FINAL REPORT

MULTILINGUAL LIFE on a MONOLINGUAL CAMPUS

INTERNATIONAL CENTER for ETHICS, JUSTICE and PUBLIC LIFE
Brandeis University

A Project of the Language, Culture and Justice Hub

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Brandeis prides itself on being a "university of the world" – one that strives to create knowledge and action across borders and to participate in sustainable global partnerships. Yet the many implications of multilingualism among our international students, and the values associated with their linguistic skills, are too often ignored.

Introduction

Over the 2021-22 academic year, a group of researchers studied the experiences of Brandeis' international students around language use and language attitudes through a unique project, Multilingual Life on a Monolingual Campus (MLMC). The project aimed to shed light on how our international students use all the linguistic resources at their disposal and respond to language challenges and opportunities, in both their academic and social lives, in a space that is predominantly English speaking. This topic is an important one, given the demographics of our student population: in Fall 2021, more than 20% of Brandeis undergraduates and almost 35% of our graduate students were international, with China being the first source country and India the second in both categories. Various other Asian countries were among the top 10 source countries.

Brandeis prides itself on being a "university of the world" – one that strives to create knowledge and action across borders and to participate in sustainable global partnerships. Yet the many implications of multilingualism among our international students, and the values associated with their linguistic skills, are too often ignored. Furthermore, any language bias that international students may encounter at Brandeis is not covered by equal opportunity policies around "protected categories", nor is language explicitly mentioned by the Office of Diversity, Equity and Inclusion as one of the "many social identities [that] benefit our entire community." Indeed, the observation made decades ago by American sociolinguist Rosina Lippi Green[1] remains largely true today: linguistic profiling is "so commonly accepted, so widely perceived as appropriate, that it must be seen as the last widely open backdoor to discrimination."

Leigh Swigart, Director of the International Center for Ethics, Justice and Public Life's Programs in International Justice and Society (and creator of the Language, Culture and Justice Hub), recruited in August 2021 a very able MLMC research team made up of Brandeis undergraduate and graduate students. Team members brought their own perspectives and interests to the study: several were themselves international students; most of them had direct connections to Asia; and all were multilingual.

The six researchers spent the 2021-22 academic year preparing and administering a survey to Brandeis international students, and then conducting follow-up interviews with a subset of survey respondents. During Fall 2022, the two researchers who had not graduated the previous May worked alongside Swigart to analyze and summarize the project findings. This report presents these results in a succinct and easily digestible form.

MLMC was enhanced by running in parallel with similar studies at Macquarie University in Sydney, Australia and the University of Birmingham in the UK, both of which, like Brandeis, are English-dominant spaces with large international student populations. The Language, Culture and Justice Hub acted as the coordinator of this multi-country study. The Brandeis student research team interacted online with the other teams, sharing ideas for the survey design and the subsequent interview process, and comparing their findings.

1 Lippi Green, Rosina. 1994. "Accent, Standard Language Ideology, and Discriminatory Pretext in the Courts." Language in Society 23 (163-198). https://www.academia.edu/749542/Accent_standard_language_ideology_and_discriminatory_pretext_in_the_courts.

Given the recent increase in anti-Asian sentiment – an unfortunate and misguided response to the COVID pandemic and current political tensions – the US, UK and Australia project leaders agreed that it was an opportune moment for their respective institutions to turn their attention to how students hailing from other countries, and in particular Chinese students, navigate their multilingual lives on largely monolingual campuses. According to Swigart, "it is important that we understand the challenges that international students face and how the pandemic, in particular, has affected how they choose to communicate in public." Macquarie-based scholar Agnes Bodis, who conducted doctoral research on the discursive construction of international students' language proficiency in Australia, said of the joint project, "Understanding the lived experiences of international students is essential for the creation of a truly inclusive higher education." University of Birmingham's Prof. Karen McAuliffe added, "This is a unique opportunity for students to work on a truly interdisciplinary and international project, which will shine a light on the experiences of international students across three continents."

The Language, Culture and Justice Hub hopes that the findings of Multilingual Life on a Monolingual Campus will help the Brandeis community become more aware of its attitudes around languages and their speakers, and better appreciate, value and understand the multilingual members of our campus. To this end, a number of recommendations for the Brandeis administration and faculty are provided at the end of this report.

Zoom meeting of research teams from Brandeis, Birmingham, and Macquarie Universities

Methodology

The MLMC project consisted of three main activities.

Background reading and preparation

The research team began by doing in-depth reading on the current debates and research around international students and their linguistic experiences on campuses where English is the primary language. Concurrently, the team reviewed the current policies at Brandeis on language use and discrimination to understand to what extent the university is already addressing issues of language difference on campus and in classrooms.

Survey design and roll-out

In writing the survey questions, MLMC researchers focused largely on the language knowledge of international students; their broader campus experiences around language; feelings of inclusion and exclusion vis-à-vis domestic students and faculty; and basic demographics of the group (nationality, first language, gender, undergraduate/graduate, school/program of study).

The survey, which used Qualtrics software, was designed carefully to avoid unconscious bias and leading questions. A survey flyer was created and distributed digitally through various university social media platforms and email listservs focused on international students – like those of the International Students and Scholars Office (ISSO), the Heller School for Social Policy and Management, the International Business School, and the Graduate School of Arts and Sciences – and the survey was also announced in classes with high international student enrollment. The survey was furthermore featured during *I Am Global Week*, and paper flyers with a QR code were posted around campus. The survey was available to be completed by Brandeis students for approximately six weeks.

More than 300 responses were received, representing 46 countries, with just slightly more undergraduates than graduate students participating. Over 100 students expressed interest in being part of the follow-up interview phase of the study, in response to the final question of the survey. The names of students who completed the survey were put into a lottery, from which 20 were randomly selected to receive a $30 Amazon gift card. After removing outliers from the survey (e.g., students who did not fit the criteria

and suspected bots), the team analyzed the responses and used them to shape the interview questions for the next phase of the study.

Conducting interviews

The MLMC research team developed an interview guide that would encourage international students to elaborate on their campus language experiences. Questions focused on language background and ability; interactions with domestic students and faculty; make-up of social networks; experiences of discrimination or bias; and perceptions of institutional support for international students. Interviews adopted a qualitative and semi-directive approach, with interviewers allowing the participants to go "off script" into topics that they felt were important. Researchers practiced interview techniques beforehand and communicated with their peers in Australia and the UK on best interview practices.

The team invited 21 individuals for interviews, deliberately choosing a group that reflected the demographics of the Brandeis student body according to nationality and degree level. Ultimately, 16 students responded and were interviewed (receiving a $30 Amazon gift card in thanks.) Each member of the research team conducted two or three interviews lasting approximately one hour.

The interviews were conducted via Zoom and recorded, after the interviewee had the opportunity to discuss and then sign a detailed consent form (now on file with the team leader). The interview recordings and transcripts were subsequently analyzed by the researchers, with comments and anecdotes organized into dominant themes. The findings from this analysis are presented in the next section.

The MLMC team acknowledges that this small interview sample cannot be seen to represent all international students at Brandeis. We feel, nonetheless, that what we present below offers significant insights into the lives of our multilingual students as they navigate a space dominated by the English language and its native speakers.

Findings

It is important to acknowledge that the international students who responded to our project survey indicated that they are by and large content with their lives at Brandeis and feel generally positive about the campus atmosphere, a result which we found encouraging. Our study uncovered, however, some trends and recurring frustrations through the in-depth and more nuanced conversations that the interview phase allowed.

Below are the five broad themes that emerged organically from the interview transcripts, illustrated with selected quotations from our interviewees. These lead to the recommendations offered in the final section.

> *"We had something due last week. I did it like a week before, and it took me eight hours, just recording myself 20 times. Then I went to the library the day it was due and saw a person doing it an hour before. You know, like a native speaker. He did a real quick recording of himself, one time, and then submitted it."*
>
> An international undergraduate describes how long it took to complete an audio assignment compared to the effort expended by an American classmate

1. Language experiences in the academic sphere

International students constitute a significant part of the Brandeis population, and their primary aim is clearly to gain a degree, whether at the undergraduate or graduate level. Their experiences in the classroom and in other academic environments thus occupied a central place in their accounts of language use and attitudes on campus. Several recurrent topics and concerns are described below.

International students begin their studies from varying baselines

A common topic running throughout the MLMC interviews was the challenges faced by international students who share learning spaces with their domestic counterparts. Unfamiliarity with the American classroom style, lack of understanding of context-specific vocabulary, and encounters with new kinds of assignments, among other challenges, were cited as significant stressors for international students, especially during their first semesters.

Several interviewees were alumni of the Gateway Scholars Program, which was designed to "prepare high-performing, nonnative speakers of English for the rigors of coursework

at Brandeis University." Nearly all of the students who went through the program were from China. Because the Gateway Program took into account cultural and instructional differences between China and the US, one undergraduate felt a shock when he transitioned into his first semester of regular classes and realized that he was now expected to perform in the same way as his American counterparts. This expectation has led some international students, he continued, to choose so-called "objective" majors, like math and physics, where they believe that culture and background matter less.

An undergraduate from Central America described his early days in an Undergraduate Writing Seminar as "a humbling experience." He elaborated, "My confidence was really low. Depression was hitting hard. You know, like 'how am I going to make it here?' So that's when I actually started going to a tutor and seeking out help. It was honestly better than just figuring things out by myself." An undergraduate from Greece echoed this confusion and also the need to seek assistance. "I went to [the professor's] office hours, and I told him, 'I don't really understand what you're talking about, because all these terms are unknown to me.'" The professor then provided a vocabulary list that he made available to all his students, not just those from other countries. A Chinese undergraduate found oral presentations a particular challenge, having to write all his ideas down word for word so that he could then read it in front of the class, not having the proficiency or confidence to do this more extemporaneously.

It is clear, however, that not all international students encounter a helpful attitude on the part of their instructors. Many professors do not understand, or do not wish to acknowledge, that some international students start at different baselines than the average American student. A Chinese undergraduate said that his journalism class assumed that all students would be familiar with US media outlets, but they were all new to him. He went on to say that he was too intimidated to take advantage of office hours, this being an action he would only take if "desperate." Another Chinese undergraduate noted that citation practices and what counts as plagiarism were not made clear enough, especially as common American understandings run counter to what is practiced in the Chinese educational system. An Israeli student noted that her professor did not seem to realize or care that she could not read English as quickly as native English-speaking students, nor pack as much into a four-minute audio assignment. She also recounted one of her worst linguistic experiences: seeing unfamiliar terms on an in-class exam, and upon seeking clarification being told by the professor that "she should know these words."

A number of international undergraduate students also expressed frustration at the rapid pace of classroom proceedings. "I have a class where the professor dictates the notes to the class and since I cannot write as fast in English, I always miss out on material," recounted one. "When I reached out to him about this and asked to be given the notes from the class notetaker, he said he cannot do that without official approval from the accommodation committee. Since

I do not have any accommodations, I am left to 'chase' all the missing material." She consequently felt shunted between her professor, ISSO and Student Accessibility Support services. She also felt that the writing seminars and center do not give international students the tools they need to understand grammar and sentence structure. "You're just like in this circle of never getting the help you need."

To differentiate or not to differentiate?

The kinds of frustrations and difficulties described above lead to an inevitable question. Should Brandeis instructors treat international students differently as a matter of course, acknowledging their challenges openly? While some interviewees would clearly prefer this differential treatment, at least in certain aspects of their academic life, many also do not wish to occupy a "marked" category in relation to their domestic counterparts. It was noted that some professors, for example, create "Chinese-only" teams for group work with the good intention of facilitating communication. And several interviewees indeed noted that using Mandarin to ask other Chinese students for explanations and clarifications in class is a strategy that helps them through their early semesters as they settle into English-speaking academic life.

But separating students by language may also eliminate one of the few opportunities that international students have for meaningful interaction with American students. In the words of one interviewee, such separation "may not be helpful for international students to get involved in American life." Special treatment can thus be a double-edged sword, with advantages and disadvantages.

The questions raised here are the following: Might it be possible to achieve some sort of middle ground between special treatment and an unwillingness to accommodate on the part of professors, TAs and academic services? Might there be a way to address the needs of international students that will not reinforce a "deficit mindset"[2] around them?

Moving beyond the confines of US scholarship

A number of interviewees, especially those in graduate programs, expressed surprise at the limitation and predictability of the scholarly resources that are assigned in their courses. An African Heller student noted that readings in her classes are all from American authors, which only provide American perspectives. These readings do not "do justice" to the case studies they consider; for example, when looking at the conflict in South Sudan, students do not know the language and culture there, and the readings do not fill this gap. She also noted that the Brandeis library does not seem to provide access to many sources from outside the US scholarship sphere.

A Chinese undergraduate encountered a related situation in a politics class in which he enrolled. As the topic was related to China, he hoped to encounter Chinese perspectives and have some familiarity with the subject matter. But he quickly dropped the class when he saw that his fellow students were mostly Asian Americans who grew up in an educational system that is strictly US-centric.

A Russian undergraduate student noted that professors who have themselves had experience abroad are often the most empathetic and understanding of the circumstances faced by international students. The Heller School, which only offers graduate programs, emerged as the space that most encourages international

2 Bodis, Agnis. 2021. "'Double Deficit' and Exclusion: Mediated Language Ideologies and International Students' Multilingualism." Multilingua 40(3): 367-91.

The limitations of such overseas experiences for domestic students suggests that the presence of international students at Brandeis might constitute our most meaningful claim to a global identity.

students to contribute their life experiences and perspectives to their learning activities. A Heller student from Tanzania appreciated this, noting that "a number of students, including myself, take advantage of that opportunity." Considering the number of international students enrolled at the Heller School and the international content of several of its programs, this is perhaps not surprising.[3]

Northeastern University scholar Qianqian Zhang-Wu has published on the experience of Chinese international undergraduate students in the United States, and she writes persuasively about the benefits of offering classes where these students can contribute their unique knowledge and perspectives.[4] It has also been suggested that encouraging students to cite scholars from countries outside the US, and in languages other than English, could broaden the horizons of not only domestic students but also instructors.[5]

Conclusion

Brandeis' aspirations to be a global institution could be advanced through the creation and enhancement of campus learning environments that value the knowledge and experiences that international students bring with them, including their linguistic skills. Instead of evaluating this population according to a deficit model, classrooms and other academic spaces could draw on the expertise of international students – and foreign-born instructors – to enrich the educational life of all.

Domestic Brandeis students who study abroad increasingly pursue those studies in English and often in carefully curated environments, instead of taking courses in a local university. This arrangement not only reinforces the unfortunate move toward English-language hegemony in global education[6] but also prevents US students from experiencing first-hand the kind of educational, cultural and linguistic immersion that their international classmates at Brandeis are required to undergo. The limitations of such overseas experiences for domestic students suggests that the presence of international students at Brandeis might constitute our most meaningful claim to a global identity.

Given this fact, along with the vital tuition dollars coming from our international students, the university would do well to acknowledge the challenges facing this group with understanding and openness, and to institute effective solutions to these challenges across all schools, programs and departments.

3The International Business School also has a global focus, but it was mentioned in only a single interview and not extensively.

4 Zhang-Wu, Qianqian. 2021. Languaging Myths and Realities: Journeys of Chinese International Students. Bristol, UK: Multilingual Matters.

5 Gogolin, Ingrid, Marguerite Lukes, Vijay Ramjattan, and Shawna Shapiro. 2022. "Language Justice in Higher Education." Webinar from the International Center for Ethics, Justice and Public Life, Brandeis University. October, 12. (https://brandeis.mediaspace.kaltura.com/media/t/1_zaz50zgl). This public webinar was followed by a workshop on classroom strategies for achieving language justice, attended by 18 Brandeis faculty members and graduate student instructors.

6 Salomone, Rosemary. 2021. "The Downside of English's Dominance: The world's most commonly-used language is facing a backlash and keeping its monolingual speakers from engaging with the world." Wall Street Journal website, November 27. Accessed Feb. 28, 2023. https://www.wsj.com/articles/the-downside-of-englishs-dominance-11637989261

> *"My English is proficient enough that I can communicate with a native speaker. But I'm not culturally proficient enough to connect with them."*
>
> A Chinese undergraduate student

2. Social interactions across languages and cultures on the Brandeis campus and beyond

Social interactions between domestic and international students

Our interviews show that international students consistently feel that there exists a social divide between themselves and students from the United States. "The gap is huge!" declared a Chinese undergraduate, adding that his English is simply not good enough to speak "like a real American or American-born Chinese." Indeed, he believes that cultural and social integration is the hardest hurdle to overcome as an international student. A Romanian graduate student echoes this sentiment: "I think sometimes I have issues conveying what I'm trying to say. Yeah, maybe it's been somewhat hard to form a meaningful connection with people."

Another Chinese interviewee described their frustration at not having the skill to communicate fully in English, going so far as to say that they have a different personality when they speak it: "When I am back in my native language, Chinese, I'm super outgoing. Everyone that met me would just describe me as very talkative, liking to express myself. But when in a strange language environment, I suddenly just get much more introverted. It's like you used to speak very fluently, or you can just express everything you want to say. But in a different environment, you're stuck. You cannot say anything that is truly inside your heart." In contrast, an African student from an Anglophone country recognized the linguistic advantage he brought with him: "Other international students that I have interacted with, you know, they have difficulties with their English level, and sometimes they're not comfortable hanging out with people for that reason."

Chinese students are clearly in a unique situation on the Brandeis campus, as there are many other members of their language community to fall back on for companionship. A Greek student had a very different situation upon arrival, not understanding at first where she fit into Brandeis' social universe. "The most difficult part was that I felt that I didn't belong to any group. And I remember that, like, white people were considering me foreign, so they didn't really want to hang out with me. And people of color or other ethnicities were considering me white. So, they thought that I wouldn't understand them. Like, I wouldn't notice the culture or what they're talking about. So yeah, I was kind of in the middle."

Interestingly, some interviewees also noted the drawbacks of having a large number of students from a given country on campus. The Greek student above ended up being glad that she did not choose a university with many students from her home country, especially as she eventually found a diverse but comfortable social niche. Chinese students appear to sometimes have trouble

"That's what multilingualism means to me. It means that you're not restricted, that you can engage with people even if they don't speak the dominant language."

breaking out of the reassuring network they join upon arrival, which may impede the development of a more diverse social circle during their later time at Brandeis.[7] As one undergraduate offered, "No one actively discourages [Chinese] international students from speaking Mandarin, but you have to discourage yourself if you want to get ahead." The tendency for many Chinese students to socialize within their group – Zhang-Wu characterizes this in her study as "sticky rice behavior"[8] – led several international students from other countries to state in their interviews that Chinese students sometimes appeared exclusionary or even discriminatory toward "outsiders."

Appreciation of different languages and cultures on campus

Some international students have been pleasantly surprised by shows of interest by domestic students about their countries of origin or home languages. A student from Central America noted that American students are sometimes excited when they realize he speaks Spanish if they are studying it themselves. "I feel it's such a big honor, finding people who are interested in learning my language, and they actually tell me 'I love the language, I'm trying to learn it, I'm taking the classes.' And they try to speak to me in my language. I feel very proud in those moments, of where I come from and the language I speak, you know?"

Such appreciation is not always found, however, even when it might be most expected. An Israeli student was surprised, for example, that a knowledge of Hebrew and Israeli culture did not seem to be acknowledged or considered an asset for her campus job at Hillel.

More generally, international students bring their ease and familiarity with multilingualism into a wide range of activities and interactions at Brandeis. A Spanish-speaking interviewee spoke enthusiastically of his exposure to the many varieties of Spanish spoken by both international students from around Latin America as well as in the US. This exposure has given him a renewed appreciation of his home country, "the piece of earth where I come from." This same student observed that although English is used in almost all social contexts on campus, an exception is with the Brandeis Football (Soccer) Club, where Spanish often reigns supreme. This fact was not lost on a Malawian student in our study, also a soccer enthusiast, who undertook to learn enough Spanish to communicate with his fellow players in their language of choice.

Yet another international student, this one from South Africa, related that he has started to learn Spanish so that he can engage more fully with folks on campus and in Waltham. In a statement that illustrated the true appreciation of diversity that many international students bring with them to our university, this student explained his motivation. "I'm trying to learn a little bit of Spanish because I recognized that a lot of the people who work in the dining halls, and who clean our spaces, speak Spanish, and I will be able to speak to them in the language that they feel comfortable in. And when I go to Moody Street, there's a big Hispanic community. I meet people whose English is not that great. I want to engage with them, I want to participate. That's what multilingualism means to me. It means that you're not restricted, that you can engage with people even if they don't speak the dominant language."

7 See also Zhang-Wu, footnote 4.

8 Ibid.

Not all experiences off campus are this positive, however. When international students leave the university environment, they encounter both the best and the worst of American society. A hijab-wearing graduate student recounted that the day of President Trump's election, a white woman approached her and demanded to know, "Do you even speak English?" It was "just regular US racism," the student added. An African graduate student described how he sometimes feels uncomfortable in a local restaurant or bar where he is the only Black person. Until he came to the US, he explained, he had always been in the majority. "But if me and my friends are the only Black people there, that doesn't really deter me from doing things I would like to do."

Misunderstandings about how multilinguals live their lives

A number of interviewees noted that domestic students often seem confused by, or even hostile to, certain multilingual practices of their international counterparts. This was not a surprising finding of our study as we sought precisely to illuminate, through this project, how multilingualism runs up against the "monolingual mindset"[9] so often seen in the US and other English-speaking countries of the global north. Even universities that consider themselves "global institutions" conform to often unrecognized ideologies around language use, which include the notion that speaking only one language at a time, ideally to its "highest" standard, is what constitutes legitimate speech.[10]

Participants in our study noted that their use of languages other than English on campus may be viewed unfavorably by those around them. An Indian graduate student described the common trope of being suspected of bad-mouthing domestic students when speaking in an Indian language with co-nationals. Monolinguals often seem surprised that speaking a first and shared language is a natural, and even default, choice for those gathered with other members of their national or linguistic community.

Perhaps even more surprising to monolinguals is the common use of language mixing, codeswitching, or what is now commonly called "translanguaging."[11] Whether from China, India, or countries on the African continent, students who are straddling nations, educational experiences and communicative environments may use multiple languages during the same speech act as part of their normal repertoire. An Indian student said that this practice is hard to explain to domestic students who have never experienced it. "Imagine just changing gears in your head, so you go from English to Hindi to Gujarati, just fluidly changing your thoughts and the language you are thinking in. It's like shifting gears in a car." An African graduate student also spoke of this phenomenon, so normal at home. "I grew up speaking multiple languages and, I mean, I think I have trained myself to not do it here. But I just switch through languages, depending on what has the better idiom, you know, or the better sayings or what sounds best for the context."

The intellectual fluidity and multiple perspectives of students who practice this kind of everyday multilingualism should

9 Bonello, Marina. 2016. "Challenging the Monolingual Mindset." Current Issues in Language Planning 18 (1): 102-105). This term describes the perception that monolingualism is the social norm. https://doi.org/10.1080/14664208.2016.1194248

10 See the 2022-23 activities of the Language, Culture and Justice Hub which center around language justice in higher education: https://www.brandeis.edu/ethics/international-justice/language-culture-justice/events-and-projects/index.html.

11 EAL Journal. 2016. "What is Translanguaging? EAL Journal, July 26. Accessed Feb. 28, 2023. https://ealjournal.org/2016/07/26/what-is-translanguaging/.

be acknowledged and even celebrated by an institution of higher learning. As one interviewee explained, "Not having English as my primary language, it's like having two different people thinking for you. I learned how to think through my culture, and now I know how to think like you. And I'm seeing things differently in these two worlds."

Brandeis painstakingly attempts to shape global-minded citizens through various programs and course requirements, at times not seeming to recognize that our campus community already includes hundreds of them. How might our international students be supported – and also acknowledged for the capacity – to share their insightful ways of speaking, thinking and viewing the world for the benefit of domestic students who have not had the same kinds of intercultural and multilingual opportunities?

International students – a group unto themselves?

By far the most common sentiment expressed by our project interviewees is that they tend to find their most gratifying relationships with other international students. This does not mean that they only spend time with co-nationals; often these friendships are mediated through English as students from across the globe gather to socialize and share common experiences.

A Spanish-speaking undergraduate said of his friends: "Geographically we're all over the place. We talk about our struggles and can all relate. It doesn't matter which language we speak. We understand each other way better." A South African graduate student expressed a similar view: "I feel a lot of connection with my fellow international students because you go through the same struggles. I don't really have a lot of friendships with domestic students, which is quite interesting because the majority of the people on campus are domestic students." A Greek undergraduate student described a similar social circle: "I would say all of my friends have another ethnicity. My best friend is from the Dominican Republic. I have another friend who's from New York, but she has origins from Morocco. I hang out with Greek Americans. I have another friend from Nepal. So, all of them have a different cultural background. They're not just Americans." The social world of a Romanian graduate student followed the same pattern – his friends "don't have conventional US identities." A Russian student explained that international students are more likely "to value my multilingual experience."

The formation of international student social networks does not appear to be a result of rejection by domestic students. To the contrary, many international students make their social choices intentionally, feeling that their US counterparts may be somewhat narrow in their outlooks, unaware of the larger world, and occasionally immature. The latter view was expressed by several international undergraduates who attended Brandeis at an older than usual age after several years of military service or practical work experience. These older undergrads indicated, not surprisingly, that they have more compatibility with graduate students, typically closer in age to themselves.

Conclusion

Our interviewees' comments about the shape of their social lives indicate that while language is a factor in how they form relationships, it is perhaps not the most definitive one. It is rather a shared sense of worldview and experience that leads international students to seek out one another's company. If the University wishes to achieve the goal of producing globally conscious and broad-minded citizens, it should seek an appropriate strategy to increase social mixing between international and domestic students.

> ***"It's like, even though I'm really comfortable with English, I somehow don't have ownership of it. I'm, like, renting it, you know? And as long as I rent it correctly, it's fine. Otherwise, they're gonna take some of my security deposit."***
>
> A South Asian graduate student who grew up speaking English describes a common attitude toward her variety of English on the Brandeis campus

3. Speaking "other Englishes" and the accent question

Of the world's approximately 7.78 billion inhabitants, 1.35 billion speak English. But only 360 million people, a little more than a quarter of total speakers, have English as their first language.[12] There are also over 50 nations around the globe where English is an official language, although this status does not always mean that the majority of the population reads or speaks it – especially in countries that "inherited" English upon independence after a period of colonial domination. The inevitable consequence of such widespread use of English is that it is spoken in many different varieties, according to many different pronunciation patterns or "accents," and has developed recognized regional standards beyond the familiar American and British standards (for example those spoken in India, New Zealand, Nigeria and South Africa).

It goes without saying that persons who have English as their first language enjoy an enormous benefit – that of speaking the contemporary global language without having expended much effort to develop fluency. However, that benefit should entail certain responsibilities. Namely, native English speakers should acknowledge that they do not own their language, and they should refrain from dictating what counts as its legitimate use. Furthermore, native English speakers should train themselves to understand and accept diverse varieties of English, in recognition of the fact that most English speakers have other first languages whose phonological features may influence how they pronounce English, or they may simply speak it according to local norms. Unfortunately, the American ear – and that of other monolingual speakers of English – tends to be parochial.[13] And American students and instructors at Brandeis are no exception.

A graduate student from Liberia described how her variety of English led her professor to question the integrity of a presentation she had made to her class. "I had to go back and forth [with the professor], even send my slides because she was not sure that I had actually done the reading. Because she found it hard to understand my presentation. You're from an English-speaking country, but the

12 Dylan Lyons. "How Many People Speak English, and Where Is It Spoken?" Babbel Magazine, March 10, 2021. Accessed Feb. 28, 2023. https://www.babbel.com/en/magazine/how-many-people-speak-english-and-where-is-it-spoken.

13 Hansen, Heather. Interview with Raina Cohen, Luis Trelles, and Warner Gregory. "How to Speak Bad English." Rough Translation, National Public Radio. Podcast audio. April 21, 2021. Accessed Feb. 28, 2023. https://www.npr.org/2021/04/21/989477444/how-to-speak-bad-english

"Why is speaking with an accent a bad thing? And what is an accent even, just because it's not like how everyone else talks?'"

accent thing still has a lot to do with how you relate to students, or to teachers." A Chinese undergraduate said that he is aware that his pronunciation sometimes gets in the way of communicating with professors, and he has to repeat himself to be understood. He confesses that this has affected his experience at Brandeis. An international student who has spoken English since childhood has observed such difficulties, and she has tried to assist her fellow students. "I've been a peer mentor, like a support student for international students. I know their biggest worry is 'will I be able to communicate well?'"

An international student from Europe has tried to take her "errors" in pronunciation with a grain of salt. "It's very funny, actually. Because I don't understand the difference between the words 'beach' and 'bitch.' A lot of people have tried to explain to me the difference, and every person keeps saying different things. So, I'm very confused. And I remember when that comment first happened, I was very uncomfortable with that. But then, I started making fun of myself too."

A student from Africa has also accepted that accents can sometimes get in the way: "I don't think that there's anything wrong with my English proficiency, but there's certainly differences in the accent. I feel like since I came here, I've had to tweak how I say certain words because people would not understand."

The profiling of international students based on their use of English is not confined to speech, but can also affect evaluations of their writing. A graduate student from Pakistan reported making minor grammatical mistakes in an assignment – the kind that native speakers regularly make – but believes that they were considered a problem because of her status. "Once my professor was giving me feedback on my report and I had made some grammatical errors and she's like, 'I know English isn't your first language, but you need to work on this.' I mean, it's fine that I'm not a native speaker and my experience is slightly different, but you don't have to make me feel bad about it. If it had been a native speaker, you would never make them feel small for it." The same student is hurt when her fellow science students remark on her pronunciation of certain technical words, which follows a British rather than American pattern. "English isn't my mother tongue, but it's my primary mode of communication. And when you judge me for how I use it, it's kind of rude. It's like, 'because you are not a native speaker, whenever you make a mistake, we can judge you for it.'"

International students from English-speaking countries may also be puzzled when their mastery of English is met by surprise, their listeners clearly unaware that English has a presence in the students' home countries. A Tanzanian student reported, "I would just explain that I learned English from a very young age." He added that interlocutors who are well-traveled internationally do not generally have this reaction. An Indian student noted that he has encountered similar reactions even from other international students, which he believes stem partially from his appearance. "People may judge you on where you come from, saying 'Oh, you can actually speak English?' [The comments] were slightly racist." A Russian student commented that accent prejudice on campus can be language-specific, especially in the context of current world events which have inspired xenophobia toward the Russian and Chinese languages.

But not all international students take offense at requests to repeat their utterances or comments about their pronunciation. A Chinese student feels that people at Brandeis are generally tolerant of his "broken English" (although this self-characterization already suggests an internalized belief that his English is sub-par). A graduate student from South Africa reported that he is not offended when asked to repeat something because he understands that people have just not been exposed to his accent. A graduate student from Malawi declared pride in his pronunciation. "I saw somewhere that people can help you clear out your accent. I was like, 'Why is speaking with an accent a bad thing? And what is an accent even, just because it's not like how everyone else talks?'" He added that having an accent is a sign of multilingualism, something he takes pride in as "it makes me look at a world or a problem or a situation in different dimensions, and being multilingual has helped me to connect with people."

Conclusion

Experiencing difficulties in comprehension when encountering a new accent is a normal state of affairs. One of our interviewees noted, in fact, that he often had trouble understanding speakers with a strong Boston accent. This being said, domestic students and instructors at Brandeis should strive to be patient and "open-eared" when interacting with non-native speakers of English as well as those who do not speak Standard Academic English. As Heather Hansen notes in her insightful podcast about varieties of English, it is often easier for listeners to train their ears to understand different pronunciation patterns than it is for speakers to achieve a change in pronunciation.[14]

14 Ibid.

> ***"In my country, we speak English in school and if you fail English, you've completely failed everything. That's the school system that I went to. But now when we want to apply to schools in the United States or the UK, we are required to write exams to prove our English proficiency."***
>
> An African graduate student

4. The "what" and "who" of English proficiency exams

Our interviews, along with an exploration of Brandeis policies, have revealed two different concerns vis-à-vis the English language proficiency exams that many applicants to our university are required to take as part of their admission process. The first has to do with the capacity of the Test of English as a Foreign Language (TOEFL) and other proficiency tests to evaluate linguistic knowledge and predict academic success in an English language medium university. The second concern has to do with unclear criteria around which nationalities are exempt from submitting exam results, along with the unacknowledged language ideologies that may influence this exempt status.

What do English proficiency exam results tell a university?

In her pioneering book about the experiences of Chinese international students in a US university, Qianqian Zhang-Wu[15] notes two critical points that emerged from her study:

- There are different expectations around language use (terminology, genres of writing, etc.) that are associated with specific fields of study and disciplines, and the readiness to meet these expectations is not necessarily captured by a language test like the TOEFL.

15 Zhang-Wu, footnote 4.

A first-semester undergraduate student from the Middle East...was met with this response from the office handling student disabilities: "You had to take an English proficiency exam to get into Brandeis. So, we assume that you have mastered English in the way that we require."

- Many incoming Chinese students have a limited exposure to "authentic language in context",[16] which may make their initial academic encounters very challenging, despite high scores on the TOEFL.

A recent article by applied linguists Ingrid Piller and Agnes Bodis (the latter led the MLMC research team in Australia) also challenges widespread beliefs about what English proficiency exams achieve:

> The international use of [the International English Language Testing System] and other language tests is supposed to ensure objectivity and the fair and equal treatment of all test takers. This assumption is increasingly being questioned as researchers find that the overreliance on a test score for admission purposes seems to detract from attention to ongoing language development once students have entered their studies. While the overreliance on test scores is being questioned by academics in applied linguistics, they tend to be uncritically accepted by university admission officers, university lecturers, and even English language teachers preparing students for university entry.[17]

Comments from a number of interviewees echo such misgivings about proficiency exams. A first-semester undergraduate student from the Middle East, exploring whether her challenges with English might entitle her to extra time on assignments and tests, was met with this response from the office handling student disabilities: "You had to take an English proficiency exam to get into Brandeis. So, we assume that you have mastered English in the way that we require." This view, the student continued, does not square with the reality faced by many international students, who are expected to write an essay, understand a lecture, and take a chemistry exam in the same time frame granted to people who have been speaking and reading English all their lives.

An Indian graduate student agreed about the shortcomings of the TOEFL, not finding it "a good reflection of what students need to perform well... I mean, there are people who have scored in it well at the University, but they don't have that level of linguistic skills." This student also reported that "to understand what is being taught in the lecture hall, [some students] come back and translate it into the home language that they understand and speak." Zhang-Wu also identifies the use of a first language in learning as an effective "bridging strategy" for Chinese international students who are new to the US system, one that they are able to abandon once they become more confident in their English language skills.[18]

An undergraduate from China found more problems engaging in "social language," remarking that the TOEFL may "test formal skills but it is not at all about the kind of English you need to speak in your everyday life." The gap between social and academic language registers was particularly difficult for him to navigate, as all his first-year classes were taken via Zoom during the

16 Ibid, p. 20

17 Piller, Ingrid and Agnes Bodis. 2022. "Marking and unmarking the (non)native speaker through English language proficiency requirements for university admission." Language in Society, 1-23. A summary of this article can be found in a blogpost by Piller: "How do universities decide whose English needs to be tested?" from Language on the Move (Jan. 6, 2023). https://www.languageonthemove.com/how-do-universities-decide-whose-english-needs-to-be-tested-for-admission/.

18 Zhang-Wu, footnote 4.

pandemic. He thus became familiar with academic discourse – and could rewatch class recordings to make sure he understood lectures – but he found himself utterly unprepared for social interactions upon his arrival to the Brandeis campus the following year.

Other Chinese interviewees brought up further concerns about the ability of proficiency exams to catch the nuances of varying levels of language preparation. One undergraduate explained that Chinese students are not monolithic, having had very different levels of English language instruction depending upon whether they attended a "regular high school" or an "international high school." The latter steers their students toward universities abroad, mostly in Anglophone countries.[19] Consequently, some Chinese students at Brandeis may struggle more at the beginning of their studies than others.

A Chinese student who went through the Brandeis Gateway Scholars Program expressed resentment that it seemed to be only Chinese students who were required to take this intensive language training, as if they were the only incoming students in need of such assistance. "If this program is for the international student, you could also admit maybe some European or maybe Indian or maybe Japanese, not just Chinese people."

Finally, an international graduate student who teaches math to undergraduates was exasperated that he was expected to undertake further English language training upon his arrival to Brandeis. "If you take the TOEFL, and you're deemed good enough to study in the US, I really do not understand why you have to take another, you know, English training. I think once we're here, we should be treated as equals."

To waive or not to waive?

What determines whether an international applicant to Brandeis is required to submit English proficiency exam results? It is instructive to look at the practices of the Graduate School of Arts and Sciences (GSAS), the Heller School for Social Policy and Management (Heller), and the International Business School (IBS), all of whose applicants have presumably attained their first university degree. A master's degree applicant who is a citizen of, has obtained a higher education degree in, or has a certain work history in a country on a designated list may have the test requirement waived. But by what criteria are these lists configured? Why are some countries that have English as an official language, and which use English in their tertiary education, not included, while others are? Why are some countries where English holds no official status nonetheless on the waiver list? And why are GSAS, IBS, and Heller not always in sync on their requirements?

19 Zhang-Wu explores these differences in detail in her study. Footnote 4.

Table 1: English proficiency exam requirements for Brandeis graduate schools by selected nationality.

	Liberia	Nigeria	Kenya	Tanzania	Philippines	Singapore	Samoa	India	China	Scandinavian Countries ✲
GSAS	◆	◆	◆	◆	▸▸	◆	◆	◆	◆	▸▸
Heller	▸▸	▸▸	▸▸	◆	▸▸	◆	▸▸	◆	◆	▸▸
IBS	▸▸	▸▸	◆	◆	▸▸	◆	▸▸	◆	◆	▸▸

KEY:

Blue Countries with English as an official language

✲ Denmark, Iceland, Norway and Sweden

◆ Exam required

▸▸ Exam waived

Table 1 shows that the requirements for certain English-speaking countries in Africa vary from school to school. As a Tanzanian graduate student from Heller noted in exasperation, "it's just ridiculous that some countries are exempt. I think they should just have a standard requirement. But some African countries are required, and others are not." It is understandable that this student should feel frustrated when he discovers that a Kenyan classmate in the same Heller program was exempt from taking a proficiency exam, thereby avoiding both considerable expense and inconvenience. Tanzania and Kenya are neighboring countries with closely related histories, comparable past colonial ties with England, and similar educational systems. Why, then, is one on the exempt list and the other not? Furthermore, if this same Kenyan student were to apply to GSAS or IBS, he *would* be required to take a proficiency exam.

A similar disconnect is seen with Liberia and Nigeria, whose citizens are required to submit an exam score to GSAS but not to the other schools. Samoa follows the same pattern. If there is a logic to these different policies, it is certainly not clear to an observer, nor is it explained on the websites. Whatever decisions led to these policies instead appear random or ill-informed, as if the decision-makers were unaware of the breadth and variety of the English-speaking world.

As for India, one of the most populous English-speaking countries in the world and an important source country for Brandeis graduate students, its citizens are required to submit tests by all three graduate schools. This is despite the fact that English is the primary language in its university system, although there is currently a move towards Hindi language instruction at the tertiary level.

Applicants from the Philippines and Singapore are mysteriously treated differently in terms of testing, with only the former awarded a waiver. This is particularly striking given that Singaporean universities themselves ask their international applicants to take English proficiency tests.

The most striking policy discrepancy is around the waived requirements for citizens of the four Scandinavian countries, none of which has a historical connection to the English-speaking world – unlike the countries noted above – nor a language policy granting English official status.

One explanation for these uneven

testing requirements lies in the phenomena laid out in the preceding section about speaking "other Englishes" at Brandeis. Piller and Bodis write that "despite the phenomenal advance of a new register that has been termed 'English as a lingua franca in academic settings,' old ideas about the primacy of the native speaker in higher education and global knowledge production continue to linger. They go hand in hand with the persistence of language ideologies claiming a privileged status for Standard English as defined by Britain and the US."[20] In other words, it is those who speak the "right kind" of English, including Scandinavians who generally learn the European or North American variety, whose English is not subject to scrutiny. But speakers from many countries in Africa, Asia and the Indian subcontinent – despite years of schooling in English, including an undergraduate degree – are not deemed legitimate and are consequently required to prove their proficiency.

There is another ideology around the English language that almost certainly comes into play here – a raciolinguistic ideology,[21] often unrecognized and unacknowledged, that associates the English language with whiteness.[22] Decades ago, scholar Braj Kachru[23] formulated a model of world Englishes that locates Western nations and their settler colonies at the center of the Anglosphere, and former colonies at the periphery. This formulation has carried over into the sphere of contemporary English proficiency testing, write Piller and Bodis, which is "deeply racialized with white speakers in the inner circle and racialized others in the outer circle."[24]

However unintentional the outcome, it is clear that Black and Brown applicants to Brandeis University graduate programs are more often required to take an English proficiency test than white applicants. This pattern should be further interrogated by the University.

Conclusion

It is reasonable that Brandeis, like other universities in the Anglophone world enrolling large numbers of international students, should establish admissions standards for those who undertake its various degree programs. And there may be justified, if unstated, reasons that certain exams are required, and that persons from given countries must take them. This section has sought to pose important questions about English proficiency exams, with the hope that those who set policies at Brandeis will reflect on some of the unarticulated understandings and assumptions that may underlie those policies.

20 Piller and Bodis, footnote 17.

21 Alim, H. Samy, John Rickford, and Arnetha F. Ball. ed. 2016. Raciolinguistics: How Language Shapes Our Ideas About Race. Oxford, UK: Oxford University Press.

22 Ramjattan, V.A. 2019. "The White Native Speaker and Inequality Regimes in the Private English Language School." International Cultural Education 30(2): 126-140. https://www.tandfonline.com/doi/abs/10.1080/14675986.2018.1538043?journalCode=ceji20; Piller, Ingrid, Hanna Torsh, and Laura Smith-Khan. 2021. "Securing the borders of English and Whiteness," Ethnicities, https://journals.sagepub.com/doi/full/10.1177/14687968211052610; McIntosh, Janet. 2020. "Whiteness and Language," The International Encyclopedia of Linguistic Anthropology, Wiley Online Library. Accessed on Feb. 28, 2023. https://onlinelibrary.wiley.com/doi/10.1002/9781118786093.iela0474.

23 Kachru, Braj B. 1985. "Standards, codification and sociolinguistic realism: The English language in the outer circle." In Randolph Quirk & Henry G. Widdowson (eds.), English in the world: Teaching and learning the language and literatures, 11–30. Cambridge: Cambridge University Press.

24 Piller and Bodis, footnote 17, p 2.

5. What Brandeis does well and could do better vis-à-vis international students

This section briefly outlines some appreciated aspects of the Brandeis experience that emerged from our interviews, as well as some areas that interviewees felt could benefit from improvement.

What Brandeis does well:

- ISSO's *I Am Global Week* is a big hit among many international students. Said one undergraduate, "it made me feel valued." A graduate student suggested that "domestic students be encouraged by their professors to attend these events where international student countries are showcased."
- More generally, ISSO is recognized as a valuable and helpful resource on campus, responsive to the needs of students from abroad.
- A number of students feel that the Heller School rises above all other schools in the assistance it provides to its international students and its record of using a globalized curriculum, including diverse case studies. A Heller student who had previously completed a degree at IBS favorably characterized the experience at Heller in contrast to the experience at IBS in this respect.
- The Brandeis Counseling Center has (or has had in the past) a well-regarded support group where international students "can speak about our communal struggles."
- Academic Services play an important role in supporting international students. "I remember all of them going to great lengths to help me with any of my problems," said a European undergraduate who was diagnosed with ADHD upon arrival at Brandeis.
- The Writing Center and English Language Programs also provide critical support in the academic lives of international students.
- The Waltham Group is an effective way for international students to gain an understanding of local life (while also "pushing domestic undergraduates out of their privileged bubbles").
- Many international students find that Brandeis is overall a welcoming place, even if they experience difficult moments along the way.

What Brandeis might do better:

- ISSO could provide more assistance with unfamiliar aspects of American life: for example, around the rights and responsibilities of renters, using public transport, paying taxes, finding an appropriate doctor or dentist, and locating shops that sell halal food.
- Cultural sensitivity training could be required for domestic as well as international students, and also for faculty. Said a graduate student, "this would help people realize that international students are very brave and very passionate for being here. We should try to make it more like home for them. They have been uprooted from everything they

know." An undergraduate student stated that activities "should not just be about supporting international students but also about putting awareness into American students that international students may be struggling." This includes appreciating the added uncertainty that many international students may face upon graduation when their visas expire.

- Academic and writing services might be offered in a more discreet setting so that people are "not embarrassed or afraid of having their language skills judged" – a feeling that may be especially common among older graduate students who are being assisted by someone younger than themselves.
- Instructors could further globalize their curricula, taking into account the home countries of international students. A Central American student noted, "Jewish students may have their sense of struggle and injustices toward their population, but they don't seem to realize that Honduras and El Salvador have been some of the most violent places on the earth recently, and that the US feeds that violence."
- Some international students, particularly undergraduates, would like to see additional organized opportunities for social mixing with their domestic counterparts (and not just events that bring together Chinese students).
- Brandeis could demonstrate its commitment to diversity by extending financial assistance to international students. "They say they care about diversity, so they should put their money where their mouth is," said a graduate student. "If you don't give financial aid, you are only going to have rich people coming in, not a diverse international population."
- International students – and graduate students more generally – could be paid more for teaching, and there could be a consistent pay rate across departments and schools.

Institutional Recommendations

To conclude this report, the MLMC team suggests below several ways in which Brandeis University could create a more welcoming and productive environment for the international and multilingual members of our community.

Design a training for all professors and instructors that focuses on the particular needs and challenges of international students.

Such a training might cover the following:

- The need to explain/provide definitions for unfamiliar discipline-specific terminology (which would incidentally benefit all students).
- Use of case studies from parts of the world represented by their international students so they can feel "expert" on the topic and more easily contribute to discussions.
- Creation of assignments that will allow students to bring in a knowledge of their home country or region.
- Assignment of readings by scholars from non-Western regions of the world in order to introduce diverse perspectives.
- Encouragement for students to cite from sources in languages other than English (perhaps accompanied by a summary).
- Being conscious of the extra effort needed by non-native English speakers to accomplish certain tasks or assignments, and providing assistance or accomodations accordingly.
- Promoting the development of "pro-multilingualism class environments" that value the diverse knowledge of international students and open the eyes of domestic students. For example, one might allow allow an international student to use their native language to express a thought if there is someone present who can help interpret it.

- Choosing to not "grade down" non-native English speakers for grammatical errors and norm deviations when comprehensibility is not impacted, especially for incoming students.
- Not assuming that international students, even those from the same country, constitute a monolithic group with similar language skills in reading, writing or speaking.

Include a session in new student orientations about cohabiting academic and social spaces with international students.

Topics might include:

- Understanding that international students are an integral part of Brandeis as a global institution.
- Acknowledging that international students are functioning at a high level in a second (if not third or fourth) language and often a different writing system, and as such are highly-skilled students who may nonetheless face significant challenges.
- The need for domestic students to be patient and "open-eared" in academic or social interactions with international students. Verbal interactions involve both speakers and listeners, and each plays a part in successful communication.
- Consideration by domestic students of what they might gain through group work or friendships with international students.
- Understanding that international TAs have been selected for their knowledge and skill, and that they should not be judged according to their speech patterns.
- Awareness that it is normal to speak one's first language with others from the same linguistic community – it is not necessarily an exclusionary act – and that language mixing among multilinguals is also a common phenomenon.

Review and rethink the services that international students need to thrive at Brandeis.

- Can international students whose primary language is not English be afforded extra time for assignments and exams, or other kinds of special support, in particular during their first semesters on campus?
- Can writing and other academic services be offered in more discreet settings to avoid embarrassment?
- Can international students receive more assistance on "nuts and bolts" issues: for example, renting apartments, finding medical professionals, using public transportation, filing tax returns, etc.?

Understand and accept the legitimacy of "other Englishes."

- Brandeis students and faculty, especially those who are monolingual English speakers, should be conscious that there are region-specific varieties of English that are standard in their home contexts, if less familiar in the US. Learn about the linguistic varieties and pronunciation patterns of other Anglophone countries, as well as their educational systems that use English.
- Be aware of the tendency to conflate race and language through (perhaps unconscious) raciolinguistic ideologies.
- Review which nationalities are required by schools at Brandeis to demonstrate English proficiency through testing, and consider the reasons that some countries receive waivers while others do not.

Explicitly articulate the value of language diversity in ODEI principles, and the prohibition against language and accent discrimination in policies of the Office of Equal Opportunity.

- This will officially recognize the importance of languages other than English, and multilingualism more generally, within an institution that aspires to be diverse, tolerant and global. And it will provide recourse for students who feel that they have been discriminated against on the basis of language and speech.

Make every week *I Am Global Week*.

- This would admittedly be difficult. But there is a high level of enthusiasm around the showcasing of the home countries of our international students. How might a steadier spotlight be shone on the nations represented by the international members of our community, along with their diverse languages and cultures? And how might our domestic students be encouraged to participate in learning about them?

Create a "linguistic landscape" that reflects our student body.

- The Brandeis written environment is almost entirely in English. Languages such as Chinese, Spanish, Hebrew, Arabic and others with a significant number of speakers might be given a presence through signage in dining spaces, student centers, classroom buildings and beyond. This would remind everyone of the linguistic diversity of our campus.

Conduct more research on the topic of international students and language at Brandeis.

- Interviewing instructors who teach large numbers of international students would serve as an illuminating complement to the MLMC study.
- Further research might also be carried out on multilingual students, perhaps by students with Anthropology or International and Global Studies majors.

Additional Relevant Resources

A list of resources exploring various aspects of the linguistic and cultural life of international students can be found at the Language, Culture and Justice Hub's thematic page on this topic: https://www.brandeis.edu/ethics/international-justice/language-culture-justice/themes/international-students-and-education.html.

Watch a February 2022 talk by Prof. Qianqian Zhang Wu, organized by Brandeis, on "Languaging Myths and Realities: Journeys of Chinese International Students": https://brandeis.mediaspace.kaltura.com/media/t/1_40jfmk32

Watch an October 2022 Brandeis webinar on language justice in higher education, which addresses relevant issues: https://brandeis.mediaspace.kaltura.com/media/t/1_zaz50zgl

Find some innovative conceptual and methodological approaches to conducting research about international students at a website dedicated to this area of inquiry, led primarily by researchers at the University of Manchester in the UK: https://researchintlstudents.com.

Learn about the University of North Carolina's initiative around language diversity, "Educating the Educated": https://linguistics.chass.ncsu.edu/thinkanddo/ete.php. Read a 2016 article on this initiative from the *Chronicle of Higher Education*: https://www-chronicle-com.eu1.proxy.openathens.net/article/discriminations-back-door-tackling-language-bias-on-campus/. Read a statement on language diversity and harmful language ideologies from the University of North Carolina linguistics department: https://linguistics.unc.edu/diversity/

Read an example of a "language acknowledgement" statement from University of Michigan professor Laura Aull (shared with her permission). Like a land acknowledgement, this statement foregrounds the displacement of Indigenous languages and the privileging of a certain standard of English: https://docs.google.com/document/d/1sAMm_Gt5R11eyqCjOAyUjMlFfB4ix-KajuzRgnKkF_E/edit

The mission of the International Center for Ethics, Justice and Public Life of Brandeis University is to develop effective responses to conflict and injustice by offering innovative approaches to coexistence, strengthening the work of international courts, and encouraging ethical practice in civic and professional life. The Center was founded in 1998 through the generosity of Abraham D. Feinberg.

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