



SELF-ASSESSING LINGUISTIC BIASES

FROM DEFICIT MINDED ASSUMPTIONS TO EQUITY MINDED
BELIEFS IN TEACHING & LEARNING

Abstract

In this instructional material, teachers and teacher educators will define implicit linguistic biases and linguistic justice work in the teaching of writing, revise deficit-minded linguistic assumptions into equity-minded beliefs about students' writing strengths, and reflect on and redesign a writing assignment through a transparent, equity-minded approach.

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Self Assessing Linguistic Bias: August 2022

*Published by Branch Alliance for Educator Diversity, an imprint of M.E.B. Alliance for Educator Diversity, Inc., 7500 Rialto Blvd, Building 1, Suite 270, Austin, TX 78735
(<https://www.educatordiversity.org>)*

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Engagement Activity #1: Revising deficit-minded statement to equity-minded beliefs

1. To complete this activity, please review the following resources: 1) the implicit bias intervention strategies located on page 16 in [Concepts and Activities for Racial Equity work](#), 2) the National Council of Teachers of English resource titled, [Racism Exists](#), and 3) the assumptions and how to rethink them by visiting the [Creating Inclusive College Classrooms](#) resource.
2. **Intervention:** What intervention to address or reduce implicit bias would you take as you revise this statement? Why?
3. **Revised statement:** How would you revise the deficit-minded assumption into an equity-minded statement?
4. **Teaching/learning practices:** What type of writing assignment and/or feedback on writing embraces the inclusive & equity-minded statement?

Groups & Deficit-minded/implicit bias assumptions	Intervention to address or reduce implicit bias	Revised Statement: Inclusive & Equity-Minded Statement	What type of writing assignment and/or feedback on writing embraces the inclusive & equity-minded statement?
<p>EXAMPLE</p> <p>Students from certain backgrounds (e.g., students from urban or rural areas, students who speak with an accent, students from specific racial or ethnic groups) are poor writers.</p> <p>Note: this is a guided example and only one example for how to approach statements like these.</p>	<p>stereotype replacement (the statement is based on a stereotype of students from certain backgrounds) Ask self: why is this a stereotype? We possess misconceptions of what “good” writing means within an “academic” and “English only” context. An equity-minded statement centers the support and resources individuals need to succeed and their prior knowledge and strengths.</p>	<p>Within the context of linguistic justice work, a revised equity minded statement would read: “Students from different backgrounds (e.g., students from urban or rural areas, students who speak with an accent, students from specific racial or ethnic groups) possess diverse writing abilities and knowledge of different languages that challenge and enhance traditional notions of what “good” writing means for different audiences, intentions, and goals</p>	<p>Assignments that would embrace equity-minded notion could ask students to record and share different types of writing they engage with on a daily basis (school, work, family, friends, community) and how these languages change or shift based on their audience, purpose, intentions, and goals.</p>
<p>Students whose cultural affiliation is tied to non-English speaking groups are not native English speakers or are bilingual.</p>			

Engagement Activity #2: Writing Assignment Self-Analysis

1. Please read each question carefully and discuss collaboratively in your small groups around a current or most recent writing assignment you have assigned or are planning to assign in your class. Please choose one writing assignment to discuss collectively.
2. As you reflect on each question, please think about your responses considering the definitions and examples we have explored in the first part of the presentation related to equity vs. equality, implicit bias, and deficit-minded beliefs.
3. Please be honest in your responses. Remember that implicit biases are hidden from us, so we can help each other as we first become aware of our biases and then commit to enacting change.
4. Save your reflective responses to inform our next activity as well as your redesign of writing assignments in the future.

Reflection Questions	Your reflective responses
What elements of a current writing assignment you teach do you think create linguistically biased practices?	
What elements do you think might hinder students' abilities to draw on their full linguistic repertoire?	
Who and what languages are overrepresented and underrepresented in readings, guest speakers, collaborations in preparation for this writing assignment?	
What does the writing assignment, in its current form, assume about students (e.g., access to resources, literacy and language background, technology, books, car, travel, cultural background, etc.)?	

Engagement Activity #3: Writing Assignment Design Action Plan

1. Informed by our conversation on transparent assignment design, please reflect on each question carefully as you identify an action plan collectively for how you hope to approach a writing assignment redesign.
2. As you reflect on each question, please think about our previous discussions and activities.
3. Save your reflective responses to inform your writing assignments in the future.

Reflection Questions	Your reflective responses
What is a writing assignment you wish you design or (re)design? Why?	
What elements of the assignment will you revise to embrace linguistic justice, students' rights to their own language, and linguistic inclusivity? Specifically, How will you communicate this in the purpose, task, and criteria for success of the assignment?	
How can the assignments empower students to not only draw on their full linguistic resources when writing and communicating but also to analyze the linguistic imbalances in our communities that often marginalize the most vulnerable in our society?	
What biases might influence your feedback and assessment (criteria for success) of students' writing or language practices?	
How will your feedback and assessment (criteria for success) process be equitable or differentiated to ensure all students' ability to demonstrate learning, engagement, and empowerment?	

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