

# **Anyone Can Code-Mesh: Teaching and Tutoring Strategies for The First-Year Writing Classroom**

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# Overview

- **What is code-meshing?**
- **Why teach code-meshing in first-year writing courses?**
- **How to incorporate code-meshing in our classrooms?**
  - Structured class discussions
  - Formal/informal assignments around code-meshing
  - Tutoring strategies

# What is code-meshing?

**Controversy:** Is it *code-switching* or *code-meshing*?

**Definitions:**

⊙ *code-switching*

- **shifts between multiple languages, local varieties, or registers**

## Code-Switching: between INDONESIAN, ENGLISH, AND FRENCH

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# Key & Peele: Phone Call

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## **Definitions:**

### ● *code-switching*

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### ● *code-meshing*

- blends languages, local varieties, or registers with a dominant language
- tends to be a purposeful, rhetorical strategy

# What is code-meshing?

## **Our observations:**

- Both code-switching and code-meshing can involve multiple local and global languages



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## Our observations:

- Both code-switching and code-meshing can involve multiple local and global languages
- Code-meshing is a deliberate, rhetorical move made by the author
- As such, code-meshing is highly relevant to writing and writing pedagogy

# Why teach code-meshing?

## The writing classroom is changing:

- Demographic shifts in American schools, universities, workplace, and society at large

Moss and Walters (1993): "no single ethnic group will constitute the majority of Americans: instead, the majority will soon be composed of various groups of ethnic minorities"

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- Students' right to their own language (NCTE 1974)
- Council of Writing Program Administrators: outcome statements for first-year composition (2014)

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changing:

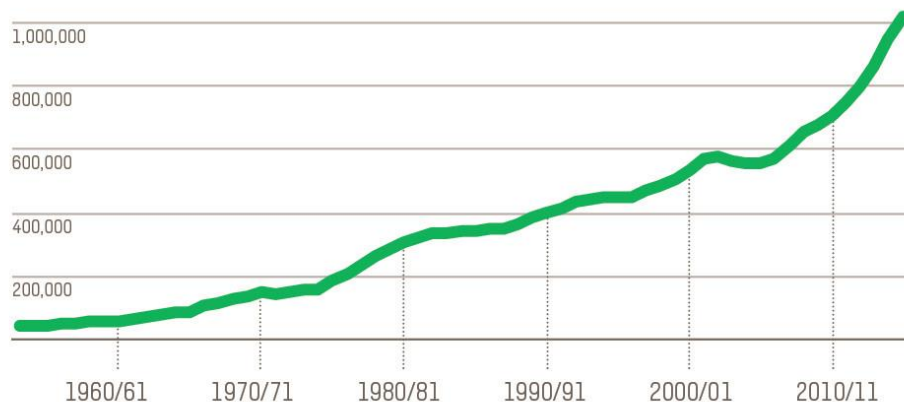
Institute of International Education (IIE)

**1,043,839** international students  
studied at U.S. colleges and universities in 2015/16.

Open Doors is conducted by the Institute of International Education  
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INTERNATIONAL STUDENTS IN THE U.S. 1953/54 – 2015/16



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# Why teach code-meshing?

## **The writing classroom is changing:**

- The third culture kids (Pollock and Van Reken, 2009)
- Multilinguals: global and domestic (Grosjean, 2012)
- College statistics (UR 2016)
- Higher education and global engagement

# Why teach code-meshing?

## **We can help students think about:**

- The social, political, and cultural features of spoken and written language (Shafer, 2007)
- Their perceptions of race and power and how these are connected to linguistic choices (Baugh, 2000)
- Their own diverse linguistic and cultural identities
- Linguistic risks and assumptions about 'good' and 'bad' writing

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- courses centered on language

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- courses centered on language

- **Academic code-meshing as a unit**

- an integral part of the final research project
- applicable to a wide range of theme-based writing courses

Suzanne: **Considering Audience and Teaching Culture through Informal, Code-meshing Opportunities**

## **Student assumptions**

- **Value – ‘good’ versus ‘bad’ writing**
- **Approach – transferable writing skills**
- **Purpose – the audience’s needs**

Suzanne: **Considering Audience and Teaching Culture  
through Informal, Code-meshing Opportunities**

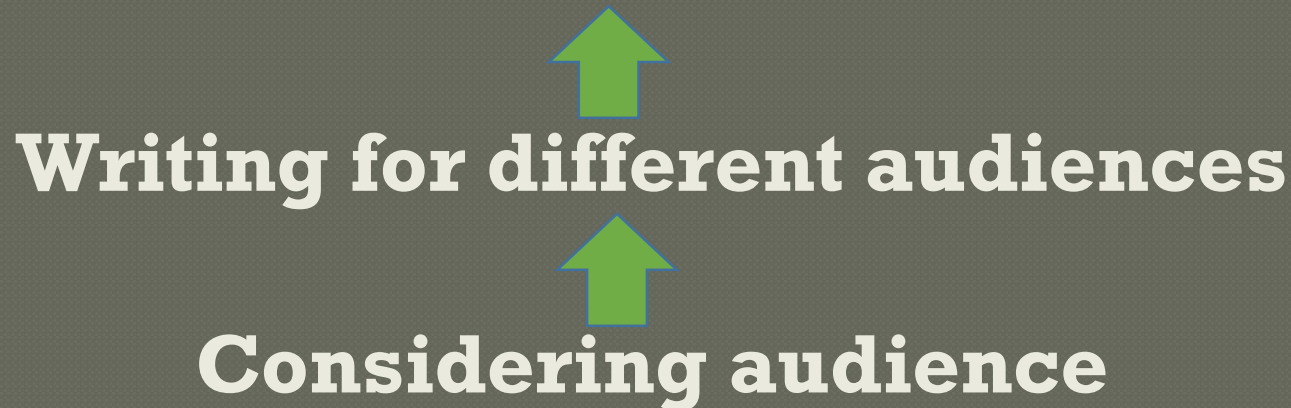
**A scaffolded approach**



**Considering audience**

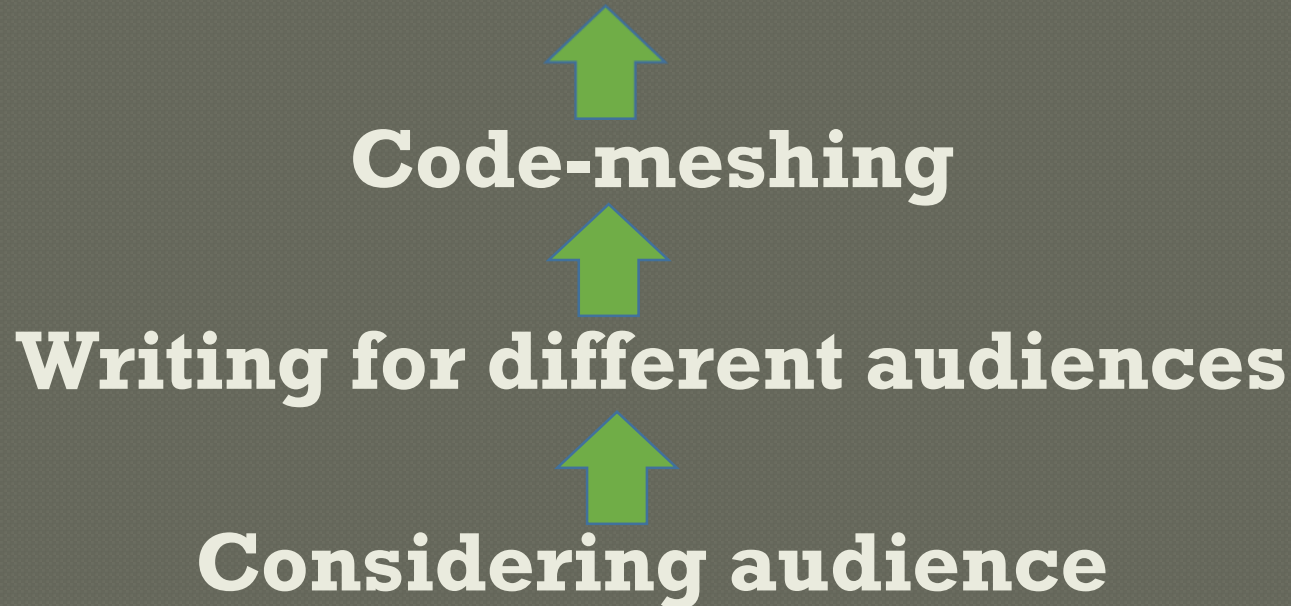
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**A scaffolded approach**

**Peer and self-evaluation**



**Code-meshing**



**Writing for different audiences**



**Considering audience**

## Whitney: **Code-Meshing as an Object of Study in Formal, Argumentative Writing**

### **language as “object of study” and as “playground”**

- explore connections between language & thought and language & culture
- “play” with mixing different registers, genres, etc.
- think deeply about impact of particular linguistic choices



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- “play” with mixing different registers, genres, etc.
- think deeply about impact of particular linguistic choices

### **my focus: language/grammar as “tools for creating and shaping meaning”**

- **audience, purpose, genre:** different tools for different jobs
- **choices:** every choice matters, influences the final “job” the writing can do

## Whitney: **Code-Meshing as an Object of Study in Formal, Argumentative Writing**

### Where do we code-mesh?

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- “Recasting” in informal assignments:
  - “translate” a scientific study into a letter to a family member
  - Write a “conversation” between AI scholars/philosophers

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## Where do we code-mesh?

- In students' freewriting and early drafting
- “Recasting” in informal assignments:
  - “translate” a scientific study into a letter to a family member
  - Write a “conversation” between AI scholars/philosophers
- In discussions about “translation” that take place throughout the semester, starting with first informal assignment...

## Whitney: **Code-Meshing as an Object of Study in Formal, Argumentative Writing**

### **Informal Assignment: “Untranslatables”**

(what makes a text hard to translate?)

- translation across languages? registers? cultures? genres?

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(what makes a text hard to translate?)

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**This becomes the basis for some students’ first argumentative paper (FP1)**

- develop arguments relating to author’s intention as reflected through linguistic choices

# Stella: **The Place and Practices of Code-Meshing in Academic Writing**

## ◉ **Code-meshing in published research articles**

1. Blowin' in the Wind: English Grammar in United States Schools
2. Language and African Americans: Movin on up a Lil Higher
3. To Err Is Human; To Study Err-Making Is Cognitive Science
4. Sleep is of the Brain, by the Brain and for the Brain
5. Whales Are Big and It Matters

# Stella: The Place and Practices of Code-Meshing in Academic Writing

## ● Code-meshing in published research articles

1. Hancock, C., & Kolln, M. (2010). Blowin' in the wind: English grammar in United States schools. In T. Locke (Ed), *Beyond the grammar wars, A resource for teachers and students on developing language knowledge in the English/literacy classroom* (pp. 21-37). New York, NY: Routledge.
2. Smitherman, G. (2004). Language and African Americans: Movin on up a lil higher. *Journal of English Linguistics*, 32(3), 186-196.
3. Hofstadter, D. R., & Moser, D. (1989). To err is human; to study err-making is cognitive science. *Michigan Quarterly Review* 27(2), 185-193.
4. Hobson, J. A. (2005). Sleep is of the brain, by the brain and for the brain. *Nature*, 437(7063), 1254-1256.
5. Kareiva, P., Yuan-Farrell, C., & O'Conner, C. (2006). Whales are big and it matters. In J. A. Estes, D. P. DeMaster, D. F. Doak, T. M. Williams, & R. L. Brownell Jr. (Eds), *Whales, whaling, and ocean ecosystems* (pp. 379-387). Berkeley, CA: University of California Press.



# Stella: **The Place and Practices of Code-Meshing in Academic Writing**

## ● **Code-meshing in published research articles: more examples**

- Bennett, K. (2007). Epistemicide! the tale of a predatory discourse. *The Translator*, 13(2), 151-169.
- Young, V. A. (2010). Should Writers Use They Own English?. *Iowa Journal of Cultural Studies*, 12(1), 110-117.

## ● **‘Ain’t So/Is Not’: Academic Writing Doesn’t Always Mean Setting Aside Your Own Voice (Chap 9, *They Say/I Say*)**

# Stella: **The Place and Practices of Code-Meshing in Academic Writing**

## ● **The Multimodal Code-Meshing Project**

- An integral part of the final Research Project
- Mixed use of the writer's linguistic resources as well as a range of multimodal components to engage a targeted audience cognitively and emotionally
- Heightened awareness of the audience and the author's own agency
- Code-meshing for communication and argument

# Stella: The Place and Practices of Code-Meshing in Academic Writing

## The Dear Parents Project

rsd™

**"If you talk to a man  
in a language he understands,  
that goes to his head.  
If you talk to him in his  
language, that goes to his heart."**

*Nelson Mandela*



# **Sarah: Developing Strategies for Tutoring Code-Meshing**

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- Risner, D. (2014). Gender problems in Western theatrical dance: Little girls, big sissies & the 'Baryshnikov Complex'. *International Journal of Education & the Arts*, 15(10).
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[http://www.ted.com/talks/jamila\\_lyiscott\\_3\\_ways\\_to\\_speak\\_english](http://www.ted.com/talks/jamila_lyiscott_3_ways_to_speak_english)

# 2017 CCCC Code-Meshing Presentation

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Please **email us** to continue this conversation and give us feedback.

1. How well did this presentation help you to understand the usefulness of code-meshing as a pedagogical tool?
2. How well did this presentation help you to think about how you might incorporate code-meshing into your writing classes?
3. Is there anything we didn't cover that you wish we had? Suggestions?

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Stella Wang: [stella.wang@rochester.edu](mailto:stella.wang@rochester.edu)

Suzanne Woodring: [swoodring602@yahoo.com](mailto:swoodring602@yahoo.com)

## Other presentations of interest

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1. **Thursday 3:15-4:30 pm:** D.19 *Cultivating STEM-writing through diagnostic assessment, genre analysis, and writing center* (A106)
2. **Friday 8:00-9:15 am:** F.05 *What linguistics can offer the composition teacher* (F151)
3. **Friday 6:30-7:30 pm:** FSIG.12 *Linguistics, Language, and Writing Standing Group Business Meeting* (B119)