Cultivating Awareness of Identities and Ideologies in Academic Writing

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The Writing Center is a “third space” at the Lewiston-Auburn College where students meet with undergraduate and graduate peer writing assistants to work on gaining and developing key writing skills. Recently, we have been exploring ways to engage in dialogue with students about the roles of identity and ideology in writing.

Abstract

Writing is never a neutral process. It is never isolated from the context in which it takes place, nor is it isolated from the ideologies of that context. Because of this interconnectedness, it is important to recognize the ways in which students, faculty, and the Writing Center approach the process of writing. According to Gee (2008), teaching writing will always “apprentice the learner into” certain ideologies (as cited in Scott, 2016, p. 48). However, it is our hypothesis that students do not always consider the variations of writing disciplines, the inherent ideologies of those disciplines, or the identities that each individual brings to the writing process.

We set out to explore the level to which faculty consider and explicitly discuss writing as an apprenticeship into an ideology. Due to our interactions with both students and faculty, the Writing Center is ideally situated to bring awareness of writing ideologies to the entire university campus. Additionally, the Writing Center can and should also engage in dialogue with students about the roles of identity and ideology in writing thereby enabling them to:

• approach the writing process with awareness and intention,
• be more conscious of the ideologies of their context, and
• accept or challenge those ideologies rather than being unconsciously influenced by them.

Ibeladies Within Disciplines Affect Their Values and Practices.

For example – if each discipline was to study emotion:

• Science - biology - experiments
• Psychology - psychological theories - case studies - interviews
• SBS - human interaction - case studies - interviews
• Humanities - cultural perceptions - artistic representations
• LOS - role of emotions in organizations

Emotions, often described as subjective reactions to experiences, have in fact a physiological basis in neuronal and hormonal activity.

Media representations of emotion inherently demonstrate and reinforce acceptable and non-acceptable displays of emotion for both men and women.

Works Cited

Roozen, K. (2016). Writing is linked to identity. In L. Adler-Kassner & E. Wardle (Eds.), Naming what we know: Threshold concepts of writing studies (pp. 50-53), Logan, UT: Utah State University Press.
