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Cover letter

The audience I wrote to are my classmates. I wrote my essay in a way where they could understand the material I wrote. I know that some of my classmates may have not read one of the articles I read, so I included a brief summary of both books. This could also serve as something to refresh their memory about what that article was about as well. In my rhetorical analysis, I pointed out the rhetorical strategies that my authors used that my audience would also agree with such as the appeal to ethics.

This assignment helped me learn a great deal about the rhetorical strategies. I learned that when writing, authors want to convey a point and the way they convey it is the rhetoric. Some of the rhetorical strategies are ethos, pathos, and logos. In other words, appeal to ethics, appeal to logic, and appeal to emotion. I learned the various ways an author can incorporate these in his/her writing. Furthermore, I applied this new knowledge in analyzing some of the pieces we did in class which helped me put these skills to test.

Some concepts that have impacted my learning on rhetorical strategies are the concepts of ethos, pathos, and logos. However, this concept confuses me. When I think about these things I do not immediately think of the appeal to emotion, ethics, and logic. I think about what these words are and it takes me a while to know what they mean. I also do not know what each word means. For example, I am unsure about what pathos mean. I do not know if it is the appeal to emotion, logic, or ethics. I do know that it is one of them but I find it hard to attach the meaning with the word. For this reason, I think it is better to forget the words and just focus on the strategy itself.

Some learning outcomes I achieved through this phase are Recognizing the role of language attitudes and standards in empowering, oppressing, and hierarchizing languages and their users, and being open to communicating across different languages and cultures. This phase really made sure that we as students do not discriminate against those who speak differently. Also, I learned to recognize and practice key rhetorical terms and strategies when engaged in writing situations. The peer assignments in class where we analyzed the pictures and practiced finding the ethos, logos, and pathos in it were really helpful in helping me develop this skill.

Overall, I really enjoyed reading the articles in this assignment but writing the essay proved to be a little stressful and lengthy. However, it was extremely helpful in learning the above learning criteria.

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Rhetorical Analysis of *Mother Tongue* and *Challenging Language Prejudice in the Classroom*

Authors usually have a specific thought in mind when writing their pieces. This thought or argument is developed through their piece in a way where their target audience takes this argument and wants to make it their own. Amy Tan, the author of *Mother Tongue* and Walt Wolfram, the author of *Challenging Language Prejudice in the Classroom* are great examples of this. They both use a wide range of rhetorical strategies to capture the attention of their target audience and prove their argument. Although some of their methods differ, there are some similarities between them. Overall, Amy Tan’s *Mother Tongue,* and Walt Wolfram’s *Challenging Language Prejudice in the Classroom* both appeal to the readers logic and emotion in order to prove that there exists discrimination based on the type of English one speaks and that teachers should focus on minimizing this discrimination.

Amy Tan is an Asian American author who majored in English whose mother immigrated to America. In Amy Tan’s article, she talked about her immigrant mother’s English. Her mother knew English well and Tan proved this by claiming that “She reads the Forbes report, listens to Wall Street Week, converses daily with her stockbroker, reads all of Shirley MacLaine’s books with ease” (Tan 2). These things would be difficult or even impossible for someone who barely knows any English so her mother knew English, yet Tan classified it as “broken English”. She classified it as so because it is not the traditional “white” English. Throughout the article Tan claims that her mother's broken English was the cause of many problems. Her target audience consists of teachers and professors who would be able to teach their students to make a change and not to discriminate against others who speak broken English.

Walt Wolfram is a sociolinguist who specializes in different dialects of English. Walt Wolfram’s article had the same audience as Amy Tan’s article. He wanted the teachers to eliminate discrimination of different dialects of English in the classroom. He believes that children grow up in a world where discrimination against dialects is deemed right. He claims that we see this in Disney shows where the villain speaks in African American English while the superhero speaks in standard English. Wolfram argues that teachers should teach their students that dialects other than standard English aren’t bad and that they shouldn’t discriminate against them.

In *Mother Tongue*, Tan appealed to the reader's logic to prove her argument that the way someone speaks a language does not determine the quality of what they are saying. Tan said that her mother was an immigrant which meant that her English won’t be standard. However, some immigrants do not know how to speak English at all but this was not the case of Tan’s mother. Tan used logic to prove this when she said that her mother read the Forbes report and multiple other things with ease. The reader now knows that Tan’s mother was fluent in English but not the standard English we all know. So now that the reader knows that Tan’s mother has an accent but is fluent in English, we see that people discriminated against her just because of the way she speaks. She further appeals to the readers logic by providing evidence that discrimination against her mother occurs by providing her personal stories. This argument presented by Tan appeals to teachers because they will think that all they are teaching their students will be useless if dialect discrimination still exists. The teachers’ students will be well educated but they will remain powerless over their dialect and their wide variety of information will be rendered useless. Part of a teachers job is to care about things of the sort and thus, this article should be extremely appealing to teachers.

Tan also appealed to the reader's emotion to a great extent. Tan relied on her personal stories to provide reason for her argument. All of these personal stories appeal to the readers emotion since the readers would feel bad for Tan and her mother for the discrimination that they went through. An example of this is that people never took Tan’s mother seriously. Tan stated that “people in department stores, at banks, and at restaurants did not take her seriously, did not give her good service, pretended not to understand her, or even acted as if they did not hear her” (Tan 2).

All of this makes the reader sad and sympathetic towards Tan’s mother because of the discrimination she faces in her everyday life. The reader would want to change the views of the average person and make them understand that what Tan’s mother is saying is just as important as what anyone else is saying. Similarly, when Tan’s mother was at the hospital and the doctors lost her CAT scan, they didn’t apologize but rather told her that she came for no reason. She refused to leave until her daughter (Tan) was contacted. When they finally contacted Tan, and she spoke standard English with them, they apologized and promised that they would find the scan. This makes the reader see that Tan’s mother wouldn’t have been able to simply see the results of her scan in the hospital just because of her accent. The readers would further feel the need to change the way the world views different dialects. As stated previously, teachers would find this appealing and try to influence a change because it is their job to care.

Tan further appeals to the reader's emotion. With all of these stories that Tan shared, the readers feel that they want to change the way the world looks at dialects. This is an appeal to emotion since the reader knows that Tan’s mother is a human as much as the rest of us and that she deserves to lead a normal life ethically speaking. Furthermore, Tan’s mother should not be ignored when she is in the hospital and she should not have to call her daughter to help her speak English since she already speaks fluent English. The reader might wonder how many other people could face challenges similar to this and would further want to be the one to end this discrimination. Tan geared this toward her specific audience of teachers by appealing to their emotion. When teachers read about Tan and her mother’s experiences, they would try their best to influence a change through their students.

Walt Wolfram appealed to logic as well. In his article, he stated that there were studies that were completed to see if discrimination based on a person’s dialect exists in children and he found it to be true. This experiment consisted of children being told to accept a present from one of two majical boxes. The boxes looked similar but there was a speaker in each one that had a different voice. The speaker in the first box was Steve and he spoke standard English and the speaker in the second box was Kenneth who spoke African American English. The students picked the present from Steve and one student said, “I think I want my present from Kenneth, if he doesn't bite” (Wolfram 27). This proves that there exists discrimination of dialects from these children. Wolfram argued that if we wanted the discrimination to stop, we would have to educate the students about the dialects and in North Carolina, another study was completed that proved discrimination was reduced due to education. These studies were an appeal to logic since they proved that there was a problem, and they proposed a solution that would work (also backed by evidence). This example will make teachers think if this problem exists within their students. Wolfram appeals to teachers because they are the ones educating the kids and this appeal to their logic will influence them to make a change in their classroom. They would want to ensure that their students would not be the reason other people are emotionally hurt.

Wolfram also appeals to the reader's emotion. Wolfram states that one of the teachers in the study stated that the education about dialects "has proven to be empowering for my minority students” (Wolfram 29). This appeals to the reader’s emotion because the reader feels that the minority students felt as if they were being discriminated against or maybe even felt that there was something wrong with them. However, this education proved it otherwise. It proved that they were perfectly normal although they don’t speak the standard English other people speak. The readers may think that the minorities who do not receive an education will still believe that there is something wrong with them. The reader would feel the need to change this. They would want to change this because they would feel bad for them and they would also think that it is not ethical to let these children grow up thinking that there is something wrong with them.

Wolfram and Tan both appealed to the reader in similar ways to provide evidence to their arguments that there exists a discrimination of dialects and that discrimination should be removed. However, Wolfram relies mostly on the appeal to logic to advance his argument while Tan relies mostly on appeal to emotion. Both of these authors worked towards a common goal. They both wanted the discrimination to end but they wrote about it in different ways.

What did both of these articles want? Both of these articles want a change. They recognized a problem and both of them proved this problem. Tan proved this problem with her personal stories about her mother being discriminated against because of her dialect. Wolfram proves this problem through a study which proved that children also discriminated against people with dialects other than standard English. Both articles then wanted the readers to make a change. Although Tan’s pieced did not explicitly say that the readers should change the world to make it rid of dialect discrimination, she implied it. Wolfram, on the other hand, explicitly stated that the reader should change the world and rid it of this dialect discrimination, and he even stated the steps the readers should take to do so.

Both of these articles use many rhetorical strategies to provide a spine to their argument. Rhetorical strategies remain a crucial part of any piece of writing due to the fact that without it. An argument wouldn’t be able to stand. Wolfram and Tan knew this and applied rhetorical strategies in their articles, and this is why both pieces are very successful.