Audience, Purpose, and Code-Meshing

Each of these in-class activities requires students to take an increasing consideration of the audiences' needs and how to best meet them.

Activity #1: Considering Audience

This initial activity asks students to consider the significance of audience, purpose, authorial voice, grammar, and overall 'effective' communication.

Read the following passages, each presenting the benefits of being bilingual (or trilingual) and discuss with a partner. In your discussion, please address the following questions:

1. Who do you think the audience might be for each of the texts?
2. What kind of text do you think each is?
3. Where might you find each text? How do you know?
4. Where would you NOT find each text? How do you know?
5. Is there anything else that you can tell about each intended audience based on the text?

Passage 1
"I was born in 1946 in Paris. My mother was British and my father French but I did not become bilingual immediately as my parents spoke French to me at first. It was only when I was sent to an English boarding school in Switzerland at the age of 7 that I acquired English in a "sink or swim" manner. I don't recall it being difficult as the staff and my peers were all very friendly. I stayed in that school for 7 years and then, at the age of 14, was sent to a boarding school in England where I remained until my A-levels. This change was culturally very difficult and I never quite managed to become totally monocultural (i.e. British only) in the way others wanted me to be. But after 11 years of English schooling, I wasn't really French any longer and my return to France to enter the University of Paris at the age of 18 was quite a change. It took me a number of years to adapt linguistically, but especially culturally, to France and that explains many of my reflections in the book I was to write some years later."

Passage 2
"Bilingualism is the ability to use two languages with equal fluency, and to sound like a native in both. Young children are naturally designed to acquire what ever language(s) they are regularly exposed to. Although adults can study a second language to a high, even fluent, standard, they rarely manage to avoid a foreign accent. That's why true bilingualism has to start early in life - and why you don't need to be 'good at languages' to be bilingual.

The language you speak is closely bound up with your sense of identity, and how you view the world: being bilingual can make you feel at home in a wider set of social situations, and can give you two slightly different ways of looking at things."

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<u>Passage 3</u>
"'Cause I speak three tongues
One for each:
Home, school and friends
I'm a tri-lingual orator
Sometimes I'm consistent with my language now
Then switch it up so I don't bore later
Sometimes I fight back two tongues
While I use the other one in the classroom
And when I mistakenly mix them up
I feel crazy like … I'm cooking in the bathroom
I know that I had to borrow your language because mines was stolen
But you can't expect me to speak your history wholly while mines is broken
These words are spoken
By someone who is simply fed up with the Eurocentric ideals of this season
And the reason I speak a composite version of your language
Is because mines was raped away along with my history
I speak broken English so the profusing gashes can remind us
That our current state is not a mystery
I'm so tired of the negative images that are driving my people mad
So unless you've seen it rob a bank stop calling my hair bad
I'm so sick of this nonsensical racial disparity
So don't call it good unless your hair is known for donating to charity
As much as has been raped away from our people
How can you expect me to treat their imprint on your language
As anything less than equal
Let there be no confusion
Let there be no hesitation
This is not a promotion of ignorance
This is a linguistic celebration
That's why I put "tri-lingual" on my last job application
I can help to diversify your consumer market is all I wanted them to know
And when they call me for the interview I'll be more than happy to show that
I can say:
 "What's good"
 "Whatagwan"
And of course …"Hello"
Because I'm "articulate"
Thank you."

Activity #2: Writing for Different Audiences

Choose any topic to write about related to your academic field. Take 5 minutes to write about this topic to a colleague (in the same academic field). Then find someone who is NOT in your academic field. Before you write about your topic again, briefly interview this outside person. Find out the level of background knowledge (if any) he or she has relevant to your topic. Take 6 minutes to write about your topic again to this person. Be prepared to briefly describe both of these audience members and to provide a rationale for particular linguistic choices.

Activity #3: Code-Meshing for a Blended Audience

Pretend that you are to attend the International Interdisciplinary Conference, and you need to be prepared to present your topic to members of an audience who come from different disciplines. The two individuals that you've already written to (in activity #2) will be in your audience. Write a brief speech on your topic for this interdisciplinary audience. Decide what approaches you'll need to take, and incorporate appropriate rhetorical devices to most effectively meet the needs of everyone (or at least to these two audience members that you know about).

Activity #4: Peer Review and Self-Evaluation

Find another person who is neither in your academic field nor in the field of your second audience member. Share your speech with this person along with an explanation of your two audiences. Discuss with your peer the following components:
- Clarity of purpose and needs of audience
- Particular language, tone, and style choices
- Communicative benefits or disadvantages of rhetoric choices

Take a couple of minutes to debrief about this process with your peer. Which parts of this assignment came naturally? What was challenging?

References for Considering Audience Activity

Passage 1

Kruschewsky, G. (2014, June). *6 multilingual benefits that you only get if you speak another language.* Retrieved from http://www.huffingtonpost.com/2014/06/02/multilingual-benefits_n_5399980.html

Passage 2

Fan, S. P., Liberman, Z., Keysar, B., & Kinzler, K. D. (2015, May). The exposure advantage: Early exposure to a multilingual environment promotes effective communication. *Psychological Science, 26*(7), 1090-1097. Retrieved from http://journals.sagepub.com.ezp.lib.rochester.edu/doi/full/10.1177/0956797615574699

Passage 3

Lyiscott, J. (2014, February). *3 ways to speak English* [Video file]. Retrieved from http://www.ted.com/talks/jamila_lyiscott_3_ways_to_speak_english