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English

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Cover Letter

The audience I chose to write for were my classmates. I tailored my language to them by including more background information about the sources that they read in class but may have forgotten. I used types of rhetoric that I believed were the best at the time, mostly appeal to logic.

A meaningful insight I gained through this phase is that I learned more about the difficulties that many people saw and continue to see because of the way they speak a language. I also learned how to research and find good and reliable sources for my paper.

The thing that my paper was focused on was the audience. It was explaining the texts as if they did not read it before or forgot them. It gave them insights as to what was similar in two texts compared side by side. I didn’t want to confuse the reader, so I only compared two texts at a time. I also compared one text (by Wolfram) to two different articles but in an attempt to make it less confusing, I compared Wolfram’s article to the first text in one paragraph, then his text to the second text in another. My purpose in this essay was to make sure the reader sided with me on the fact that there exists a dialect discrimination in schools and teachers are the ones that could fix it. I developed this argument by providing evidence that dialect discrimination exists in schools by providing evidence from sources which I explained their authenticity. I then went on to prove that teachers have a major effect on students, so they have the ability to decrease the amount of discrimination. I then described the opposing side where people may claim that students can fix it themselves and I brought it back to my side which is students need the teachers help to fix it.

This phase helped me learn and improve on some of the learning outcomes. It helped me engage in the collaborative and social aspects of writing processes. I recall when as a group we described what we had to do for the essay and it really cleared things up for me. I was also able to locate research sources which I found to be extremely helpful. I will use this for my future research. I also learned what synthesis was and how to integrate it into my essay. Lastly, I was able to practice systematic application of citation conventions. I practiced how to do in-text citations, how to do a works cited page and the heading of it as well.

Overall, I did not enjoy this phase and found it to be a little boring but that was expected. However, if I overlook that part, I can see that I gained many useful things for my college career such as using the research sources through the library’s databases.

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Dialect Discrimination (‘A’ Option)

Many people from around the world escaped the horrors from their hometown and came to the United States in hopes of living a life their parents could only dream of, only to be greeted by discrimination from other people. This discrimination could be because of their skin color, religion or something that is usually overlooked: the way they talk. As Amy Tan suggested in *Mother Tongue,* there exists a discrimination based on the type of English one speaks, even if what they are saying is valuable. This issue exists and starts to grow in children as Walt Wolfram proved in his article *Sound Effects* through a study on school children. Wolfram continues to talk about how teachers can help reduce this type of discrimination among the students. This paper will aim to discuss that dialect discrimination exists in children and will examine how teachers can help slow or put an end to this discrimination because when the children grow, this problem will get worse because small time teasing can lead to bigger problems such as withholding jobs in children’s futures.



Walt Wolfram, the author of *How to Challenge Language in the Classroom,* is an American sociolinguist at North Carolina State University, and he specializes in social and ethnic dialects of American English and he even participated in the study of urban African American English and he claims that there exists a discrimination of different dialects and teachers can fix this in the classroom. Wolfram states that a specific study in North Carolina was completed where teachers taught students about dialect differences and “Ninety-eight percent of the students reported they learned something that would change the way they thought about dialects” (Wolfram). Wolfram develops this idea throughout his article by providing studies that prove that students discriminated on people by the way they talk and then continued by providing studies that prove that teachers can help the students. His purpose is to make readers aware of this issue and try to fix it in the classroom by presenting their students a lesson that would help decrease this discrimination. The intended audience of the text consists of teachers in the United States.

George Lucas, author of *The Power of Teachers: The Opportunity to Shape Lives,* is an American film director, producer, screenwriter, entrepreneur and is best known for creating Star Wars and Indiana Jones and he asserts that teachers are important figures in children’s lives. Lucas stated that “Apart from my parents, my teachers have done the most to shape my life” (Lucas). This quote shows his love for teachers as he is a very successful man. He supports this claim by describing his personal thoughts of how teachers shaped his life and by showing the numerous things teachers help us improve in. His purpose is to make the readers aware of the powerful position teachers must let the readers know that teachers can change the problems for the next generation. The audience of this text consists of teachers so that they could know their worth.

Wolfram and Lucas both have many similarities across their writings. Wolfram argues that children develop a discrimination of different dialects early in their life and as they grow up this discrimination will not go away but only grow stronger. He believes that teachers can change this by teaching the students differently. Similarly, Lucas believes that teachers are a very important figure in a child’s life and that they can be the reason a child grows to do something. Lucas’ article extends Wolfram’s article by proving that teachers can change the discrimination in children because they are an important figure in the child’s life. However, Lucas believes that teachers do not have much time with students and that their time should be increased with students.

These two passages together prove that teachers can help students to a great extent. Wolfram provided the evidence needed to prove that the discrimination of different dialects exists in children. He then concludes that teachers could slow this discrimination down by including lessons in their curriculum that aims to teach students what this type of discrimination can do and that it is not good. Lucas extends on this idea by claiming that teachers had a very important effect on him as a child and he believes that teachers are important a child’s life. This proves that teachers really can change the way a child thinks of different dialects.

Although I agree with both articles. I believe that Lucas could have extended on the ideas in his article. He claims that teachers are important in a child’s life, but he does not claim why a teacher has this role. He also does not talk about if teachers can put an end to dialect discrimination. However, even with this in mind, since Lucas is a trusted source, his ideas on teachers being able to shape the way students think extends on to Wolfram’s ideas. I would like to take the same stance as my sources and claim that teachers can indeed reduce the discrimination of different dialects.

Janie Carnock, author of *How Young Children of Immigrants Face Discrimination at School*, is a policy analyst with the Education Policy program at New America and was also a member of the Dual Language Learner National Work Group and she addressed her work towards bilingual education and educational equality. She claims that children of immigrant’s face discrimination from their teachers or their peers in school. She stated that students “can face discrimination at the personal level from staff or peers at school” (Carnock). She develops this idea by giving examples of things children see in a classroom daily and she explains how that is discriminatory. Her purpose is to inform the readers of the daily discrimination that children of immigrant’s face and thus spark a change in the educational system. This intended audience of this article is teachers, and immigrants.

Janie Carnock wrote an article that expressed her views on how children under the age of eight can be discriminated against because of their accent, by their peers in school. She claimed things such as “name-calling about a student’s accent” is one example of dialect discrimination (Carnock). Wolfram adds onto the fact that students can discriminate against others by conducting a study where “children were asked to accept a box of crayons and drawing pad from one of two ‘magic boxes.’ The boxes looked identical, but the voices that played from a hidden speaker within each box were different: Steve spoke Standard American English and Kenneth spoke African-American English” (Wolfram). One child claimed that he would take it from Steve because “Steve is good, Kenneth is bad” (Wolfram). This proved that the students discriminated based on the accents they heard.

These two examples proved that dialect discrimination takes place and could be present in little things such as name-calling which usually takes place regularly. This would take place between two children in school and the only ones who can stop this are the teachers.

If we further look at these two passages, one can conclude that if teachers were to teach the students that making fun of someone because of their accent is bad, the children might stop doing it and this discrimination could come to a stop. I agree with both articles because they both claim that teachers can stop this discrimination and Wolfram even gives a guide on how teachers can go about doing this.

Amy Tan, author of *Mother Tongue,* is an American author who majored in English and wrote novels claims that there should not be the discrimination on Asian dialects since what a person is saying is what matters, not how they say it. Tan talked about how her views on her mother’s English changed over time. When she was younger, she “believed that her English reflected the quality of what she had to say” but as she grew older she claimed that she realized that quality of what is said is different from the way it is said (Tan). Tan supports her implication by giving personal accounts of discrimination her mother faced because of her “broken English”. Her purpose is to make the readers notice this discrimination to make the readers put an end to it. Tan’s audience consists of teachers since the teachers may help teach students to stop this discrimination.

The University of Wisconsin, a public land-grant research university in Madison, Wisconsin, published a peer reviewed article called *Preventing Language Discrimination,* which argues that language discrimination can be prevented. The university stated in their paper that “languages and dialects bring up issues of possible discrimination due to the perception that some accents are more prestigious than others are” (University of Wisconsin). This shows their beliefs of dialect discrimination. The university supports their argument by providing many situations that could lead to this discrimination, then provided ways for teachers and students to avoid this type of discrimination. The purpose of the article is to make the readers aware of things they can do to avoid being discriminated against or even being the source of the discrimination. The audience of this piece consists of teachers and students who encounter different types of language in their classroom.

The articles by Amy Tan and The University of Wisconsin both agree and add onto each other when speaking about dialect discrimination. Tan talks about how language discrimination affected her mom who spoke “broken English”. She proved that this discrimination existed everywhere including in everyday locations such as the grocery store (Tan). The article by the university extends this idea and claims that it stems in schools and teachers can help stop it by doing a variety of things. Some of these things include understanding that the discrimination exists and teaching the students about it.

These two passages illustrate the fact that dialect discrimination should not be overlooked because it can negatively affect a person to a great extent. Tan gave an example of this where her mother was in the hospital and was not being treated fairly because of her “broken English” (Tan). The university claims that this discrimination can be prevented by teachers and students alike. Both sources together claim that to reduce the dialect discrimination that people face in their everyday life, teachers and students must work to prevent it in the classroom.

I believe that both of these passages are very reliable and speak about a controversial topic that many overlook. However, I agree with the article by the university only to a certain extent. I think that teachers have the power to stop this discrimination while the students do not have as much power as claimed by the article. If one student aims to stop this discrimination the other students may not take him seriously. However, if a teacher aims to put an end to it, the students must take her seriously, given her power. Furthermore, if the students are younger, the students will not be old enough to make other students stop the discrimination but, the teacher would.



Overall, based on these articles, there is dialect discrimination in diverse schools with children as young as seven years old. Sometimes the teacher can be the source of the discrimination by doing something such as giving students who do not speak English as good as others, higher grades that they did not earn. However, with the correct education, I think that teachers can stop dialect discrimination in schools, which would lead to a stop of this discrimination on a larger scale. From my experience in school and with teachers, I can say that teachers can change students for the greater good. An example of this is how teachers teach about global warming and most of the population now believes in global warming and its effects. If teachers want to decrease the amount of discrimination based on accents, they can.

Other people may argue that younger children do not discriminate against each other because they are too young to place labels on other people based on their speech. However, Wolfram debunked this claim through his magical box experiment (Wolfram). He even continued to prove that teachers who acted and taught their students to stop discriminating were successful and reduced dialect discrimination in their schools.

All in all, the many people who came to the United States to escape the horrors of their country were greeted with dialect discrimination. Their children see it and experience it in their schools daily and it is not going to change until teachers decide to stop it. Only teachers have the power to teach the students to stop this poor habit that many overlook. If teachers teach it, then the future generations of immigrants will not have to worry about their children having a tough day at school because the way they speak. They will not have to worry about being ignored in the grocery store because the employee did not understand them.

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