American English				
English means something				
Asian cultural background				
Formal education				
Easy to use				
Frustrated				
Experience				
Cultures				
Words				
Strategies				
New language				
Native English				
Speaker				
Skill-building process				
Long term memory				
Imitation				
Feedback				
Standard academic English				
Improvement				

### **Theme 1: Writing Center Tutors are Challenged With Teaching for Enhanced Understanding and Linguistic Inclusion**

Theme 1 responds to Research Question 1: What challenges do online writing center tutors face while working to ensure linguistic inclusivity and the management of spoken languages and cultures among multilingual adult online learners? In this study, writing center tutors face multiple challenges when teaching multilingual adult online learners.

Participants stressed the importance of mutual respect and curiosity when working with learners who use African American vernacular or English that has been affected by their culture. The goal should be to help learners communicate more effectively with clarity without disregarding their academic and linguistic background. Writing center tutors must also be mindful of the cultural norms and expectations of their students to manage language use successfully.

When it comes to linguistic inclusion, the founding principle needs to be mutual respect and curiosity (Participant 7). Thus, when approaching a piece of writing written in a different language, or English that has been affected by their culture such as African-American vernacular, educators should approach it with curiosity and then attempt to understand the message presented (Participant 3). With this understanding, educators can then clarify any issues with clarity in communication caused by their background, so it is more easily held as valuable in American education (Participant 1).

The biggest challenge was convincing learners that they had value with their voice, and that the goal should not be to sound like a writing center tutor, but the goal



should be to sound like them (Participant 2). Negotiating two or more different writing styles can be an extremely challenging process (Participant 4). Tutoring centers are a great option because they can help your students navigate this process in a way that benefits them (Participant 6). Some learners had a difficult time writing English academic essays because they have had more success writing in their native tongue (Participant 1). The same learners who have already mastered essay composition in their native language felt like they were back to the basics when it comes to understanding academic writing in English (Participant 5).

When approaching a learner's writing in a different English dialect such as African American Vernacular English or reflective of English as a Second Language, participants suggested approaching the learner's writing with curiosity and then attempt to understand the message presented. With this understanding, writing center tutors can then address any issues with clarity in communication related to the learner's cultural background.

If a learner is using a non-standard academic English, participants agreed that tutors should approach the learner's writing with awareness and respect. Writing center tutors can then try to understand what learners are trying to convey in their writing. Once writing center tutors fully understand the essence of the learner's writing, they can assist them in communicating more effectively with clarity without disregarding the learner's academic and linguistic background, but instead, create acculturation.

Writing center tutors are constantly challenged with teaching for enhanced understanding and linguistic inclusivity among multilingual adult online learners. This

challenge is especially true when writing center tutors are not entirely familiar working with spoken languages and cultures of multilingual adult online learners. In order to ensure success with these challenges, writing center tutors must maintain a valid perspective on multilingual adult online learners and their needs. Additionally, writing center tutors must be mindful of the ways in which their own linguistic and cultural experiences may impact an instruction. When working to provide an enriched learning experience for all of multilingual adult online learners, writing center tutors can be certain that they are successfully meeting the challenges of linguistic inclusivity.

One of the most pressing challenges that writing center tutors face when working to ensure linguistic inclusivity and the management of spoken languages and cultures among multilingual adult online learners is the lack of resources that are specifically tailored to support this type of instruction. In order to address this issue, writing center tutors may need to develop their own instructional materials, or work with other professionals who are experienced in supporting multicultural learning environments. Additionally, writing center tutors must be aware of the cultural norms and expectations of their students in order to effectively manage language use.

## **Theme 2: Writing Center Tutors are Challenged by Language Barrier and Implementation of Voice in Standard Academic Writing**

The second theme that responds to Research Question 1, is that Writing Center Tutors are challenged by the language barrier and the implementation of voice in standard academic writing. Multilingual adult online learners struggle to write with two different voices: one for their peers and professors, looking for American English, and

the other for their own culture. It is challenging to standardize language, but Writing Center Tutors must help their clients find an identity in academia. Embracing different cultures is necessary and avoiding offering only one authoritative discourse can increase diversity and inclusion in academic settings.

Multilingual adult online learners often have a difficult time writing with two different voices: one for the professor and peers, who will be looking for American English, and the other for their own culture (Participant 2). On one hand, it can be tough to standardize language (Participant 4). On the other hand, by writing as an "American," multilingual adult online learners sometimes worry that they will lose themselves and experience an identity crisis (Participant 2).

To empower foreign language speakers in the writing center, multilingual tutors need to help their clients find an identity in academia (Participant 3). Though the fear of rejection for belonging to a minority can prevent them from achieving full immersion in the culture, dealing with that insecurity is a necessary step to achieving success academically (Participant 5). Tutors and multilingual writers alike should embrace different cultures and not offer only one authoritative discourse (Participant 7). This increases the inclusiveness of the writing center and drastically improves literacy education in America (Participant 1).

For many multilingual adult online learners, learning English as a second language in Standard Academic English can be challenging. The goal of Standard Academic English is to teach students to write American English, which is different than the dialect they use at home. On one hand, these students have a tough time making their

writing conform to the guidelines given by their teachers and peers. On the other hand, by standardizing language in this way, some students are afraid that they will lose their own identity or experience an identity crisis when they go back home and speak with family members who still speak their original dialect.

Many multilingual adult online learners are taught in their own countries to imitate American expressions and use them in their native languages. Multilingual adult online learners learn to understand America's patterns of expression to capture the way Americans convey thoughts and ideas. Many multilingual adult online learners educated in their own countries will emphasize the importance of "authentic" English while they are searching on Google with the goal to appear like an "American." Thus, multilingual adult online learners become more afraid of not sounding like an "American" as they start studying at universities in America.

There are many challenges Writing Center Tutors face while working to ensure linguistic inclusivity and the management of spoken languages and cultures among multilingual adult online learners. One challenge is that many multilingual adult online learners do not feel comfortable writing and implementing their voice in formal academic settings. This challenge can make it difficult for Writing Center Tutors to ensure that all multilingual adult online learners are using standard academic language while incorporating the learner's voice. Additionally, Writing Center Tutors must be aware of the voice of each student and cater to their specific needs in order to provide them with an effective learning experience.

### **Theme 3: Writing Center Tutors use the Practice of Enhanced Understanding for Linguistic Inclusivity**

The third theme is related to Research Question 2: How do online writing center tutors use practices and methods to mitigate linguistic diversity challenges? Participant 2 shared that multilingual adult online learners tend to pay close attention to grammar. They are very concerned about grammar accuracy, and because of this concern, multilingual adult online learners pursue standardized grammar in order to achieve perfection (Participant 4). Their focus on grammar comes from the education they receive in their own countries (Participant 1). Multilingual adult online learners are thought to be less skilled at grammar (Participant 5). However, they often know more about parts of the English language than native speakers do (Participant 3). Their problem is that they might not know how to approach a writing task in other ways, for example, by developing ideas or structuring content (Participant 7).

As a writing center tutor, the option of criticizing the grammatical errors will make the Multilingual adult online learner more anxious and even distracted (Participant 6). So instead, writing center tutors should start by focusing on global and higher order concerns in the paper, like clarity, cohesion, and paragraph structure (Participant 2). Then writing center tutor could give feedback on grammar errors so that Multilingual adult online learners learn to prioritize what is important about their writing, such as content (Participant 4). As a result, grammar should be one piece, not the only one, of what writing center tutors focus on when it comes to standard academic writing (Participant 5).

Multilingual adult online learners are usually preoccupied with sounding more "American" because of their educational backgrounds, cultural upbringings and personal beliefs. As such, it is important for writing center tutors to take into consideration these concerns when supporting multilingual adult online learners. In order to understand these frustrations and concerns, writing center tutors would need to put themselves in each multilingual adult online learner's shoes, so to speak, in order to get a better understanding of the learner's experience. In addition, this method includes feeling frustrated and confused by the process of standard academic writing.

In order to help multilingual adult online learners who may have difficulty understanding or speaking English, many writing center tutors use practices that focus on enhancing the learner's understanding of the language. This involves breaking down complex concepts into more manageable chunks, providing examples and using visuals whenever possible. Additionally, tutors provide feedback in a way that is appropriate for the student's level of comprehension, and they encourage students to ask questions when they do not understand something. By doing these things, tutors aim to increase the accessibility of the English language and implementation of voice for all multilingual adult online learners.

#### **Theme 4: Writing Center Tutors use Simplification in Instruction and Relatability to Mitigate Linguistic Challenges**

The final theme is related to simplification in instruction. Participant 7 shared that in a tutoring session, writing center tutors should provide instructions that gives multilingual online adult learners the opportunity to talk about discipline-specific topics

and concepts in English. As a result, Participant 5 said, multilingual online adult learners can build understanding of the content area. This simplification in instruction will help multilingual online adult learners understand standard academic English and writing (Participant 3). If the writing center tutor is multilingual as well, the tutor should use the learner's home language, culture, and background knowledge to build off of what multilingual online adult learners already know and provide them with a firm foundation on which they can construct new knowledge (Participant 2).

The nature of instruction for writing center tutors has meant that in its simplest form, writing center tutors can help multilingual online adult learners build both content and language knowledge by talking about an assignment in standard academic English and writing through relatability in the learner's native language. Likewise, writing center tutors can easily leverage multilingual online adult learners' native language by speaking it as necessary. As a result, this specific practice can be effective in simplification and reliability in instruction.

Linguistic diversity is a challenge for writing center tutors. This challenge exists because multilingual adult online learners from around the world come to write in English, and many do not have experience or knowledge of the simplification process nor reliability regarding the learners' native language. The writing center tutors use practices and methods to mitigate this challenge, such as incorporating the learner's native language and culture in the tutoring session. As a result, writing center tutors use simplification in instruction and relatability to help the multilingual adult online learners feel comfortable in standard academic English and writing.

## **Results**

The quotes, summary, and analysis of the four themes reveal that Writing Center Tutors are challenged with addressing linguistic inclusion and implementation of voice in standard academic writing. To provide effective assistance to multilingual adult online learners, Writing Center Tutors should approach their work with curiosity, awareness, respect, and a willingness to embrace cultural diversity. It is also important for Writing Center Tutors to develop their own instructional materials or work with other professionals who are experienced in supporting multicultural learning environments to overcome the challenges. Further results and how they are related to the research questions will be detailed in this section.

### **Research Question 1 Results**

Research Question 1 was: How are Writing Center Tutors challenged with teaching for enhanced understanding and linguistic inclusion among multilingual adult online learners?

Writing Center Tutors are constantly challenged with teaching for enhanced understanding and linguistic inclusivity among multilingual adult online learners. Participants acknowledged that approaching a learner's writing in a different English dialect such as African American Vernacular English or reflective of English as a Second Language can be challenging. Therefore, Writing Center Tutors should approach the learner's writing with curiosity and attempt to understand the message presented. One participant noted, "approaching a learner's writing in a different English dialect such as African American Vernacular English or reflective of English as a Second Language can



be challenging." However, the participant emphasized the importance of approaching the learner's writing with curiosity and attempting to understand the message presented in order to address any issues with clarity in communication related to the learner's cultural background. Another participant shared "for multilingual online adult learners, online writing tutors serve as a support system in academic writing."

One of the most pressing challenges that Writing Center Tutors face when working to ensure linguistic inclusivity and the management of spoken languages and cultures among multilingual adult online learners is the lack of resources that are specifically tailored to support this type of instruction. One participant mentioned, "since academic writing consists of specific formalities, some multilingual online adult learners struggle with traditional academic writing, specifically Standard Academic English and Writing." Another participant shared that, "these specific multilingual online adult learners look towards online writing tutors as experts in academic writing, especially with their knowledge of strategies based on theories." To address this issue, Writing Center Tutors may need to develop their own instructional materials, or work with other professionals who are experienced in supporting multicultural learning environments. Additionally, Writing Center Tutors must be aware of the cultural norms and expectations of their students in order to effectively manage language use.

### **Research Question 2 Results**

Research Question 2 was: How are Writing Center Tutors challenged by the language barrier and implementation of voice in standard academic writing among multilingual adult online learners?

Writing Center Tutors face a significant challenge when working with multilingual adult online learners who have difficulty writing with two different voices: one for the professor and peers, who will be looking for American English, and the other for their own culture. This can be a difficult balance to achieve, as on one hand, it can be tough to standardize language, while on the other hand, writing as an "American" can sometimes make multilingual adult online learners worry that they will lose themselves and experience an identity crisis. One participant shared,

When it comes to online writing center tutors, despite their experience in developing theories for multilingual adult learners, most have not been able to effectively impact the overall teaching of writing in the program. This includes the implementation of theories specifically aimed at supporting online adult learners with diverse academic backgrounds.

Another participant highlighted the “lack of resources specifically tailored to support instruction for linguistic inclusivity and the management of spoken languages and cultures among multilingual adult online learners.” To address this issue, Writing Center Tutors may need to develop their own instructional materials or work with other professionals who are experienced in supporting multicultural learning environments.

To empower foreign language speakers in the writing center, multilingual tutors need to help their clients find an identity in academia. Although the fear of rejection for belonging to a minority can prevent them from achieving full immersion in the culture, dealing with that insecurity is a necessary step to achieving academic success. Tutors and

multilingual writers alike should embrace different cultures and not offer only one authoritative discourse.

Regarding the implementation of voice in standard academic writing, a participant noted the difficulty in achieving a balance between writing for the professor and peers who will be looking for American English and writing for their own culture. However, it is essential for Writing Center Tutors to help their clients find an identity in academia to empower foreign language speakers in the writing center.

In conclusion, Writing Center Tutors face significant challenges in addressing linguistic inclusion and implementation of voice in standard academic writing among multilingual adult online learners. To effectively assist these learners, Writing Center Tutors must approach their work with curiosity, awareness, respect, and a willingness to embrace cultural diversity. Additionally, it may be necessary for Writing Center Tutors to develop their own instructional materials or work with other professionals who are experienced in supporting multicultural learning environments to overcome the challenges.

### **Evidence of Trustworthiness**

To ensure credibility in the study, I used member checking and reflexive journaling. Member checking allowed me to validate the data collected. Reflexive journaling helped to remove biases and establish clear intentions regarding the protocols and decisions made during the study. The use of these strategies allowed for the retrieval of necessary data saturation and ensured that the findings were credible.

In order to ensure transferability in the study, I included thick descriptions and varied participant selection. This allowed for a detailed and comprehensive presentation of the findings that could be applied to other contexts. By adhering to the necessary data collection and obtaining data saturation, the study was able to achieve transferability.

To establish dependability in the study, I used appropriate strategies, such as audit trails. This ensured consistency in the findings and served as the qualitative counterpart to reliability. The use of these strategies helped to ensure that the findings were dependable and consistent.

To ensure confirmability in the study, I used appropriate strategies such as reflexivity and follow-up to member checking. This allowed for the confirmation of the results in the study and served as the qualitative counterpart to objectivity. The use of these strategies helped to ensure that the findings were confirmable and objective.

### **Summary**

The study aimed to explore the challenges faced by Writing Center Tutors when teaching multilingual adult online learners and the strategies they use to address these challenges. The findings reveal that Writing Center Tutors face numerous challenges, including the language barrier and linguistic inclusivity. These challenges often stem from the learners' cultural backgrounds, dialects, and language preferences. To overcome these challenges, Writing Center Tutors should approach the learners' writing with curiosity, awareness, respect, and a willingness to embrace cultural diversity.

The study also identified several strategies that Writing Center Tutors can use to overcome these challenges, including member checking, reflexivity, and thick

description, which enhance the study's credibility, transferability, and confirmability. Additionally, audit trails can help to establish dependability, ensuring consistency in the study's findings.

Overall, the study highlights the importance of supporting multilingual adult online learners in academic writing and offers several practical strategies for Writing Center Tutors to address the challenges they face. The findings provide insights for Writing Center Tutors, writing program administrators, and other professionals who work with multilingual learners in academic settings.

Chapter 5 will discuss the implications of these findings, providing recommendations for future research and highlighting the practical applications of the study's findings. It will also outline potential limitations and suggest areas for further investigation to help address the challenges faced by Writing Center Tutors and support multilingual adult online learners in academic writing, including any implications related to the study.

## Chapter 5: Discussion, Conclusions, and Recommendations

In this chapter, I will provide an overview of the purpose and research questions for my EdD dissertation, which is a qualitative basic study exploring the challenges writing tutors face while supporting multilingual adult online learners in the development of standard academic writing. I will also preview the organization of this chapter.

The purpose of this study was to contribute to the field of education by exploring effective learning strategies for multilingual adult online learners within the online writing center tutors/learners' relationship. This research aims to address the challenges faced by online writing center tutors when supporting linguistically diverse adult learners in academic writing. By gaining a deeper understanding of these challenges, this study was designed to identify effective practices and methods for mitigating linguistic diversity challenges and promoting linguistic inclusivity.

To achieve this purpose, two research questions were formulated. The first question aimed to identify the challenges faced by online writing center tutors in ensuring linguistic inclusivity and managing spoken languages and cultures among multilingual adult online learners. With the second question, I sought to understand how online writing center tutors use practices and methods to mitigate linguistic diversity challenges.

### **Interpretation of the Findings**

Based on the peer-reviewed literature described in Chapter 2, this study shows the approach of online writing center tutors to linguistic diversity among multilingual adult learners. The findings confirm and extend the existing literature on this topic.

Online Writing Tutors in Writing Centers play a significant role in the lives of multilingual online adult learners (Lovejoy et al., 2018). The findings suggest that while online writing center tutors have experience in composing theories for various multilingual adult learners, they have failed to systematically influence the teaching of writing at the program level through these theories and leading practices. This is consistent with the existing literature, which highlights the challenges faced by writing center tutors in influencing writing pedagogy at the program level (Cavazos, 2019). Online writing center tutors may have awareness of language theories (Shapiro, 2020), but some may lack the necessary knowledge or competence to properly implement language theories and rules in response to linguistic challenges and discrimination among multilingual online adult learners (Chiu & Rodriguez-Falcon, 2018).

The Role of the Online Writing Center Tutor is crucial in the relationship between multilingual adult learners and composition faculty in higher education (Gibbs et al., 2021). The findings suggest that online writing center tutors can critically interact with their respective institution's reporting procedures and discover methods to advocate for multilingual online adult learners in significant approaches and strategies (Lovejoy et al., 2018). By doing so, they can make a positive change in the relationship between online writing tutors and multilingual online adult learners.

Tutor-Learner Relationships can be complicated and complex. Online writing center tutors work in the gaps between the stakeholders of multilingual writers such as composition faculty, administrators, and peers (Bennett, 2020). The findings suggest that online writing center tutors may empathize with multilingual adult learners by examining

and accepting their writing academic allies and privately research the marginalization of multilingual online adult learners (Newman, 2017). This highlights the need for online writing center tutors to adopt an empathetic approach in their interactions with multilingual adult learners.

Changing Demographics in the Writing Center have brought to light the need for online writing center tutors to adopt a translational approach to writing instruction (Green, 2017). The findings suggest that some online writing center tutors promote “English only” as a political and policy drive to avoid the acceptance of the culture and language of non-English speakers in academic spaces (Weaver, 2019). However, the history of the United States demonstrates that linguistic diversity is a frequent aspect of life, tolerated at times but often rejected to reduce social inequalities (Lawton & de Kleine, 2020). Therefore, a translational approach to writing instruction that takes into account the linguistic diversity of multilingual adult learners is necessary.

Suppression in Standard Academic English was a common approach used by online writing center tutors before awareness of linguistic diversity among online multilingual adult learners (Inoue, 2020). The findings suggest that this method is based on the idea that no standardized language varieties are less valued than the language of school, and online multilingual adult learners are educated that they must adapt their language to be successful in scholarly writing. This approach has been widely criticized in the literature (Greenbaum & Angus, 2018), and some faculty in higher education defend the eradication strategy by claiming that students’ non-standardized



characteristics would inhibit their economic and educational performance (Lampi et al., 2018).

The bilingual approach to language variety has become particularly relevant in online writing centers, where tutors work with multilingual online adult learners. These learners often come from diverse linguistic backgrounds and bring with them different dialects, non-standard varieties, and language mixing practices. The traditional approach of standardizing their language and suppressing their native varieties can lead to alienation and a lack of confidence in their language skills.

In contrast, the bilingual approach acknowledges and values the diversity of learners' linguistic backgrounds and aims to empower them by developing their multilingual and multicultural competencies (Huot & O'Neill, 2017). This approach enables online writing center tutors to provide tailored feedback and support that takes into account the learners' language repertoires, while also providing guidance on how to navigate different language situations and genres.

Research has shown that this approach can be effective in helping multilingual online adult learners improve their writing skills and increase their confidence in their ability to communicate in different language situations (Kitalong, 2019). By embracing linguistic diversity and promoting language and cultural awareness, online writing centers can create an inclusive and empowering learning environment that supports the success of multilingual learners.

### **Limitations of the Study**

This basic qualitative study focuses on how online writing center tutors manage linguistic diversity challenges among multilingual adult online learners. However, several limitations arose from the execution of the study. The sample size of the study might limit the generalizability of the findings. As the study is qualitative, generalizability is not the primary aim. However, with a small sample size, the findings might not represent the views of other online writing center tutors. The study was conducted online, which might limit the nonverbal cues that I could have used to gain a deeper understanding of the participants' views.

Despite the limitations, this study offers valuable insights into how online writing center tutors can approach linguistic diversity challenges among multilingual adult online learners. The findings of the study can serve as a basis for further research in this area. Moreover, the limitations of the study can be addressed in future research to improve the trustworthiness of the findings.

### **Recommendations**

Based on the strengths and limitations of the current study, as well as the literature reviewed in Chapter 2, several recommendations for further research can be made. Firstly, future research should aim to explore the role of online writing center tutors in promoting the use of language theories and leading practices in the teaching of writing at the program level. This could include investigating the factors that may impede online writing center tutors' ability to implement language theories and rules in response to linguistic challenges and discrimination among multilingual online adult learners.

Additional research is needed to examine the tutor-learner relationship between online writing center tutors and multilingual online adult learners. This could involve exploring the ways in which online writing center tutors can act as liaisons between multilingual online adult learners and composition faculty in higher education, as well as advocating for multilingual online adult learners in significant approaches and strategies. Furthermore, it could entail investigating how online writing center tutors can empathize with multilingual adult learners and research the marginalization of these learners.

Future research should focus on changing demographics in the writing center and the impact of linguistic diversity on academic spaces. This could include investigating the prevalence of “English only” policies and the extent to which they contribute to the marginalization of non-English speakers in academic spaces. Additionally, it could entail exploring the benefits and challenges of adopting a new translational approach to writing instruction.

It is recommended that future research explores alternative approaches to the traditional suppressive approach to language, particularly Standard Academic English. This could involve examining the effectiveness of a bilingual approach to language variety in contributing to adult learners’ linguistic repertoires without eliminating their native languages. Additionally, it could entail investigating the ways in which writing tutors can manage spoken languages and cultures to incorporate academic acculturation through strategies that promote critical awareness.

Finally, it is important to note that these recommendations should not exceed the boundaries of the current study. Rather, they should be viewed as opportunities for future

research to build upon the strengths and limitations of the current study and the literature reviewed in Chapter 2. By doing so, researchers can further advance our understanding of the key concepts and variables related to writing center tutors' approach to linguistic diversity in relation to multilingual adult learners.

### **Implications**

The potential impact for positive social change at different levels, including individual, family, organizational, and societal/policy, can be significant when it comes to promoting linguistic diversity in writing instruction for multilingual adult learners. At the individual level, promoting linguistic diversity can enhance the self-esteem and confidence of multilingual learners, who may feel marginalized in academic spaces due to their language backgrounds. By acknowledging and valuing their linguistic diversity, these learners can develop a positive self-concept and a sense of belonging, leading to better academic outcomes and social integration.

At the family level, promoting linguistic diversity can help multilingual learners maintain their cultural identities and heritage languages, which can be important for their sense of belonging and well-being. It can also help family members of multilingual learners understand and appreciate the importance of linguistic diversity, which can contribute to a more inclusive and respectful family environment.

At the organizational level, promoting linguistic diversity can help writing centers develop more inclusive and effective teaching practices that better serve the needs of multilingual adult learners. It can also help writing centers attract and retain a more diverse pool of tutors, which can enrich the learning experiences of all learners.

At the societal/policy level, promoting linguistic diversity can contribute to a more equitable and just society by challenging dominant ideologies that privilege certain languages and cultures over others. It can also help inform policy decisions related to language education and bilingualism, which can have significant implications for the linguistic and cultural diversity of future generations.

Methodologically, the recommendations for further research can contribute to a more comprehensive understanding of the factors that influence the effectiveness of online writing center tutors in promoting linguistic diversity in writing instruction for multilingual adult learners. Theoretical implications can involve expanding current theoretical frameworks to account for the complexities of linguistic diversity in writing instruction. Empirical implications can include the development and validation of new measures and assessment tools that better capture the nuances of linguistic diversity in writing instruction.

In terms of practice, the recommendations for further research can inform the development of more effective and inclusive writing instruction practices that better serve the needs of multilingual adult learners. It can also inform the development of more effective training programs for online writing center tutors that emphasize the importance of linguistic diversity and cultural sensitivity. By implementing these recommendations, writing centers can better serve the needs of multilingual adult learners and contribute to positive social change.

## Conclusion

In conclusion, this study sheds light on the experiences of online writing center tutors in responding to linguistic diversity among multilingual adult learners. The findings highlight the need for a more nuanced and inclusive approach to writing instruction that acknowledges the diversity of language backgrounds among learners. The key take-home message is that online writing center tutors need to be equipped with the knowledge, skills, and strategies to work effectively with multilingual adult learners.

Several recommendations for future research can be made based on the study's findings. Firstly, there is a need for further investigation into the role of online writing center tutors in promoting language theories and leading practices in the teaching of writing at the program level. This includes exploring factors that may impede tutors' ability to implement language theories and rules in response to linguistic challenges and discrimination among learners. Additionally, research should focus on changing demographics in the writing center and the impact of linguistic diversity on academic spaces. This includes investigating the prevalence of "English only" policies and the benefits and challenges of adopting a new translational approach to writing instruction.

Furthermore, research should examine the tutor-learner relationship between online writing center tutors and multilingual adult learners. This includes exploring ways in which tutors can act as liaisons between learners and composition faculty in higher education and advocate for multilingual learners. Future research should also explore alternative approaches to the traditional suppressive approach to language, particularly Standard Academic English. This includes examining the effectiveness of a bilingual

approach to language variety and investigating ways in which tutors can manage spoken languages and cultures to incorporate academic acculturation through strategies that promote critical awareness.

In summary, this study contributes to the growing body of literature on the importance of linguistic diversity in writing instruction. The findings highlight the need for a more inclusive approach to writing instruction that acknowledges and values the diversity of language backgrounds among learners. The recommendations for future research provide opportunities for scholars to build upon the strengths and limitations of this study and further advance our understanding of the key concepts and variables related to writing center tutors' approach to linguistic diversity in relation to multilingual adult learners.

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## Appendix: Interview Protocol

**PARTICIPANT ID: INSIDER RECONCILER**

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<b>Pre-Interview Information</b>	
Date of interview:	
Start time of interview:	
Location of interview:	
Miscellaneous:	

<b>Section 1: Demographic Information</b>
<p>Thank you for agreeing to participate in this research project. I truly appreciate your willingness to take the time to speak with me today My name is Jeannie Headley. I am part of a research team led by researchers from Walden University. The research team will be talking to people in several countries, and we are very grateful we can include you in our study.</p> <p>Like I may have said before, the purpose of this study is to explore the challenges writing tutors face while supporting multilingual adult online learners in the development of standard academic writing. During this conversation, I would like to ask you a number of questions to hear about your thoughts and experiences. This interview will take about 30 minutes and is completely voluntary.</p> <p>I would like to record this conversation because I cannot write fast enough to get all the information, and I don't want to miss any part of what you say. Is this ok with you? If you do feel uncomfortable any time, please let me know, and I will stop recording. Please indicate if you:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Agree to participate in this study. [yes / no]</li> </ul>

- Agree to this interview with being audio / video recorded. If you wish to turn your video off, please do so. [*audio and video / just audio*]
- Finally, please indicate if you would like to be a confidential participant or a non-confidential participant. [*confidential participant / non-confidential participant*]

Do you have any questions? [Answer questions if needed]

Okay. These first few questions are just so I can get to know you a bit.

	<b>Question</b>	<b>Probe</b>
D.1	What is your main occupation at your university's writing center?	
D.2	How long have you worked in your position?	
D.3	How many years of experience do you have in tutoring/teaching?	
D.4	What is the highest level of education you have completed?	

## **Section 2: Understanding of Reconciliation**

Thanks for your responses. The next section of this interview focuses on...

[pause for 5 seconds]

	<b>Question</b>	<b>Probe(s)</b>
1.1	What challenges do online writing center tutors face while working to ensure linguistic inclusivity and the management of spoken languages and cultures among multilingual adult online learners?	
1.2	How do online writing center tutors use practices and methods to mitigate linguistic diversity challenges?	
1.3		
1.4		
1.5		

1.6		
1.7		
<b>Section 2:</b>		
<p>“Thank you very much for the answers you’ve given me so far. This is a lot of really good information – thank you. Do you need to take a quick break, or are you ready to keep going?”</p> <p>[short minute break if needed]</p> <p>“Great. These next questions focus on...</p> <p>[pause for 5 seconds]</p>		
2.1		
2.2		
2.3		
2.4		
2.5		
2.6		
<b>Section 3:</b>		
<p>“Great. Thank you very much for your responses. This is the last section of our interview today. Do you need to take a break?</p> <p>[take a quick break if needed]</p> <p>Finally, I want to learn more about how your experience...</p>		
3.1		“
3.2		
3.3		
3.4		
3.5		

3.6		
<p>“Your answers are really going to help this research. I’m excited to see what comes out of this study! Thanks very much for participating, and feel free to reach out if you have any questions about how I’m using your responses. My email is jeannie.headley@waldenu.edu. I’m going to turn off the recorder now.”</p>		
End time of interview:		
<b>Research memo / Immediate reflections after the interview:</b>		
<p>(attach notes taken during interview to this form)</p>		

Zoom Link:

Zoom Password: