

# Translanguaging in the Drafting Process:

*Writing across Cultural Style*

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# Today's Goals

1. Explore contrastive rhetoric
  2. Merge this with current understanding of dynamic bilingualism & translanguaging
  3. Explore implications for pedagogical practices
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# Theoretical Framework: *Dynamic Bilingualism*

- Languages are not separate in the brain
  - One dynamic set of linguistic resources
  - Use of all linguistic resources reflects experience of bilinguals, honors home language practices, and encourages English development
  - Flexible language practices can reduce frustration and engage deeper thinking
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# What is good academic writing?

*Writer does heavy lifting*  
**Explicit Thesis**  
**Logically Sequenced**  
*Easy to read*  
**Concise**  
*Smooth transitions*  
**Direct**  
*Clear*  
**Cohesive**  
**Strong Voice**  
*Signposting*

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Good writing is  
a cultural construct.

# American Academic Writing

is  
**linear.**



# Cultural groups define good writing differently.

Where US academic writing is **linear**...



...others find **digressive** writing to be more academic.



# Digressive Styles

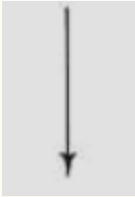
have a thesis and prove that thesis  
but...

- along the way, show breadth of knowledge using information that may be tangential to thesis
  - reader should do more work to understand
- make use of longer, more complex sentences
  - In some cases, voice of experts foregrounds author voice

# Kaplan's Doodles: Contrastive Rhetoric

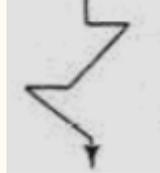
**Linear**

US Academic



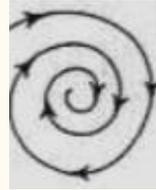
**Digressive**

Romance  
Languages  
& German



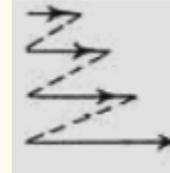
**Circular**

Asian  
Languages



**Parallel  
Propositions &  
Embedded  
Stories**

Arabic



Adapted from: Kaplan, R. (1966). Cultural thought patterns in intercultural education. *Language Learning*, 16(1-2), 1-20.

Adolescent and adult  
learners often have  
internalized the rhetorical  
patterns common to their  
home languages

and this is a valuable resource.

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**What we know about our home language serves as the foundation for building subsequent language.**

“The dilemma older [emergent bilinguals] may face is that their English proficiency doesn’t match the thoughts they yearn to convey.”

-Fu *Writing Between Languages* 2009

So how can we make use  
of students' full linguistic  
repertoire and reduce  
frustration?

Create space to discuss and draft in home language, English, or both...

...to reduce frustration for students with lower proficiency in English

...to encourage deeper thinking for all students

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*Writing is like flexing a muscle; it gets stronger with practice.*

# 8 tips to enact linguistically and culturally flexible writing practices

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# 1. Familiarize yourself with the rhetorical styles of the home languages of your students

- A. Studies in contrastive rhetoric
  - B. Look for patterns in writing
  - C. Students are a resource for this too!
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## 2. Let thinking happen in any language

- A. Encourage students to talk before writing.
  - B. Brainstorming should occur in any language.
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### 3. Read and build vocabulary connections in multiple languages

- A. Create a multilingual library
- B. Use language experience (retelling of home and community events/life experiences) to create materials
- C. Make use of cognates or “lexical bundles”

# 4. Let drafting occur in a variety of styles

Write in a variety of genres/styles  
(on same topic) to create  
opportunities for thinking from  
different perspectives

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# 5. Create many opportunities for informal writing to occur

- A. Use home language, English, or both!
  - B. Students need to see themselves as writers, so writing shouldn't only be for the goal of final drafts
  - C. Let the writing process be recursive and flexibly move between languages
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# 6. Use samples to analyze form

- A. To be explicit about English language goals in writing
  - B. To honor that differences in rhetorical style and organization are not better or worse from one group to another
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# 7. Give writers choices about which language to use in final drafts

- A. Also consider ways that mixing of languages can be powerful as a means of communication.
  - B. Share bilingual authors who make choices about which language to include
  - C. Encourage intentional choices about language used for final draft
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# 8. Consider your cultural positioning when giving feedback

- A. Your way is not *the only way*; it is just *a way*.
- B. Avoid feedback like:

*“Lacks focus”*

*“Needs proofreading”*

- A. Remember that writing is about communication; target that first -and then build developmentally appropriate structures and mechanics along the way
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# Final ideas

You don't need to speak the all languages of your students, but you can learn about those languages and their rhetorical styles.

Don't be afraid of writing; consider keeping a journal about these experiences to flex your own writing muscles.

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# Want more ideas?

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*Check the resource list!*

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