

12-2011

# Claiming Their Right to Write: Linguistically and Culturally Diverse Learners Across a Secondary Curriculum

Sarah Henderson Lee  
*Indiana University of Pennsylvania*

Follow this and additional works at: <http://knowledge.library.iup.edu/etd>

---

## Recommended Citation

Lee, Sarah Henderson, "Claiming Their Right to Write: Linguistically and Culturally Diverse Learners Across a Secondary Curriculum" (2011). *Theses and Dissertations (All)*. 1071.  
<http://knowledge.library.iup.edu/etd/1071>

This Dissertation is brought to you for free and open access by Knowledge Repository @ IUP. It has been accepted for inclusion in Theses and Dissertations (All) by an authorized administrator of Knowledge Repository @ IUP. For more information, please contact [cclouser@iup.edu](mailto:cclouser@iup.edu), [sara.parme@iup.edu](mailto:sara.parme@iup.edu).

STUDENT HAS RESTRICTED ACCESS TO FULL TEXT OF THE DISSERTATION.

ONLY COVER PAGES AND ABSTRACT ARE AVAILABLE AT THIS TIME

CLAIMING THEIR RIGHT TO WRITE:  
LINGUISTICALLY AND CULTURALLY DIVERSE LEARNERS  
ACROSS A SECONDARY CURRICULUM

A Dissertation

Submitted to the School of Graduate Studies and Research

in Partial Fulfillment of the  
Requirements for the Degree

Doctor of Philosophy

Sarah Henderson Lee

Indiana University of Pennsylvania

December 2011

© 2011 by Sarah Henderson Lee

All Rights Reserved

Indiana University of Pennsylvania  
The School of Graduate Studies and Research  
Department of English

We hereby approve the dissertation of

Sarah Henderson Lee

Candidate for the degree of Doctor of Philosophy

---

Gloria Park, Ph.D.  
Assistant Professor of English, Advisor

---

sj Miller, Ph.D.  
Associate Professor of English

---

Lisya Seloni, Ph.D.  
Assistant Professor of English  
Illinois State University

ACCEPTED

---

Timothy P. Mack, Ph.D.  
Dean  
The School of Graduate Studies and Research

Title: Claiming Their Right to Write: Linguistically and Culturally Diverse Learners  
Across a Secondary Curriculum

Author: Sarah Henderson Lee

Dissertation Chair: Dr. Gloria Park

Dissertation Committee Members: Dr. sj Miller  
Dr. Lisya Seloni

Linguistically and culturally diverse (LCD) students in U.S. high schools are often enrolled concurrently in English Language (EL) classes and general education classes. In both learning environments, students are expected to communicate through writing. The writing development of LCD students, however, is not always consistent across the curriculum. In part, this is due to the complex nature of the secondary educational environment where these students' writing is often overshadowed by "the more dramatic, threatening, and far-reaching issues learners face and the seriousness of the other language, identity, and agency issues their cases present" (Leki, Cumming, & Silva, 2008, p. 26). Framed by concepts of biliteracy (Hornberger, 2003), language socialization (Bayley & Schecter, 2003), and identity (Norton Pierce, 1995), this study explores the following research questions:

1. What are the experiences of seven LCD learners writing across the curriculum in a U.S., secondary context?
2. How do LCD learner identities affect secondary writing across the curriculum (WAC) instruction?
3. To what extent do secondary writing programs meet the needs of LCD learners as they transition into higher education and/or the work force?

To represent the transformative purpose underlying the social constructivism practices of qualitative research, a critical case study methodology is employed. Multiple data sources, including in-depth interviews, non-participant observations, and written artifacts, illuminate the writing experiences of LCD learners nearing the transition to higher education and/or the work force. As analytic perspectives, Hornberger's (2003) continua of biliteracy (COB) model and Critical Discourse Analysis (CDA) (Rogers, 2004) are used to make explicit the power relationships influencing the writing and writing experiences of secondary LCD learners across a curriculum. By pairing the texts of these writers with their perceptions of writing across a curriculum, the following power-influenced themes emerge within the secondary WAC context of this study: (a) writing instruction, practices, and feedback inconsistencies; (b) forced representations of LCD writers; (c) the EL classroom as both a safe space and a ghetto; and (d) an unequal trade between language acquisition and subtractive bilingualism. Moreover, secondary multilingual writers are provided with the agency and voice needed to begin claiming their right to write.