Writing the Local-Global: An Ethnography of Friction and Negotiation in an English-Using Indonesian Ph.D. Program

Amber Engelson

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WRITING THE LOCAL-GLOBAL: AN ETHNOGRAPHY OF FRICTION AND NEGOTIATION IN AN ENGLISH-USING INDONESIAN PH.D. PROGRAM

A Dissertation Presented

by

AMBER ENGELSON

Submitted to the Graduate School of the University of Massachusetts Amherst in partial fulfillment of the requirements for the degree of

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Department of English
DEDICATION

To the wonderful people at the Indonesian Consortium for Religious Studies, and Nate.
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I would like to begin by thanking all those people at the Indonesian Consortium for Religious Studies who welcomed me so openly to their intellectually rigorous and close-knit community. Without the support of faculty, students, and staff my project and the insights I made about what it means to write internationally in English would never have happened. Thank you to all my students, and in particular to Faqih, Nina, Ninik, and Tim, whose writing portfolios and words contributed so substantially to my dissertation. And thank you to Ingrid, Ipung, Elis and Atun for their continuous support and friendship as I learned to navigate, live, and teach in Indonesia.

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ABSTRACT

WRITING THE LOCAL-GLOBAL: AN ETHNOGRAPHY OF FRICTION AND NEGOTIATION IN AN ENGLISH- USING INDONESIAN PH.D. PROGRAM

SEPTEMBER 2011

AMBER ENGELSON, B.A., OCCIDENTAL COLLEGE
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Suresh Canagarajah, John Trimbur, Bruce Horner, and others argue that U.S. scholars must begin imagining their academic institutions as part of larger global English conversations, which would involve expanding Western perceptions of “good writing” to allow for the cultural and ideological differences implied by the term “global.” Horner and Trimbur, for instance, urge compositionists to take an “internationalist perspective” to writing instruction, to ask, “whose English and whose interests it serves” in relation to the “dynamics of globalization” (624). To better understand what it means to write internationally in English, I conducted ethnographic research at the Indonesian Consortium for Religious Studies (ICRS), a self-identified “Indonesian, international, interreligious Ph.D. program,” in Yogyakarta, Indonesia. My ten-month ethnographic project, which drew from teacher research, interviews with students and faculty, and student texts, suggests that English, though linked to Western cultural imperialism—and thus Western ideology—can no longer be considered solely a Western language, useful only for Western purposes and audiences.
The first section of this dissertation focuses on institutional and individual identity construction in relation to ICRS’s local-global goals and what the program’s language policy terms the “painful decision” to adopt English despite being “aware of the imperialism of English.” By placing Indonesian language history in conversation with faculty and student interviews, this section suggests that language, whether local or global, is never entirely “authentic” or “imperialist”—that English, despite its imperialist implications, is also capable of representing Indonesian identities. The second section of this dissertation shifts from identity negotiation to frictions involved with the actual writing process, particularly in relation to culture, audience, and rhetorical choice. Drawing from Bakhtin’s notion of diachronic audience, this section explores the complexity involved in determining “whose English” is appropriate given ICRS’s Indonesian, yet international intentions and the multiple audiences, both local and global, suggested thereby. This section highlights cultural and material frictions students reported when moving between Indonesian and Western rhetorical traditions—and thus audiences—while also highlighting how students re-articulate English as both local and global, Indonesian and international as they write to the multiple audiences suggested by English as an international language.
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INTRODUCTION

The Indonesian Consortium for Religious Studies (ICRS), a self-described, “inter-religious, international PhD program” in Yogyakarta, Indonesia, lists its primary goals as follows:

To provide a setting for Ph.D. research on religions that is rooted in Indonesian culture and religious beliefs, but in dialogue with the international academic community. To produce a Ph.D. program in Religious Studies that maintains international standards of academic excellence but is controlled and directed by Indonesian scholars. To promote North-South and South-South exchanges which empower cooperation between good universities in different parts of the world. (*Introducing ICRS-Yogya* promotional brochure 7)

This excerpt highlights the desire of this PhD program—located in a postcolonial, post-dictatorial, newly democratic, and deeply religious country—to draw from local Indonesian knowledge while also participating in international academic conversations that have, as many scholars have shown, often co-opted or silenced voices from the Global South. Indeed, when it comes to language, “international” does trump “local”; despite ICRS’s desire to be by, about, and for Indonesia, this excerpt is written in English, not in Bahasa Indonesia, the newly adopted national language. No matter how rooted in local culture, to truly be “international,” English is a must because of a long history of linguistic imperialism. This history, in turn, has cemented English’s role as the primary language of international academic writing, often at the expense of local languages. Though English may be implicated in global systems of power, we can also see in the above excerpt that, for ICRS, English represents the possibility for dialog not only with traditional powers in the Global North, but also with other countries in the Global South. English may overpower local languages in international academic
conversations, but it can also empower “local” voices through the connections it represents.

ICRS’s paradoxical positioning as “local” to Indonesia yet also “global” and English’s relationship to this “local-global” identity was the catalyst for my 10 months of ethnographic teacher research in Yogyakarta, Indonesia. The following chapters will draw from my research in this local-global site to explore what it means to write internationally, in English, from an Indonesian perspective. This exploration will highlight frictions that occur as local meets global, both institutionally and in writing, and the ways that people working from within ICRS negotiate their Indonesian identities and purposes with those suggested by English academic conversations that have long been dominated by the Global North.¹ By focusing on the intersections between culture, writing, and identity in this local-global site, this dissertation will highlight both the power and possibility the English language and Western academic writing conventions represent for Indonesians as they seek to write from their local-global positionalities.

The Implications of My Indonesian Research for U.S. Writing Scholars

Although my research in Indonesia may seem distant from our U.S. context, I would argue that by looking to local contexts outside our national borders—and the various ways the power of the English language is both constitutive of and reconstructed by the cultures and agents with which it comes into contact—we can come to a better understanding of what it means to communicate “internationally” both in the U.S. and beyond. Indeed, my research is in alignment with recent calls for us in the U.S. to begin imagining our academic institutions as part of larger global conversations in English—a

¹ I use the term “Global North” here in reference to the excerpt above; elsewhere in my dissertation, however, I use “Western” because that is the term my Indonesian students and faculty were most accustomed to using when referencing traditional global powers such as the U.S., Great Britain, and Australia.
global situation that many argue calls for an expansion of our perceptions of “good
writing” to allow for cultural and ideological differences of the diverse language users
out there. Horner and Trimbur, for instance, urge us in the U.S. to take an
“internationalist perspective” to language and composition instruction, to ask ourselves
“whose English and whose interests” the English that we teach serves (624). As academic
conversations become increasingly global in scope—as students, researchers, and
knowledge transcend traditional national boundaries—so too does the English language,
and with that, Western academic writing conventions. And as English moves in and out
and across our borders, it shifts, taking on hues of the diverse cultures, the diverse
languages, and the diverse purposes of the global language users who put it in play.

Suresh Canagarajah takes up Horner and Trimbur’s call for such an
“internationalist perspective” in his essay “The Place of World Englishes in
Composition,” where he argues that we need to link World Englishes scholarship to
classroom practices in the U.S. to make classroom spaces here more open to linguistic
diversity. He points to statistics by Graddol and Crystal that show that, globally, native
users of English are far outnumbered by non-native, multilingual English users (588)—
indeed, Graddol argues that native speakers “lost their majority in the 1970s” (cited in
Canagarajah 588). Taken from a global perspective, then, education practices in the U.S.
that focus solely on native speaker norms seem shortsighted, and at worst, oppressive. He
argues that “every time teachers insist on a uniform variety of language or discourse, we
are helping reproduce monolingualist ideologies and linguistic hierarchies” (587). Indeed,
ample research (Gutierrez and Orellana 2006, Villanueva 2003, Prendergast 2003,
Smitherman 2003) has shown that Standard English has worked as a gatekeeper in the
U.S., placing multilingual or multidialectal students at a deficit, while masking underlying xenophobic, racial, patriarchal, and class-based reasons for exclusion.

That said, monolingualist language practices continue in the U.S., partly, as Paul Kei Matsuda suggests, because of the “myth of linguistic homogeneity” forwarded by “containment practices” that separate composition and ESL departments, and thus students and scholarship (638). Despite this separation, Matsuda shows that multilingual students are and have always been a part of student populations in the U.S. (643). Indeed, the Institution of International Education shows that the majority of the country’s 800,000 international students are currently from Asia—and in the last year alone there has been a 30% increase in Chinese English users in American universities (IIE). These international students, in addition to the multilingual or multi-dialectical American students entering our university settings, make it evident that multilingual and multi-dialectical people are here to stay—and with that reality, so are alternate ways of using language. Linguistic diversity is present in our U.S. academic institutions, and Matsuda argues that “to work effectively with the student population in the twenty-first century, all composition teachers need to re-imagine the composition classroom as the multilingual space it is, where the presence of language differences is the default” (649).

This reimagining of the writing classroom as linguistically diverse will not only benefit multilingual students as they use English within U.S. borders. By reimagining the language classroom as linked to a global and linguistically diverse communicative context, Min-Zhan Lu suggests we can encourage our U.S. students, as future global leaders, to bring to their cross-cultural interactions a more nuanced and ethical view of what it means to use English—because “[a] course in composition is one of the few
courses required of a majority of college students, a social domain through which future Working Persons, Tourists, Consumers, Teachers, CEOs, Portfolio Men, Consultants, Politicians, Leaders of institutions or life worlds, and the parents and teachers of the next generations of these certified U.S. patrols of the boundaries of English will pass through” (50). As a researcher, I, like Lu and the authors above, believe that helping students and, to take the concept beyond the classroom, our public adopt a global view of language—and an understanding of the various ways English is adapted and used cross-culturally—is especially important in a world where borders are increasingly fluid and English is positioned as the language as power. It is my hope, then, that my research in Indonesia will also help U.S. compositionists begin to view their classrooms as linked to the same global forces as the classrooms at ICRS: after all, we too, and the students within our classrooms, could be part of the “empowering” global conversations ICRS envisions.

Theorizing Linguistic Imperialism

This linkage of local and global, both in classrooms and in our scholarship, is also especially important given that many of our problematic language practices and pedagogies in the U.S. spread to countries far from our own, furthering inequality on a global scale. Robert Phillipson dubs this spread "linguistic imperialism" and argues that "the dominance of English is asserted and maintained by the establishment and continuous reconstitution of structural and cultural inequalities between English and other languages"(47). Our language myths—and the ideologies they draw from and recreate—not only affect U.S. students and citizens, but also students and citizens globally.

Perhaps one of our most insidious myths is that English is a neutral and apolitical tool for communication. Phillipson uses a powerful metaphor to describe the way that
English has been rendered “technical:”

The sellers of English use cultural, neutral arguments and normally claim that what they are doing has nothing to do with political, economic, or military power. The cultural 'product,' the 'goods' to be sold (English) is technicallized and professionalized. What is sold is presented as a technical instrument (like a tractor), not a world order. The instrument, the tool, can be used for better or worse, and it is up to the buyer to decide on the use. Once the seller has handed over the product, it bears no trace of the context where it was developed. As an instrument it is presented as being completely neutral towards the uses to which it can be put. A tractor is a tractor, and you can transport a Muslim or a Hindu on it as well as a Christian (Phillipson 287)

Despite this “packaging,” much research has shown that English should never be considered a “neutral” tool.

Indeed, Pennycook, in his *Cultural Politics of English as an International Language*, argues that any such discourse of neutrality or scientifcacy is a cultural construction that has at its roots power/knowledge in the Foucauldian sense. Claims to language neutrality, he argues, spring from the 19th century “disciplining” of language in linguistics— an increase in knowledge production about English, through the production of dictionaries and linguistic research for instance— that began in part during colonial times to justify failing language policies. Through standardization, the colonizers were able to paint the “native” language learner as inherently incapable of grasping “civilized” language. Such “disciplining” re-enforced the civilized-uncivilized binary under the guise of scientific neutrality, and has since paved the way for English to become “the language of development, science and rationality”(151). Echoing Foucault, Pennycook argues that “to constitute thought as a scientific discipline on the one hand excludes other possible knowledges, and on the other hand gives this particular discourse extreme power”(124). That English is a tool of both economic and cultural imperialism—that it promotes
inequality and problematic ideologies in the countries to which it is and has been brought, embraced, or imposed has been amply proven.

Perhaps one of the most explicit acknowledgments of English’s powerful role in spreading Western ideology came from Winston Churchill. Churchill, in response to F.D. Roosevelt's interest in spreading Basic English (or the 850 word English language created by CK Ogden) as a global lingua franca, stated: "Such plans [to spread Basic English] offer far better prizes than taking away other people's provinces and land or grinding them down in exploitation. The empires of the future are the empires of the mind" (quoted in Pennycook 131). The shift from colonial enterprise to the knowledge economy had begun, though it could be argued that English’s role in imperialism remained somewhat constant.

Along the same lines, Phillipson points to a mid-20th century Anglo-American language alliance, comprised of government agencies, academic institutions and foundations such as Peace Corps, Fulbright and the British Council, that consciously promoted English as a tactic against communism in the Cold War—and as a way to open up postcolonial countries to free market ideology. Continuing the colonial legacy of “disciplining” to which Pennycook points, this language alliance funded research in teaching English, sent English teachers abroad, provided pedagogical supplies, developed standardized tests of English, and consulted with developing countries to solidify the political influence of the West. Indeed, researchers such as Prendergast (2008) in Slovakia and Canagarajah (1999) in Sri-Lanka have shown, in their in-depth ethnographies, the ways these actions, begun in the 1950s, continue to play a part in post-communist and postcolonial contexts. They join a chorus of many other researchers, of
whom I’ll only mention a few, that have examined how English perpetuates dominant ideologies while maintaining the West’s control of the knowledge economy.

That English language textbooks circulate capitalist ideology has been amply proven (Pennycook 1994; Canagarajah 1994; Suaysuwan et al, 2005; Prendergast 2008). Suaysuwan and Kapitzkeuse, for instance, use critical discourse analysis to analyze Thai English textbooks from the post-war period to the present era of globalization, showing through close reading the Western values and capitalist positionalities made available to students through these texts—positionalities that increasingly posit a middle-class child, with free time and strong individualist feelings about "hating" and "liking" objects—feelings that prepare them to participate as consumers in capitalist structures absent in traditional Thai culture (88-89). They suggest these positionalities, though alien to most Thai children because of their socio-cultural and economic positions, create the desire to participate in a global capitalist economy. To return to Phillipson’s metaphor, middle-class individualist identities are packaged and sold, in English language textbooks, under the guise of neutrality.

This desire to participate in global economies through English in turn plays into the myth that English is the great equalizer; this myth implies that every individual who learns English, no matter her or his geopolitical positioning, has equal access to dominant institutions and power (Apple 2001). However, Prendergast shows quite powerfully in her study of Slovakian English users that no matter how fluent in English, their identities as Eastern Europeans bar access to many opportunities offered to English-using Western Europeans because of already-present prejudices. Indeed, in many cases, these rhetorics
of individuality and equal access, Phillipson argues, cause students to internalize such failure as individual, rather than to question the system:

As schools focus on individual responsibility and employ a rhetoric of freedom of choice, it is the victim who gets the blame for failure, rather than the structure which generates failure or the society which is permeated by hegemonic ideas which make this state of affairs appear natural and unavoidable, and possibly even just. (70)

Ideology promulgated in part through English language textbooks may prepare students to participate (and to accept their positions) within Churchill’s “empire of the mind,” an empire that, while promising equal access to global economic resources, enables some while disabling others.

Multiple authors have also shown that with English textbooks come curricular and pedagogical practices that often invalidate local pedagogical practices that may be more suited to students’ cultural context in favor of “native-speaker” pedagogies (Canagarajah 1999; Crossley 2000; Schapper and Mayson 2005). For instance, Canagarajah, based on his experience researching Sri Lankan language classrooms, argues that the common assumption that teacher-centered models are inherently authoritarian and undemocratic springs from a colonial discourse that places Western-based educational models as always more effective— and thus more “democratic”— than periphery pedagogies (106). He argues that the student-centered process pedagogy that is being exported to more teacher-centered pedagogical locations, “give(s) the illusion of freedom and equality in the classroom which may not be available in larger society,” in turn giving students “false optimism” that does little to prepare them for oppressive power structures outside of the classroom (107). Importing center-based pedagogies may discount already-there and effective teaching strategies, while also implicating the teacher in the problematic
“civilizing” discourses that have long been circulated by and through the English language.

The same “disciplining” of English that validates Inner Circle pedagogies while marginalizing other practices has also placed the “native English speaker” as expert on language matters, placing non-native English language teachers in second class position in global institutions, regardless of qualification (Phillipson 1992; Pennycook 1995; Canagarajah 1999). Phillipson coins this aspect of linguistic imperialism the “native speaker fallacy” and he argues that this fallacy is part of a larger discourse circulating globally, which he names the “monolingual fallacy.” Despite much research to the contrary (Pennycook 1995; Crawford 2001; Skutnabb-Kangas 2002), the monolingual fallacy forwards the belief that students’ first language negatively interferes with English language acquisition, and thus only English should be used in the classroom. Pennycook explains:

> The English language classroom, as idealized in the discourses of Western ELT theory, is not a place in which languages can be freely used and exchanged but rather has come to reflect a dogmatic belief in a monolingualist approach to language learning. (169)

Rather than encouraging students to draw from already present linguistic ability to build bridges between their own languages and English—which would situate multilingual English teachers as beneficial to the learning situation—second language classrooms continue to operate under a monolingual bias, and with this bias comes the idea that the “native speaker” is somehow always more qualified to teach English.

With this notion of “native speaker” superiority, it is no surprise that final assessment of students’ language fluency is often not based on their ability to communicate successfully with English in local contexts, but instead is determined by de-
contextualized Inner Circle standardized tests such as the TOEFL. Glenwright (2005), in an article about Hong-Kong’s post-reunification educational policy, for instance, points to the increasing pressure standardized English tests developed by Western countries place on teachers and students in Hong Kong. In turn, Prendergast shows, in her ethnography of post-Communist Slovakia, that in order to get jobs, people must be “certified and credentialized” by Western language agencies such as the British Council, rather than local ones like the Slovak Technical University (89). As will be discussed in Chapter 2 in relation to ICRS, these tests are often de-contextualized from any real communicative context students have encountered, in addition to requiring knowledge of Western culture and ideology, which makes them difficult to pass for many competent language users. Working under the guise of neutrality “disciplining” creates, standardized language tests act as effective “gate-keepers” to Western privilege, while also contributing to a multibillion dollar industry that helps solidify Western economic interests in the global economy.

This gate-keeping also occurs in the academic knowledge economy. Suresh Canagarajah, in his Geopolitics of Academic Writing shows that even in so-called “international” academic journals, authors from Western countries vastly outnumber scholars published from non-Western countries, pointing, once again, it could be argued, to colonial legacies that continue to paint the West as subject researching and non-Western countries as object researched. He even finds that in TESOL Quarterly—a journal that, ironically, is focused on global multilingual research—articles submitted by non-Western authors are vastly outnumbered by writers writing from within Western contexts (36). Canagarajah acknowledges that there are thousands of journals written in
local languages circulating knowledge in non-Western contexts, but these journals are often absent from Western research databases and thus off the research radar, making them low prestige. Non-Western researchers, he argues, often feel “compelled to get published in [Inner Circle] journals to validate the respectability of their work, disseminate their findings effectively to the academic channels that matter in their profession, and participate in knowledge construction” (43). This trend was quite evident at ICRS—most of my PhD students were already well-published in Indonesian journals, yet still felt compelled to publish in Western journals to solidify their research’s importance.

That said, Canagarajah suggests that even if non-Western scholars do get published in English, because most editors spring Western contexts, non-dominant knowledge is inevitably circumscribed by Western ideology in the editing process:

Publishing according to the conventions and terms of set by the Center academic communities influences in no small way the representation of periphery knowledge. The publishing requirements, epistemological paradigms, and communicative conventions established at the center shape the knowledge that gets constructed through these journals. (43)

The pressure to publish in English, then, and the ideologies that are transmitted through English, have flattened textual diversity by forcing non-Western scholars to adapt to dominant Western rhetorical practices to get published. As will be discussed later in this introduction and more thoroughly in Chapter 4, because rhetorical traditions are linked to culturally-influenced ways of being and doing, editing to conform to Western norms is not a neutral task; such editing often causes ideological friction. Indeed, as my research will show, there is no doubt that the English language and Western academic discourse conventions are more than just neutral tools for international communication; with their
transmission comes Western ideology and thus Western ways of being and doing that are sometimes at odds with “local” cultures.

**Locating Agency**

The researchers above paint a fairly dark picture of the English language and its global role, and, as the following chapters will show, many of these imperialist aspects of the language do surface at ICRS. However, we must be careful to avoid creating an overly deterministic notion of English as doing so denies language users’ agency.

Phillipson’s notion of linguistic imperialism tends to create structure/victim binaries; for instance, he dubs English the “dominant language” and all other languages “dominated” (39). Although he is careful to argue that people work within larger hegemonic structures that encourage them to unquestioningly promulgate problematic language ideology (69)—that it's not the individual but the structure that controls the individual's actions—such a focus on structure, as opposed to individuals acting within that structure might also obviate an individual's agency (whether that individual is a policy maker, an English language teacher or a student) to challenge linguistic imperialism.

Although as we see above, Pennycook agrees with Phillipson that English is oppressive, he, unlike Phillipson, accounts for agency. He draws from Foucauldian theory to challenge both the notion that English is a monolithic, oppressive force that eradicates all languages in its path and the discourse of neutrality that holds English up as a neutral language that creates equal opportunity for all who choose to learn it (32). The former denies any agency periphery countries may have in using and transforming English for their own purposes, and the latter denies the inequalities that English, though not monolithic, has created historically—and is still creating within countries that cannot
afford to ignore the power that English holds in the global market (33). To challenge these claims that English is all powerful or culturally neutral, he suggests that language scholars must move from isolated examinations of linguistic and political structures to look instead at specific English-using contexts. He suggests that in doing so, researchers can better acknowledge English’s "worldliness":

First, ...English is worldly by dint of its vast global expansion. Second, English is worldly in the sense that a person may be called worldly: it has been and is constantly in the process of being changed by its position in the world. And third, it is in the world, it is part of the world; to use English is to engage in social action which produces and reproduces social and cultural relations. The worldliness of English refers to both its local and to its global position, both to the ways in which it reflects social relations and constitutes social relations and thus the worldliness of English is always a question of cultural politics. (34)

“Worldliness” suggests that discourses around English not only pre-exist those who operate within them, but that they are also constantly reproduced by language users in specific social and cultural sites; it is because of this reproduction, or negotiation between discourses, that English is constantly being “changed by its position in the world.” The fact that English is still malleable despite its imperialist tendencies leaves space for English language users to “write back” and challenge hegemony locally (262).

**Acknowledging that Writing is a Cultural Endeavor While Leaving Space to Write Back**

Pennycook suggests, then, that English is a purveyor of culture—and given the West’s “ownership” of language, this culture is often “Western”— but as English comes into contact with “specific social and cultural sites,” it is re-formulated by the language users that put it in play. Indeed, contrastive rhetoricians have long suggested that multilingual writers’ non-Western cultures re-formulate Western rhetorical traditions when they write in English.
As will be discussed (and problematized) in more detail in Chapter 4, contrastive rhetoricians such as Robert Kaplan, the originator of the field, analyzed English texts in relation to non-English texts to suggest that a writer’s first language—and thus culture—affected his or her writing in English. Though he has since added more nuance to his theory, in 1966, he analyzed “Oriental” texts and found them less direct, with attention to context—and thus other people’s ideas—before the writer’s own ideas (the writer’s voice, then, is much less evident in the text); on the other hand, he found Western writing in English direct and very writer-focused. He attributed these textual differences to cultural difference, and argued that because of these cultural differences, “Oriental” people write differently than Western people when using English. Kaplan found, as Pennycook suggests, that English is capable of changing to accommodate different contexts.

However, when contrastive rhetoric was brought into language classrooms, the ultimate goal wasn’t to embrace English’s “worldliness,” but to encourage multilingual students to locate these cross-cultural differences in writing styles so they might “fix” their writing to better emulate Western rhetorical traditions (Kubota 9). This focus on assimilation denies the possibility that students might want to take agency and appropriate the English language for their own contexts and purposes—to de-link English from Western rhetorical structures—a possibility that Pennycook and others such as Canagarajah and Ryoko Kubota suggest is possible.

Indeed, if we return to the excerpt that began this chapter, ICRS wants to use English to start conversations not only with the Global North but also with scholars in the Global South and, presumably, given their local focus, with other English-using
Indonesian scholars—scholars who may use English differently because of their differing cultural contexts. So, to return to Horner and Trimbur’s call for an internationalist perspective, we might ask ourselves: whose English is a must for ICRS as a local-global site?

As this dissertation will attest, the answer to this question is not a simple one, given the historical and sociopolitical power the West still holds over English and the desire of those at ICRS to keep their scholarly identities rooted in Indonesia. Indeed, as an extremely religious post-colonial, post-dictatorial and newly democratic country, Indonesians are seeking to define their national identity on their own terms—as both pluralist and religious—while also engaging in international academic conversations that view these terms as mutually exclusive. ICRS, as an academic program, positions itself at the nexus of these local religious imaginings and global communicative possibilities. And as we’ll see, friction occurs as local meets global and students seek to articulate—and write—their local imaginings in English, a language that has long been implicated in Western imperialism.

As Chapter 1 will explain, to get at the complexity involved with writing from an international yet Indonesian perspective, I take a critical ethnographic approach, drawing from teacher research, interviews, and students’ writing to more fully understand the friction that happens as local meets global ideologically as well as textually. After this chapter on my approach and methods, this dissertation will move to section one, titled “Articulating Identity in a Local-Global English-Using Indonesian Context.” This section will draw from my ethnographic research to focus on points of friction between local and global and the ways that people from within ICRS articulate English-using identities in
light of linguistic imperialism. Chapter 2 will place ICRS’s local-global identity in relation to Indonesia’s broader sociolinguistic history; this contextualization will highlight both the institutional frictions involved with choosing English instead of Bahasa Indonesia as the primary mode of instruction and the ways that the program negotiates this friction to articulate its English-using local-global identity. Chapter 3 will also examine constructions of local-global identity, though it will focus in on how four students from my Academic Writing course articulate, in their literacy narratives and in interviews, their English-using identities in light of the imperialism and possibility they see English representing. These explorations of local-global identity will highlight, as Pennycook suggests, that English, though linked to Western imperialism, can also be re-imagined as “local” in particular literacy sites.

The second section of this dissertation, “Whose English? Towards a Diachronic Understanding of Audience, Friction, and Local-Global Negotiation” will shift the focus from identity negotiation to frictions involved with the actual writing process. This section will use a Bakhtinian conceptualization of diachronic audience to explore the complexity involved in determining “whose English” is appropriate given ICRS’s Indonesian, yet international intentions and the multiple audiences suggested by this identity. This Bakhtinian lens allows me to draw from productive aspects of contrastive rhetoric while also leaving space for the re-articulation of language in relation to material context. In short, Bakhtin suggests that past voices, as well as present and future voices, are audience to any textual production. Given ICRS’s complicated Indonesian yet international identity, students negotiate with both Indonesian and Western rhetorical traditions as past audiences while writing from a present populated with both non-
Indonesian and Indonesian English users. As Chapter 4 will explore, contending with these voices, past and present, from their developing country context and determining to whom they should address their English words—and with that, in what rhetorical tradition they should write—causes friction for both faculty and students. Chapter 5, in turn, will focus on how I, as an instructor, developed an audience-focused critical contrastive pedagogy that both acknowledged cross-cultural friction and encouraged students to make conscious rhetorical choices in regards to their English-using audiences, rather than assimilating to Western norms without question. Finally, Chapter 6 will turn to an analysis of the actual texts students produced—and with that, their textual choices in relation to the audiences—whether Indonesian, Western, or both—that they located for their English words.

As the following chapters will show, this local-global writing context can be viewed as a contact zone between English and the many language contexts and rhetorical traditions students’ take part in, as well as a place where global and local discourses collide, often reformulating what it means to use English in the process. Culture, writing, and the ideology spread through competing discourses are indelibly linked—and it is in the examination of these links that we can locate and critique both the power English embodies as an imperialist language—and perhaps the possibilities it represents to people writing from the periphery.
A critical ethnographic approach, I propose, can illuminate the ways that writers negotiate the local-global tensions that have arisen from a history of English “linguistic imperialism.” As Anna Tsing points out in her book *Friction: An Ethnography of Global Tension*, it is instructive to look at the point of contact or “friction” between global and local discourses; she argues that “an attention to friction opens up the possibility of an *ethnographic account* of global interconnection” (author’s emphasis 6). Ethnography, she argues, allows for

A study of global connections [that] shows the grip of encounter, or friction. A wheel turns because of its encounter with the surface of the road; spinning in the air, it goes nowhere. Rubbing two sticks together produces heat and light; one stick alone is just a stick. As a metaphorical image, friction reminds us that heterogeneous and unequal encounters can lead to new arrangements of culture and power. (5)

Such friction implies both participation between countries and various actors—it takes two sticks to create friction—and, possibly, if one looks to the specific material and historical realities already at work in countries, exceptions to the idea of a “free-wheeling” global encounter being either entirely beneficial or entirely detrimental to all. Despite (or perhaps because of) such uneven encounters, Tsing argues that “friction gets in the way of the smooth operation of global power,” acting, at times “like a ‘fly in the elephant’s nose’” (6). To explore these hiccoughs in global power, Tsing suggests researchers turn to ethnography. Indeed, she shows in her own ethnographic study the

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2Indeed, to take into account inequality of access, I imagine the road—or the developing country—with which the wheel makes contact as uneven—as rifled with peaks and valleys—so that the wheel makes contact with the peaks, or those who have the privilege to access powerful global institutions in the first place, but rarely with the disenfranchised poor.
ways various actors—environmentalists, both local and global, tribal leaders, urban students, tourists, mountaineers and more—play into the movement to “save” the Indonesian rainforests. Ethnography allows her to examine the messiness of these encounters, or points of “friction,” while also pointing to the ways systems of power both disable and enable social action depending on the multiple and sometimes competing discourses in situated contexts.

To apply her metaphor to the English language, without connection with material realities in specific countries, English would never gain purchase enough to continue its “free” motion. Indeed, compositionists Catherine Prendergast, in her *Buying into English: Language and Investment in the New Capitalist World* and Suresh Canagarajah, in his *Resisting Linguistic Imperialism in English Teaching*, both point to the desire people have in developing countries to learn English (disrupting the notion that English is always unwillingly imposed from without) while also showing how, in various actor’s encounters with English, they take agency and challenge dominant discourses English promotes. Furthermore, to examine this power and agency in global, yet local interactions, like Tsing, these authors also use an ethnographic approach. Prendergast, in her study of postcommunist Slovakia, uses ethnography to “appreciate the ambiguities that result from the collision of global economics, national history, and personal desires”—ambiguities that push Slovaks to both learn and question English, ambiguities fostered by the friction between global and local discourses surrounding English. Canagarajah, in turn, uses ethnography to develop a “grounded theory” of “language, culture and pedagogy that is motivated by the lived reality and everyday experience of periphery subjects”(5) while also taking into consideration larger socio-cultural forces.
that act upon people in his Sri Lankan Tamil English language classrooms.

To elaborate on his approach, Canagarajah draws a useful distinction between traditional *descriptive ethnography* and his own critical ethnographic approach. He argues that in contrast to *descriptive ethnography*, which, with its too-local focus, “treat(s) the words of informants from the community as sacrosanct” and “attempt(s) to smooth over contradictions among informants”—*critical ethnography* opens up space for contradictions fostered by multiple and competing ideologies that transcend the local (author’s emphasis 48). A *critical ethnography*, he argues, “analyzes [informants’] words in relation to larger historical processes and social contradictions, searching for the hidden forces that structure life”(48). As Canagarajah shows in his research, because of its focus on both micro and macro cultural processes, critical ethnography is a particularly useful approach to examining English’s “worldliness;” after all, English, as Pennycook argues, is “worldly” both because of its position as the global language of power—a positioning determined by global, sociohistorical processes—and because locally, “it has been and is constantly in the process of being changed by its position in the world” (34). To put it a different way, a critical ethnographic study of English is a study of the friction fostered by local-global interactions. In my own study of local-global academic writing, I have also adopted a critical ethnographic approach in order to better understand the local-global frictions engendered in students’ writing processes. More specifically, this study is a critical ethnography of ICRS as a literacy context, and with that, the writing processes and texts of ICRS students during the 10-month 2009-2010 academic year.

As mentioned in my introduction, ICRS is an “inter-religious, international” Ph.D.
program located in Yogyakarta Indonesia. The program’s goals are both local and
global—they aim to engage in the study of Indonesian religions to the benefit of inter-
religious dialog in Indonesia, but also to take part in larger global conversations
concerning religion that are, because of English’s status as global lingua franca,
happening in English. As a U.S. Department of State English Language Fellow, I was
invited to take part in this local-global program as a curriculum developer and teacher
which also, we will see, gave me a valuable opportunity to research local-global friction
having to do with writing in English.

Indeed, during my 10-month ELF position I worked closely with faculty members
and students at ICRS to develop and implement a program-specific Ph.D.-level English
academic writing course. Though at the time of my research, ICRS had 34 faculty
members of multiple religious denominations, most of whom were Indonesian, I worked
most closely with three faculty members: Dr. Bernard, director of the program, an
American Christian male with long ties, both personal and professional to Indonesia; Dr.
Atun, assistant director of the program, an Indonesian Muslim woman; and Dr. Fatima,
former assistant director of the program, also an Indonesian Muslim woman. The
program also had 34 full-time students, though only nine first-year Indonesian Ph.D.
students took part in the academic writing course I taught and developed over the course
of two semesters. Of these nine, four were Christian Indonesian males, three were
Muslim males, and two were Muslim females.

My position as curriculum developer and academic writing teacher—and the close
relationships I had to the faculty and students with whom I worked—also presented me a
valuable opportunity to add to research conversations concerning local-global English
Although there have been numerous full-length ethnographies done in relation to English language education in global sites—including Canagarajah’s and Prendergast’s—very few full-length studies have focused specifically on English writing in a global site. Although Xiaoye You, in his *Writing in the Devil’s Tongue: A History of English Composition in China*, does productively draw from the actual writing of Chinese composition students, his research is primarily archival, rather than embedded in a contemporary literacy context. I hope, then, that the critical ethnographic research I conducted at ICRS will contribute to current understandings—in both second language and composition circles—of what it means to write internationally in English.

I was interested in answering the following questions in my writing-focused ethnography:

- How has the English language been positioned as both local and global in a specific Indonesian literacy context?
- How, in turn, do writers, as they use English, negotiate the point of contact between local and global?

These questions helped shape my study, but, as Dyson and Genishi (2005) and Bogdan and Biklen (2003) suggest is common in research projects, other, more focused sub-questions arose as I conducted my research. In what follows, I discuss my approach to critical ethnographic teacher-research and then describe my more specific methods for gathering and analyzing data.

**A Writing-Focused Critical Ethnography**

Because my research focuses specifically on writing, I found Ulla Connors’ concept of intercultural rhetoric quite useful in structuring my ethnography. Seeking to expand the field of contrastive rhetoric into a more context-driven intercultural rhetoric in
her “Mapping Multidimensional Aspects of Research,” she suggests a need to explore points of contact between local context, global discourse, and English writing, an exploration, as we can see above, for which critical ethnography seems quite suited. She draws from three postmodern theoretical frames to define what it means to practice “intercultural rhetoric”: 1) Fairclough’s notion of the text in context (1992); 2) Holliday’s notion that small and large cultures intersect (1994); and 3) Sarangi’s distinction between intercultural and cross-cultural communication (which points to the ways language users accommodate and shift registers depending on their audience) (305).

Arguing that earlier examinations by contrastive rhetoricians were too text-based, she forwards Fairclough’s model of discourse, where “any discursive ‘event’ (i.e. any instance of discourse) is seen as being simultaneously a piece of text, an instance of discursive practice, and an instance of social practice” (qtd. in Connor 306). Any text, in other words, is both effected by and affects the social context in which it is produced. As such, research on multilingual writing in global contexts should pay close attention to cultural context in which texts are produced.

This cultural context, in turn, is an amalgamation of both “small” and “large” cultures, according to Holliday. As will be discussed below, this nuanced picture of culture is especially important in challenging much-critiqued (and since revised) models forwarded by early contrastive rhetoric that painted culture as static and monolithic. Holliday points to the multiple and intersecting cultural contexts that work upon textual producers in an academic setting: youth culture, student culture, classroom culture, professional-academic culture, and national culture (qtd. in Connor 308). The simultaneous and sometimes conflicting discourses that spring from these cultural
contexts affect the texts produced in the classroom—as such, research should not only attend to national and macro-cultural features of writing (as contrastive rhetoric is wont to do), but also to the “smaller” discourses circulating in specific socio-historical contexts. Again we see the importance of analyzing the interplay between macro and micro social processes.

Finally, in any interaction that involves communication across cultures, not only should we take into consideration “cross-cultural” aspects, or the more abstract language universals tied to “large” cultures, but we should also account for “intercultural” communication, where “interactants can be studied as diverging from their first language culture and language norms to try to communicate” (310) with members of a different cultural group. In other words, communicators often step outside of their own cultural norms to accommodate (perceived) cross-cultural audience expectations, which calls for a more situated look at the give and take between larger cultural norms and more local interactions. Intercultural rhetoric, with its awareness of the multiplicity of culture(s) and discourses that affect textual production, opens up space for an analysis of friction between local and global in specific, “worldly” English writing contexts. It also, I will argue in the next section, suggests a re-articulation of the researcher’s relationship to her research site.

**Teacher Research**

That is, because intercultural rhetoric challenges monolithic notions of “culture,” it may also challenge discourses that position the researcher as always an “outsider,” detached from cultural production in her research context. Clifford Geertz considers this “disciplined outsider” position a positive in that it allows for rational detachment from
the research context, though he believes the informants’ perspectives are also important; a researcher’s challenge, he thinks, should be balancing the researcher’s outsider “experience far” perspective with the insider “experience near” of the informants (55-70). However, I believe this outsider/insider perspective relies on the same notion of a static, monolithic culture that traditional contrastive rhetoric does, where there is one large national culture that dictates a person’s identity in relation to those studied in a particular research context. If we reinterpret the researcher’s identity from an intercultural perspective, however, perhaps we can visualize the researcher as a co-constructor of knowledge and textual production on some occasions, even if she is ethnically an “outsider”; such a re-conceptualization seems increasingly important as cultures and ideologies transcend borders with globalization.

This re-conceptualization of research as an intercultural endeavor opens up space for action research (Nunan 1990)—or in my case, teacher research—where the researcher takes a more “active” role in her research context than traditional ethnographic observation allows for. As an ethnically white scholar and lecturer from the U.S. (a positionality I’ll discuss in more detail below), I will always be an outsider in the large, national Indonesian culture; however, in “smaller” cultural contexts—on the professional-academic, classroom, and in some cases student cultural levels at ICRS—I actively participated in the construction of discourse about, through, and with English. Through the pedagogical frameworks I introduced, through my conversations with students and administrators, and in my very presence as a researcher, I contributed to the “worldly” and sometimes friction-full English language culture at ICRS. As will be seen in the next section, teacher-research gave me a position from which to interpret with,
rather than just about, ICRS while also forwarding the notion that we are all implicated—myself included—in the construction of global encounters.

A Critical Contrastive Pedagogy

The dialogic relationship offered by teacher-research—between my researcher identity and my teaching identity—helped me embrace a teaching approach that mirrored my research approach. I employed what Kubota calls “critical contrastive rhetoric” in my writing classroom, a pedagogical model that weds critical theory, contrastive rhetoric research and pedagogical practice to encourage students to become critical language users.

Kubota argues that in traditional contrastive rhetoric models, “agency resides completely within the instructor—or the researchers who have already determined for teachers and students alike that English is linear, etc. and that other languages are not”(22). To move us towards the notion that knowledge is co-constructed and negotiated in particular social contexts, she urges instructors to construct their classrooms in ways that encourage students themselves to analyze and negotiate existing literacies in relation to those being introduced through English. For example, she suggests, “An appropriate starting point for classroom work is for individual students to think about, discuss, and write about how they perceive the ways in which they write—or not—in their first languages and critically bring their perceptions to bear on the work of composing texts in another language (here, English) as a second language” (21). This analysis, she argues, will highlight students’ differing language histories—to connect to Holliday, students spring from different “small cultures”—and help spark conversations that problematize the ways that languages, and with that writers, are “positioned” within powerful and
shifting global discourses.

To expand, rather than focusing on concretized differences, then, teachers and students—and in my case, researchers as well— who engage in critical contrastive rhetoric should look at the *processes* that create such differences in the first place. She hopes this contrastive practice—where students look at both dominant and non-dominant texts in relation to shifting cultural contexts—might give students the tools to “both resist assimilation and appropriate the rhetoric of power to enable oppositional voices”(20). In other words, by examining the discourses surrounding English that affect textual production, students can learn to negotiate *within* powerful institutions while also taking agency and challenging dominant discourses when necessary. As the following chapters will show, critical contrastive rhetoric helped my students articulate and negotiate between culturally-constructed language practices—Kubota is careful to assert that this “view does not deny the existence of cultural difference”(17)—while also offering me valuable, and co-constructed data for my research.

**Researcher’s Subjectivity**

In fact, this co-construction of data regarding cross-cultural textual differences was incredibly important due to a major shortcoming in my research project: I went to Indonesia with no knowledge of the Indonesian language, Bahasa Indonesia. As Chapters 4-6 will show, I draw heavily from Suresh Canagarajah’s “Toward a Writing Pedagogy of Shuttling Between Languages.” In this article he argues that to truly understand writers as critical agents, capable of moving between languages, “[W]e have to study the same writer composing in multiple languages, shuttling between one language/context/discourse and another. Ideally, we should study the author writing in relatively
the same genre though for different audiences and languages” (591). By focusing on the
same writer as he or she writes in multiple languages and then analyzing his or her textual
choices in relation to audience, Canagarajah believes that researchers can acknowledge
multilingual writers’ agency, in turn avoiding essentialist readings of language and
culture as they embark on contrastive analysis.

As Chapter 4 will discuss, this model allowed Canagarajah to show that
multilingual writers can use the English language strategically in relation to the audiences
they wish to address—that, in fact, the multilingual writer who he researches, Professor
Sivatamby, uses English in different and culturally-appropriate ways depending on
whether he’s writing to a Tamil English-using audience or an international English-using
audience. Canagarajah argues, understandably, that such research should be done by a
multilingual person:

Of course, to conduct such a study the researchers themselves have to be
multilingual. Only scholars who are proficient in both (or all) the languages an
author is using will be able to undertake this kind of study meaningfully. (591)

A multilingual researcher would be ideal for such research in that he or she undoubtedly
has a deeper understanding of the writer’s culture and writing practices, and
pragmatically, he or she can actually read texts written in both languages. I do believe,
however, that there are ways for a researcher like myself, who is not well-versed in the
local language, to engage in critical research regarding cross-cultural language friction.
To make up for my deficit, I relinquished a top-down research positionality that would
place my analysis of students’ texts as primary and instead adopted a bottom-up
positionality. That is, rather than relying on my own analysis of culture and textual
practice as a starting point for theorizing multilingual textual production, I began my
research by drawing from my students’ understandings of their own writing processes, and with that, the cross-cultural differences they saw between Indonesian and English rhetorical styles. Though I wish I were fluent in Indonesian so I could have accessed students’ Indonesian texts in my analysis, it was my hope that starting from their Indonesian perspectives would alleviate some of the problems involved with a non-Indonesian-using researcher exploring cross-cultural language friction.

It is important to note, however, that bottom-up approaches do not create an egalitarian relationship between researcher and researched. As someone hailing from the United States (arguably the most powerful of Western countries), I was implicated in the very processes of linguistic imperialism I encouraged students to critique. Therefore, given the historical and socioeconomic information I give in my introduction, it’s important to acknowledge that I held a position of power as a U.S. Department of State English Language Fellow (ELF). The job description of this 10-month fellowship says the program’s aim is to “assist U.S. Embassies throughout the world in their goals of facilitating democratic institution building and encouraging participation in the global economy” (What do Fellows do?). These aims resonate quite powerfully with English’s often-imperialistic role in pushing Western economic and cultural interests.

Indeed, keep in mind Phillipson’s argument that English has been and is still used politically as soft power in postcolonial and postcommunist states as I relate the following brief history of my program. In 1969, the English Language Fellows Program, originally called “English Teaching Fellows” (ETF), was created to “increase U.S. presence, to raise academic standards, and to provide native speakers of English trained

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3 During my 10 months researching in Indonesia, I did take bi-weekly Indonesian language lessons, which gave me a grasp of conversational Indonesian, though I still lacked fluency in academic Indonesian.
at the Master’s level in Teaching English as a Foreign/Second Language (TEFL/TESL)” in Latin America. In the 1970s, the first ETF was placed in Africa at an American Center in Madagascar and, by the 1980s, the program had spread to universities, teacher training institutions and other tertiary level institutions worldwide (Program Background). Then, in 1991, sponsored by Support for Eastern European Democracy (SEED), the English as a Foreign Language Fellows (EFL) program was created to respond to the growing demand for English language teaching in Eastern Europe and the former Soviet Union. As the program became more successful, sponsors such as the Freedom Support Act (FSA) and the Bureau of Educational and Cultural Affairs (ECA), contributed funds, “help[ing] encourage and foster the positive impact of the EFL Fellows on both English learning and mutual understanding” (Program Background). From 1991 to 1996, up to 50 Senior Fellows were sent to Eastern Europe and, later, to Eurasia and Russian countries. Fellows trained local English teachers, “thereby enhancing communication skills and raising the standard of English instruction” (Program Background). In 2001, the two programs were combined to form The English Language Fellows Program (ELF). Since then, the School for International Training (SIT), in collaboration with the Bureau of Educational and Cultural Affairs at the U.S. Department of State and U.S. embassies around the world has placed over 400 Fellows in over 80 countries. I am one of those fellows sent abroad to foster “mutual understanding” through English language teaching, and, as Chapter 2 will explore, this implicates me in what Tania Murray Li dubs “the will to improve.” Though this dissertation research is tangential to my ELF duties—and is in no way sponsored by the U.S. government—my position as a “native English language expert” from the U.S. (in addition to already present power differentials between teacher
and student created by the grading process and traditional hierarchical conceptions of the classroom) undoubtedly affected respondents’ relationship with me as a teacher and a researcher.

Why, then, do I wish to be implicated in such a project? Simply put, I believe that there is possibility for the English language to open up the types of international discourse ICRS wishes to promote, given that English language teachers approach their enterprise critically. As Pennycook argues, "if English is the major language through which the forces of neocolonial exploitation operate, it is also the language through which 'common counter-articulations' can perhaps most effectively be made" renewing "both local and global forms of culture and knowledge"(326). As English spreads, then, we need to ask difficult questions to open up space for such possibility.

Furthermore, keeping in mind that power is never absolute and that it shifts depending on context and the multiple discourses operating within specific social spaces—perhaps my other identities worked against the notion that as a native speaker and teacher hailing from the U.S., my power was absolute. As an instructor, a graduate student, and a relatively young woman, my identity often shifted between and within the multiple “small cultures” at ICRS, to employ Holliday’s terms. Within my academic writing course—what Holliday would consider the “classroom culture”— I undoubtedly held a position of power, both as a language professional, and because of the fact that I was the one grading the papers. However, within the same space, I often drew from my own experiences as a fellow graduate student, shifting from my more authoritative role. By situating my PhD students’ writing experiences next to my own—for instance, the challenges I too faced when writing “academically” for the first time at the graduate
level, or in downsizing a seminar paper into conference paper length and format—I hoped to further the notion that writing difficulties are not necessarily solely linked to “large culture” or language differences, but, in a more general way, difficulties may also be linked to becoming part of the academic discourse community. As fellow graduate students, my students and I discovered, we often faced similar challenges when navigating this new discourse community. I read students’ work, but students also read my work—they requested copies of my dissertation prospectus, seminar papers, and conference papers—which, I believe, helped create a classroom culture that viewed everyone—including me as the instructor—as learners of academic discourse. We all, as writers, were negotiating with the academic norms expected of us, sometimes successfully and sometimes not. Thus, within the classroom culture I was at times language professional, and at other times, I was a fellow graduate student writer.

Indeed, my graduate student identity was made even more evident by the fact that all of my students were older than me: many students had worked and saved for years to return to school, and they were shocked that I was so far advanced in my degree at such a “young” age—a consequence, I explained to them, of economic privilege and funding availability in the U.S. My students did not question my authority because of this age disparity—probably because of my position as language expert and “native speaker”; rather, it led to a joking re-conceptualization of our classroom as a “family.” Pak Joko, our oldest student at 58, became the “father” and the other members of our classroom community, myself included, his “children.” Jokes about me being the “youngest child” surfaced throughout our course, causing much laughter. Although some may view this re-conceptualization of our classroom culture as a traditional family unit as challenging my
classroom authority (as a young woman), perhaps the situation deserves a more nuanced interpretation. Students showed throughout the course that they were aware of my “expert” identity as the “native speaker,” so perhaps joking was a way of negotiating tensions and discomfort they felt with me as a representative of Western language practices and ideology. Furthermore, by frequently invoking my identity as fellow graduate student, I myself opened up space for a more “comfortable,” student-centered classroom culture—one where both joking and re-articulations of classroom space to accommodate Indonesian cultural norms was welcome. My dual role as “language expert” and graduate student, I believe, helped reduce some of the problematic power differentials inherent in my teacher-research; in turn, my identity as a graduate student also encouraged me to ask questions rather than give answers, a positionality important, I believe, in encouraging cross-cultural understanding.

In outlining the above research approach, I hope to emphasize that by examining power in relation to language use in specific contexts, or English’s worldliness, I believe we—teachers, researchers and students—can challenge dominant discourses that paint Standard English and the pedagogy that surrounds it as neutral, pragmatic, and ideology-free, opening up space within dominant structures for students such as those at ICRS to use English on their own terms. In the following section, then, I turn to the specific ethnographic methods I used to explore the points of friction outlined above—between language, culture(s), and the powerful ideologies English represents at ICRS. And, as will be seen, although at some levels I observed, at others I participated in the English-using culture at ICRS.
Methods of Data Collection and Analysis

Because of its usefulness as an organizational schema, I used Holliday’s notion of large and small cultures to structure my methods section; however, it is important to note that cultural contexts are ever-shifting and that they overlap in specific contexts, producing sites of friction. My aim in the following chapters, therefore, will be to paint a more nuanced, narrative picture of points of friction that happen when these different “cultures” interacted at ICRS, contributing to a more “intercultural” notion of language use. By drawing on ICRS program documents, the perspectives of program administrators and teachers, interviews with and writing by graduate students, and my own fieldnotes as a teacher-researcher, my study explores these writers’ local contexts as they engage in and produce academic discourse for Indonesians as well as broader global audiences.

Gathering Data on National/International Culture

In keeping with Canagarajah’s suggestion that any study of language use should be considered in relation to sociolinguistic and historical trends, Heath and Street, in On Ethnography, emphasize that ethnographic researchers should engage in a “back-and-forth among historical, comparative, and current fieldwork sources”(33). As Chapter 2 will show, I place my analysis of ICRS as a local-global literacy site in relation to already existing social science scholarship concerning Indonesia’s complicated identity as a newly democratic, postcolonial, yet extremely diverse country. By situating my 10 months worth of more local ethnographic observations at ICRS in relation to larger historical and political studies of Indonesia, I show how national and international discourses concerning development, religion, and language policy circulate, mingle with,
and influence more “local” discourses—and thus the writing practices—at ICRS.

**Gathering Data on Professional-Academic Culture**

As ICRS is a decidedly new program—and still “in the making” as far as a textual trail—I employed several different methods to help me obtain a more complete understanding of its history, purposes, and institutional goals as an “international” PhD program. To trace the ways ICRS establishes its identity through its written texts—which inevitably affects educational practice—I began my research by gathering documents the program uses, both to promote itself and attract new students, and to make its goals clear to current faculty and students. These documents not only gave me valuable information regarding ICRS’s goals for my students, but they also helped shape and focus interviews with the current Director, Dr. Bernard, a white Christian male professor from the U.S. who has had close ties, both professionally and personally, with Indonesia for many years; with the current Assistant Director, Dr. Atun, a Muslim Indonesian female professor; and the former Assistant Director, Dr. Fatima, also a Muslim Indonesian female professor.

The purpose of these interviews was three-fold: first, I wanted to obtain multiple narratives, from different perspectives (both Indonesian and American), concerning ICRS’s professional academic history and the challenges that faces ICRS in creating a truly “international” identity. Second, as these administrators are also (or in the case of Fatima were) faculty at ICRS, I wanted to hear their perspectives concerning our students’ writing, as writing practices encouraged in other classes might also affect students’ texts in my own classroom. And third, I wanted to understand not just the end policies, but the decision-making process behind ICRS’s language policy.
These tape-recorded interviews were partly semi-structured, particularly in regard to the history, perceptions of students’ writing and challenges in developing an international identity; and partly discourse-based, in regard to specific excerpts of the language policy. I asked the following questions, with some room for modification based on participants’ answers:

**Set 1: ICRS’s history as an “International” Program:**
1. Could you tell me the history of ICRS? When was it founded? What were the motivations for founding this institution? The primary actors? Who funds ICRS? What challenges does or has ICRS faced since its founding?

2. In the Benefits and Privileges section, ICRS’s role as international partner is highlighted (6)—how has this role actually manifested itself? What are some of the challenges in defining an institution as “international”?

**Set 2: Faculty Perceptions of Student Writing:**
1. As a professor, what challenges do you see students having when they write?

2. Do you think these challenges have something to do with culture? If so, how?

3. What audience do you think students most often write to? An Indonesian audience? A Western audience? A local audience? An international audience? What audience do you as a professor want students to write to? Why?

**Set 3: ICRS’s Language Policy:**
1. The faculty handbook states that “[faculty] members should be able to teach effectively and advise students in English”(5). How is a lecturer’s effectiveness in English defined? Has this requirement provided any challenges to ICRS?

2. In the Language Policy, there is quite a powerful statement: “The decision to use English as the primary language of ICRS-Yogya was painful to decide since we are aware of the ‘imperialism’ of English. Most people from any nation, including Indonesia, communicate most effectively in their mother tongue. However, English is now the single most effective language of universal communication. Indonesians must master English in order to participate in international discourse, including discourse with other Asian, African, and Latin American scholars”(13).

   - Could you talk a little bit more about the decision-making process? Perhaps outlining some of the perspectives—both ‘for’ and ‘against’
using English? What argument finally pushed ICRS to adopt English as its primary mode of instruction?

- The final statement points to English’s role in international discourse, particularly its role in helping ICRS communicate with the Global South. Could you talk a little bit more about English’s roles in creating these partnerships? How did this affect the decision to use English as a primary mode of instruction?

3. It says in the language policy that “the basic, minimum language requirements for ICRS-Yogya doctoral students is defined as fluency in English (demonstrated by a TOEFL score of 550 or above), and one other modern language (such as Indonesian, French, Tagalog, Chinese, etc.)”(13). What made ICRS choose TOEFL as the main measurement of fluency in English? Has this decision provided any challenges to ICRS?

4. Requirement 6 states that “written assignments should always be designed to develop the students’ critical skills and not just repeat back information they have read or heard in the class. In a good course, students may learn more from the process of their own writing, than they learn from the lectures or readings. When students write creatively and critically, they integrate what they have heard in class and read in books, into a form of knowledge that is integrated with the rest of their knowledge. That does not happen if they just repeat what the ‘experts’ say”(10).

- Could you talk a little bit more about this statement? What past experiences led to this belief?

- What challenges, if any, do you see in making this belief an actuality at ICRS?

5. In requirements for student assignments, the handbook states that students should write “a total of 30 pages, double spaced, of written assignments per semester for one, 3-credit doctoral seminar”(9). What factors influenced the adoption of this requirement? Is this requirement typical of Indonesian PhD programs?

6. ICRS has a four-stage comprehensive exam process—a take home test, two preliminary papers, the proposal, and the oral comprehensive exam (20-22). It also has two writing stages: the proposal and dissertation itself.

- Could you talk a little bit more about this process and the reasoning behind each stage?

- What factors led to the adoption of this particular process? Is this process typical in Indonesian PhD programs?
• What challenges do you see students facing as they negotiate the writing process?

7. Would you like to add anything else?

These questions, as Chapter 2 will show, unearthed points of friction between local and global discourses concerning internationalization, language, and student writing practices, helping me paint a “worldly” view of what it means to use language at ICRS.

In addition to these interviews, I also had an opportunity to participate in ICRS’s annual Academic Board meeting, where a group of 20 Indonesian faculty members from ICRS’s three sponsoring universities met to discuss the program’s writing curriculum. At this meeting, I first explained my curriculum and then opened the floor to discussion and questions from faculty members. After receiving informed consent, I tape-recorded this open question section and distributed an anonymous survey about student writing. These faculty members’ concerns about students’ writing and suggestions for curricular modification further helped me understand the professional-academic writing culture at ICRS, and the challenges they see students facing as they negotiate cultures in English academic writing. Furthermore, as Chapters 4-6 will show, a faculty member’s question pertaining to audience at this Academic Board Meeting played a major part in structuring my pedagogy and research.

Gathering Data on Classroom Culture

As Holliday suggests, the classroom culture in which students produce and negotiate meaning to compose their written work undoubtedly affects the texts they produce. As a teacher and researcher, I was quite lucky to work with the same nine students in my Academic Writing class. Over the course of two semesters, for a period of
ten months, we co-constructed a classroom culture that was both critical and comfortable, which not only helped with the learning process, but also offered valuable research insights.

As mentioned above, I used Kubota’s critical contrastive rhetoric as a framework for my curriculum. In brief, not only did I teach typical academic writing genres—the response paper, research proposal, conference paper, research article—but, as I’ll discuss in chapter 5, I introduced essays and theories that challenged the ideological neutrality of these genres from a cross-cultural critical contrastive perspective. This teaching method—because it made the links between culture, writing, and power explicit to students—opened up space for in-depth classroom discussions of cultural friction. As these discussions were quite important to my research, I kept a teacher’s journal, something that I do for all my classes, regardless of whether I’m researching. However, given the power relationships inherent in teacher research, obtaining informed consent for this particular teacher’s journal required several steps. Here is a section of my IRB form where I outline to students the process:

Although I will take research notes throughout the semester, to ensure that your choice to participate in this research is entirely voluntary, and will not affect your grade in any way, this consent form will be collected by [Office Manager] and kept locked in her office until after grades have been submitted. At this time, I will look at the consent forms, and include you in my analysis only if you have consented to participate.

During class, I took discussion notes in my teacher’s journal, a useful teaching practice even if I found I couldn’t use them in my research, and then, after class, I re-wrote these notes in a more narrative form, adding preliminary analysis and questions that arose from each class. My discussion notes worked as “field notes,” and the re-writes worked as “conceptual memos,” since they gave me space to articulate “patterns, insights, and
breakthroughs” (Heath and Street 77-79). These field notes and conceptual memos were quite useful in jogging my memory at the end of my two-semester course, when I found that all of nine students in my course consented to this aspect of my research project; furthermore, since the field notes represent a more “timely” discussion of classroom events than any I could give one year later, I excerpt them throughout this dissertation.

In addition to encouraging critical discussions of language, identity, and power, my pedagogy was also formulated on a student-centered process model, where students had time to create, draft, and revise their own texts based on peer response sessions and large classroom discussions. Although I was aware of Canagarajah’s warning that such student-centered, process-oriented, “democratic” classrooms are rife with Western ideologies, the curriculum I developed for ICRS drew from this tradition for several reasons: first, a student-centered pedagogy seemed in alignment with ICRS’s goal to create a shared critical discourse among peers with differing views; second, just because the notion of the student-centered classroom springs from a differing ideological tradition does not mean that it is necessarily oppressive; third, students need not (and did not, in some cases) completely assimilate to my center-based classroom practices; and finally, I would contend that friction can be beneficial—that negotiating different pedagogies and educational expectations can teach rhetorical flexibility and different ways of being and thinking that do not necessarily have to supersede more traditional local educational modes. The anonymous evaluation I gave students at the end of each semester assessed the effectiveness of this pedagogy for their local language needs while offering me useful data. Students answered the following questions:

1. Which aspects of the academic writing course did you find unique or different from other courses? Were these aspects positive or negative? Explain.
2. Which aspects of the academic writing course did you find most useful, and why?

3. Which aspects of the course might be revised to better address your needs as academic writers in an Indonesian context?

4. What aspects of the course would you recommend keeping for future courses?

As the following chapters will show, this combination of anonymous student feedback and teacher research gave me a nuanced picture of the ways my pedagogy interacted with already present writing practices, producing, at times, friction, and at other times powerful insight into students’ writing processes.

**Gathering Data on Student Culture**

As mentioned previously, one of the most powerful critiques against traditional contrastive rhetoric was that it ignored diversity in favor of an essentialist, static notion of culture. Since this formulation denies writerly agency—and thus possible challenges to linguistic imperialism—an especially important part of my research involved exploring students’ diverse cultures, identities, and motivations as they navigated ICRS as an international, inter-religious writing context. To help me build individual-student based picture of what it means to write internationally in English, I conducted a 3-part semi-structured interview with students who wished to participate in my project. Because of the power differentials involved in teacher research—where students’ participation or non-participation could potentially jeopardize their grades—I conducted all interviews after the my two-semester course ended. Of the nine students who took part in my academic writing course, seven participated,\(^4\), though I ended up focusing most heavily

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\(^4\) IRB approval was contingent upon interviews being conducted after the course was finished and final grades submitted due to the power dynamics involved with teacher research, which meant that two students could not participate since they had to leave ICRS directly after courses ended.
on four particular students’ for this dissertation. I asked students the following questions:

**Set 1: Language histories and motivations**

In the first section of the interview, I asked students the following semi-structured questions to get a better understanding of their individual language histories and motivations for writing in English (factors that could affect textual production):

1. Why did you apply to a PhD Religious Studies program?
2. Why did you apply to one that’s entirely conducted in English?
3. What are your motivations for writing about religion in English?
4. How long have you been writing in English? For what purposes?
5. What other languages do you write in? For what purposes?

As we’ll see in Chapter 3, students’ answers to these questions, when placed in conversation with literacy narratives they wrote, helped paint a nuanced picture of the ways each student constructed his or her local-global English-using ethos.

**Set 2: Audience**

My second set of questions sprung from a question a faculty member asked me at the Academic Board meeting mentioned above: in a heated discussion about the writing curriculum, she asked, “But to whom do we have students write?” This question, we will see in Chapters 4-6, is particularly complicated given the program’s international yet Indonesian identity. I asked students the following questions to gauge their perceptions of audience in their local-global site:

1. What audience do you imagine most often when you write? Why?
2. What audience would you like to reach that you haven’t already?
3. What tensions do you feel when making decisions about who to write to?

4. What identity shifts do you feel when writing to new audiences?

5. Have you been published before? Can you talk about that? How much of this was in English vs. Indonesian? Can you compare the different writing styles to different audiences?

As we’ll see in chapter 6, the answers to these questions, when placed in conversation with texts students wrote and the audiences they located for these particular texts, offer valuable insight into the ways audience might be constructed in this local-global, Indonesian, yet international research site.

Set 3: Discourse-based questions

In the final set of questions, we moved on to a more focused, discourse-based interview. First, I pointed to powerful passages from each student’s writing portfolio, particularly as related to 1) language, identity, or culture; 2) textual choices that seemed deliberately non-Western; and 3) broad themes that came up repeatedly in their writing. Then, I asked them to elaborate on these aspects of their portfolio to help frame my own initial analysis of their portfolios. As we’ll see, these portfolio-specific discussions contributed quite productively to Chapter 3’s exploration of student ethos.

The more open set of discourse-based questions, however, led to less fruitful results because of the time that had elapsed since students had written and thought about some of their texts. As mentioned above, IRB approval was contingent upon the fact that all interviews took place at the end of our two-semester course to ensure that students’ participation didn’t jeopardize their grades. Although I asked students to review, before their interview, their entire portfolio—which consisted of 8 essay units spread across 10 months— many did not because of time constraints. Because of my own visa constraints,
I had to interview them during final’s week, when they were busy writing four different final seminar papers, and many explained that they just didn’t have time to look back at all their writing. The following questions, then, led to very vague responses, if any.

1. Which essay has been most difficult for you to write? Why?
2. Overall, what parts of this text do you find most successful?
3. Could you point to these places? Why are these parts successful, in your opinion?
4. What challenges did you have when creating this text?
5. Could you point to places where you had difficulty? What factors do you think contributed to your difficulty?
6. What cultural factors, if any, do you think affected your writing process or your final essay?
7. Is there anything else you would like to add?

Although I didn’t draw from students’ answers to these particular questions in this dissertation, the other sections of students’ post-course interviews offered valuable context for my analysis of ethos, audience, and writing choices within student texts.

**Gathering Writing Portfolios**

The various data-gathering methods I outline above contributed valuable context for the actual texts that students produced in my critical contrastive classroom. The process for obtaining informed consent for student portfolios was similar to that of the teacher journal. Although I could read student texts as a teacher throughout the course, as a researcher, I had to wait until the course was done before I could get permission to begin my actual analysis of students’ complete portfolios. That said, my two identities coincided on many levels; I found that the comments I made on students’ texts as a teacher lent valuable insight when I shifted into researcher mode post-semester. In fact,
many of the directed discourse-based questions I asked students during their post-course interviews sprang from comments I made on their texts as a teacher. Without these dual roles, and the opportunities they gave me to observe and participate in students’ writing processes, my reading of students’ final products would have inevitably flattened the complexity involved with writing internationally in English.

**Data Analysis**

Indeed, all of the data I gathered from the methods I outline above—from historical research, teacher observations, interviews with faculty and students, and student writing portfolios—lend credence to the notion that leaving our understanding of cross-cultural textual production at merely the textual level belies the complexity and materiality of writing processes in specific literacy sites. Not surprisingly, though, sorting through all of this data to paint a coherent picture of what it means to write internationally in English was also a rather complex process. I had historical research, faculty interviews, 10 months of teacher journaling, student interviews, and finally, the complete writing portfolios of 7 students, each comprised of 8 final essays and multiple generative writing activities to analyze.

To sort through all of this data, I took an inductive approach to analysis, which, according to Kamberelis and Dimitriadis,

Involves analyzing multiple forms of data (e.g., texts, observations, interviews) to discover recurrent themes and thematic relations. Most forms of inductive analysis involve multiple and interrelated phases of coding and categorizing, along with various forms of preliminary analysis and cross-checking. Coding and analyzing data begins almost as soon as data collection begins, and the process continues throughout the final write-up. (19)

As Kamberelis and Dimitriadis suggest, my initial analysis did begin when my academic writing course began—in my teacher journal, as I commented on student texts, and as I
participated in professional-academic conversations such as those at the Academic Board meeting. The observations I made in these preliminary stages helped shape my pedagogy as my course progressed as well as the interview questions I asked faculty and students when the course was finished. And, as they suggest, with each revision of this “final write-up,” I find myself returning to my data and seeing it in new ways.

My data gathering stopped when I returned to the U.S., though my analysis was ongoing. The first thing I did was turn to my tape-recorded interviews to begin transcribing the words of faculty members and students, which was an important place for me to start because I had just returned to the U.S. and was finding it difficult to transport myself back to my Indonesian research context. Their recorded voices, because they seemed so much more “present” than the written texts I collected, helped me re-connect and ground my analysis in my Indonesian experience and, with that, their Indonesian understandings of what it means to write internationally, in English. During the time-consuming “play, stop, rewind, replay” transcription process, I also took a transcription log, which as Heath and Street suggest, provided me “a memorandum of general contents and points of comparison and contrast” that came up within and across the interviews (85). These key points, when read next to the preliminary analyses I had conducted throughout my time in Indonesia, helped me structure my dissertation into two sections: one focused on local-global constructions of identity in relation to English, and one focused on the friction involved with audience at a local-global site. Multiple forms of analysis took place within these sections.

Section 1, which I title “Articulating Identity in a Local-Global English-Using Indonesian Context,” begins with a chapter focused on ICRS’s language policy. In this
chapter, I drew from outside historical and sociolinguistic research, programmatic
documents, faculty interviews, and my own observations of English use within
Yogyakarta to understand the ways ICRS articulated its local-global identity in relation to
English’s imperialist tendencies. Given Indonesia’s history—which involved the
imposition of the Malay language by the Dutch but also the co-optation of this language
by Indonesians for Indonesian purposes—I was particularly interested in whether and
how these historical trends might interact with the program’s understanding of English as
both imperialist and opportunity-rich. Therefore, I coded faculty interviews for mentions
of English’s imperialist power and its possibilities and the ways these particular faculty
members articulated ICRS’s programmatic identity given their understandings of English.

Chapter 3 builds on Chapter 2’s discussion of the possibility that English might
represent Indonesian interests despite its imperialist tendencies; however, it focuses in on
four case study students and the ways they articulate their local-global English-using
identities. To paint their portraits, I drew from their post-course interviews and the
literacy narratives they wrote for my class. I coded these texts for students’ purposes and
motivations for using English as well as points of friction they felt when navigating in
English. Placed together, these analyses helped me paint a nuanced picture of the ways
particular students articulated their English-using identities in their Indonesian yet
international literacy context.

Section 2, “Whose English? Towards a Diachronic Understanding of Audience,
Friction, and Local-Global Negotiation” takes up the question of audience and textual
choice in this local-global site. The impetus for this section was a question Dr. Atun
asked me at the academic board meeting: “To whom do we have students write?” This
question shaped my project in multiple ways: during my stay at ICRS, it helped re-shape my critical contrastive pedagogy to address the multiple local-global audiences suggested at ICRS, which led, in turn, to an entire set of post-course interview questions pertaining to audience. I knew, then, that this question of audience would be important to my research, but I didn’t realize how important. After working through Chapters 2 and 3, and thinking I would address the audience part of my research in my final chapter, I set the question of audience momentarily aside and began coding my teaching journal and student interviews for frictions they reported when writing in English. After noticing that students had located multiple frictions involved with writing in English—cultural-semiotic frictions having to do with differences in Indonesian and Western rhetorical traditions, as well as frictions linked to their material present, having to do, for instance, with other instructors’ ambiguous writing expectations—I realized these frictions, from a Bakhtinian perspective, also had to do with audience. After all, Bakhtin’s model for diachronic audience suggests that voices past, present, and future are all audience to textual production, and that these voices are often conflicting. Therefore, Bakhtin’s diachronic perspective—as well as Kay Halasek’s heuristic for understanding diachronic audience in the classroom—lent a useful lens to my coding process in that it could encompass semiotic and material frictions having to do with negotiating past and present audiences, as well as frictions pertaining to audience in the more traditional sense that Dr. Atun’s question implies.

In Chapter 4, I coded student interviews and my teacher journal for references to friction they felt when moving between Indonesian and Western rhetorical traditions, or to frictions involving what Bakhtin refers to as backward-looking audience. I then coded
the same texts for references to frictions involving the material present, or to what Bakhtin refers to as present audience. This data, when placed in conversation, suggests the importance of moving past “culture” as the sole reason multilingual students feel friction, while also affirming the usefulness of Bakhtin’s diachronic audience for understanding local-global language frictions. In Chapter 5, I explore the audience-focused critical contrastive pedagogy I developed to address the frictions involved with negotiating past and present Indonesian and English audiences, so that students might answer for themselves Dr. Atun’s question. This chapter involved drawing from curricular materials and my teachers’ journal to explore my reflections and students’ in-process reactions to this pedagogy. Finally, in Chapter 6, I used Bakhtin’s model for diachronic audience as a lens to explore the actual texts that students produced in relation to my pedagogy. I coded my four case study students’ second semester portfolios, as well as reflective cover letters they wrote in relation to each piece, for references to backward-looking, present, and forward-looking audiences.

This analysis, we will see, highlights the complex interplay between Indonesian and English voices within student texts, as well as the importance of incorporating “local” Indonesian voices in the “global” implied by English. Indeed, as this dissertation will show, taking a critical ethnographic approach to academic writing at ICRS helps me shed much needed light on the local-global frictions to which Tsing refers. By considering the rich and complex motivations and writing approaches of ICRS students and teachers, we can begin to explore English academic discourse in an international context that continues to grapple with English’s paradoxical positioning as a language long tied to Western imperialism, but also as the language most likely to represent non-
Western voices in global conversations. The students and teachers at ICRS raise important questions about how participating in academic writing in English interpellates them and how they, in turn, work to re-imagine themselves and their more inclusive global audiences. In essence, this critical ethnography will illustrate how English, and the linguistic imperialism it represents, is understood, negotiated and at times, re-articulated within a specific local-global academic context.
SECTION 1:

ARTICULATING IDENTITY IN A LOCAL-GLOBAL ENGLISH- USING

INDONESIAN CONTEXT
The decision to use English as the primary language of ICRS-Yogyakarta was painful to decide since we are aware of the “imperialism” of English. Most people from any nation, including Indonesia, communicate most effectively in their mother tongue. However, English is now the single most effective language of universal communication. Indonesians must master English in order to participate in international discourse, including discourse with other Asian, African, and Latin American scholars. (Faculty Handbook 13)

This excerpt, taken directly from the Faculty Handbook of the Indonesian Consortium for Religious Studies (ICRS), highlights quite poignantly the power that English holds globally—often at the expense of the “mother tongue.” That an Indonesian program whose aim is “to provide a setting for Ph.D. research on religions that is rooted in Indonesian culture and religious beliefs” chose English, rather than the national language, Bahasa Indonesia, is a testament to English’s international power. As the handbook asserts, the “imperialism of English” in academic circles is both obvious and almost impossible to resist because of English’s increasing “universality” in international discourse. We can also see from this excerpt that language is a crucial means through which people imagine their relationships with each other, both nationally, and increasingly, internationally—whether these relationships are with traditional powers in the Global North or with the developing Global South. There is friction, then, between English’s imperialism in relation to the “mother tongue” and the possibilities English presents for imagining global relationships—a tension, as this chapter will show, that is intimately linked to ICRS’s desire to forge both a local and global identity.

Benedict Anderson, in his Imagined Communities, explores the ways that language forges national identity. He posits that a nation, in addition to the “limited,” or
bounded and cohesive entity we usually imagine when concepts of “nationhood” come up, is also a socially constructed concept:

[It is] imagined because the members of even the smallest nation will never know most of their fellow-members, meet them, or even hear of them, yet in the minds of each lives the image of their communion. In fact, all communities larger than primordial villages of face-to-face contact (and perhaps even these) are imagined. (6-7)

This imagined cohesion between citizens who may never encounter each other, he argues, originally emerged with the written text, in particular the novel and the newspaper, as print-capitalism took hold of Europe in the 18th century (25). With the awareness of a simultaneously shared experience—and with that, shared knowledge—came an awareness of community. This connection, imagined through language, opened up space for a national “we” that I would argue—with global encounters and the fluid borders prompted by the movement of people and the texts they produce—has now turned to a more fractured set of “we”s that work within and upon our traditional notion of “nation.”

Such a fracturing, I believe, plays a part in the “pain” ICRS feels in choosing English over Bahasa Indonesia, their national language. To better understand ICRS’s “painful decision,” the following chapter will explore how various actors in Indonesia’s history—whether Dutch colonists, Indonesians themselves, or English-using scholars—have utilized language to intervene in the Indonesian social fabric, operating under what Tania Murray Li terms the “will to improve.” These interventions, we will see, play a large part in ICRS’s decision to relinquish Bahasa Indonesia, the language that initially helped imagine a national identity for Indonesia, in favor of English, the language that, because of its longstanding economic and educational power, has often been construed as imperialist. While acknowledging that English has had an imperialist history, this chapter
will also move us past this rather deterministic understanding of language. As Xiaoye You, in his *Writing in the Devil’s Tongue: A History of Composition in China* suggests,

> Each nationality exposed to English finds a way to repurpose it to their own needs, to exercise control and a degree of sovereignty over the language. English becomes a technocultural means owned by its users, regardless of their national, racial, linguistic, class, or gender background. Rhetorical and sociolinguistic factors associated with people’s use of English, rather than the old monolithic notion of language, are central to understanding the ownership of English. (167)

Though You draws from the history of English composition in China to argue that English can be and is “repurposed” by those that put it in use, his argument applies just as well to Indonesia. By exploring ways that both Bahasa Indonesia and English—despite their implications in colonial and postcolonial power structures—have been re-imagined as part of the Indonesian social fabric, this chapter will suggest that language, whether local or global, is never entirely “authentic” or “imperialist.” Though language should always be considered as linked to power, we must also acknowledge that language users such as those at ICRS have the ability to take agency and use English to resignify their local-global communities.

**Imagining a Unified Indonesia in Bahasa Indonesia**

To better understand the “painful decision” to use English as the mode of instruction at ICRS— at the expense of colonial-cum-revolutionary Bahasa Indonesia—this section will first explore Li’s notion of the “will to improve,” a discourse that, we will see in this chapter, links former Dutch colonists to people working within the English language teaching industry, strange bedfellows though they may be. This discussion will set the scene for a more extensive look at colonial language policies, both by the British and the Dutch, that have had long-lasting impacts on the ways these languages operate in Indonesia’s imagined community.
Tania Murray Li, in her *Will to Improve*, interrogates the ways that various actors, whether colonial officials in the past or current global developers, have used “expertise” as a justification for intervention in Indonesia’s cultural and political fabric. These interventions are implicated in what she terms “the will to improve,” or the development discourse that has, since the 19th century, painted Indonesia as lacking, whether culturally, politically—or, as will be discussed later, linguistically—to justify intervention (5). Though the motivations of trustees vary—many trustees have “benevolent” intentions and some interventions even have beneficial results—she argues that “any claim to expertise in optimizing the lives of others is a claim to power, one that merits careful scrutiny”(5). She points to two key practices that work in conjunction to justify intervention: *problemetization*, or identifying “deficiencies” often based on pre-conceived notions about “proper” ways of being and doing, and *rendering technical*, or “defining boundaries” for action by assembling data about the “problem.” This “technicalization” works, in turn, to justify any intervention as neutral, commonsense, and thus apolitical, leaving power relations between trustees and those receiving “aid” unquestioned (7).

Though she avoids the overly simplistic dominant/dominated binary suggested by the trustee/beneficiary relationship in her ethnography, she still points quite powerfully to the ways this “will to improve” justified oppressive colonial policies. Beginning in 1800,5 the Dutch rendered technical Indonesia’s “never quite there-ness” to justify colonial

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5 It is important to note that from 1602 to 1800, Indonesia was also a lucrative outpost of the Dutch East Indies company (VOC), which, because of its purely extractive aims, “ruled” Indonesia indirectly through already established Indonesian rulers. When the VOC went bankrupt and its assets were taken over by the Dutch government in 1800, however, the relationship between colonizer and colonized was re-imagined. Li argues that “as Dutch emphasis on regulation, enumeration, and bureaucratic compliance increased, so did the range of fronts upon which [Indonesian] rulers were found deficient” (17), a constructed deficiency which in turn re-imagined the relationship between ruler and ruled in more hierarchical, paternalistic, and oppressive terms.
intervention, whether that intervention involved “helping” Indonesians become more “white” and thus more “civilized,” or helping them return to an authentic native state by “being true to their own indigenous traditions” (Li 15). To showcase the latter, for instance, she highlights how colonial officials used “research” to almost entirely invent—and thus “discover”—traditions of “communal life” and an Indonesian collectivist mentality that justified forced migration and re-structuring of already structured communities.

Language, in turn, was a particularly important means of controlling the 17,000 islands and over 400 distinct language groups the Dutch encountered in their colonial enterprise; indeed, the Dutch language policy, I would argue, was implicated in Li’s notion of the “will to improve” because of the standardizing and codifying processes implemented to control both meaning-making and who was allowed to make meaning. Though there has been little theorization of the role this technicalization of language played in the Indonesian colonial project, it is instructive to look briefly at the analogous history of British colonial language policies. Alistair Pennycook, in his Cultural Politics of English as an International Language, points quite powerfully to the ways this “will to improve”—and the “rendering technical” of knowledge through the process of standardization—played into British colonial language policies. He takes to task the mistaken notion that English was promoted in British colonies as a blanket policy. In fact, English was meted out to only a select few elite colonial subjects because of the possible incendiary affects if it became too wide-spread: after all, those with the tools of the colonizers could challenge the colonizers’ justifications for oppressing them. Such withholding, in turn, created the desire in non-English using colonial subjects to learn
English and thus “improve” their social positionings. As far as those subjects who did have access to English, Pennycook shows how the “rendering technical” of English worked to maintain notions of never-quite-thereness: during the same time period, the burgeoning of English Studies and Linguistics worked to “standardize” English through codification, a process that “held the language and its desired meanings firmly in the hands of central colonial institutions” (104), and left little room for culturally-specific uses of English.

The Dutch enacted similar practices in terms of language policy. Similar to their British counterparts, the Dutch also withheld Dutch from the vast majority of Indonesians, despite the fact that they proclaimed Dutch as the national government’s official language. In fact, fearing the same incendiary effects as the British, they established only 250 Dutch medium primary and secondary schools for the Indonesian elite and a few “academically promising non-elite” (Lowenberg 61). To implement their “improvement” agendas efficiently in what was then a loosely-aligned archipelago, they turned to Malay, a language that had already acted as a lingua franca for traders in Southeast Asia for thousands of years. The language was so useful, in fact, that they made Malay the official language of commerce and local administration in 1865 (61). Similar to the British, they then “rendered” the language “technical,” operating under what could be considered the “will to improve”: Lowenberg points to the fact that once Malay was made “official,” “the Dutch found themselves continually having to modernize and standardize the variety of Malay,” a standardization which involved the

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6 Mark Woodward suggests that the Dutch chose Malay over Javanese — despite Java’s importance to the colonial enterprise — because of the hierarchical nature of Javanese, which involves navigating multiple registers (my students explained that it’s more like three different languages) depending on to whom one talks. If colonial officials were to speak to Indonesian rulers in the honorific register, it would imply equal power positions; if they were to speak to Indonesian rulers in the register reserved for inferiors, it would make their true sentiments towards local rulers quite explicit, undermining relationships important in maintaining local acquiescence to colonial rule (23).
imposition of a standard Latinized alphabet in 1901 and the eventual formation of Malay publishing houses in 1908 (62). The Dutch, it seems, had the same impulse as the British to “standardize” their colonized subjects’ language use, perhaps, like the British, so they could maintain control of colonial meaning-making. This standardization, however, also helped work against the Dutch colonial project, uniting once-disconnected islands in a shared national imagining and solidifying Malay’s importance—at the expense of Dutch—to Indonesia’s burgeoning national identity.

Indeed, in 1928, the growing nationalist movement (ironically began by the few Dutch-speaking and reading Indonesian elites allowed education in Dutch) rejected Dutch as a language of unification because of its connection to the elite, as well as Javanese because they feared alienating non-Javanese populations; instead, they chose Malay (renaming it Bahasa Indonesia), because they saw it as a “neutral” language, native to no one but accessible to everyone (Lowenberg 62). This supposed “neutrality,” as Li suggests, could be considered a testament to the power of the process of rendering technical—after all, though Bahasa Indonesia was no Indonesian group’s “mother tongue,” the Dutch had chosen it and begun to codify it. Despite these colonial implications, the nationalists, operating under this notion of “neutrality,” demanded that the Dutch government recognize Bahasa Indonesia as the official language of the national government, but to no avail.

This lack of Dutch recognition did not hinder other moves to solidify Bahasa Indonesia as a nationalist, rather than colonial, language. Lowenberg points out that by 1933, “deliberate non-European attempts to develop Bahasa Indonesia began” with the formation of an Indonesian-run publication house, the “New Poets.” This same
organization, by 1938, had organized the First Indonesian Language Conference, “where it was agreed that the urgent need to spread the language included an institute and faculty for teaching Bahasa Indonesia, a modernized and standardized lexicon and grammar, and unified reform of the many spelling systems that had evolved”(62). Indonesians had wrested from colonial control the standardizing process begun by the Dutch at the turn of the century. As further indication of the language’s link to insurrection, this group echoed the nationalists of 1928, demanding that Bahasa Indonesia be used as the primary language of the colonial parliament and legal system, but again, the Dutch failed to listen (Loweberg 63).

It wasn’t until the Dutch lost Indonesia to the Japanese during World War II that the nationalists’ demands were taken seriously. Initially, the Japanese banned all languages but Japanese in the school systems, but, as they saw their chances of retaining Indonesia as a colony dwindle, they abandoned Japanese and began to openly encourage the use of Bahasa Indonesia to further political ends: they not only made Bahasa Indonesia the official language of government and law, but in a development process of their own, they funded Malay language newspapers, sponsored radio stands, and conducted all communications in Malay in order to spread more effectively their message that Indonesia should help in their war effort (Lowenberg 64). In addition, they established the Commission on the Indonesian Language, an organization of Japanese scholars and important Indonesians like Sukarno (future president-cum-dictator). By the time the Japanese were thrown out by the British, and Indonesia was returned to the Dutch, this group had finally developed a normative Bahasa Indonesia grammar, while also adding 7000 words to the Bahasa Indonesia dictionary (65).
Given Anderson’s notion of the power that language— and with that the texts that affirm this language— hold in national imaginings, it should come as no surprise that when Indonesia finally became independent in 1949, Sukarno, Indonesia’s first president (and soon to be dictator), outlined the following guiding principles, called Pancasila, in Bahasa Indonesia:

1) Belief in one god;
2) A just and civilized humanity, including tolerance to all people;
3) Unity of Indonesia;
4) Democracy led by wisdom of deliberation among representatives of the people;
5) Social justice for all (Strengthening Education 7).

Despite these guiding principles and their focus on morality and social justice, the years that followed this articulation of national unity brought two successive dictators, Sukarno and Suharto— both of whom killed, terrorized, and re-located hundreds of thousands of Indonesians. Amidst the political, economic, and religious strife of the past 60 years (factors that, as we’ll discuss later, encouraged the founding of ICRS), Bahasa Indonesia remains a success story and one of the most powerful tools in unifying an extremely diverse archipelago as it has grappled with what it means to be a newly democratic nation since Suharto’s 1998 overthrow.

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7 Li argues convincingly that these failures were due to remaining colonial structures and the persistent discourse of “improvement” that encouraged paternalistic and authoritarian intervention by the government for the people’s own good. She cites Lev, who writes that “the independent state was not merely similar to the colonial state. It was the same state” (cited in Li 51).
8 It is important to note that although Bahasa Indonesia is the only official language, provisions were also made in the Constitution to preserve the islands’ rich linguistic diversity. In many regions, children are taught in their home languages for several years before Bahasa Indonesia is introduced, and, during the rest of their education, classes in local languages are offered. Governmental mandates for the preservation of local languages as well as the national language, Lowenberg argues, encouraged the language’s success, while also assuring that the majority of Indonesians are multilingual (71).
Through this brief yet complicated history, then, we can see the ways that language has been used as a colonial tool—enabling colonizers to more easily navigate and control the colonized under the guise of “improvement”—and, more importantly, the ways that Indonesians took agency and resignified this colonial tool as a revolutionary one, capable of articulating their own interests. As the next section will show, this ability to make an imperialist language their own might be particularly important as Indonesia grapples with the burgeoning influence English has in Asia as well as within its own borders.

**Imagining “Asia” in English**

Despite the success story of Bahasa Indonesia, English has had increasing power in Indonesia since 1950, when, post-independence, it was adopted as the official foreign language over Dutch because of its growing international status and the Dutch language’s colonial implications ((Dardjowidjojo, 2000; Nur, 2003). Indeed, with the shift from colonial power to “soft power,” Asians, and with that, Indonesians, have had to increasingly grapple with what English symbolizes as both imperialist power and tool for economic development and global communicative possibilities.

English’s influence in Asia, and thus Indonesia, can be tied to the colonial enterprise outlined above. McArthur, in his “English as an Asian Language” highlights that unlike other continents, Asia has “no large native English-speaking population base, but at the same time it has had a long acquaintance with English as a key medium of first the British Empire, then the United States (itself an offspring of that empire)”(3). Although many would argue against his assertion that there are no “native English-speakers” in Asia—particularly in former British colonies, where English is often
learned simultaneously with other “home” languages—McArthur is correct in pointing out that since World War II, rather than shrinking in influence as the British Empire “contracted,” English has grown exponentially both world-wide and in Asia. In fact, Braj Kachru, in his *Asian Englishes: Beyond the Canon* (2005), estimates that English-users in China and India comprise well over 533 million people, making Asia the locus for the largest English-using population globally.

English’s power, Robert Phillipson asserts, can in part be tied to deliberate Post-World War II policies by the U.S. and British that, through programs like Fulbright, the Peace Corps, and the British Council, sent English-users abroad to exert “soft power”—whether educationally, in English language classrooms, or structurally through development projects (272). These English language-users brought with them an English that the colonial project described above had already “rendered technical” through dictionaries, textbooks and development schemata, making English the most convenient choice for countries wishing to continue “improving” their countries after the U.S. and Britain had left. This soft power, combined with and due to the U.S. and Great Britain’s economic power, worked to solidify English as de-facto global lingua franca in two spheres that have long been implicated in the “will to improve”: the educational sphere and economic sphere.

It’s not surprising, then, that the Association of Southeast Asian Nations (ASEAN), whose primary purpose is to foster economic and geo-political cohesion in the region, has adopted English as their official language. The organization, founded in 1967—and whose members now include Indonesia, China, Brunei Darussalam, Cambodia, the Lao People’s Democratic Republic, Malaysia, Myanmar, the Philippines, Singapore,
Thailand, and Vietnam—has a population of 580 million people (about 9% of the world’s population), making it a powerful economic and social force; in fact, with a GDP in 2009 of 1.5 trillion dollars, its economy would rank 9th largest in the world if the organization were a single country (“European Union”).

That ASEAN, with its economic and educational power in Southeast Asia, chose English as its official language is a testament to English’s present and future power in the region. To return to Anderson’s notion of imagined community, the English language—the medium through which all communication, whether written or oral, diplomatic or economic, in-person or online—unites these countries, and with that, their business-people, students, teachers, and politicians, across traditional “national” borders. Despite Bahasa Indonesia’s national importance, then, English also plays a part in Indonesia as it imagines itself part of a larger “global” Southeast Asian community.

We can see this power quite literally in ICRS’s hometown, Yogyakarta (Yogya), a city that, I would argue, sits at the nexus of local and global. As the only existing and sovereign sultanate in the Indonesian republic—due in part to the fact that it was the only pre-colonial state able to maintain sovereignty through Dutch colonization and the succeeding dictatorships—as well as the epicenter for Indonesian art, the city symbolizes both national pride and Indonesian culture (Woodward 2). On the other hand, Yogya also has symbolic power because of its reputation as “kota belajar,” or the “city of education.” With over 100 institutes of higher education, including the University of Gadjah Mada—which houses ICRS and is considered one of the best universities in Southeast Asia—Yogyakarta has long been influenced by international forces, which, not surprisingly given the
information above, often bring with them the English language as symbol of education and economic empowerment.

The fact that English has come to increasingly symbolize education in Indonesia is pictured quite literally—through the many banners and murals that line the streets in public spaces all over Yogya. I was particularly struck, for example, by the following banner advertising a private school because of its deliberate code-switching between Bahasa Indonesia and English:

**Image 1: The Best Choice for Kids Future Banner**

The majority of the sign is in Bahasa Indonesia—in particular the parts relaying important information such as location and contact information for particular regions of Yogya—implying that the audience for the sign is primarily local and Indonesian-using. Indeed, if one follows the weblink, the website is also in Bahasa Indonesia. That said, the fact that the school’s motto—“The Best Choice for Kids Future”—is in English suggests at the very least an audience that is aware of English’s cultural capital in educational spheres; in fact, English is pictured quite literally as the language of the “future.”

This conflation of English with education and the “future” is also seen quite publicly elsewhere in Yogya, in murals sponsored by Honda, an international corporation
that probably has a vested interest in developing its Indonesian market. The following
text image depicts a young woman with her face buried in a book, and asserts, in non-
Standard English, “Be best student, make your future with real education:”

**Image 2: Be Best Student Mural**

Although the medium denies the muralist space to define what “real” education might be
(other than reading books), the fact that this mural arguing for “real” education is in
English does, again most literally, link English to whatever “real” learning might mean.

In the same set of murals is another image that implicitly links English to
“revolution” and education:

**Image 3: Revolution Your Education Mural**

Given, as discussed above, that Bahasa Indonesia has so recently been adopted as the
language of Indonesian revolution, the conflation of English and revolution is a startling
testament to English’s growing influence in Indonesia. We can also see in this mural an
interesting contact zone between the man’s decidedly “European” features, his use of what I would consider “Indonesian English,” and the Japanese sponsor’s symbol; a contact zone that symbolizes the various identities English represents on the global stage.

English’s connection, as status symbol, to economic prosperity—a prosperity for which education is often positioned as a necessary pre-requisite—is also quite evident in the streets of Yogyakarta. Luxury real estate signs like the one below, which line the streets in almost every section of Yogya, are almost all in English:

**Image 4: Living Perfect in Elegance Billboard**

The use of English could point to the fact that much real estate is owned by non-Indonesian developers (who are perhaps reaching out to a more affluent ex-pat population), and to the fact that English, to Indonesians, is considered the language of the elite; this advertising ploy could be quite effective, for its Indonesian audience, in re-affirming notions of elite identity. At the very least, it shows English’s connection to global capital and the ways Indonesia is being re-imagined, through imagery and language, as “global.”

Although these links to global capital implicate English in imperialism, we can also see that for Asians, and with that, Indonesians, the language represents economic and
educational possibilities through inter-regional global partnerships. That ASEAN, (as well as the muralists), chose to adopt English as their medium suggests that perhaps the imperialist/oppressed model is overly deterministic; that, in fact, English may be seen as a tool for re-inventing a regional Asian identity. Although English was shaped and is still shaped by oppressive colonial and postcolonial discourses, it’s also important to acknowledge that language users have the ability to re-imagine, through language, national— and international— identities. Such is the aim of ICRS.

**Imagining an Inter-religious, Indonesian, International Programmatic Identity**

Not surprisingly, the above amalgamations of language, power, and imagined identity also play out at ICRS as the program seeks to imagine itself as both Indonesian and international—an imagining that implicates the program in Western imperialism yet also opens up space for global communication. As the introduction to this dissertation has shown, the program articulates its local-global identity as follows:

To provide a setting for Ph.D. research on religions that is rooted in Indonesian culture and religious beliefs, but in dialogue with the international academic community. To produce a Ph.D. program in Religious Studies that maintains international standards of academic excellence but is controlled and directed by Indonesian scholars. To promote North-South and South-South exchanges which empower cooperation between good universities in different parts of the world. (Promotional Brochure 7)

As this section will explore, ICRS’s goals to strengthen Indonesia—through religious dialog and education—are in tension with the program’s use of English, which, through the identities it promotes and its standardizing tools, also symbolizes western imperialism, and the “will to improve.”

The idea to found ICRS started quite locally, in response to increasing inter-religious violence within Indonesia. To return briefly to Pancasila, or the guiding
principles established upon independence, out of all the guiding principles, “belief in one God” comes first, pointing to religion’s importance in the Indonesian cultural fabric.

Indonesia, as a deeply religious but extremely diverse country, and a new democracy, is striving towards inclusiveness yet, we can see, not secularism. Religion, or rather monotheistic religion, is a given. It is important to note, however, that noticeably and purposefully absent is any mention of a god specific to one religion, leaving space for Indonesia’s multiple religions to (ideally) coexist. Although Indonesia is the largest Muslim nation in the world, Pancasila promises religious freedom to the six religions recognized by the state: Islam (which comprises 86.1% of the population), Protestantism (which comprises 5.7%), Catholicism (which comprises 3%), Hinduism (which comprises 1.8%), Buddhism (which comprises about 1%), and Confucianism (which comprises less than 1%). Although most islands are largely Muslim, in Bali over 90% of the population is Hindu, and in remote locations animism is still practiced, though not officially recognized (Profile, U.S. Dept. of State).

As a university researcher from the (at least as far as our guiding principles go) more institutionally “secular” United States, I was continually astonished by the pervasiveness and “matter-of-factness” of religion in everyday Indonesian life. Like the Muslim call to prayer—which is projected five times a day, at high volume, from loud speakers situated in every mosque—religion permeates almost every aspect of Indonesian life. People, when they first meet you, ask you openly about your religion as small talk. As will be discussed in later chapters, religious texts have authority in academic papers. Religious mores are even codified in official forms: when filling out forms for my Indonesian identification card, there was a question asking if I was married: the available
answers were “Yes” or “Not Yet.” When I registered at the local hospital, the first question asked on the patient form, after my name and address, pertained to my religious affiliation; notably absent, after the tick boxes for the six “officially recognized” religions, was the “Other” box so prevalent on U.S. forms. In Indonesia, being “in-between” religions, being agnostic, atheist, or from a religion outside of the six official ones is, at least institutionally, not a recognizable response. In fact, as faculty at ICRS explained in a conference paper presentation, it is in fact “illegal” to have a religious existence outside of the normative religions (Amin, April 2010). There is tension, then, between the religious-pluralist bent of Pancasila and the ways the state has defined what it means as “belief in one god,” tensions that have erupted in violence and oppression.

Indeed, Mark Woodward suggests:

We may conclude that religion, culture and nationality are as contested today as they were more than sixty years ago when Indonesia was founded and more than eighty years ago when it was first publicly imagined. The democratic transition of the last decade did not create these debates; it only allowed them to emerge from the shadows of the New Order (21).

After Suharto was overthrown in 1998, there has been an intensification of religious extremism (as evidenced in the bombings in Bali, and more recently Jakarta), as well as multiple religious riots in places throughout Indonesia. ICRS was founded in response to this burgeoning violence.

ICRS’s founders, most of whom are professors of religion in their respective faiths—Islam, Christianity, and Catholicism—convened and decided that one of the reasons the violence was occurring was due to a lack of inter-religious education. When I interviewed the current director of the program, Dr. Bernard, an American man and one of the founders of ICRS, he explained the situation this way:
We were very concerned because we recognized that religion was a required subject at all levels of education, from kindergarten through university but all courses are normative—the teaching of morals, practices, rituals etc. of religion. But you learn only from a person from your own religion, so if you learn anything about another religion it’s quite likely that it will be taught in an apologetic, negative manner. And this was seen as a possible source of conflict rather than a way of overcoming conflict between religious communities.

Foreshadowing one of the reasons ICRS adopted English as its official language, Dr. Bernard pointed to a lack of educational resources in Indonesia:

We asked why is it that anyone that has to study religion academically, using social sciences, humanities, philosophy—to study religion descriptively and more academically or objectively—basically they have to leave the country? There aren’t any programs in Indonesia. Whereas people come from all over the world to study religion in Indonesia, when Indonesians want to study religion, they have to leave.

The founders of ICRS, most of whom were forced, as Dr. Bernard says, to get their Ph.Ds in Religious Studies abroad, decided to create a program within Indonesia to upset the power balance that forced Indonesians to rely on international institutions for understandings of their own religious identities. (Such a power dynamic still exists, we will see, because most scholarship about religion is still happening in English.)

After years of negotiation, ICRS was finally launched in 2007, with the support of three Indonesian universities—of secular, Muslim, and Christian affiliations—making it the first inter-religious consortium of its kind in the world. Co-sponsored by the University of Gadjah Mada (a religiously neutral, multireligious “secular” university); the State Islamic University Sunan Kalijaga (also called UIN, which houses the oldest state Institute for Islamic Studies); and Duta Wacana Christian University, ICRS’s guiding question is: “What happens when traditional boundaries break down and Muslims, Christians, Hindus and Buddhists find themselves colleagues rather than on opposing
sides of the ‘dialogue”(1-2)? Perhaps an equally relevant question might be: why does this dialogue about Indonesia happen in English?

Put simply, this inter-religious collegiality, ICRS believes, should not only cross traditional religious boundaries within Indonesia, but it should also move past national boundaries, carving out a space for Indonesian scholars to take part in global academic conversations. Given, as the excerpt that began this chapter suggests, that English is “now the single most effective language of universal communication,” ICRS had little choice but to adopt English to be “international,” despite its desire to maintain its Indonesian roots.

That said, ICRS’s official brochure is careful to note that the program is still rooted in Indonesian religious ideals, despite its connection to “foreign secular universities.” Unlike these programs, the brochure asserts that ICRS “is not a secular program that studies religions ‘objectively’ or focuses on de-construction of religious beliefs as purely social phenomena.” Instead, scholars at ICRS “take divine revelation and the normative teachings of their different religions seriously,” and, starting from this religious point of view, use “social science and human sciences to research the impact of religious communities in the world”(6). Rather than starting from a secular point of view, as Religious Studies departments in the U.S. are apt to do, scholars at ICRS, though they do draw from international scholarship in their research, start with religion, in keeping with the deeply religious Indonesian context.

Despite the ways the program “imagines” itself as both international and Indonesian in its published goals, because of its international connections (and, tangentially, its use of English), ICRS has been accused by more conservative
Indonesians of being an “agent of the West.” Such complaints are often linked to the Western funding required to establish an “international program” in Indonesia. During the program’s second year, the founders of ICRS applied for and were granted a 5-year, one million dollar endowment from the U.S.-based Ford Foundation to help foster international connections through south-south networking; staff development; student scholarships; and south-south exchange programs. Although this global intervention by the Ford Foundation is undoubtedly implicated in the “will to improve”—indeed, as Dr. Fatima explains below, it has been viewed as one way to further U.S. interests in the developing world—without this support, the continuance of ICRS, at least internationally, would be nearly impossible with just the support of the three Indonesian universities.

Dr. Fatima, the former assistant director of ICRS, described in her interview how ICRS’s local-global positioning makes Indonesians wary of ICRS’s goals with an anecdote about Dr. Bernard’s and her initial trip to Jakarta to accept the Ford Foundation funding (Indonesian law says that all aid money must be channeled through the secretary of state before distribution, requiring them to go in person to the capitol). She explained that as she and Dr. Bernard outlined the “golden goals” for their Indonesian yet international program, the official in charge of distributing their money “did not seem interested at all.” Remembering from past experience with the already developed MA program (CRCS) that “many people will probably think we are leading to weakening of Muslim—and not only Muslim, but all religions’ faith—trying to say that all religions are the same” and that the M.A. program had been viewed in the past as “a challenge to

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9 Although important to ICRS’s history, due to space limitations, I will not outline CRCS’s history in detail. In brief, CRCS, founded in 2000, is the MA counterpart to ICRS, from which many of ICRS’s faculty, policies, and structures were adopted.
Muslim faith by the West,” she rushed to assure him. “Look,” she explained, “as a Muslim, I wouldn’t exchange my faith for this kind of thing. If this program actually led students to become less Muslim or less Christian, I wouldn’t join this.” In response, the official pulled out a giant pile of documents from his desk, “which prior to this he had prepared about news related to ICRS and CRCS.” She explained that she was not surprised by some publications put out by a well-known conservative Muslim group against the programs; however, she was quite surprised to find that “it’s not only people you anticipate to hear from, but people from the state department who wonder why the Ford Foundation is going to give us this money and what kind of activities we’ll do.”

Such resistance points to many Indonesians’ valid fear that as a postcolonial, developing country, Indonesia has been and still is vulnerable to non-Indonesian ideologies circulating with global capital such as that donated by the Ford Foundation.

That said, ICRS must implicate itself in Western imperialism if they wish to continue in their more idealistic international aspirations to spread inter-religious dialog through “North-South” and “South-South exchanges” of students and faculty. This commitment to local-global connections is reflected in the program’s PhD requirements—students are promised a “rigorous Ph.D. program with international standards of accountability, including foreign advisors for every student,” and “frequent contact with international faculty, scholars and doctoral students from around the world” (“About us”). To foster these relationships, ICRS seeks to attract international scholars and PhD students, both full-time and exchange, while still holding onto its identity as “Indonesian.” At the time of my research, ICRS had 34 faculty members, most of whom were Indonesian and worked for their home universities the majority of the time.
(UGM, Duta Watana, and UIN), with four faculty members—two male, two female, two Muslim, two Christian—who devoted most of their time to ICRS. Of these four, three are Indonesian, pointing to the desire to keep the program an international, yet still Indonesian academic experience; one, Dr. Bernard, the Director, is from the U.S. ¹⁰ In addition, during my time there, two visiting faculty from the U.S. taught courses at ICRS while also conducting research. The program had 34 full-time students, the majority of whom were Indonesian, two from the Philippines, and one student each from Egypt, Poland, Serbia, and Singapore; in addition, throughout my 10 months of research, exchange students, primarily from the U.S., came and went, again adding to the “international” identity of the program. Because of this focus on exchanges, the English language, as global lingua franca in academic spheres, is necessary.

The English language is also a must for Indonesian students when studying abroad. To further the program’s international identity, each student is also promised a fully-funded 6-month study abroad experience at an international university—what ICRS terms a “sandwich program.” At the time of my research, eight students had already embarked on their sandwich programs, to the U.S. (to Duke, Georgetown, Hartford, Temple, the Union Theological Seminary (NY)); to South Africa (to the University of Capetown); to Singapore (to Asia Research Institute); and to Bangalore, India; four, in turn, were poised to go to various universities in the U.S., the Netherlands and Australia. The sandwich program allows students access to libraries and texts that they cannot access in Indonesia, (helping them bring their scholarship up to “international standards,”

¹⁰ Faculty at ICRS, including the U.S. director himself, are very aware of the imperialist perceptions having a white, Christian Director from the U.S. call forth. Because the Director has full funding and course release from his home university, unlike the founding Indonesian professors—and because the program was partly his brainchild—he became director by default; his 3-year contract is up and ICRS is currently conducting job searches for an Indonesian, preferably Muslim, director.
a point to which we’ll return later in this dissertation); encourages cross-cultural inter-
religious discourse; and also helps establish connections with international faculty, who can act as potential foreign advisors and visiting Religious Studies scholars at ICRS. As the current assistant director, Dr. Atun suggested in her interview, “It’s like planting a seed.” But planting this seed, Dr. Fatima explained, is expensive:

[ICRS] needs to establish itself in terms of money, the funding, because it’s not a cheap program. It has a very high expectation to send students abroad, in the sandwich program, which is not cheap. It’s not always in terms of money, like cash money, but to be able to establish links, MOUs, with other universities which in turn will offer funding in terms of giving us money or in terms of paying for students to go there without paying the amount of money that is usually required for their own students, which is almost impossible for Indonesians to pay.

Economic inequality makes for a “dependent” relationship between Indonesia and its more powerful global partners, a relationship that—despite the ways ICRS tries to carefully navigate the secular-religious divide between Western and Indonesian scholarship—has also brought forth complaints of Western imperialism.

We can see, then, that ICRS’s identity as an international, inter-religious Ph.D. program, is nuanced: its identity is both local and global, as is its funding; its scholarship relies on both religious and secular texts; and its focus is both on social justice within Indonesia and on telling the “true story” of religion in Indonesia in international academic circles.

The Painfulness of English

Not surprisingly, the English language traverses, contributes to and is implicated in these contact zones. To understand the “painfulness” of English more specifically, this section will put administrators’ perspectives about their language policy in conversation
with the ways the program’s subsequent standardizing policies implicate them in the “will to improve.”

Perhaps one of the most powerful statements concerning the choice to use English as opposed to Bahasa Indonesia came from Dr. Atun, the current assistant director of the program. She explained in her interview:

Some of us here ask, why here in Indonesia do we use the English language? Why don’t we force international students who come to Indonesia to take a test to come here? But then, who cares about Indonesia? I mean at this moment, who cares? International students who don’t take Indonesian language before coming are going to protest ICRS. We cannot do that because we are so new and we want to attract international students. But it will be interesting to see what happens in the next ten years.

Dr. Atun implies that Indonesia is barely on the international radar “at this moment,” making the likelihood of the international community “caring” about their language very low—despite its importance to the Indonesian national imagination. With the English language, we will see, comes “Western” ways of being and doing at ICRS that many would argue point to linguistic imperialism.

Dr. Bernard, when asked about the “painful” decision to adopt English as the mode of instruction, points to the ways that writing in English positions students at a deficit (a point which will discussed in more detail later). He explained,

Surprisingly enough, I was one of the persons who had the most reluctance in choosing English because I have been teaching for many years in Indonesia and I know that sometimes you have a student write an essay in English and it’s so unsophisticated and lacking in nuance and depth that you wonder about their intelligence, and the same student will write it in Indonesian, and the essay is so nuanced and in depth that it makes you realize what a big disadvantage it is to have to do academic writing in a language that is not your own.

This difficulty students have in showcasing their intelligence in their English writing, Dr. Bernard believes, springs from Indonesia’s complicated language context:
Especially in Indonesia, as compared to countries that were former British colonies, Indonesia as a Dutch colony doesn’t have any English in its long-term history. Besides which, as you well know, for many Indonesians, English is not their first language, but instead their third or fourth or fifth language. They have a number of other languages they’ve mastered as a higher priority than English. Even though English is taught since grade school, and everybody acknowledges that English is the most important language, you can’t convince that to a kid when he doesn’t need English to communicate with anybody, and he does need other languages to communicate to the people that are around him, both in Indonesian and whatever his mother and father’s home language is.

Indeed, Indonesia is already an extremely polyglot society, and many students lack clear motivation to learn a language that seems divorced from their already existent language environments.

Furthermore, as interviews with Dr. Atun and Dr. Fatima, the former assistant director, show, the fact that they as Indonesian professors must teach in English also causes tension, though both are experts in their fields and have spent extensive periods of time studying in Canada and Australia. Dr. Atun explains the challenges of teaching in English to a mixed student body:

Sometimes teaching in English is not easy for me and when we have difficulty explaining something in English, we use Indonesian. But then there are international students who don’t understand so we try to explain to them. I guess, our Indonesian English is not very easy for them to understand because sometimes in question time, the questions are only to clarify.

Dr. Fatima, referring directly to the quotation that began this chapter, also highlights the “painfulness” of using English:

Unfortunately we have to force lecturers to communicate in English, even though they communicate better in Indonesian than English. It’s not only for our own students, but because if we want to internationalize the program, and we say to them that we are using English as a medium of communication, unless we use English, the international students will not come…But for me, the word ‘pain’ is true—it’s painful in the sense that sometimes I even feel silly when I have teach in English in a class where no one is international.
We can see, then, that teaching in English causes pedagogical tensions, particularly when there is an Indonesian teacher teaching a classroom audience comprised of fellow Indonesians with whom she already shares a newly-adopted lingua franca—but in order to claim an “international” identity, English is a must. Multiple factors, then, from purely linguistic issues to ideological tensions made the decision to adopt English as the mode of instruction a “painful” one for administrators at ICRS. Nonetheless, the language was adopted because of the program’s aspirations to add their Indonesian voices and perspectives to global inter-religious discourse.

These aspirations, in turn, are mediated by “international standards” which are often defined by the West. As mentioned above, one of ICRS’s goals is “to produce a Ph.D. program in Religious Studies that maintains international standards of academic excellence but is controlled and directed by Indonesian scholars.” The very structure of this sentence points to a divide between who “controls” international standards and who “controls” the program, highlighting, however implicitly, the very real power relations involved when a non-Western program adopts English, the language of power, as its primary mode of instruction. Although Indonesians may direct the program, Western “standards” influence the definition of “academic excellence,” implicating the program in the force that helped set linguistic imperialism into motion: the will to improve.

**Using TOEFL To Define Good English**

One of the West’s most powerful tools in defining “good English” is the Test of English as a Foreign Language, or TOEFL. Because TOEFL is the most widely accepted English language assessment tool in university settings, ICRS adopted the test, to use Dr. Bernard’s words—“by default”—as one of the acceptance criteria to the program.
Despite claims to neutrality, TOEFL plays a powerful and lucrative part in the English language industry, and, as a standardization tool developed in the U.S., it is implicated in the “will to improve.” Li, as mentioned above, points to two key practices involved in improvement discourse: problematization and rendering technical (7). TOEFL does both: by rendering technical “Standard English,” it defines the boundaries of “correctness,” a process Pennycook argues began in colonial times to keep non-Standard English users at a deficit. This process, by defining “correctness” and thus the moves necessary to “correct,” paints TOEFL as a “neutral” test of English language ability, and thus a valuable way to encourage English users to “improve” their English. This neutrality masks power relations between those who define proper English and those who may wish to use English for their own culturally-situated purposes—while also masking the way TOEFL fuels a multi-million dollar English language teaching industry that relies on non-standard English-users desire to “improve” their English skills.

In order to participate in the program, ICRS students must have a TOEFL score of 550 by the end of their third year, or by the time they take their comprehensive exams. Because of students’ limited economic resources (the average income per month for Indonesians is around $300), they are allowed to take the $30 Institutional Paper-based TOEFL Test (PBT)—which is comprised of already-used paper tests— that for several years has been made obsolete in the developed world by the $165 internet-based test (www.iief.or.id). Not only is the PBT cheaper, but it’s also offered more often and in more locations (70 within Indonesia). That said, one student, from the remote Indonesian island of Flores, almost wasn’t accepted because, according to Dr. Bernard, she was “teaching at a seminary in a remote place, without testing facilities, and the plane tickets
to the mainland were too expensive.” Luckily, though, she had “excellent recommendations,” though her acceptance to the program was “conditional on her taking and passing the TOEFL after she got out of Flores.” As further testament to TOEFL as economic gate-keeper, to take the Internet-based test—considered a less de-contextualized and more culturally aware test—students would have to buy tickets to Jakarta, in addition to paying for the test. Given the majority of Indonesians’ income, the combined cost of transportation and the test would be nearly impossible to pay without outside funding. TOEFL is undoubtedly a money-making business, often at the expense of less privileged—but just as intelligent—multilingual people.

Access to the test is not the only issue with TOEFL. As one of my students argued, “TOEFL only tells you how good you are at taking the TOEFL.” He was pointing to the fact that standardized tests are not necessarily good measures of language ability. Administrators at ICRS are cognizant of this issue. Dr. Bernard explained that “In the first two years, we became aware that we turned down some students who had excellent academic qualifications, but low TOEFL scores, and we accepted some students who had high scores, but didn’t have the academic background they needed.” To rectify this situation, ICRS has implemented a 4-month intensive pre-Ph.D. TOEFL course; students with a score of 475 can be accepted to this program, and they will be accepted to the actual PhD program contingent on receiving a score of at least 500. Dr. Bernard explained that “It’s still got all the problems of TOEFL; the cultural bias, the test bias, but at least the program is meant to make it possible to find out how the person really uses the language and give them an opportunity.”
The “cultural bias” Dr. Bernard points to was at times quite obvious. One student came to my office in a panic after taking a practice test. On the test, there was an entire dialog between a professor and a T.A., but, because most Indonesian universities don’t have T.A. systems, and the term was never defined, she was unable to answer an entire set of questions correctly. Another student told me of her difficulties understanding what a “work study” position was; again, the concept is almost unheard of in Indonesia. Though some would argue that these terms are important to students wanting to go to study in U.S. universities, they can hardly be seen as a fair test of students’ English-using abilities, and in particular their abilities to navigate an Indonesian religious studies context. As Dr. Atun said, quite succinctly: “TOEFL is written from a very Western perspective, and based on my own experiences is very strange for the religious studies person.”

Despite its economic gate-keeping and cultural bias, TOEFL plays a significant role in students’ academic experiences at ICRS. Many students spent several hours a week in the TOEFL course I was asked to teach, just learning “tricks” I garnered from a TOEFL Test Prep book published by Longman (another testament to the test’s money-making power for U.S. publishing houses). These “tricks”—like ignoring the first sentence in a dialog since the answer is rarely there —were just to pass the test, and did nothing to improve students’ English abilities. This time could have arguably been spent on one of the most important skills in a graduate student’s career — writing — an activity the PBT, with its listening, grammar correction and reading sections, fails to take into account.
Adopting an American Dissertation Process

Despite the program’s focus on TOEFL, writing plays an important part in proving ICRS’s “academic” rigor in relation to other world-wide universities. However, similar to the situation with TOEFL, U.S. models are used to define what a “rigorous” program might look like, despite the program’s goals to promote Indonesian scholarship. Rather than relying on the already-established and Dutch-influenced Indonesian system, where, in Dr. Bernard’s words, students “go in, write their dissertation, and leave,” students at ICRS are much more “present” and involved in the program’s academic community through the courses they take and the comprehensive exam process—a model borrowed from the U.S., according to faculty.

Ph.D. students are required to take 8 three-credit courses their first year—with a recommended reading load of 50-100 pages a week “because most students are reading in a foreign language”—and a recommended writing load, per class, of 30 pages double-spaced (Faculty Handbook). The handbook suggests these 30 pages be broken down as follows: a “5-page in-class report, 10-15 pages of weekly critical responses, and a 10-15 page final paper”(9), and in my observation, most professors followed this break-down as they created their syllabi. Similar to my own U.S. graduate program, then, students not only attended discussion-based seminars, but they read and wrote about topics that were not necessarily related to their own research topics. Once they finish their coursework, students then take a “standardized, general, comprehensive examination”—this exam is a take home, open-book essay test based on a list of 20 books chosen yearly by graduate faculty. After passing this test, students write two specialized preliminary papers, tailored to their own research needs, the purpose of which is to help students prepare for writing
their dissertation. Students then write a comprehensive exam proposal. Finally, once they have submitted all three texts to their advisors, they participate in an oral comprehensive examination.

This process is much more involved than the more independent research-based Indonesian system—putting pressure on both students and faculty. As Dr. Atun explained in her interview: “Our PhD students are working much harder than other Indonesian students at Indonesian universities. Much harder!” ICRS faculty, Dr. Atun continued, also feel the pressures involved with the American system:

I think ICRS is much more intensive than some other programs. And all of the lecturers are aware of that. Teaching at ICRS is so heavy and it’s so demanding, so at one time there was a conversation that we had to reduce minimum requirements to make it more Indonesian.

Dr. Atun points to very real pressures ICRS’s Indonesian professors feel as they try to negotiate full teaching loads at their home universities, as well as at the more “demanding” requirements at ICRS. In the words of Dr. Fatima:

[As a professor] you are forced to teach 3 or 4 courses one semester, and people like me, with my position—I have worked for more than 13 years, and my salary is $300 a month. If we are married and are the head of the family with 3 or 4 kids, we cannot pay our bills, so that’s why almost all professors have multiple jobs.

Indeed, many professors in Indonesia are over-worked and underpaid—an economic reality that might make the less intensive, less hands-on, and more research-based Indonesian system make sense. Encouraging Ph.D. students to research independently—as opposed to guiding them through multiple years of coursework and a rigorous comprehensive exam process—takes less time for professors who are already over-worked due to the material realities of working in a developing country.
Why then, did ICRS choose a Ph.D. model divorced from the already-established and perhaps more context-appropriate Indonesian model? Dr. Atun explained that “[Dr. Benard] said if we want to have this as an international school, we have to have high standards.” These “high standards” have to do with ICRS’s inter-religious goals, as well as the reputation of Indonesian universities in global academic circles. Dr. Bernard explained, in his interview, that the first reason they chose the American system was because of ICRS’s “interdisciplinary nature:” “the process leading up to comps, with classes and so on is meant to at least create common ground and establish a shared discourse and context for discussion between people of different backgrounds.” The American system, to return to Anderson’s terms, helps ICRS imagine itself as a cohesive academic community.

Dr. Bernard’s second explanation, however, highlights quite powerfully the ways adopting U.S. standards is implicated in the “will to improve:”

We are aware that most Ph.D. programs in this country have a poor reputation academically, and whether it’s deserved is not our business, but we wanted to have a comp process in order to try to, as far as we can, guarantee academic excellence for our students.

One way to ensure that ICRS gains “international” credibility, then, is to distance itself from Indonesian models and move towards models created by powerful academic institutions in the United States—a model that creates tensions for Indonesian teachers and students as they attempt to navigate the local-global divide and negotiate very different educational contexts and expectations.

We can see, then, the complicated power relationships involved in adopting an international identity. The question raised, then, is why, though overt in their acknowledgement of English’s ‘imperialism,’ did ICRS still choose to adopt U.S.
institutional models and international standards dictated by the West? The answer is simple: English also represents the possibility to re-imagine relationships in a global community that is often riven with religious, economic, and cultural violence.

**The Possibilities of English**

If we return to the quotation that begins this chapter, showcased is the belief that English is not solely “owned” by the Global North; English can also create “discourse with other Asian, African and Latin American scholars”(13), a discourse important to ICRS because religious belief also crosses traditional national boundaries. In the words of Dr. Atun, “Even among Asian and African countries we use English as a mode of communication. I think because we are interested in making connections with other countries. In Malaysia, Singapore, Brunei, English is very common. We know a little bit of English and they know much, so we can communicate in English.” Indeed, as discussed previously, this “commonness”—despite its colonial implications—pushed ASEAN to adopt English as the “official language.”

Dr. Fatima also pointed to English’s spreading influence in religious circles, showing its potential to unite religious people in a more global imagined community. She explained that as a devout Muslim, she found that English was quite useful when she went on pilgrimage:

> It’s kind of a funny story. I went to Saudi to do the small Haj, the pilgrimage, with my mom last year, and three years before I went for the formal Haj. My Arabic…well, I know Arabic, but it’s very limited. And both times, knowing English was such a big advantage in Saudi Arabia. So I communicated with most of the sellers and pilgrims in English, and they… I don’t know how to explain this…but they admired me a lot, because they thought, ‘oh, look at her, where is she from? She speaks English.’
Dr. Fatima highlights the cultural capital that comes with knowledge of English, even in dominantly Arabic-speaking Muslim religious sites. These burgeoning linkages with religion undoubtedly affected ICRS’s decision to use English as the mode of instruction.

The adoption of English also opens up the possibility for a less unidirectional research relationship between Western scholars and Indonesians. As mentioned above, to study Indonesian religions from an academic perspective, Indonesian students have traditionally had to enroll in Western universities; in reaction to this uni-directional relationship, Dr. Bernard explained that faculty want:

ICRS to be the best place in the world to study Indonesian religions, and as such we anticipate that we need to develop Indonesians who can start and study in their own context of Indonesia, in a program that is controlled by Indonesians, and where Indonesians are the main teachers; yet at the same time be in dialog with people from other countries and that includes having students from other countries study here and professors coming here, in addition to the sandwich program. We want to establish an Indonesian, yet international network.

Because of English’s ubiquity in the academic study of religion, Indonesians, ironically, must communicate in English to challenge traditional Orientalist research relationships—even when working in their own country.

Such in-country, Indonesian, yet international conversations in English happened quite frequently during my 10 months of research in Indonesia; I observed many dynamic interactions between religiously-different students, faculty, and international scholars as they read, critiqued, and collaborated with each other, in multiple Englishes, on projects related to Religious Studies. For an example of this dynamic English-using community in action, we can turn to the Wednesday Forum. This weekly forum allows faculty, students, and international visiting scholars and researchers to present their research, in turn promoting an “ongoing discourse related to their various academic fields, such as the
comparative study of religion, cultural and historical studies of religion, interfaith
dialogue, gender, pop-culture, hermeneutics, peace building, and other related topics”
(CFP Wednesday Forum). During my 10-month position at ICRS, students, faculty and
visiting international scholars presented on such topics as: religious responses to disaster
in Indonesia; religion and transgender identity; religion’s role in the environmental
movement; the importance of state-recognition of indigenous Indonesians religions;
Muslim identity in the Philippines; the identity formation of female monks in the U.S.;
and the role conflict resolution can play in promoting inter-religious dialog, to name a
few. Presenters came from not only Indonesia, but also the Philippines, Egypt, Australia,
India, Singapore, the Netherlands, Sweden, and the U.S. Drawing from their dissertation
work, published articles, course papers, and other research, presenters received
constructive feedback, in a variety of Englishes and from multiple perspectives—an
exercise in collaborative feedback that I, as a writing teacher, thought particularly
powerful. These researchers drew from their various religious lenses to focus on social
justice and tolerance, in keeping with Pancasila’s religious and pluralist goals, while also
incorporating scholarship from the wider international religious studies community.

Thus, despite English’s imperialist tendencies, ICRS can also see the possibilities
it might present for international discourse from an Indonesian perspective. Indeed, Dr.
Atun, when I asked her if English was always imperialist, gave a nuanced response:

No. Sometimes we use English to criticize, for our own purposes. To criticize the
general attitude of English speakers. How can our critiques be known if they are
not in English? It it’s written in Javanese, then people don’t know, don’t care.
Sometimes we say ‘OK, we can use English and we don’t have to give up our
ideals, our identity.’ But sometimes only. There’s some tension there.
It is to these tensions that the next chapter will turn. Though this chapter has focused on the broader socio-historical context in which ICRS, as an Indonesian yet international program, locates itself, the next chapter will begin focusing more specifically on the students working within ICRS as a writing context; by exploring students’ own understandings of the ways their “ideals” and “identities”—and thus their writerly ethos—interact and are shaped by the English language, we will begin to see the ways writers within ICRS help to imagine and articulate ICRS as a local-global community using English.
CHAPTER 3
NEGOTIATING IDEALS AND IDENTITY: IMAGINING A LOCAL-GLOBAL ENGLISH IDENTITY

English, as Chapter 2 suggests, is linked to imperialism as well as possibility; it’s a language that represents powerful global interests, yet it also can be appropriated for more “local” uses. As ICRS faculty member and assistant director Dr. Atun suggests, “We can use English and we don’t have to give up our ideals, our identity. But sometimes only. There’s some tension there.” This chapter will explore in detail the dynamic interplay Dr. Atun locates between English imperialism and Indonesian “ideals” and “identities” by asking the following question: “What role do ‘local’ identities play in writers’ conceptualizations of themselves as English users?” Though a simple question, the following case study portraits will paint a complex picture of what it means for individual students to construct an English-using identity to write from their local-global context: a picture of the ways, for instance, students’ religious and feminist activist motivations for studying English meet accusations of Western imperialism; of the ways local identities rub up against identities implied by English academic writing; and of the ways students’ English writing histories both in Indonesia and abroad mediate their understanding of the language as imperialist or not. By exploring the multiple “local” identities individual students see mediating the English identity they construct, and with that, the various frictions they feel, this chapter will show that just as English should not be considered monolithic, neither should the Indonesian writers that use it to articulate their local-global identities and purposes. On a more pedagogical level, I also hope this chapter highlights the importance of acknowledging the different local identities students bring to language classrooms. Understanding the multitude of local identities students
embody as valuable resources, I would suggest, can help both teachers and students understand and navigate the diverse local-global communicative possibilities English represents.

**In Students’ Words: Painting the Portraits**

As mentioned above, I take a case study approach in this chapter. In the following portraits, I outline the stories four of my nine students’ told of themselves—in class writing assignments and in interviews—as local-global writers. I chose the following four students as case studies because their contexts— their gender, religious and academic identities, as well as their motivations for writing in English— diverge and coincide in interesting ways, in turn affecting their other academic work, which I’ll examine in more detail in Chapter 6. That said, narrowing this chapter to four students was quite difficult for me, as the voices, identities, and writing of all nine students contributed to my understanding of what it means to write from a local-global context. Indeed, as Chapter 4 will argue, we mustn’t view the following voices as entirely discrete from the voices of peers and others who are not showcased here; there I’ll explore in a more inclusive way how, through in-class discussions, peer responses, and conversations outside of our classroom, all nine students’ voices and ideas—as well as the ideas and voices of others past and present— co-mingled. This co-mingling undoubtedly affected my case studies’ perceptions of themselves as language users; after all, contexts— and thus languages— not only pre-exist writers, but they are in constant flux as present mingles with past and looks towards the future in a local-global context.

For this chapter, I drew the individual-student-focused portraits from post-course interviews as well as from students’ literacy narratives. Before moving to a more holistic
rendering of the ways students saw themselves as writers, I’ll briefly outline the particular ways I elicited information from students, as my interview questions and assignments undoubtedly favored and thus called forth in students particular ways of articulating their writerly identity.

As mentioned in Chapter 1, I conducted semi-structured interviews to get a better understanding of students’ individual language histories and motivations for writing in English at ICRS—to get at what Connors terms “student culture.” I asked them the following questions to encourage them to narrate, from their own perspectives, the way they saw themselves as students and thus as language users:

1. Why did you apply to a PhD Religious Studies program?
2. Why did you apply to one that’s entirely conducted in English?
3. What are your motivations for writing about religion in English?
4. How long have you been writing in English? For what purposes?
5. What other languages do you write in? For what purposes?

Students’ answers to these questions varied—showing that leaving our understandings of multilingual writing at the national cultural level flattens the nuance embodied by individual writers. Not all Indonesians are the same; individual context and motivation for language use do matter when conceptualizing what it means to write internationally.

When these interviews are placed in conversation with the two literacy narratives I assigned in my academic writing course, we get an even more nuanced picture of the ways students view themselves as multilingual writers and, with that, how they view the English language. As Chapter 5 will discuss in more detail, the critical pedagogy I introduced incorporated explicit discussions about writing norms and ideology—and with
that, the different ways of being and doing associated with differing rhetorical
traditions—in order to help students locate points of friction and, as Canagarajah would
say, “shuttle between” different rhetorical traditions, depending on their purposes. To
begin these discussions, I assigned two literacy narratives: one to begin the course and
one at mid-year to help students reflect upon what they learned about language and their
writerly identities.

In their Unit 1 literacy narrative, I asked students to address the following prompt
after discussing Fan Shen’s “The Classroom and the Wider Culture,” a text where Shen
forwards the ideological differences between writing in Chinese and writing in English
composition:

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<td><strong>Literacy Narrative:</strong></td>
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| Fan Shen writes, “Looking back, I realize that the process of learning to write in English is in fact a process of creating and defining a new identity and balancing it with the old identity. The process of learning English composition would have been easier if I had realized this earlier and consciously sought to compare the two different identities required by the two writing systems from two different cultures” (466). In this essay you will, as Shen suggests, compare and contrast your own communicative identities in two different discourse communities: in English composition and in another discourse community of your choice. (Remember: a discourse community can be as small as your family or as large as your religious group or national culture).

Please use specific examples from your life to explore the following for both your English-using discourse community and a discourse community of your choice:

1) Why it is important to you to be a part of that discourse community—what your motivations are.

2) Communicative practices particular to the discourse community, such as genres you use (essays, response papers, speeches, prayers, hymn books, casual conversations, jokes, etc) and the common language (Indonesian, Arabic, Javanese, etc.)

3) How you see your position, or identity, as a communicator within that community. As a young person, a woman, a man, a Javanese, a first year graduate student, etc, how are you expected to act and communicate with others?

Then, please draw connections between these two discourse communities. How do your motivations to communicate differ or align? How are the language practices similar or different? How are the identities allowed to you similar or different in each discourse community? How might the outside discourse community you chose to explore affect your academic writing in this class?
Although Shen compares national cultures—Chinese and American—and their differing rhetorical traditions in his analysis, as noted in my prompt, I encouraged students to choose their own discourse communities to analyze in relation to English academic discourse because, as Connor suggests, multiple “locals” in addition to national culture affect language production. Giving students space to articulate their own “locals” in relation to the English writing norms I introduced in class, we will see, produced nuanced results and a broader understanding of students’ lives in relation to the various discourse communities in which they work.

Then, at the end of the first semester, I assigned students the following Final Writer’s Reflection to encourage them to reflect upon themselves as writers and the ways the local ICRS context interacted with their identities when they produced specific texts:

**Table 2: Writer’s Reflection Prompt (Continued on next page)**

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Writer’s Reflection:</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>A Writer’s Reflection is a genre that allows you to look back over all the writing you have done and reflect on, articulate, and evaluate the choices you have made in your work. It is also an opportunity for you to define yourself as a writer—not only to see how far you have come but to think about where you are going. This metalinguistic awareness can transfer to future writing contexts, making you a more self-aware, rhetorically effective, writer.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>For this Writer’s Reflection, you will analyze ICRS as a writing context (or discourse community) in relation to your own individual writing processes and needs. To ground your analysis, please look closely at this course and other courses or requirements at ICRS where writing happens—at the specific texts you produced, the activities that were effective (or not), the type of instruction you find most useful (or not), and how these courses shape who you are as a writer and your future goals. The following questions may help ground your analysis:</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1) How would you describe ICRS as a writing context, or discourse community? For instance, what languages, types of writing, genres are valued? How do these languages, genres etc. relate to the types of writing you value? Use specific examples from this class or your other classes at ICRS for supporting evidence.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2) What in-class activities (like peer review, genre analysis, note-taking, open discussion etc) or pedagogical tools (essay prompts, instructors’ comments, textbooks etc) are effective for you as a writer? Why? Which do you find least effective, and why? Point to specific examples from either this class or other classes to use as supporting evidence.</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
| 3) Which of your essays do you find most effective (in this class or other classes), and why? Which essays do you find least effective, and why? Point to specific sections (passages,
sentences, words, etc) of these essays for supporting evidence. What skills would you like to maintain and what skills would you like to improve for next semester?

4) What kind of writing do you see yourself doing in the future? In what languages? What are your future goals as a writer? How could ICRS better help you achieve these goals—next semester and throughout your academic career?

This assignment encouraged students to think critically about writing and about themselves as writers, using specific texts to ground their analyses. And as the following portraits will show, students took different approaches to writing both literacy narratives—pointing to the ways that varying contexts affect writerly choices. Despite students’ differing approaches, however, several broad themes emerge in their literacy narratives and interviews—themes that point to the importance of acknowledging local identities in our conceptualization of international English use.

**Faqih’s Portrait**

Faqih, conceptualizes his writing identity as embedded in the local—as tied to social justice and to the real—as linked to his identities as Indonesian feminist activist and Islamic law scholar. These various identities traverse his writing in English and the purposes he sees English playing in his own life and the lives of others in his community. And as he explains in his writing and interviews, the relationship between religion and English, between local voices and Western expectations, causes friction as he writes “internationally” as an Indonesian scholar. Despite this local-global friction, however, the local also plays a valuable part in Faqih’s conceptualization of the global, acting as both a starting point for his understanding of his English identity and as motivation for studying religion in English in the first place.
Negotiating Western Imperialism: Local-global Access to Knowledge

When I asked Faqih why he chose to apply to ICRS, a religious studies program conducted entirely in English—particularly since he is fluent in Indonesian as well as in Arabic and since he already holds a position in Islamic Law at the State Islamic University, Cirebon—his answer pointed to issues of access and accusations of Western imperialism. Faqih described how, since he already had a B.A. in Islamic Law from Damascus University in Syria and an MA in Islamic Law from the international Islamic University-Kuala Lumpur-Malaysia, he took a colleague’s advice and decided to apply to PhD programs in Western countries “to have another point of view and to have a new methodology”:

Because my first and second degree are in theological point of view, so I want a different point of view—an anthropological one. I want much knowledge about how to understand religious context, so I can understand religions not only from the text itself as theology does, but also from people and how they understand the text.

Faqih explained (echoing Dr. Bernard’s statement in Chapter 2) that such contextualized understandings of religion happen most often in English, so it seemed natural for him to apply to programs in the West to access these conversations.

However, his religious colleagues, hearing about his decision to go West, warned him against it:

The problem is my colleagues, especially the Muslim and religious people suggested me not to go to Western country, because of my position. Because when you go to Western country, you may lose your religious position because it will be difficult to accept for political reasons, so they said even if you want to take a program in English, it would be better to take it here in Indonesia.

Fears that his religious identity would be misinterpreted because of religious “politics” drew Faqih to ICRS, a program that would give him access to English research, but within an Indonesian context. He described his decision to apply to ICRS in this way:
I had the English already, and since my interest is how to have wider understanding, or anthropological understanding, and I think the resources are mostly in English, that’s why I applied to ICRS. To improve my English, better and better here at ICRS so I can spread my understanding not only with my Indonesian community, but also with international people.

Faqih’s motivations for applying to ICRS present a complicated view of the English language: it is a way for him to access Religious Studies conversations and anthropological research methodology (and to spread information to help his local community, a point to which we’ll return later), but, since English has been linked for so long to Western imperialism, its use is inevitably “political.” Despite this ideological friction, Faqih chose to study at ICRS because he felt this English-based program was in alignment with both his religious identity and, as the following sections will explore, his activist identity as well; Faqih’s choice implies that English is not necessarily antithetical to local constructions of identity.

**Customer is King?**

To explain his complicated relationship to the English language, Faqih turns, in his literacy narrative, to an examination of local writerly tensions between his religious and activist identities, pointing, in turn, to the ways that the local helps him negotiate his understanding of the “global” implied by English. Faqih begins his literacy narrative with an in-depth analysis of his religious writerly identity, using the two major questions that guide his interpretation to explain his textual choices. He writes that the first question that guides the form of his religious texts is "Where is God in my writing?" He explains:

To apply the question, I quote at least once or more in my writing what God have said to human being. That is the written words in the Holy Book the Qur'an. Many Muslims recite the Qur'an everyday and refer to it for many matters of their lives. Sometimes I flourish my writing with abundance of verses of the Qur'an. I put them along in my introduction, in the middle of my writing and also in the end.
God “flourishes” Faqih’s religious texts because the Qur’an holds the utmost authority for Faqih’s Muslim audience. The second question that guides his writing style, Faqih explains, is “What can we learn from this happening to be a good Muslim?” This question, he continues,

Determines my writing to consist of what I called a "lessons and hopes" perspective. I always put lessons learned from a matter described in my writing, particularly those that motivate people to become good Muslims. I also put that there are always "hands of God" at work within human efforts, especially in the context that people should have hopes that God will solve their problem.

His reliance, as a religious writer, on the “hands of God” for problem-solving caused friction, he explained, when he first began to construct his feminist activist identity:

The first time I joined my Indonesian NGO's community I felt that there is no God in their consciousness as they always refer to human factors not to "God's factors". When I sent my first writing to a magazine circulated among social activists in 2000, its editor sent back to me and replied with comments that my writing was too flourished with "hands of God". She found the idea in my writing was wonderful, but it was so general and was covered mostly by religious texts. It was too many "flowers", as she said in her reply. She suggested that I rewrite the article and replace "hands of God" with "what people can do now practically."

Since that point, Faqih explains, his writing to the activist audience has been less “flowery” and much more grounded in the human because, “As problems come from human factors, I should reveal them and exhibit them in my writing. I have been trained that to empower community is to make them realize their own capacity to solve their problems. I was assigned to empower a marginalized community and my writing is one of forces to do so.” Faqih, we can see, began seeing writing as a social force in addition to a spiritual force after he joined the activist community—as a human endeavor, capable of empowering the local if used effectively. Indeed, he describes how this shift from God-driven to human-driven texts, though initially causing tension, taught him to be an effective communicator and thus to “serve” his communities in appropriate ways:
While in doing business is a proverb that "customers are kings", it is true also in doing communication. I do serve people when I communicate to them. In many cases, I shift deliberately from my way of thinking to that owned by people whom I do write to and then I start to write. Writing in this case actually is an art of communication. Moreover, if I do serve a community with my writing, I should please them by changing my style of writing; words, sentences and structures in order to serve them.

Since Faqih writes to “serve” his audience—and to “empower marginalized communities”—he seems to have no qualms here with assimilating to community norms. To “empower” different local audiences, he takes different textual approaches in his writing and with these different textual approaches, he also constructs different identities which allow him to “serve” the differing needs of his audiences.

Faqih uses these “local” experiences to discuss the shift in writing styles and identities that he believes he’ll have to make when writing in English for my academic writing class:

I think my experience above seems to be similar to what I will experience with English writing academic skills. All that should be done before any step in developing English writing academic skills is to know and be aware enough of what is so called as "academic". The awareness then should be applied in my writing.

Despite being cognizant of English’s ties to the Western ideology, whether through Shen’s essay or because of his religious colleagues’ conflation of English and the West, Faqih implies here that in his desire to serve, he will assimilate to English norms. As long as he learns the appropriate “rules,” he will be able to shift identities, just as he does between his Indonesian religious and activist discourse communities without, it seems, relinquishing his other identities or sacrificing his ideals.
Fundamentals or Freedom?

As the semester progressed, however, Faqih complicated his “customer is king” mentality, as evidenced in the nuanced analysis in his Writer’s Reflection, of the tensions he feels between English “academic” rules and the freedom to express his experiences. As an indication of how intertwined religion, activism, and writing are for Faqih, he uses an extended metaphor drawing connections between these three identities to explain what it means to write in English.

He begins his Writer’s Reflection by explaining his move from a Fundamentalist to a Social Constructivist view of the Qu’ran, outlining, in turn, his activist community’s role in his shifting perceptions of religion. He explains that, “Fifteen years ago, when I was first rank of student of Islamic theology I was bound closely by religious norms. [The Qu’ran] was a text strictly to be followed. It should be implemented ‘actually as it is’.” When he became a feminist activist, however, things changed:

Ten years later, I had realized that there is no ‘actually as it is’. It is not only because I joined group advocating ‘women experiences’, but also I was faced by many opinions conflicting one with other, even coming from the same Islamic school due to variety of experiences. In my mind then, experience is very important in determining the so called ‘text as actually as it is’.

We can imagine the struggle Faqih, as a deeply religious man, must have had when realizing that God’s “rules” were open to interpretation based on the differing experiences of worshipers—that, in fact, God’s word might be followed differently depending on these interpretations. Faqih even goes so far as to ask in his reflection, “Is the text already dead in my mind? Or is its author really dead?” These questions highlight his discomfort with the postmodern suggestion that, because of myriad
interpretations, authorial intention and thus the author himself might be dead. That God’s “rules” might be negotiable causes Faqih great discomfort.

He comes to no definitive answer to these difficult questions about God the author and his word. Instead, he writes, “I am really not sure, since structuralism is now whispering to me the word ‘freedom is an illusion’. Am I really free from ‘the language’?” He does answer this question, implicitly implying that the author, and thus God, is not dead despite the freedom to interpret his language: “I am aware enough now, that I will be free only within these rules.” He can interpret, but God’s rules dictate the form in which he interprets.

Faqih uses this religious friction as a starting point to discuss his relationship to the English language and the various tensions that ensue as he seeks to articulate his Indonesian experience within English “rules”:

My writing is now a bit different too. English academic writing in some extent, its rules is burdening me more. My mind is not free enough to articulate in English rather than in Indonesian. It is my problem, being surrounded by two poles; ‘rules of the text’ and ‘freedom of expressing experiences’.

Here Faqih points to his increasing discomfort, as the semester progresses, with the “rules” of academic writing; he returns to the concept introduced through his religious example — rules of the text vs. experience — to paint a vivid picture of the friction he feels when trying to articulate his Indonesian experiences in English. He continues,

On the one hand, I like to know rules of grammar, nice flow of sentences, proper discourse community whom I should address my thought, theories of thinking that I should refer to, etc. I like them all as I like my religion. It is the text that should be followed. On the other hand, those rules disturb me articulating my thought. I need to express freely my voice, my mind, and especially my Indonesian experiences. Is it possible to articulate out of the rules? How?
Faqih asks a pressing question: can the English language ever represent his Indonesian experience and thus his Indonesian voice? When writing in an international yet Indonesian program, whose voices triumph, and in what form? Is it possible to write from experiences outside of the “rules”? His answer to the last question is no:

Of course, it is impossible or at least I will be excluded from the community. I should be bound by those rules by necessity. No rules, no community. I should like ‘the rules of writing’ at least as I like the text of religion or the religion itself. It is the way how I am trying to pass on English problems little by little. I know that I will, with God’s willing of course, be successful in term of passing the problems.

Not only does Faqih call upon God in this narrative—a device he explains is important when writing from his religious identity—but he uses religion as a metaphor to understand English writing, which, he explains, is one way he negotiates the local-global friction he feels. He chooses to assimilate, despite the friction, because of his desire to be part of a community—the same desire that led him to write that the “audience is king” in his first literacy narrative.

**Assimilate to Serve?**

Indeed, Faqih views his scholarship, just as he does religion—as a way to promote social justice in his local community, suggesting that perhaps it’s not the form his texts take, but the actions they foment for the people he serves that matter most to him; as mentioned above, he believes that “writing [is] one of the forces to empower” his community. With his focus on local exigency and concrete social change, Faqih engages in what Canagarajah terms “civic ethos” where “one doesn’t write papers simply to develop an original viewpoint and earn professional or personal credit. Scholarship has to be socially responsible” (Shuttling 592). It is this civic mindedness—which Canagarajah suggests is sometimes at odds with individualistic Western academic notions of
knowledge-making as merely for personal “professionalization”—that made Faqih want
to engage with English scholarly communities in the first place. English may be seen as a
tool of Western imperialism, but it, and the knowledge it transmits, can also be co-opted
to articulate non-Western identities and purposes.

In fact, Faqih’s NGO work has shown him that links between Religious Studies
scholarship—and with that international English-using perspectives—and his own
Islamic beliefs can lead to real social change in an Indonesian context. Faqih was a co-
founder of an Indonesian NGO called Fahmina, which holds as its “core belief that Islam
or “Islamicness” must take shape within a framework of social justice.” He and his
colleagues began Fahmina because they were unhappy with the growing disconnect
between pesantran, or traditional Islamic boarding schools, and the real social issues
wreaking havoc on Indonesian lives. As the program’s website proclaims in English as
well as Indonesian:

We continue to promote the intellectual tradition of pesantren as an inspiration for
the upholding of social justice. We have inspired, encouraged and facilitated
rituals and traditions in local pesantren to be imbued with intellectual tradition
and solidarity with the oppressed.

Through contextual study of Islamic texts and training workshops linking Islam to
Indonesian reality, the program seeks to use Islam as a starting point for pluralism, social
justice through community democracy, and most importantly to Faqih, for gender
equality. The program has this to say about Islam and women’s rights in Indonesia:

Women, although they are many in number, remain victims of a patriarchal social
system that turns them into objects, weakened and vulnerable to many forms of
violence. Islam is based on principles of justice in all things, including relations
between men and women, does not oppress one gender or permit one gender to
become an object of violence. Behaviour and actions that cause oppression or

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11 That the website is in both Indonesian and English probably points to the fact that this “local” NGO is also funded in
part by global aid organizations.
violence towards women are in opposition to Islam. As a result, Fahmina, along with other local and national women’s groups, campaign to create a social order that is more just, without violence towards one sex towards another, oppression, discrimination or any forms of tyranny.

In training workshops with feminist activists as well as religious leaders, Fahmina “historiciz[es] and contextualiz[es] the discriminatory rulings on women that have become part of Islamic law, showing that they are neither manifestations of divine will nor immutable, but rather that they are juristic constructs that are shaped by, reflect, and can change with time and place.” We can see here the social constructivist view Faqih outlines above.

Faqih, as an Islamic law scholar—and as someone privy to, through his ability to read English, a less theological and more anthropological view of religion—played an important part in promoting this re-reading of Islam, and from this experience, he published a book in Indonesian titled Dawrah Fiqh Concerning Women: A Manual on Islam and Gender—a book that makes his belief in the connection between academic knowledge and real world social justice—both within Indonesia and internationally—quite clear. Indeed, not only are there 2,000 copies circulating in Indonesia, amongst such varied groups as the Nanggroe Aceh Darussalam police force, an Aceh male activist group and various women’s activist groups in Jakarta, but the book has also been translated into English. Another 2,000 copies of the English version are circulating both in Indonesia, with international NGOs such as the American Red Cross, and abroad, particularly in the Philippines and Malaysia. Furthermore, Faqih has been asked to do presentations and workshops for numerous international and local NGOs within Indonesia—in English and in Indonesian—about this manual and other scholarship linked to Indonesian social justice, gender, and Islam, indicating that both Indonesian and
English may be a way for him to serve his Indonesian community. To Faqih, writing is a real world, civic and religious activity. And these local contexts—religious as well as civic—wendi themselves into his understanding of himself as an English writer, challenging, in turn, the notion that English can only represent Western subjectivities.

**Nina’s Portrait**

Similar to Faqih, Nina’s motivations for studying at ICRS and using English are guided by her religious identity and, with that, a civic ethos tied to a desire for local social justice. Unlike Faqih, however, she openly discounts English’s links to imperialism; in fact, in her literacy narratives and her interviews, she points to very little friction as she moves between Bahasa Indonesia and English and the identities suggested therein. This lack of tension can be attributed to Nina’s long exposure to English in her local Indonesian context, both as a student and as an English teacher, pointing, in turn, to the local’s importance in mediating students’ perceptions of themselves as English users.

**Not Only Javanese, but a Javanese Who is Using English**

Nina’s belief that English and her local identities can coexist with little friction was quite evident in her interview. She explained that

> Writing in English doesn’t mean we don’t respect our Bahasa [Indonesia]. We respect it. But as a part of being international academicians, we have to admit that English is used by many people. Because in Indonesia, there are some people who think, “OK. You use English. You are like bule. You are not nationalist.”

Nina, on the other hand, sees her “nationalist” identity and her English identity as discrete and equal. As she writes in her Unit 1 literacy narrative,

> I do not find any difficulties in grasping English since I put myself not only as a Javanese but as a Javanese who is using English. I do consider that if we want to

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12 “Bule” is a widely-used slang term used to refer to white people in general, though it was initially used to refer to Dutch colonists.
learn language, it means that we also have to embrace and understand the culture; but it is not necessary to be involved in that culture.

Rather than an either/or dichotomy between her home language and English, Nina paints English as an additive to her Javanese identity—an addition that doesn’t necessarily require full identification with English ideology. In her interview she expanded on this, explaining that her comfort with cultural co-existence was related to her ability to shift identities: “My identity is fluid I think. I can say I’m an English student, I’m a Muslim, I’m a woman, I’m a housewife. That’s fine. To my friends, I say I’m a working studying mother.”

Nina also points to her long history with the English language as part of her ability to accept English, not as imperialist, but as an additional part of her Indonesian identity. In her interview, she explained that she is comfortable assimilating to dominant English norms because, to her, they don’t seem imperialist:

If I’m not good at English genre, I will just copy it, and as long as I understand it, I feel comfortable. That’s fine. Because I never think English is imperialist, that’s why. Maybe I differ from my friends in that because my experience writing. I wrote for the first time in English. So maybe the difference, that’s why. So maybe Faqih, he is very good at writing in Indonesian so he feels it difficult to copy.

Indeed, as we saw above, Faqih, though resigned to the forms and the English ideology therein, feels much more tension than Nina seems to feel when trying to express his Indonesian identity in English. Perhaps, as Nina suggests, their differing relationships to English have to do with their differing writing histories.

Nina explained in her interview that her first exposure to writing academically—unlike Faqih, who is well-published in Indonesian—happened in English during her Master’s program in Social Work and Interdisciplinary Islamic Studies, an English-medium Indonesian program co-sponsored by CIDA, or the Canadian International
Development Agency. To prepare for this English-only program, she took a short course in English writing in Bali, Indonesia, which was her first exposure to writing at length in any language. Because of this writing course, she explains,

Now I find it difficult to write my ideas in Bahasa. I think, to start, what should I write? But in English I come to an idea easily, and in writing, I never think in Bahasa. I always think in English. Always. Because I think my teacher, when I got short course in writing English in Bali, my teacher was Australian, she said, “Don’t think in Bahasa and then translate to English, go straight to the English.” I think it’s more effective. Yeah. But now, even when my thesis is going to be published in Indonesian, and I have to write in Bahasa, I find it difficult to make it good Bahasa.

Nina’s academic identity, because of this experience, is linked to English rather than Javanese or Bahasa Indonesia, a circumstance that may make adoption of English norms less difficult for her than for writers who wrote academically for the first time in Bahasa Indonesia.

Furthermore, although Nina was first taught to write in English in her MA program, she had already had much exposure to the language and its forms as a student and later as a teacher of English to other Indonesians. She explained that in junior high and high school she always had the highest scores in English because she “loved it.” Although she majored in Arabic for her B.A., when she returned to her hometown after college, she began to teach both Arabic and English at her parents’ Islamic schools, an experience that led to her post-MA employment at a private ELT school. She explained that she took this job—that involved teaching 8 hours straight without stopping—because, “If I stopped speaking in English, or writing, my English would be lost, because ability in language is to use it.” Indeed, before coming to ICRS, Nina had long been using English in various Indonesian contexts, suggesting, perhaps, one of the reasons she sees English as capable of articulating Indonesian realities despite its Western origins.
Her Writer’s Reflection highlights her comfort incorporating English and her Indonesian context. She writes that her favorite essay was her response paper to Joya’s “The Task of Remembrance: History as The Burden of Inheritance and an Opportunity for Justice”. Unlike some students, who felt difficulty critiquing published authors because of Indonesian rhetorical traditions that encourage writers to respect authority,13 Nina writes of her pride in finally being able to adopt an egalitarian positionality when interacting with a published author:

This is when I can encourage myself to be more critical in reading an article and responding to it. Furthermore, I can amplify my confidence in writing since before that I always felt that I was not knowledgeable enough to criticize and respond to an article particularly which is published in a journal. Now, I posit myself as same as the author in terms of power relation so that I can feel and think freer to give responsive comments.

Nina, as she suggests in her Unit 1 Literacy Narrative, feels very little ideological friction when adopting a Western orientation in her interaction with a published author. And perhaps this ability to critique and add to the conversation has to do with the way she chose to respond to and critique Joya. She continues, “Another thing is that I will always try to bring the important ideas in an article to see and analyze my Indonesian context.”

She highlights the following passage from her response paper to show how she did so:

Reflecting Benjamin’s idea in “Theses on Philosophy of History”, Joya (2006) suggests that history is an on going process which does not stop in the past. History can connect the past into the present in order to ascertain a just future. It seems to me that this idea is an uncommon idea, since before reading this article I thought that history is just about past time without any connection with today’s present and future. This article really brings about a new idea for me in understanding history. For example, when I was in elementary school I got a History lesson which told that September 30th 1965 movement was a kind of rebellion attempt from the Indonesia Communist Party. I always thought it was over and we do not need to look back at it. Now I see that event in different way. I start to see it in correlation with today’s issues, particularly for women today who were victimized and accused as communist by the “New Order” regime.

13 The next chapter will offer an in-depth discussion of this cross-cultural friction.
Nina constructs an Indonesian ethos in this English text by applying Joya’s distant-from-Indonesia article to both her personal experience as an Indonesian student and recent Indonesian history that many reading from the West may be unaware of—pointing to a local Indonesian-using audience. I would argue that the local audience implied by Nina’s text as well as her comfort placing local knowledge in conversation with a published article can be attributed to the fact that she has long used English within her local Indonesian context, for both academic and civic purposes.

“Reaching and Teaching” an Indonesian Community

Indeed, similar to Faqih, Nina’s strong civic ethos motivated her to study at ICRS in the first place, suggesting how important it is for her to be able to contextualize her English academic scholarship within her Indonesian context. This civic ethos is linked both to her identity as a member of a subjugated religious group and to the fact that she has seen firsthand the effects an oppressive migrant worker system has had on women in her hometown. She explained in her interview that she chose to study for a PhD at ICRS because of her religious background:

I’m a Muslim, but actually I’m a member of Ahmadiyya movement. It’s a Muslim organization all over the world, and it has headquarters in London, where we have our caliph. But in Indonesia, Ahmadiyya is considered as non-Muslim, so some of us were attacked and even some people were killed by mainstream Muslims. So that’s why I think that OK, as a woman, and as a Muslim and as Ahmadiyya, I have to learn about interreligious studies to reach and teach my own knowledge and maybe I can do something for my community then.

As a member of an international, yet oppressed group in Indonesia, Nina hopes to access knowledge through English that can help her “reach and teach” her Indonesian “community” about Ahmadiyya—knowledge she believes might help her, as a Muslim

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14 The construction of audience in a local-global site will be taken up in detail in Chapters 4-6.
woman, stem the violence she and her fellow religious community members have experienced at the hands of other Muslims. Her English-using identity, then, can co-exist with and, most importantly, contribute to her local religious and civic ethos.

In fact, she explained in her interview that English had helped her help her local community in the past. She reported that a similar desire for social justice led her to study for her MA in Social Work in an Indonesian English-medium program similar to ICRS:

[A]s an English teacher in my parents’ schools, I thought I need to know more about social work. Education is part of the social work field. Because I was thinking about my community at the time. As you know, most of the young women are migrant workers there. And I thought, why are they becoming migrant workers? But at least if you are migrant worker, you can get better life or better way if you use English. So after they graduate from high school, they can go not to Saudi Arabia, but to Taiwan, Hong Kong if they can use English. It is better conditions for women there, I think. So my social work emphasis was I like English and I can help my community with it too.

Nina points to the stark reality that a majority of young women from her area are forced, because of economic circumstances, to become migrant workers in more affluent nations and to her belief that if they know English, they at least have a chance at working in less oppressive circumstances than those in Saudi Arabia. Nina, then, doesn’t see the English language or the “Western” identities it supposedly represents as imperialist because she has long experienced it as part of her local context. In fact, she believes English, rather than acting in opposition to her local religious and civic identities, can contribute to these identities through the academic knowledge it conveys and its power to help other Indonesians access and navigate global communicative contexts.
Ninik’s Portrait

Unlike Nina and Faqih, whose primary experiences using English occurred within Indonesia, Ninik received an international Ford Foundation fellowship to pursue her Master’s degree from the East-West Center at the University of Hawaii. This three-year experience using English “abroad” undoubtedly affected her perception of English, and with that, the ways she constructed her English-using identity at ICRS. Indeed, in her literacy narratives as well as her interview she discussed the ways she was interpellated differently as an English user in Hawaii and in Indonesia, though in both cases in terms of an “international” identity. In Hawaii, she was considered an “international” English user because of her Indonesian identity and at ICRS, despite being Indonesian herself, she is considered a representative of “international” English users because of her two years spent abroad. In response to this interpellation, she constructs an English-using identity that positions her as cross-cultural ambassador; at times, she draws from her Hawaiian experiences to educate her Indonesian peers, and at times she draws from her Indonesian experiences and contexts to educate people working outside, rather than within, Indonesian borders. Ninik, by occupying cross-cultural ambassador subjectivity, positions herself at the juncture between local and global in order to educate other English-users, whether Indonesian or Western, about the other’s context.

Same Identity, Different Problems

In her Unit 1 literacy narrative, Ninik embarks on a contrastive analysis of her Hawaiian and Indonesian literacy contexts in order to help her Indonesian peers navigate the local-global divide. That she writes to educate her peers is clearly highlighted in the conclusion of her piece, which she titles, “If You Are in My Position”: 
I know not only I have problems with cultural shock. Many students who just come back from abroad and continue their studies in Indonesia will face the same problems. Right now, I am still trying to solve my cultural shock even though I have been in ICRS for one month. For those of you who have same position as me, I have many suggestions.

She draws these suggestions for coping with “cultural shock” from her own experiences navigating between her Hawaiian and Indonesian educational contexts.

She begins her paper by suggesting that although her identity and the language she was using remained constant, the educational contexts in which she worked were very different:

Although as other people, I have many discourse communities, for this paper, I would only like to address two discourse communities, which are my existence as a student in Hawaii and in Yogyakarta. I think that this is quite interesting since even though I have same identity and language, the problems are not similar.

Indeed, Ninik shows quite clearly in her analysis of Indonesian and Hawaiian discourse communities that even though she uses English in both contexts, she feels very different frictions in Indonesia than she does in Hawaii. She explains, for instance, the differing expectations each program had in relation to her English abilities:

Although I am a pure Indonesian, I still got culture shock when I began studying in ICRS. It is more difficult than I thought. My first problem is regarding my position. When in Hawaii, I was considered as an international student, I could get excuses, if my English was not perfect. The program supported me to express myself freely. The main point when I talked in classes was my ideas. As long as my classmates and professor could catch my point, it was enough. English was not really important because it is only a tool to communicate my ideas.

Because she was considered an “international student” in Hawaii, people were more lenient of her non-standard language use, which forwarded to her the notion that communication, rather than correctness, was most important in communicative contexts. That said, when she returned to Indonesia after two years in Hawaii, she felt her Indonesian cohorts had very different expectations of her English:
Unlike in Hawaii, in ICRS my English should be perfect since I graduated from America. Actually, nobody speaks directly about that to me. However, I am able to feel it when I talk to some people. One of my friend said, “Your English must be advanced.” It indicates they put my English skill higher than theirs. It really makes me uncomfortable. I am aware about my ability in English. Although I am a US alumna, it does not mean that my English skill is better than students who only study in country.

Because of these shifting expectations of her language abilities, Ninik feels friction as she works to construct an English-using identity at ICRS. Furthermore, by writing of these frictions to her Indonesian peers in this literacy narrative, she adopts a cross-cultural ambassador identity, challenging their assumptions that English use in “native” speaker contexts is always standard, while also dispelling the notion that her own English must be perfect.

She also uses her literacy narrative to explain to her peers the importance of bringing knowledge about their Indonesian context to the West, even though it may be “old news” to Indonesians. She writes,

The topic of research [in the U.S.] is also, in my view, quite dissimilar. I remember one day my Indonesian friend asking me about my Hawaiian capstone’s title. He gave me an unpleasant comment, “Why do you discuss about pesantren [Islamic boarding schools]? Open your eyes, a thousand people already wrote about pesantren. You have to find another topic.” It really made me disappointed. I realize that the topic of pesantren is a “common” topic in Indonesia. Pesantren from many different ways is already examined. However, for Hawaiin or Western scholars, in fact, this topic is still saleable. We can not take for granted that all people in West know about pesantren…They really want to know what happens in Eastern countries, so pesantren, which is associated with Eastern countries, is still interesting for them.

Ninik highlights quite clearly the importance she sees in bringing Indonesian knowledge to the West through English, a position that substantiates her cross-cultural ambassador identity. She may be educating her Indonesian peers about the differences between “East”
and “West” in this literacy narrative, but when she writes to the West, she educates them about her Indonesian context.

Ninik also educates her Indonesian peers about material inequality in the global educational sphere. She explains that in Hawaii, economic circumstances make being a student much easier:

I realize that US has more sources to develop their educational institution, so the facilities in university become the priority of their project. Students in Hawaii are free to access library from anywhere as long as they have internet access, for instance. Online journals can be downloaded freely by using students’ ID. Students also do not need to worry if they want to finish their assignment because library opens until midnight. Internet is an essential tool that students are able to use anywhere in campus with high speed. The complete facility, for sure, will support students to focus more on study.

In the U.S. money allows for high speed internet, free online journals, and thus flexible research hours for writers. In Indonesia, on the other hand, resources, and thus time for research, is more scarce. Ninik writes:

Actually, I really do not want to compare with the condition in ICRS since I understand that the sources and system in ICRS are totally different from US. Nevertheless, with using international standard, the assignments in ICRS are not easier than US, so for me, it is hard to adjust.

Ninik is careful, and rightfully so, to avoid critiquing ICRS because of unequal resources, instead blaming broader systems of inequality. Nonetheless, since ICRS has the same “international standards” as the University of Hawaii, Ninik feels friction as she writes in English. She explains:

On one side, I have to study the same as in the US, but the facility is not giving me the same opportunities to focus on study. To illustrate, our library at ICRS only opens until 4.30 pm. How can students use the library if the last class is 3.30 pm? Another thing is online library. This facility seems quite exclusive. It only can be accessed with using university’s line on campus. For me, I live in Yogyakarta with my family. Usually, night is the only free time for me to finish my papers. When I am writing a paper, and I need supporting data from online
library, it is really impossible that I can go to campus in order to access online library.

Ninik sees her ability to use English effectively for research circumscribed by economic inequality—in this case a lack of connectivity and access to resources off campus. Writing papers that maintain “international standards of excellence,” as the Faculty Handbook recommends, is more difficult when doing so from a developing country context.

Thus, the friction Ninik feels as an English user seems to have less to do with identity shifts regarding language, and more to do with her awareness of differing language contexts. Indeed, the first suggestion she offers to her peers in her “If You Are in My Position” section points to how emotional this cross-cultural awareness might be:

Firstly, if you feel disappointed and angry about this condition, share with your friends who have the same experiences as you. It can help you to feel that you are not alone, and some time your friends will give you good advice to solve your problem.

She implies that with an awareness of the cultural and material differences between Indonesia and other contexts may come anger and disappointment, but that through sharing these feelings—just as she does in this literacy narrative by adopting a cross-cultural ambassador identity—these emotions can be overcome.

Ninik maintains her cross-cultural ambassador identity when giving her peers advice on how to negotiate tensions involved with differing perceptions of language ability. She advises her peers that,

Your position right now is the same as other students that use English at ICRS. You study in the same class, and your assignments are not different from them. If you have different experience by studying abroad, it is just because you have opportunity that others do not have.

Here Ninik implicitly acknowledges that studying in a resource-rich country is a rare
opportunity, while also discrediting the idea that such an experience necessarily leads to perfect English language use. And finally, when it comes to issues of access, Ninik suggests that her peers should,

Keep in touch with your colleagues from your previous university. It will help you to find sources that you need. In fact, Western universities usually have more open and complete sources. It is good ways not only to find sources but also to maintain networking. I believe networking always gain good things for us in the future.

Indeed, as Chapter 2 explores, ICRS developed their study abroad sandwich program because they saw this “networking” for resources as a way to ameliorate economic inequality between developed countries and their own developing contexts—so that students like Ninik could access Western resources to the benefit of international English academic conversations and their local Indonesian contexts.

**Educating the West: Helping Indonesia**

Indeed, Ninik had first-hand experience with the ways this international networking in English “gain[ed] good things” for Indonesians. Ninik’s ability, as cross-cultural ambassador, to educate the West about Indonesian social issues helped fortify her civic ethos within Indonesia. She explained in her interview that even when she and her husband were in Hawaii, their thoughts were back in Indonesia:

One time, when my husband and I were in Hawaii, we had this lunch and we think we have to do something for our community at home. We have to start now. If we have a dream to help, when are we going to realize it? Then we realized, OK: we don’t have money. What can we do? The only valuable thing that we have is books. So let’s make a community library.

Ninik explained that she went back to her Hawaiian dorm room, sent out some emails to list-serves explaining that she wanted to start a community library in Indonesia and the emails and phone calls started flooding in: “I say I’m from rural area in Indonesia,
something like that and 10 minutes after, I got a call from a couple. They said ‘I have many used books but they are in English.’ And I said no problem in English.” Ninik and her husband left Hawaii with multiple monetary donations to get their library started, as well as hundreds of donated books. Ninik explained that “I already had 300 books of my own, so at the time, when we were packing, my husband said, ‘Which would you prefer to bring home? Your slippers, clothes, your shoes, or your books?’ OK. So I think the important thing is books. We have six luggages and five are for books and one for clothes.” Ninik and her husband combined these international donations with the books they already had in Indonesia to create a community library with over 900 books, journals, and DVDs, serving 450 active members, and many other “drop ins” who want to read on-site.

Although the idea happened abroad, Ninik explained that the impetus for the community library was local to Indonesia—sparked in particular by the very real needs of local women and other marginalized members in her community. Ninik emphasized in her interview that unless one is a student in Indonesia, there is very little access to free books, meaning that literacy is not available for many housewives, the elderly, or the poor. Her “dream” was to help these marginalized people gain access to free knowledge and literacy by opening a local and public library—an uncommon concept in a developing Indonesia where, as discussed above, even universities have limited resources. To achieve this dream, Ninik worked as a cross-cultural ambassador: by using English to share her Indonesian experiences with her colleagues in Hawaii, she was able to engage in real social change, in turn furthering her Indonesian civic ethos.
International-Indonesian Networking: Constructing a Religious and Civic Identity through English

It’s not surprising, then, that English—and the opportunities the language offers for international networking from within Indonesia—was a prime motivator in Ninik’s decision to apply at ICRS after coming back from Hawaii. However, a secondary motivation had to do with local frictions she felt regarding her Arabic language abilities—frictions that her access to “international” resources through English ameliorated, to some extent.

When I asked Ninik in her interview why she chose to study at ICRS, she explained that

First of all, the major wasn’t so important. I chose ICRS because of the place. I was already separated from my family for three years, so I didn’t want to be separated again from my son. Then, and I think the second reason is about language because in ICRS the first language is English so I want to keep up my English skills so that what made me decide about ICRS.

ICRS was appealing both because of its ties to Indonesia and her family and because English was the primary mode of instruction. In fact, she explains that though religion is important to her, it wasn’t her prime motivator to apply to the program:

About religious studies, the major is actually my third or fourth consideration. Yes. Because even though this interfaith or interreligious dialog is a new thing for me, I have already dealt with religious issues since I was an undergrad. So for me the major is not the important thing, for me I want to keep continuing my studying, and this place is nice in Yogy; I don’t need to be separated with my family, and it’s in English and an international program so I still have opportunity to continue my skill and my experience in international networking.

English and, with that, opportunities for making further international connections with the language were Ninik’s prime motivators to study at ICRS (though, it should be noted, she has always been a very active in her Muslim community because of her family’s ties to the pesantran, or Islamic boarding school, in her local town.)
Furthermore, Ninik explained that once she made the decision to join ICRS’s community, studying religion in English made sense since she viewed her Arabic, the primary language of her Islamic religion, as less than fluent. She explained that,

I feel I lack of knowledge about Islam because I cannot really read Arabic. I’m different from Faqih. He can read Arabic; he can read English. But for me, in Arabic, I don’t understand. That’s why when I give my argument in religious studies, I must use all Western scholars in my literature review. This is for some Indonesians, some scholars, Muslim scholars, this is not good. At least I have to know and refer to the main lace of the Islamic language. In Arabic. Tension!

Ninik turns to English to study religion because she can’t read Arabic, a situation that causes her friction: as previously discussed with Faqih’s portrait, drawing from solely English-using Western scholars when studying religion is problematic to some Muslims because of the language’s links to imperialism. Furthermore, Ninik feels that she cannot even study Arabic locally:

This is also my problem. My family is from a pesantran [an Islamic boarding school]. Most people assume that people from pesantran, they can speak Arabic language, so when I study English after graduating, they say “Oh you must be multilingual!” Everybody can accept that I study English, but everyone has a big question mark if I study Arabic in Indonesia. “How come? You should already know this.” So I cannot study Arabic in Indonesia. Because everyone would ask questions. This is my problem…

Although she views this lack of Arabic as a “problem,” in many ways, Ninik’s ability to access and take part in English academic conversations concerning religion also allows her to construct and maintain a religious identity, though this identity may be considered more “Western” than Faqih’s. That said, the cross-cultural ambassador identity she constructs may alleviate some of the tension she feels with this West-focused religious identity; after all, as she discusses in her literacy narrative, her research on religion in Islamic boarding schools may be “old news” to Indonesians, but still fresh and important
for the West. She can draw from her local religious connections to pesantran to forward, through English, her “Eastern” perspectives on Islam.

**Writing the Personal: English as Accommodative to Indonesian Identities**

In fact, Ninik emphasizes that being able to insert her personal Indonesian context into her academic writing is one of the aspects she likes most about English. Similar to Nina, she enjoys placing her Indonesian experiences in conversation with published authors, pointing once again to the fact that she doesn’t see her English-using identity as antithetical to her Indonesian identities—and perhaps, given what she discusses in her literacy narrative—to the fact that such information may help educate a Western audience about Indonesia.

In her interview, she explained that she enjoyed writing in English because the rhetorical conventions allowed her to ground her research in her personal context. Such is not the case, she explained, when she writes in Indonesian:

> It’s very rarely we find Indonesians writing in their thesis or article, something like ‘I love this topic because when I was an undergrad, my boyfriend or girlfriend introduced me to this idea’…something like that.

Ninik views Indonesian writing as more distant and less welcome to discussing personal motivations or exigency for engaging in scholarship. To explain the difference between her Indonesian and English academic writing, she expanded:

> I love English style because even if we discuss about a very difficult topic, about philosophy, women in philosophy or something like that, actually this topic I already understand from my own experiences, so I think OK, this is very, very philosophical, but also a personal story and I can write about that.

Though personal experience isn’t necessarily Indonesian—especially for Ninik, who has had experience both in Indonesian and abroad—personal experiences are the products of a writer’s local context, wherever that may be. That Ninik enjoys drawing from her local
context, whether in Indonesia, in the U.S., or both, points to the cross-cultural ambassador identity she constructs; she believes she can use English to spread her “local” knowledge, to the benefit of multiple audiences.

**Tim’s Portrait**

Similar to Ninik, Tim, a Christian pastor, also chose to study at ICRS for international networking. The English-using identity Tim constructed as he wrote, however, was very different than Ninik’s and the other students in the fact that it was “objective” and “distant” from his Indonesian context and experiences. I believe that multiple factors contributed to this distant-from-Indonesia ethos. In his writing and his interview, he suggests that his local identity as a counselor as well as his Indonesian culture made it difficult to add his own voice to ideas presented by published authors; these local communities, he explained, value less assertive communicative identities than Western academic writing. For Tim to draw on his own Indonesian context to add to a published academic essay, then, might have caused ideological friction because such a move would be an open assertion of self, when he was more accustomed to less assertive communicative ethos. Furthermore, I would argue the way he learned to communicate in English—solely by reading Western texts—contributed to this distancing of his Indonesian context—and thus his Indonesian identities—from his academic work. As we’ll see, the contact zone between these identities caused friction as Tim sought to assimilate to Western academic norms.

**“Empathetic” vs. “Proactive” Writing**

In his literacy narrative, Tim chose to juxtapose his local identity as a counselor and the identity suggested by Western academic writing to explain the friction he feels
with Western academic “voice.” He begins his narrative by writing, “Due to apparent monologist character of Western writing, our eagerness and ability to speak out our opinion should be prominent in developing our writing skill.” He points to the assertive and seemingly monological nature of “speaking out” in Western academic writing and explains that this univocal approach isn’t easy to adopt: “In fact, not all of us find ourselves easy to speak our thinking out loud. As a student of ICRS, I have to struggle with this difficulty. I tend to hold my thinking, instead of share it.” Indeed, Tim repeatedly pointed out that “not all” people use speaking out as the sole definition of “good communication”—that in some discourse communities, whether in his counseling community or in his broader Indonesian context, a less active voice is more desirable.

In his literacy narrative, Tim points to the tension between the active voice required of Western academic writing and the “listening approach” he was taught during his MA in counseling, and which he adopted for many years before returning to get his PhD in Religious Studies:

[When counseling], I should be more a listening person than a speaking one. In this process I have to listen to my client carefully and then give a brief response to make him/her speak more and more. This is in contrast to writing in which I have to finish my “monologue” in order to get some response from the readers. It is true that in some cases I do my writing as a response to something. But, I wouldn’t be a creative and productive writer if I always waited for a stimulus to respond.

Tim points to the differing roles possible in communicative situations; one can rely on others’ voices for impetus, taking a secondary role to these voices, or one can assert one’s voice and wait for a response. Indeed, in counseling Tim finds himself rarely asserting his voice over that of his counselees’:

In my counseling approach it is more important to dig and reflect my counselees’ ideas than give my own. Directive statements are rarely – or even in some cases,
never – used in such a process. Likewise, my suggestions are less important than his/ her ideas. This is contrast to academic writing in which I have to share my own opinion and give my directive suggestions. It is impossible to be a good writer in English if I just reflect or paraphrase other person’s opinion, isn’t it?

Tim’s question highlights the friction he feels when moving past paraphrase—while also hinting at his belief that working outside of English rules pertaining to “good writing” is difficult, if not “impossible.” He concludes by pointing out that “my old communicative identity as a counselor has contributed serious obstacles in developing my English writing skills.” That said, he refuses to entirely relinquish this local ethos in favor of an assertive English identity. He outlines two techniques he plans to use to “deal with” the friction he feels when writing in English:

First, when doing my writing I will try – as far as I can – to be conscious of my “new identity” as an ICRS student, thus I can consciously put my “old identity” as a counselor aside. By this consciousness I would be able to function myself properly as an academic writer. This consciousness will also motivate me to be more proactive in speaking out my opinions.

Tim implies, similar to Fan Shen, that in order to be a “proper” academic writer, two identities are necessary, signaling, in turn his assimilative attitude towards English norms. That said, he also feels that he need not completely relinquish his empathetic style. In fact, he sees his “old identity” as possibly enhancing his writing:

Second, I would also try to find certain strengths of my old identity as a counselor, so that they could even enrich my writing style. For example, I could use my empathetic mode of communication in counseling to give an empathetic character to my writing style.

He suggests that the empathy he learned from personal experience as a counselor can lend itself in valuable ways to his writing ethos, despite his wanting to assimilate to the more directive and “proactive” Western approach to writing.
Not surprisingly given his interest in psychology, Tim reported both in his Final Reflection and in his interview that his favorite essay to write was this literacy narrative because it was the “easiest” to write; indeed, he implies that grounding his English in his own experience helped him negotiate the friction involved with asserting his voice. In his Final Reflection he wrote that his literacy narrative was his most effective essay because “I have shown my boldness and honesty.” In fact, he achieved in this essay the “proactive ethos”—the boldness of voice and honesty—that Western academic writing encourages with very little difficulty. He continues: “This essay was the most easy to write among other essays I wrote for this semester. Why? It is because when writing this essay I could freely express my thinking and feelings and personal life.” In his interview, he expanded, explaining that he felt no friction writing this first essay “because it is about my own discourse community. Because this helped me to make a reflection on myself—especially the obstacles like speaking out that I have to face in writing, especially in academic writing.”

Despite his enjoyment in writing the personal—and the ways that the personal helped him achieve the “boldness” of voice he desired in his literacy narrative—he had difficulty linking published texts explicitly to his own context in other writing tasks. In fact, in his interview he pointed out that, for now, his academic writing was most concerned with reporting information, rather than adding his own voice: “Because maybe I am just concerned with the objective facts or objective literature, so I so far do not involve my personal experience or personal point of view yet.”
Distancing the Personal

We can see this concern with reporting “objective facts” in his response paper, where, despite being personally invested in the topic, he avoided applying the published author’s ideas to his own experiences. Unlike most other students, who, when given the choice, chose to respond to religious studies texts, Tim chose to write a response paper to Xiaoming Li’s essay, “Learning to Write a Thesis with an Argumentative Edge” an essay from Learning the Literacy Practices of Graduate School that I had recommended as outside reading because of its open discussion of differences in voice between Chinese and Western rhetorical traditions. As Tim summarizes in his response paper,

As a student with non-Western educational background, Li finds it isn’t easy to align with the [Western argumentative] way of writing. Li sees that language has great influence on tradition (in this case, writing style). Li shows us how the Chinese word zhishifenzhi which literally means “knowledge members” (p.48) has made them emphasize more on possessing knowledge than having critical discernment and active voice. In other words, you are regarded as a zhishifenzhi member because of your possession of knowledge, instead of your critical discernment… In Western academic, on the other hand, discourse and truth is always in progress and nobody could claim its finality. In such academic community argumentative dialogue is important to developing knowledge. In other words, to be member of Western academic community you have to develop your critical discernment.

One might assume, given the careful attention Tim paid in his literacy narrative to the pro-active and summative identities required by the different discourse communities he navigates, that he would connect Li’s essay, which approaches the topic of voice in similar ways, to his own writing experiences. However, although he makes his identification with the Asian cultural traditions Li outlines evident—writing, for instance “Li’s article ‘Learning to Write English with an Argumentative Edge’ is very instructive

\[15\] I chose to include Tim’s Unit 2 essay, in addition to his Unit 1 and his Final Literacy narrative because it directly relates to literacy and because he also discusses it in his interview in relation to Unit 1.
for students like me from Eastern cultural background, who are learning academic writing”—Tim shuns any personal reference to himself as a writer.

In fact, in his interview he admits that although he chose Li’s essay for personal reasons—that in his motivation to understand himself as a writer he thought Li’s essay would be helpful—he didn’t make this personal identification explicit in language:

[Li’s essay] is related to my own experience, my own struggle also. My voice didn’t happen in this essay, but at least my personality was involved in the essay, maybe subtly through my motivation, but when writing I used more general, not personal, language. But Li’s ideas…actually, they are my point of view.

Unlike Faqih, Nina and Ninik, who are proud of their ability to use their own Indonesian experiences to add to the conversation, Tim still feels tension when grounding published texts in his local context—in adopting the “bold” assertive voice he valued in his literacy narrative in his “academic” writing. He explained in his interview,

You know when I am assigned to make response in other subjects in seminars, most of them are just summary. Many times professors give me note: where is your critical point of view? Where is your critique? Even in my last papers, my final papers, they also give comments about this. “You have to have your critical point of view, to be more critical, more of you.” I think, I ask myself why. Because as far as I know I am a critical man, and I love my ideas, to share them with other people.

Tim is a “critical man”; he was quite willing, for instance, to share his ideas in class discussion, but his own ideas and his critical point of view, as his other professor suggests, often didn’t surface in his writing despite his desire for them to do so. Indeed, he wrote in his Final Reflection that, “In the next semester I want to improve the critical character of my writing, both in responding to others’ articles and in presenting my own opinions.” Why, then, couldn’t Tim draw from the same ethos he used in his literacy narrative to capture this voice in his other academic writing?
A More Distant English: a More Distant Writerly Voice

Perhaps Tim distances his English writing from the local because his motivations for studying at ICRS are less grounded in the local Indonesian context than Nina and Faqih’s. Similar to Ninik, Tim explained in his interview that he considered multiple areas of study, but the possibilities for learning and using English helped him decide upon ICRS:

Actually I picked two areas of choices, the first is in counseling area, and the second is more broader context. I chose ICRS because it gives me opportunity to go wider than my context now, so I want to bring myself into a broader area of people. I have to go in a program which is held in English language so I can also improve in the English community. Or the international community.

Although his decision to apply to a religious studies program was undoubtedly also tied to his current identity as a pastor, and thus to Indonesian religion, Tim emphasizes English as a gateway to the international rather than, as Faqih and Nina highlighted in their interviews, a way to engage in local conversations and social justice closer to home.

Furthermore, Tim learned to read and work with English not through local teaching experiences, like Nina; through local social action, like Faqih; or in a Western context where people undoubtedly were curious about Indonesian experience, like Ninik; he explained in his interview that he learned English by reading texts from the U.S. and Australia:

Before I took this program, I learned English just by reading, so I have to read many books from my pastor studies or my daily works. Many commentary is written in English, so I have to read these books from U.S. and Australia, and it indirectly increased my English skill. I cannot especially learn English, for example, by taking special course, like the TOEFL course in Indonesia; I did it just to apply to this program. This is the first time I take English class in Indonesia.
Tim’s experience with English is literally less grounded in Indonesia; unlike Nina, Ninik, and Faqih, who all took English courses in Indonesia, his first experience using English with non-Western English users—in this case, with other Indonesians—happened at ICRS. Perhaps, then, Tim’s more “distant” and less local perception of himself as an English user can be partially attributed to his newness to English in local communicative situations; this newness, in turn, may make Tim hesitate to bring the personal, or the locals he is accustomed to, to his English academic writing, despite his desire to assimilate to Western academic norms. Indeed, when I asked him in his interview whether he might someday highlight his Indonesian context more openly in his English academic writing, he replied: “I think I will need maybe 1 or 2 more semesters within this new community.”

**Conclusion**

From these portraits, we can see that multiple locals interact with the global represented by English, causing friction as students define their English-using identities in the local-global context at ICRS. Frictions occur as Faqih and Ninik grapple with English’s links to Western power and the ways they may be interpreted as agents of the West through their study of religion in English; frictions occur as Nina seeks to move from her dominant English identity back to her Indonesian writing identity, and similarly, as Tim seeks to move from his dominant Indonesian writing identities to the Western writing identities implied by English; and frictions vary in extent and variety depending on students’ language backgrounds and, with that, the relationship they see English playing to their “local” lives.
Despite these frictions, we can also see the possibilities English represents for these four Indonesian students: possibilities for international networking for Ninik and Tim; possibilities for engaging in local civic action for Nina and Faqih; and access to resources, whether religious studies research or donations to fund a local community library. It is because of these possibilities that these four Indonesian writers chose to negotiate with English in the first place. Indeed, this chapter has shown that Indonesian writers, as critical agents, have the ability to co-opt English and populate it from within with writerly identities appropriate to their needs and their understandings of what it means to write from a local-global positionality; even Tim, who seems to feel more friction than others as he tries to adopt the assertive English-using identity he sees appropriate to his purposes, suggests that this discomfort is only temporary. These four local-global writers, then, do not see themselves as over-determined by either their “local” writing identities, or those implied by English, suggesting that with this language of power also comes possibility.

Indeed, Chapter 2 and 3 of this dissertation have focused on English’s power and possibility from a local-global perspective and the ways that identity, either institutional or individual, is articulated at this juncture. Chapter 2, by placing Indonesia’s national and international identity—and with that its language histories—in conversation with ICRS’s local-global institutional identity, highlights points of friction between local and global, while also suggesting that language can be co-opted for local purposes despite being implicated in global power structures; this chapter, in turn, has focused on the ways that four Indonesian students perceive their own English writing identities in relation to multiple contexts in their lives, suggesting that local contexts are inevitably implicated in
the ways writers use English, no matter its imperialist origins. To return to one of the
metaphors that began this dissertation, English is indeed “worldly”—at the point of
contact between local identities and global forces exists the capacity for re-articulation of
power structures that can either silence or enable global communication in English. To
further understand what it means to write in English from this international, yet
Indonesian literacy site, the next section of this dissertation will place the voices and
ideas explored in Chapters 2 and 3 in conversation with other voices—whether cultural-
semiotic voices, or the embodied voices of instructors and peers—to highlight points of
friction more directly related to the writing process.
SECTION 2:

WHOSE ENGLISH? TOWARDS A DIACHRONIC UNDERSTANDING OF
AUDIENCE, FRICITION, AND LOCAL-GLOBAL NEGOTIATION
CHAPTER 4

TO WHOM DO WE HAVE STUDENTS WRITE? RE-ENVISIONING AUDIENCE FROM A DIACHRONIC PERSPECTIVE

As the last section explored, at a local-global literacy site like ICRS, defining an institutional and individual identity was a process of negotiation between local Indonesian identities and those implied by the English language; these next three chapters will in turn explore how, as students moved to translate their Indonesian identities into the English language through writing, these identities came into contact with the multiple audiences implied by ICRS as an Indonesian yet international academic program—a coming together of audiences that caused friction, I would argue, because of ICRS’s ambiguous identity. The friction involved with locating audience first came to my attention at an Academic Board meeting focused on curriculum development, where Dr. Atun asked a question that should central to any program wishing to adopt a local-global identity: “But to whom do we have students write?” Indeed, to whom were students to address their English words in this local-global literacy site? To Indonesian English users? To the West? To the Global North? To the Global South? Dr. Atun’s question, though seemingly simple, is surprisingly complex, as the next three chapters will explore; whereas the next two chapters will address Atun’s question as to how students and I imagined the potential audiences who might make up an “international” readership, this chapter proposes that we also need to engage with the ways past and present voices inform students’ understanding of their forward-looking audiences.

As I’ll discuss below, traditional contrastive rhetoricians were some of the first language scholars to focus on the ideological friction that occurred as multilingual writers’ past voices, or rhetorical traditions, met rhetorical traditions embraced by
historically English-speaking countries; although their work was important in highlighting that broad cultural discourses affect writing practices, their models ultimately imply—because of their simplistic and de-contextualized understanding of the relationship between culture and language—that when writing in English one is automatically writing to a Western audience. However, ICRS’s local-global positioning complicates this assumption, due in part to what has already been explored in Chapters 2 and 3—the tug and pull between English’s ties to the West and the possibility for more local and Indonesian re-imaginings of English. To address this more complicated view of the frictions involved with audience negotiation, this chapter will turn to Bakhtinian theory to establish a lens that more fully accounts for the fact that at the contact point between local and global, between power and possibility, there are multiple voices—Indonesian voices and English voices past, present, and future, voices both semiotic and material—that are audience to and thus shape ICRS as a writing context. Because of these multiple voices, the answer to Dr. Atun’s question—“To whom do we have students write?”—is, in fact, not self-evident. This chapter, then, will conceptualize, on both the semiotic and material level, points of friction pertaining to audience in order to help us more fully understand what it means to write internationally in English at ICRS.

**Audience as Cultural-Semiotic**

Though simplistic and much critiqued, traditional contrastive rhetoric models do acknowledge that different audiences have different textual expectations, and that when moving from one rhetorical tradition, and thus from one culturally-different audience to the next, friction can occur. Robert Kaplan’s 1966 “doodles,” for instance, focused on cross-culture genre differences to infer a rather static and essentialist notion of the
culturally-inscribed audience. He painted all “Oriental” texts as “indirect” and suggested that these texts were a reflection of the less-direct and collectivist Asian culture. Among other things, this means, as Kaplan and others in the field have found, that Asian writers’ theses and ideas tend to occur at the end of the text—as secondary to the authors they cite—rather than the beginning, and that writers are less visibly “in conversation” with (some might say critical of) the authors they cite. He suggested that “English” texts, on the other hand, are direct and author-centered because of the individualistic orientation of Western culture. In the Western tradition, writers’ theses occur at the beginning of the text, indicating their primacy over the published authors they cite, and writers tend to visibly respond to and critique cited authors more throughout their texts. Various other contrastive rhetoricians have painted a similar culture-equals-textual form equation: Hinds, for instance, argued that because of cultural indirectness, Asian textual forms are less explicit in form (showing fewer topic sentences and metadiscourse explaining essay logic, for example), thus making them “reader responsible” where the reader herself, rather than the writer, is responsible for tracing the logic of the text through her interpretative abilities. Western texts, on the other hand, are “writer responsible,” reflecting the individualist and direct nature of Western culture, where an individual writer must control his or her own meaning-making process visually in the text. Such conceptualizations, though simplistic, did open up important conversations in the field of multilingual writing about the correlation between cultural ideologies and writing style, suggesting, in turn, that difficulties multilingual writers have when moving between semiotic traditions are ideological, rather than merely linguistic in nature— that when writers move between languages, they may transfer their home language’s rhetorical
styles into the target language because of cultural ideologies and differing conceptualizations of audience. And that when expected to write in a “new way”—to try on a new writing style and audience—friction can occur.

Though I’ll complicate this “one-culture-equals-one audience” equation later, it is important to note that students at ICRS did feel friction as they moved between the differing semiotic audiences drawn forth in Indonesian and English academic writing—and they attributed these points of friction to cultural difference. Students were quite up-front, for instance, about feeling “rude” when positioning their Indonesian identities in relation to Western audience expectations. For instance, in his literacy narrative Tri uses the pronoun “you” to explain the friction he feels when moving between Javanese/Indonesian language conventions—which reflect a “hierarchical” cultural bent—and more egalitarian English language conventions. He writes:

The word ‘you’ in English is the same with the word ‘koe’ in Javanese and ‘kamu’ in Indonesian. So this word, in my feeling, is included in what is called in Javanese language as low language; and so, it is impolite to be used in conversation with older people. But the problem is, there are no other words, which are more polite to be used for older people, which have the same meaning with ‘you,’ in English. I just have ‘you’ to point out to my speaking counterpart regardless their social position or age. All these things finally, as far as I can conclude, come to the problem of doubt; I always doubt to speak about and to some people because I have to consider the thing of politeness and impoliteness before it, and as far as I know ‘doubt’ has become my biggest problem in mastering English.

Tri points to the way that language itself—in the very pronouns available for a language user to position him or herself in relation to other communicators—circumscribes his ability to use English “respectfully” according to Javanese and Indonesian language communities, which in turn causes self-doubt, affecting language acquisition. In English, we use the same pronouns, regardless, as Tri says, of “social position or age,” which
seems impolite when Tri translates in the most literal sense his understanding of appropriate Javanese/Indonesian audience interactions to the more linguistically egalitarian English audience.

Students also commented on the indirect nature of Indonesian discourse—and with that to indirect critique—as affecting the ways they wrote in English. Though, as mentioned in the previous chapter, Tim attributed his “indirectness” to his former identity as a counselor, he also believed his Indonesian culture had something to do with his tendency to paraphrase rather than respond directly. He explained in his interview that in Indonesian culture,

Passive voice is regarded as more polite, maybe also more artistic. For example, if I go to your home, and you serve a cup of coffee, but it is not as sweet as I hoped, I cannot tell you that directly. I have to look for another sentence which is indirect. For example, I will tell you, “Is sugar expensive in Yogya?” This is more polite and acceptable. Or “Is there no sugar factory here?”

Though people interpreting from a Western context may find Tim’s anecdote humorous, or perhaps “passive aggressive,” Tim was quite serious when describing this interaction as more polite than open critique of the host’s coffee’s sweetness. Tim then explained that this social indirectness—as well as the notion that indirectness is more artistic than explicitness— influences the way he writes to his Indonesian audience; thus, he feels tension when he writes in the more direct and active style suggested by the Western English audience.

Indeed, another student, Joko, described the differences between Indonesian and Western writing in this way, echoing Kaplan’s “Oriental” doodle almost verbatim:

Frankly speaking, as Indonesian people we have to pay attention to politeness of how to write. Not only just telling the truth, but also the way how to attract the reader. Not too straight away to the main idea. You need to be polite like having
kind of background and then actually the proposal is at the end. So it is very
different from Western writing which is direct right away.

Joko explains that to “attract the reader”—his Indonesian audience—he must adopt an
indirect and thus “polite” writing style, which he sees as very different from the style he
sees as appropriate to “Western writing.” We can see, then, that some students, as
Kaplan and others have suggested, do link culture to semiotic choices and that they do feel friction when moving from Indonesian audience expectations to “Western”
expectations.

**Audience as Shifting and Context-Specific**

That said, suggesting that there are only two audiences at play at ICRS—the
West, which is tied to English, and an Indonesian audience that is tied to Indonesian
languages—belie the complexity of audience at ICRS as a local-global literacy site.
First, as Connor suggests in her re-conceptualization of contrastive rhetoric as
intercultural rhetoric,\(^\text{16}\) writing choices are affected not only by cultural-semiotic
traditions, but also by local and more material contexts. Her argument that we must focus
on both the material and the semiotic aspects of language production, I believe, opens up
the possibility for more local and material audiences at ICRS—audiences that include
professors, peers, and the local Indonesian community. Second, linking one language to
one culture is problematic because it ignores the possibility that language can be unlinked
from its “original” culture and re-conceptualized for new audiences. Indeed, Suresh
Canagarajah, in his “Toward a Writing Pedagogy of Shuttling between languages,”
argues that,

\(^\text{16}\) See Chapter 1 for a more thorough discussion of “intercultural rhetoric”.

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Using English doesn’t mean using a single way of writing. The same language may be used to construct different texts if the language is used for different contexts and communities. This should show us the limitations of thinking of a specific language as endowed with a specific culture or a specific mode of writing. Equating one language with one discourse (the usual practice of contrastive rhetoric) is terribly limited. (601)

To explain the limitations of assuming a direct link between language and culture, Canagarajah analyzes the introductions of three different published texts by a senior Sri Lankan scholar, Professor Sivatamby. Sivatamby wrote one text to a local Sri Lankan audience in the local Tamil language; he wrote one text to a local Sri Lankan audience in English; and he wrote one text to an international audience in English. Canagarajah finds more similarities between the texts written to the local Tamil audience—regardless of whether they were written in English or Tamil—than between the two texts written in the same language—English—to differing audiences. This indicates to Canagarajah that multilingual writers can de-link language from its “original” culture to address differing audiences. In Canagarajah’s words, “This comparison should show us that language doesn’t determine the greatest difference in the texts of multilingual authors, but rather context or audience”(601). This audience analysis is quite useful in highlighting that not all English-users spring from Western cultures and that English can be re-conceptualized for local purposes, two points necessary in re-conceptualizing local-global English use.

That said, Canagarajah, probably due to Sivatamby’s positionality as a well-published academic, focuses primarily on two discrete audiences—an international audience and a Tamil audience—at the stage of post-textual production. Though he explicitly argues that we must focus on material context to understand multilingual writing, his analysis, because it focuses only on final textual products, ignores the multiple contexts that Connors suggests interact during the process of textual
production—contexts that I would argue play an important part as multilingual writers navigate between languages and, I would add, audiences; furthermore, ICRS’s positionality as a local-global, Indonesian yet international literacy site complicates the notion that audience can be conceptualized as a discrete concept. Indonesian audiences, both material and semiotic, brush up against non-Indonesian audiences, both material and semiotic, within the same writing context. It is this interaction that led to Atun’s question: “But to whom do we have students write?”

**Audience as Diachronic**

To understand this difficulty in pinning down an audience at ICRS and to bridge the productive aspects of Connor’s and Canagarajah’s models with those suggested by traditional contrastive rhetoric—to account for the semiotic, material, and fluid nature of local-global language use and the ways audience complicates this language use—I believe we can turn to Mikhail Bakhtin’s “diachronic audience,” and with that to Kay Halasek’s extension of his model to the composition classroom. A diachronic model of audience, we will see, takes into consideration the conflicting semiotic audiences contrastive rhetoricians have located, while also acknowledging the material realities and future flux involved with writing local-globally in English.

Despite Bakhtin’s background as a literary theorist, authors such as Stewart (1983) have argued that he should be considered more a theorist of ideology than a literary theorist because of his focus on conflict, language and ideology (266). We can see Bakhtin’s ideological focus quite explicitly in the *Dialogic Imagination*, where he argues that,

> At any given moment of its historical existence, language is heteroglot from top to bottom: it represents the co-existence of socio-ideological contradictions
between the present and the past, between different socio-ideological groups in
the present, between tendencies, schools, circles, and so forth, all given a bodily
form. (291)

Language represents multiple voices and thus differing “socio-ideological traditions” that
a language user must navigate as she works from the historical present to make future
meaning. We can see here a wedding of contrastive rhetoric’s more semiotic analyses of
heteroglossic contradiction with Connor’s and Canagarajah’s more context-specific
understandings of language use. Language exists on both the semiotic plane and in the
“bodily forms” that use it in specific material contexts to articulate “present” meanings.

This understanding of language use as comprising both semiotic and embodied
friction plays an important part in Bakhtin’s conceptualization of diachronic audience. In
the “The Problem of Speech Genres,” he argues that because of the heteroglossic and
thus “intertextual” nature of language, past voices as well as present and future voices are
simultaneously present in—and thus are audience to—any textual production: “any
concrete utterance is a link in the chain of speech communication of a particular sphere”
and, as such, “each utterance is filled with echoes and reverberations of other utterances
to which it is related by the communality of the sphere of speech communication”(91).
Not only are past voices—what I term the “backward-looking audience”—part of and
thus audience to every utterance a writer creates (there’s no such thing as “original”
language) but as the writer produces text, she also predicts her future addressee’s—what I
term the “forward looking audience’s”—“apperceptive background” or his “prejudices”
and “specialized knowledge” (96). Bakhtin argues, then, that audience both precedes and
proceeds from a writer as she writes from her historical present. Given, as Bakhtin
suggests, that language always “exists in other people’s mouths, in other people’s
contexts, serving other people’s intentions, ” for a writer to wrest language from past audiences in order to negotiate present and future audiences involves negotiating power and ideology (Dialogic 293-4).

Because of this focus on the ideological ramifications of language in our intertextual, heteroglossic world, we can see Bakhtin’s applicability to theorists interested in multilingual writing. Indeed, various scholars (Hall et. al 2005) have explicitly brought Bakhtin’s theory of heteroglossia into second-language circles to examine the tensions multilingual writers feel when navigating across cultural traditions in English; however, few have focused in much depth on the potential for Bakhtinian theory to enhance our theoretical understanding of the audiences involved in multilingual composing processes.

To frame such an examination, we can turn to compositionist and critical pedagogy Kay Halasek’s A Pedagogy of Possibility, a book which—though written to an audience of compositionists in the U.S.—sheds valuable light on the potential for Bakhtinian theory to enhance studies of multilingual language production. Halasek critiques common perceptions of audience in composition circles, perceptions that may have influenced Canagarajah’s analysis of Sivatamby’s texts:

To speak of audience only as those individuals to whom a spoken or written utterance is directed—as do most writers in literary or composition studies—severely limits, and in fact distorts, a rich and influential number of people and texts to which an utterance responds and from which it expects response. (65)

She argues that we must move away from a synchronic notion of audience to one that takes into consideration the diachronic audience suggested by intertextuality:

Any utterance is not only influenced in form and content by previous utterances, but also directed to them in its statement. Intertextuality, in its forward and backward glance, demands that we reconstruct our understanding of audience as more than synchronic. Audience expands across time, becomes diachronic,
determined and contextualized by sociocultural situations and the inherent intertextuality of the utterance. (65)

By expanding notions of audience to take into consideration the diachronic relationships between audiences past, present and future audiences and their effects on textual production, she argues, we might better “lay bare the play of power” for writers—and in particular for student writers—as they negotiate in, between, and through heteroglossic rhetorical traditions (74). Understanding the “play of power” involved with audience negotiation involves, for Halasek, more than an analysis of the final products writers produce; it involves explicit examinations of the audiences with whom students negotiate in the process of textual production—and these audiences are both semiotic and context-specific.

We can see this more nuanced approach to audience in the six-part heuristic she suggests for helping students locate and examine diachronic audience and power in the classroom. Students, she argues, navigate the following six audiences as they produce texts:

- the *textual audience* which encompasses past texts that prescribe genre and rhetorical specifications, limiting and shaping what an author can write;
- the *previous audience*, or the past scholarship of those who have already taken part in the conversation, with whose voices the writer must contend;
- the *evaluative audience* or the person in power who defines “quality” work;
- the *immediate audience* or a “group of living readers” in a literacy context who give feedback;
- the *public audience* or a contemporary and real audience to whom an author can write to enact social change;

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17 It’s important to note her warning that compartmentalizing audience into discrete entities belies the interconnectedness of voices and audiences.
• the projected audience, or the imagined audience which enables a writer to shape her initial text and argument (this is the one we most commonly think of as “audience”)(77-78).

The first two audiences, previous and textual, reference Bakhtin’s backward-looking audience and have been the focus of most contrastive rhetoric research because they pertain to textual form and writers’ relationships to established authors; as mentioned previously, one of the major tenets of contrastive rhetoric has been that writers interact with cited authors differently, a lens which led to the notion that some rhetorical traditions are “indirect” and some “direct”—that people from “indirect” cultures are less likely to question published authority in their texts than those springing from “direct” cultures. Halasek’s immediate and evaluative audiences represent the present audience, or those people within a specific writing context that affect writers textual choices; these audiences align with Connor’s and Canagarajah’s argument that we must look at material circumstances in addition to cultural-semiotic influences to understand multilingual writers’ textual choices. The final two audiences in Halasek’s model, the projected and public audiences, represent what I term the forward-looking audience, or the audience that writers ultimately imagine—after grappling with the expectations and words of their backward-looking and present audiences—in order to produce texts that intervene in the world. Although Halasek suggests that her heuristic might be useful for first year composition students (presumably in the U.S.) as they write, because of her focus on semiotic and material, on process and final product, this chapter will use her understanding of Bakhtin’s diachronic audience to shed light on the frictions involved with locating an audience at ICRS as a local-global literacy context. Given, as Halasek suggests, that most scholars, similar to Canagarajah, jump directly to the forward-looking
audience without taking heed of the processes and negotiations that happen prior to this final conceptualization, this chapter will focus primarily on the backward-looking and present audiences at ICRS; this examination will highlight the complicated rhetorical situation at ICRS as the multiple semiotic possibilities suggested by ICRS’s local-global positioning meet material circumstances, while also setting the stage for my pedagogical answer to Atun’s question in Chapter 5 and Chapter 6’s focus on the ways that students themselves answer Dr. Atun’s question.

**Complicating Previous Audience Frictions**

As discussed above, students at ICRS located friction when moving between Western and Indonesian backward-looking audiences, substantiating contrastive rhetoric’s claims that culture does affect textual form—which Halasek dubs *textual audience*—and with that, writers’ relationships to the previously published authors they cite—what Halasek dubs the *previous audience*. As Bakhtin suggests, language, because of its intertextual nature, always comes from the “mouth of others” and thus past writers are always “co-author” and thus audience to any textual production (76). The ways writers negotiate textually with these co-authors varies, my research at ICRS shows, because of the rhetorical traditions students mentioned above, and, it is important to note, material circumstances.

To encourage students to discuss ways U.S. academic writing views the writer’s relationship with already-published authors—Halasek’s *previous audience*—I introduced them to Kenneth Burke’s metaphor for academic conversations as outlined in his *Philosophy of Literary Form*:

> Imagine that you enter a parlor. You come late. When you arrive, others have long preceded you, and they are engaged in a heated discussion, a discussion too
heated for them to pause and tell you exactly what it is about. In fact, the
discussion had already begun long before any of them got there, so that no one
present is qualified to retrace for you all the steps that had gone before. You listen
for a while, until you decide that you have caught the tenor of the argument; then
you put in your oar. Someone answers; you answer him; another comes to your
defense; another aligns himself against you, to either the embarrassment or
gratification of your opponent, depending upon the quality of your ally's
assistance. However, the discussion is interminable. The hour grows late, you
must depart. And you do depart, with the discussion still vigorously in progress.

This excerpt sparked a vibrant discussion that highlighted both the differences between
Indonesian and U.S. literacy practices that Tri, Tim, and Joko mention above and issues
of material access not directly related to cultural-semiotic traditions.

Students explained that because of the hierarchical and collectivist nature of
Indonesian culture, to visibly challenge a published author, whether Indonesian or
Western, in their writing felt quite rude—that in fact Burke’s metaphor seemed quite
violent and argumentative. One student¹⁸ explained that at his school they were taught to
understand the conversation to show respect for published authors, rather than to
understand so they could eventually take part in the conversation. That said, another
student also explained that just because Indonesians were less comfortable critiquing
previous audiences visibly in their texts, this didn’t mean that they weren’t critical in
other ways. Indeed, I witnessed such critical negotiation throughout the year—in class
discussions as well as during individual writing consultations, where, if I pointed to a
section of English text that seemed pure summary and asked what a student thought about
that section, he or she would go into depth about his or her opinion—an opinion
seemingly absent in his or her written text.

¹⁸ Because my informed consent for teacher research emphasized anonymity unless naming is absolutely
necessary, students’ names will be withheld when narrating classroom discussions.
One could assume, as Kaplan and others have, that the friction students felt when adding their own voices to their *previous audience’s* conversation is entirely cultural. However, students also pointed to their positionality as first-year graduate students, new to the ICRS discourse community, as a contributing factor. One student asked, for instance, how she could be expected to add to the conversation when she wasn’t even sure who was in the parlor and what was being said yet—that she needed a year or so to figure this out by doing as much reading in Religious Studies as she could—before she would feel comfortable putting her “oar” in. Students’ identities as multilingual writers—many were writing academically in English for the first time—also affected their visible negotiation with *previous audience*. Students reported that they were less sure of their understanding of texts written in English, meaning that summary as a process to understand was an important and much more time-consuming activity than it would be in Bahasa Indonesia, giving them literally less time to add their own voices to the conversation before their writing deadlines.

Furthermore, several students felt that, because of their limited material access to recent conversations in English, any contribution they could make would already by “old news” by the time they got to it; one student explained that he felt “helpless” to add to the international research conversation because the ICRS library was so limited. Indeed, perhaps one of the most startling reminders of my privilege as a graduate student from the U.S. happened when I walked into the ICRS library and saw that the majority of their books in English were photocopies of the originals. Students explained to me that the library often relied on Western scholars to bring their books to Indonesia, and that photocopies of these books worked to replenish the ICRS library. Given the program’s
growing collection of English texts, this tactic seems to work, though relying on others’ interests and collections limited the types of conversations students could even enter. I remember one student coming to me in tears because she could not find any texts written about religion and animal rights at the ICRS library, even though, when she searched Google, there were quite a few out there. She just couldn’t access them because the cost, not to mention the shipping, was equivalent to one month’s paycheck. As Canagarajah suggests in his *Geopolitics of Academic Writing*, if you don’t know what has been said, it is difficult to intervene in international academic conversations where current research is a pre-requisite for even entering the parlor.

In fact, one of my students, Roma, pointed to the friction caused by unequal access to *previous audiences* quite explicitly in his interview:

When Indonesians deal with literature review, previously we freely quoted without any opinion on what we think about the reference, but in Western writing, we should establish their position to our own ideas, relating references with our writing. It is a cultural issue because sometimes the reference’s idea is considered as final, but it is also because of limitations of references themselves. Because in Indonesia many reference are 20 years old… Sometimes when Indonesians have new reference, they tend not to show it to colleagues, but for me myself, I take books from 2005 to 2009 to photocopy center to share… But some reject that idea. Because resources are power. And in higher education, if they hold the power for such a long time, it will give them power. So we can’t add to a real academic conversation.

Although Indonesian culture may lead some writers to see published author’s ideas as “final”—making the writer’s own commentary unnecessary—it’s not just about culture when writing literature reviews. It is a lack of access to resources and thus power that limits full conversation in the international “parlor.” New books become a commodity to withhold, rather than to share with colleagues, pointing to the ways knowledge is implicated in an international power system riddled with inequality.
Such inequality is furthered by the fact that some students—probably working under the impression of deficit Dr. Bernard points to when referencing Indonesian scholarship in Chapter 2—explained in class that they believed that using Indonesian sources as *previous audience* would be frowned upon by the international English-using community. Rather than relying on Indonesian academic conversations they were already a part of, these students felt they must start from scratch, in English, in order to be active members of the Religious Studies research community. This feeling by some that local research is inadequate in “international” conversations points to the link between English and the West—and to the very real power the West has in defining the shape and scope, the who and the what, of international academic conversations in English—hearkening to the imperialist tendencies of the English language discussed in Chapter 2. As we saw in Chapter 3, however, this view that “international” research is somehow distanced from Indonesian identities was also challenged at ICRS, suggesting, in turn, that the “international” might be re-conceptualized as both local and global, opening space for more Indonesian voices in the parlor.

For now, we can see that it’s not just culture—or students’ Indonesian textual audience—that affects students’ textual relationship to previous audiences; students may be hesitant to openly critique published authors because of broad “cultural” issues, but the material circumstances of working in a developing country and perceptions of the “international conversation” as West-centered also interact with cultural-semiotic traditions to produce friction.
Complicating the Notion of a Discrete Monocultural Evaluative Audience

This friction is even further complicated by the real and embodied local-global audiences at ICRS—audiences that, because of their ambiguous identities and beliefs about the English language, confirm the notion that not all writing choices pertain to cultural-semiotic influences. Indeed, the ways that these embodied audiences at ICRS imagined the “international” English-using research conversation undoubtedly mediated students’ imaginings of “good writing” and thus their textual choices in relation to audience, suggesting that the local is implicated in—and thus could have an effect upon—the construction of global English use. The present audience—which in Halasek’s model includes the evaluative audience and immediate peer audience—both produced and alleviated friction as students wrote the local-global.

Perhaps the most powerful present audience for students is the evaluative audience, or the instructor, who, as the “audience behind the audience” had the power to define good writing for students (Halasek 80). Halasek draws from Volosinov’s theorization of the therapist/client relationship, repopulating his sentences with the words teacher/student in place of therapist/client. The utterances of the student are, she writes,

Scenarios of the immediate, small social event in which they were engendered—the writing classroom. Therein that complex struggle between teacher and student…finds expression. What is reflected in these utterances is not the dynamics of the individual psyche but the social dynamics between’ teacher and student (80).

Utterances do not spring fully-formed from the “individual psyche”—or for that matter, from students’ “culture”—they are shaped by local contexts and the power relationships occurring therein. At ICRS, these local power relationships were complicated by the program’s local-global emphasis and the shifting identities of instructors themselves as
they taught in English—and friction occurred as students sought to interpret their instructors’ local-global identities, and thus their evaluative audience’s expectations of “good writing.”

My own positionality as English instructor hailing from the U.S. probably seemed much less ambiguous to students than that of their Indonesian English-using professors. As mentioned in Chapter 1, as a “native speaker” of English and “language expert” from the U.S. government, I undoubtedly compounded the already complex social dynamics between teacher and student at ICRS. In many ways, I could be seen as representing the West, and thus as a proponent of Western textual audiences, of Western definitions of good writing. That said, as a critical pedagogist, I purposefully complicated this positionality with the critical contrastive pedagogy I introduced. Though I’ll go into more detail about this pedagogy in Chapter 5, I both taught students the Western norms I would be expected to represent and encouraged them to question the ideologies behind these norms so that they could make conscious choices, as local-global language users, as to the final form their texts would take, depending on the audience to whom they wished to write. This critical contrastive pedagogy—with its emphasis on explicit conversations about textual conventions and frictions that occurred as they wrote between rhetorical traditions as Indonesian English-users—undoubtedly affected students’ writing processes and their perception of me as evaluative audience. In many ways, I hoped to alleviate tension by being explicit and allowing students to negotiate audiences for their own purposes, though it would be naive to suggest such pedagogy could entirely alleviate my positionality as Western “native speaker.” Indeed, throughout my time at ICRS I grappled with the disjuncture between my self-chosen critical pedagogist identity and
others’ perceptions of me as Western language expert, perceptions that, because of their links to the broader and more powerful sociohistorical trajectory of the English language explored in Chapter 2, probably encouraged students in the end to view me as an evaluative audience representing the West.

Furthermore, my course was also linked to other Indonesian professors’ Religious Studies courses, complicating the power dynamics I hoped to alleviate with my critical contrastive pedagogy. Because of students’ limited time—and the fact that I wanted students to bring together the Religious Studies content they were learning and the writing techniques I forwarded in my class—I dovetailed my own course with other professors’ courses, allowing students to draft and write some assignments given in other classes in my own. Thus, students had both myself as well as their “local” Indonesian professors as *evaluative audiences* for many of the texts they wrote. Given the differing rhetorical traditions and writerly identities detailed above, having both myself as “native speaker” from the West as well as an Indonesian evaluative audience for the same text might create for students an even more “complex struggle” than that described by the teacher-student scenario Halasek outlines.

### An Indonesian Evaluative Audience with Vaguely Defined Western Writing Expectations

Did Indonesian professors’ expectations for English writing differ from dominant Western expectations because of their Indonesian cultural backgrounds? For the most part, no: probably because most of the Indonesian professors at ICRS were taught to write in English in Western contexts like the United States, Canada, and Australia. At the same academic board meeting where Dr. Atun asked her important question, another faculty member explained students’ writing in this way:
The biggest problem is the tendency to become "invisible". The paper is full of references to the experts, but it is like a rudderless boat. The students need to be encouraged to have a firm control on what they are writing. They have to be "visible", and if it is a personal paper, then the personality of the writer has to be recognizable in the writing.

This faculty member references the ways students position themselves (or don’t) in relation to previous audiences, as well as the belief that when writing in English, one must have visibly firm control of one’s “boat” to be a good writer. These beliefs are in alignment with Western textual norms that value directness and a visibly present writerly voice.

Despite wanting me to help students assimilate to Western norms, faculty were also quite aware of the friction students felt when writing in English; indeed, many drew from their own experiences as multilingual writers to shed light on these tensions. Dr. Fatima explained, for instance,

For my last application for this Australian leadership program which I am leaving for, I just took my time to present myself. I consider myself a direct person, but in terms of using written language I am different. So I had my original personal statement. “Since I graduated from my PhD program in 2004, I was involved at UIN as the dadadadadada” and gave my whole life story. So I give it to my potential supervisor to have a look before I submit it. And he changed the first sentence like this: “An Endeavor Award will provide me with the kind of opportunities that a person in my position…” and it was me, me, me…but he used most of what I said later. His suggestion was be more direct. But it’s hard for Indonesians.

Fatima’s reflects on her initial tendency, as an Indonesian, to focus on general context and background information first in her writing, before moving on to her actual purpose in writing the text—in this case, to win a fellowship; her supervisor looked at her initial draft and suggested she start with her purpose in writing—the fellowship—and then move on to background information. She explained that sees students facing the same challenge with directness as they write in English:
So in terms of the biggest challenge for students, I think, again, this is also very cultural, is that you wait until the very, very end to actually express your ideas. So rather than you know, like showing an argument and then trying to either refute the argument, you wait, you think that if you show to the reader that you write with a lot of good sources, then it shows that you know a lot and only in that way then is it considered good academic writing.

We can see echoes of Joko’s descriptions of the Indonesian rhetorical tradition in Fatima’s assertion that good sources are seen as more important than a writer’s own argument. Such critical awareness of cross-cultural differences in “good writing” on faculty’s part could be a valuable resource for students as they negotiate their local-global identities in English.

However, despite the fact that Indonesian faculty members were quite willing to discuss these rhetorical differences with me, they admitted that they often didn’t discuss them in class with their students. When I asked Dr. Fatima whether she discussed with her students these cross-cultural differences in “good writing” she explained that:

Sometimes we are so immersed with the topic we are discussing, sometimes we didn’t really pay much attention on how the students should express their opinions in writing. So that’s something I think that we still need to work on, because we explain to students, OK, you know, probably I can show it to you, kind of like when I give them the syllabus, at the end I should also give them how to write a paper.

In fact, students repeatedly echoed Fatima’s call for more explicit discussion of writing expectations from their professors. They asked me several times if my essay prompts applied to their other courses and whether I could encourage other professors to write their expectations in a prompt. Roma was quite specific about his frustration with different definitions of good “writing”:

There are different perspectives among ICRS lecturers—between Indonesian and foreign ones on how to write response or critical writing on the given reading material. Some suggest not to paraphrase or quote directly from the readings, but some argue that writing critical response is just a summary mode of writing. That
case inspires me to suggest a standard ICRS guideline for writing in English. This includes formatting, the mechanics, and the other writing guidelines. The ICRS handbook has given students an overview, but it should improve in terms of models and writing samples.

Roma’s desire for explicit guidelines could be an indication of tensions students felt when writing to Indonesian professors in English—in a local-global context like ICRS, students may have felt unsure whether their texts were to be evaluated from an Indonesian or a Western perspective by their Indonesian professors, causing them to feel friction as they positioned themselves in relation to their evaluative audience in English. Such friction was amplified by the lack of explicitness about writing expectations on the faculty’s part—an ambiguity that may be symptomatic of the flux involved with ICRS’s identity as a local-global institution that wants to be by, for, and about Indonesia, but also international at the same time.

**An Immediate Indonesian Peer Audience with a Local-Global Writing Lens**

That said, instructors weren’t the only audience for students’ texts and ideas at ICRS; students’ Indonesian peers, as a “group of living readers,” acted as an “immediate audience” in my process-oriented classroom (Halasek 77). This peer audience, I would argue, played an important part in grounding the ambiguity suggested by ICRS’s local-global positioning. As an Indonesian audience that was also privy to the Western academic writing expectations and the critical contrastive pedagogy I introduced in my classroom, they acted as valuable intermediaries, in class discussions as well as in peer response sessions, as fellow students negotiated often conflicting notions of “good writing.”

My discussion-based, process oriented classroom valued the immediate audience’s role in textual production, allowing space for shared knowledge as well as
negotiation past difference. Halasek argues that the immediate audience is important because, through discussions about previous audiences (published texts), it literally embodies what a textual conversation might look like, while also making evident the notion that people differ due to the discourses, past and present, that shape them (77). Bouncing ideas, opinions and interpretations off of an immediate audience in the classroom encourages students to more fully understand and generate their own ideas in relation to others—a process that eventually helps them negotiate with published authors in their own texts. Though, as mentioned above, students at ICRS sometimes had difficulty interacting visibly with other authors in their written texts, I found students quite willing to mimic Burke’s parlor orally as they negotiated texts in my process-oriented classroom. This active engagement contradicted information provided by the U.S. embassy at a cross-cultural training session, where I was warned that because of the teacher-centered Indonesian culture, students would be passive and reluctant to speak their opinions in peer-focused discussions. This notion that all Indonesian students are passive because of Indonesian classroom culture echoes in many respects problematic claims by traditional contrastive rhetoricians that all Indonesians writers are subject to their “indirect” culture as they write.19

My research notes tell a different story: I saw students’ willingness to discuss even in the first week of school. The following are my Week 1 teacher notes on a heated discussion about Fan Shen’s article, “The Classroom and the Wider Culture”—an essay,

19 In response to the disparity between the U.S. embassy’s picture of Indonesian students as “passive” and my own experiences at ICRS, I believe students’ openness to discussion could be attributed to the small seminar-like nature of all classes at ICRS as well as to students’ positionalities as older and well-respected leaders of their religious and civic communities. As Connor suggests, then, professional academic context as well as students’ own positionalities need to be taken into consideration before making broad cultural assumptions about educational systems and the students working within them.
as discussed in Chapter 3, that points to the differing ideological positionalities required in Chinese and English writing, which students, we can see, saw as correlating to their own Indonesian English-using identities:

One woman spoke up to explain that she and her partner talked about power and the English language and how it eradicated other ways of thinking, essentially outlining Phillipson's linguistic imperialism. They must learn English and its ways of being, she explained, because they wanted to do well in school. She also argued that English should best be viewed through postcolonial studies. I asked if assimilation was the only option and students had mixed reactions—one student argued that they should just be aware of audience, and that he could keep two identities, like Shen, and switch in between them. Other students said it was complicated because sometimes the languages mixed with each other—English bled into Indonesian writing practices and vice versa, showing they had mixed identities. Another student then brought up that linguistic standardization and Standard English rules were often enforced by instructors unaware of the cultural ramifications of language.

In addition to highlighting an already-present critical awareness of English’s roles in systems of power, this snippet of conversation also shows the ways this immediate audience—and the class discussions that ensued—helped students articulate for themselves what it meant to be Indonesian English users—articulations that foreshadow the identities students located in Chapter 3’s literacy narratives. Not only did these discussions highlight that students had very clear and direct opinions in relation their previous audience—to Fan Shen in this case—but they also lent themselves to peer response sessions where students adopted the position of a critically-aware Indonesian English-using audience for each other. Class evaluations showed that these peer interactions—in discussion and peer response—were valued by students, suggesting the importance of peers in grounding local-global language use and semiotic tension. Indeed, explicitly discussing differing definitions of good writing—and with that cross-cultural and material frictions students feel as they write internationally in English seems
particularly important because of the many audiences students must navigate to produce texts.

**Conclusion**

Although I’ve only partially answered Dr. Atun’s question, I hope that this chapter has highlighted the importance of acknowledging both past and present voices as powerful intermediaries in the writing process of multilingual students. As my Bakhtinian analysis has shown, not only did students have to negotiate with past authors, both Indonesian and English, and their differing semiotic traditions, but they also had to negotiate, from their developing country context, with present audiences embodying complicated local-global identities: with Indonesian professors trained in the West, with Western instructors who seemed accommodating to textual variance, and with their Indonesian peers as intermediaries in the writing process. These varied local-global identities work to complicate traditional notions of audience that assume a direct link between culture and rhetorical expectations, opening up space, perhaps, for a more fluid understanding of global English-using rhetorical situations. Indeed, this chapter paints a picture of a rhetorical situation where there are a multitude of past and present audiences—both Indonesian and Western, textual and real—with whom students negotiate, which might also suggest that students have a multitude of forward-looking audiences to which they may be able to address their English words. And Canagarajah would suggest that with this multitude of audiences might come a multitude of rhetorical styles in students’ English texts. Such is the possibility ICRS’s local-global positionality suggests for an understanding of English as more than a Western language.

Complicating this possibility, however, is the imperialist past discussed in Chapter 2, which has given the West the power to dictate definitions of “good writing.”
Because of the powerful ties English has to the West, Western rhetorical structures have become the default when writing in English, regardless of the audience to whom writers may wish to address their words. This ownership of English has in the past empowered the West while silencing voices unwilling to write to the “standard.” Given this imperialist past, ICRS was still in the process of figuring out how to use English to bring Indonesian voices into an English academic conversation that has long silenced those working from the periphery.

Indeed, given ICRS’s complicated Indonesian yet international identity—and the tug and pull between this imperial past and the possibilities Canagarajah sees for English as a non-Western language—it’s not surprising that Dr. Atun asked me, “But to whom do we have students write?” As the next chapter will explore, it was also difficult for me, as a writing instructor from the U.S., to imagine what students’ forward-looking English audiences might or should look like in this local-global site given the many audiences to whom they could write. I’ll now turn, then, to the audience-focused critical contrastive pedagogy I developed in response to this friction, which I hoped would help students engage with the power of past and present audiences while opening up the possibility that they might de-link their English words from the West to target the diverse forward-looking audiences their program wishes to reach.
CHAPTER 5

TOWARDS AN AUDIENCE FOCUSED CRITICAL CONTRASTIVE PEDAGOGY: A WRITING TEACHER’S NEGOTIATIONS WITH LOCAL-GLOBAL AUDIENCES

The last chapter explored how ICRS’s complex local-global identity led to Dr. Atun’s question—“But to whom do we have students write?” Kay Halasek’s Bakhtinian heuristic highlighted multiple backward-looking and present audiences with whom students negotiated as they wrote internationally in English; as we saw, past Indonesian and English voices and textual forms as well as present and embodied Indonesian and English voices all vied for position at this local-global site. This chapter, in turn, will reflect upon how I as an instructor worked to help students think critically about their forward-looking audiences in light of the past and present audiences discussed in Chapter 4. As we’ll see, the audience-focused critical-contrastive pedagogy I developed took into consideration both the local and the global, both the power and possibility that English represents so that students themselves might take agency and use English for their own local-global purposes. My goal with this critical pedagogy was to leave the answer to Dr. Atun’s question in students’ own hands, assuming that students, as agents, could make conscious rhetorical choices in relation to audience. This chapter, then, will explain my own pedagogical approach to audience in this local-global site, while also exploring students’ understandings of language, culture, and the rhetorical choices they saw for themselves as writers in the generative stages of the writing process. By focusing on my audience-focused critical contrastive pedagogy and students’ generative work in this chapter, I hope to give context for Chapter 6’s text-based analysis of the many
audiences—backward-looking, present, and forward-looking—that students invoked in their writing portfolios in order to write from their local-global literacy context.

**Projecting the Local to Begin Composing**

The academic board meeting that spurred Dr. Atun’s question occurred at the beginning of my first semester teaching at ICRS; students had already completed the literacy narrative described in Chapter 3 and were in the process of writing a response paper when she asked, “But to whom do we have students write?” Her question, as well as students’ own voices, encouraged me to reflect upon and revise the ways I envisioned audience in the critical contrastive pedagogy I developed for ICRS.

To begin formulating an answer to Dr. Atun’s question, the first thing I did was to turn to my students to get a better understanding of the projected audiences—or those audiences, in Halasek’s words, that “initiate…the composing process” helping to “test the efficacy of particular lines of argument or methods of organization”(75)—that they envisioned as they wrote their response papers. In a mid-process reflective writing activity, I asked them: “Who do you imagine as your English-using audience as you write your response paper? What country or countries does this audience come from?” These questions brought forth answers that pointed to the local’s importance in sparking students’ composing process: in fact, four out of the five students who took part in the reflective writing activity reported that they imagined a primarily Indonesian audience for their response papers, with only one imagining a Western audience because, he explained, “English is a Western language.”

Two of the four students who imagined an Indonesian audience for their texts pointed to peers, or their immediate audience, as their primary projected audience. This
mapping of a present audience onto a forward-looking audience highlights the interconnected nature of audience, and the limitations of creating discrete categories when conceptualizing diachronic audience. Backward-looking and present audiences, as co-constructors of any text, exist simultaneously as writers compose to the future, and, for the following two students, their peers seemed most important in helping them initiate the composing process. One student, for instance, wrote:

In my response paper, I would like to address it to university students at any level. They can be from undergraduate and graduate schools. Since I am from Indonesia, my audience is from Indonesia, too. However, I do think that university students from other country can also read my paper.

We can see that her projected audience is both immediate—her Indonesian peers—and more global, though this global audience, as a peer audience, is equal in status to herself. Another student wrote, “I suppose my imagined readers are Indonesian graduate students. Most of them have introvert personality. They have never studied abroad, so that they are more accepting than critical.” This student imagines an “introverted” Indonesian audience who has never studied abroad because be believes this audience would be “accepting” of his English words. In turn, he implies that Indonesians who have studied abroad might read his work more “critically” than those who have not, pointing to power relationships between local English-users and those that have used English in global academic conversations dominated by the West. For these students, I believe, imagining their immediate peer audience as their projected audience probably mediated, in some respects, the frictions they felt as they negotiated a new writing task that involved not just using English, but also critiquing published authors in ways they were unaccustomed in their Indonesian writing.
Another student imagined a mixed, yet local ICRS audience for his response paper: “The academic audience whom I imagine as I write my response paper are my teacher and my classmates here at ICRS especially. My teachers mostly are Indonesian, but sometimes they are foreigners, usually from America. My classmates also mostly Indonesians, and several of them are foreigners, but mostly from Asian countries so my audience is only here.” Although the audiences he imagined for his paper are both Indonesian and Western, evaluative and immediate, we can see the importance of local and embodied audience as a catalyst for this student’s English use.

Only one student imagined an audience that was significantly wider than ICRS, though this audience was still very Indonesian. He wrote:

This reaction paper is intended to the audience who comes from all parts of Indonesia whose English is very good. They are the audiences who are eager to broaden their knowledge related to the development of culture related to six religions that are embraced by the people of Indonesia. They belong to intellectual groups of people who come from the centre of excellence of the outstanding universities in Indonesia and they are the audiences who are accustomed to do religious dialogues.

This student imagines a broader English-using religious studies academic community as he composes his response paper, but this English-using community is notably an Indonesian audience with “good English” rather than the more Western audience suggested by English’s origins. The fact that these students’ response papers were assigned from within an Indonesian literacy context—and that the response paper is a genre that rarely moves outside of graduate program walls undoubtedly affected students projected audience. However, that the majority of students who took part in this activity imagined fellow Indonesians as their projected audiences—from the complex repertoire
of backward and present audiences we explored in the previous chapter—made me reflect upon the ways I had previously conceptualized audience for the class.

**Reflecting on my Critical Contrastive (West-Oriented) Pedagogy**

Indeed, Dr. Atun’s question, as well as my students’ reflective writing, made me realize that my earlier assignments encouraged students to address friction with backward looking audiences, but that my conceptualization of students’ forward-looking audiences had been very unidirectional and West-oriented. I sought to employ Ryoko Kubota’s “critical contrastive rhetoric” in my Unit 1 activities to help students’ examine their own identities in relation to the ideological underpinnings of Indonesian and Western rhetorical traditions, but, because of my unidirectional approach to audience, I denied the transformative potential for such a pedagogy.

As discussed in Chapter 1, Kubota critiques traditional models of contrastive rhetoric that rely on essentialist notions of culture and language, especially when translated to classroom practice. She argues that traditional contrastive rhetoric’s focus on the teaching of explicit and clear-cut genre differences between multilingual students’ “original” culture and English creates a falsely monolithic perception of rhetorical situations and the actors that work within them, and with this explicitness often comes the idea that students must understand these broad rhetorical differences, not so they can question power, but so they can assimilate to Western audiences (14). To combat such a deterministic and agency-denying view of multilingual students, she argues for a “critical contrastive rhetoric,” or a pedagogy that takes into consideration a more context-specific understanding of culture, while also making distinctions between rhetorical traditions explicit so students can critique their ideological underpinnings in relation to
power. Such a pedagogy, she argues, would give students the tools to “both resist assimilation and appropriate the rhetoric of power to enable oppositional voices” (20).

In many regards, my Unit 1 pedagogy did take into consideration multiple locals in relation to rhetorical traditions and ideology. As discussed in Chapter 3, I assigned Fan Shen’s article, “The Classroom and the Wider Culture,” to open up discussions about language, ideology, and culture, while also tempering his positions with a more critical contrastive lens. Shen contrasts the ideologies that influence genres in the Western academic tradition and in his own Chinese tradition to reflect upon his difficulties acculturating to American composition practices. He explains, for instance, that the personal experience and voice valued in Western writing— the “I,” that “promotes individuality (and private property)”— was, in China, “always subordinated to ‘We’— be it the working class, the Party, the country, or some other collective body,” because individualism was a “synonym for selfishness” in communist China (460). This Chinese ideology, he argues, was reflected in the Chinese genres he was taught in school, which taught him to suppress the “I,” in turn making his transition to the “individualist” writing practices in US composition difficult. After outlining various differences between Western and Chinese rhetorical traditions, he ends his piece with a call to action for teachers in the U.S.:

Looking back, I realize that the process of learning to write in English is in fact a process of creating and defining a new identity and balancing it with the old identity. The process of learning English composition would have been easier if I had realized this earlier and consciously sought to compare the two different identities required by the two writing systems from two different cultures. It is fine and perhaps even necessary for American composition teachers to teach about topic sentences, paragraphs, the use of punctuation, documentation, and so on, but can anyone design exercises sensitive to the ideological and logical differences that students like me experience— and design them so they can be introduced at an early stage of an English composition class? (466)
I did design such activities, though as we can see in Chapter 3, I encouraged students to complicate Shen’s notion that they had only two writing identities—an “old” one linked to their national culture and a “new” one linked to Western culture (we saw, for instance, how Faqih drew from his feminist activist identity, and Tim, his counselor identity to understand these identities’ relationships to English ideology).

After students had read and discussed Shen’s article, (rather heatedly, as reported in Chapter 4), I introduced them to an activity I called “Charting Cultures” to help them link ideology to writing practices in English and in local Indonesian culture(s). I gave them the following 2-sided chart:

**Table 3: Charting Cultures Activity (Continued on next page)**

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>CHARTING CULTURES</th>
<th>What U.S. Writing Looks Like (Swales 2004):</th>
<th>Connections between culture and genre specifications:</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>(Stereotypes of) United States’ Culture:</td>
<td>1. It places the responsibility for clarity and understanding on the writer rather than the reader.</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>2. The main argument, or thesis, often comes at the beginning of the text.</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>3. It’s explicit about structure and purposes with metadiscourse: i.e. “In the following section...”</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>4. It points explicitly to “gaps” or “weaknesses” in the previous research.</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>5. It’s usually quite focused and on topic.</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>6. It uses fairly short sentences with less complicated grammar.</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>7. Active voice is common.</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>8. It relies on more recent citations.</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

<p>| (Stereotypes of) Your “Home” Culture (This can be national culture, or a more local) | What My “Home” Culture’s Writing Looks Like: | Connections between “culture” and genre specifications: |</p>
<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>“culture” that you identify with and that affects your writing:</th>
<th></th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>(Blank)</td>
<td>(Blank)</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

I first had students fill in column one with stereotypes of U.S. culture, and they came up with quite a few: for instance, “violent,” “wealthy,” “impatient,” “fast” and “rude.” To challenge the essentialism inherent in such broad cultural stereotypes, I came up with a few of my own more “local” understandings of the U.S. cultures in which I took part. I then had students think about broad national stereotypes about Indonesians as well as more context-specific stereotypes relating to their local cultures. Tim, for instance, came up with two Indonesian “cultures,” his Javanese culture and his counseling culture: for his Javanese culture, he located such stereotypes as “rubber time,” “patient,” “polite,” and “respect authority,” and for his counseling culture he came up with “listening,” “more questions than answers,” “empathetic,” and “patient.” (As seen in Chapter 3, he drew from this activity to create his Unit 1 literacy narrative).

Once they’d come up with these lists, I had them link the stereotypes about the U.S. that they came up with to Swales’ list of U.S. textual expectations and write about them in the third column. They came up with quite a few interesting connections, linking aggressiveness to the thesis at the beginning and the necessity for pointing out gaps, for instance, and wealth to relying on more recent citations. When it came to linking Indonesian “cultures” to genre expectations, I had students describe their own understandings of Indonesian rhetorical conventions and their links to the “cultures” they identified. Tim came up with such conventions as “passive voice,” “long sentences,” “metaphor,” and “other writers first” and linked these textual attributes to both his Javanese culture, where, for instance, it is polite to “respect authority” and to his
counseling culture, where listening is valued more than asserting one’s own voice. This activity, I found, was quite effective in helping students locate, to use Shen’s words “the ideological and logical differences” between English and Indonesian norms; in fact, most students drew from this activity to create their Unit 1 literacy narratives. To return to Kubota’s critical contrastive rhetoric, this activity sequence highlighted the link between genre expectations and ideology, while also making Western genre norms explicit to students.

That said, although the Shen article and the “Charting Culture” activity were effective in helping students understand cross-cultural identity friction, this contrastive activity sequence remained West-oriented in nature because we didn’t explicitly discuss audience choice in relation to students’ findings. Shen’s focus is very “East writing to West,” and rather unidirectional, probably because he writes as an immigrant to the U.S.; though he urges teachers to make the connections between composition practices and ideology explicit, his overall argument is that such explicitness might make it easier to create an English identity that can assimilate to Western practices when writing in English. But what if one wants to write in English to a non-Western audience? Is such assimilation necessary? Similarly, the “Charting Culture” activity, because we didn’t explicitly discuss audience in relation to students’ findings, might be interpreted as a contrastive activity meant to locate and “fix” non-Western ideologies in English texts—to make it easier to adopt the Western identity Shen learns to embrace.

As evidenced by Atun’s question and students’ Unit 2 Indonesia-focused reflective writing responses, however, such a unidirectional, East converting to West approach to English writing is challenged by ICRS’s local-global positionality as an
Indonesian, yet international research site. As Canagarajah suggests, it’s problematic to link one language to one discourse—in this case, English to the West—without considering audience and the fact that the English language is capable of appropriation and re-articulation by non-Western discourse communities (“Shuttling” 601). After Dr. Atun’s question, then, I began to take a more nuanced approach to my critical contrastive activities—an approach that allowed for explicit discussions about local-global audiences for students’ English; these activities, we will see, encouraged conscious choice in relation to audience, allowing for the possibility that students’ projected Indonesian audiences, rather than the West, might dictate the identities they adopted—as well as their textual forms—as they wrote in English.

**From Uni-Directional to Multi-Directional: Audience Negotiation, the CARS Model, and Critical Choice**

I was particularly careful, then, in Unit 3, to explicitly discuss audience in relation to textual choices, particularly since the unit was on the Research Proposal, a genre that students would be expected to replicate for other faculty at ICRS, both Indonesian and Western, to begin their comprehensive exam process. In keeping with Kubota’s argument that explicit genre instruction is important to help multilingual students gain access to systems of power, I introduced students to John Swales’ CARS model, though I placed audience-focused critical contrastive activities in conversation with this Western model to encourage students to make their own choices in relation to audience, as opposed to assimilating without question.

Swales’ claims that, in general, Western academic writers engage in the “moves” outlined in the following chart to situate themselves and their projects in relation to past research, what Bakhtin would consider the “backward-looking” audience:
Central to Swales’s model is the notion that in Western academic writing one not only establishes one’s territory by engaging in a literature review, but one also must establish and occupy a niche in relation to this backward-looking audience—one must make space for one’s own voice and research project to add in new ways to the research conversation. As discussed previously, this structure is related to a Western individualistic culture that is sometimes at odds with Indonesian rhetorical structures that emphasize a less “I” centered approach in regards to research. After I introduced students to this model, we discussed possible points of friction as a class: students explained that they were taught to respect authority in Indonesian culture and thus in their writing by paraphrasing important authors, and to critique in a rather indirect manner, if at all, rather than explicitly point to “gaps” in others’ research.

Keeping in mind my rather uncritical use of contrastive rhetoric in previous units, I then brought up the subject of textual agency, and with that, audience, to encourage
students to think of themselves as rhetorical actors rather than emulators. To help frame this discussion, I introduced them to Canagarajah’s argument, in his Critical Academic Writing and Multilingual Students, by showing them the following quotation from his text:

It is possible in critical writing for multilingual students to tap the resources of English and use it judiciously to represent the interests of their communities. An uncritical use of the language, on the other hand, poses the threat of making the individual and community prone to linguistic domination…ESOL writers have to be made reflexively aware of the medium they are using, developing a critical understanding of its potentialities and limitations as they appropriate and reconstruct the language to represent their interests (17).

I then introduced them to the three ways Canagarajah suggests multilingual writers might approach dominant English language forms:

- **Accommodation:** or following the rules and assimilating to dominant language forms, even if at the expense of one’s own beliefs or linguistic traditions.

- **Opposition:** or ignoring the rules by refusing to adopt any dominant practices because they are against one’s own beliefs or linguistic traditions.

- ** Appropriation:** or bending the rules and negotiating between one’s own linguistic traditions and dominant language forms: “Although [writers using this technique] establish a discourse counter to that of the dominant conventions, they still establish a point of connection with the established genre conventions” (Critical 116).

My discussion notes pertaining to the conversation that ensued from Canagarajah’s model give important insight into the risks and challenges of these modes for students. They read:

One student asked, “Which do you think is the easiest to do?” I threw the question back at the class and another student replied that accommodation is the easiest because you “don’t have to think.” Another student said that emotionally, though, accommodation was more difficult, even if writing in this way was easier, because of cultural differences. Another student countered and said that opposition might be easiest because you can do whatever you want without taking into consideration genre requirements. The student who asked which was the easiest ended the discussion with, “sometimes it is very hard to do when you are new to writing”—a gentle reminder for me that perhaps appropriation—and the ability to do so—develops over time and with much reflection.
To encourage such reflection in relation to their research proposals and the CARS model, I had students do “Charting Multiple English-Using Audiences,” an activity that, by asking them to think of these differing approaches in relation to different English-using projected audiences—not just a dominant Western one—added an extra layer to Canagarajah’s analysis. I gave them the following chart to fill out in relation to their research proposal topics:

**Table 5: Charting Multiple English-Using Audiences Activity (Continued on next page)**

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Purpose</th>
<th>Subject</th>
<th>Writer’s Identity</th>
<th>Language Use</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>AUDIENCES</td>
<td>What might be the purpose for sharing your information with this audience?</td>
<td>What info can you assume they know? That you can exclude? What info do they need to know?</td>
<td>What kind of identity will you convey in your text? i.e. Objective? Invested? Passive? Aggressive? Local? Global? Why?</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Peers</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Amber as Instructor</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Indonesian Instructors at ICRS</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Western Academic Audience</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Indonesian English-using Audience</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Broader Southeast Asian English-using Academic Audience</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Diverse International English-Using Audience (mixed Western and non-Western, etc.)</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
This charting activity elicited an active discussion about audience, revision, and research topics. My classroom notes read as follows:

In the discussion that happened afterwards, one student explained that for young scholars it is not good to make assumptions and leave things out because professors will assume you don’t know about the subject, even if you do. Another student mentioned that this exercise would be good when revising papers for different contexts and purposes—so he could revise this proposal for a research grant in Singapore he was thinking about applying to. Another student mentioned that he didn’t know what style to write in to his Indonesian professors because they didn’t give out essay prompts, so he automatically wrote in a Western way, though it felt strange to write in that way to Indonesian professors. In response to this, another student pointed out that sometimes when she wrote to Indonesian professors about her research topic, they told her it had “already been done” even though, she explained, people in the West probably didn’t know about it.

Though this activity was quite effective in de-linking English from an automatically Western audience, most of students’ discussion focused on the “purpose” and “subject” of their research projects in relation to audience; very little was said about the “writers identity” or “language use” columns, aside from the one student who mentioned he didn’t know what “style” to write in to his Indonesian professors. Students, it seemed, could imagine a non-English using audience, but had more difficulty imagining a non-Western approach to writing in English to these diverse audiences, despite our discussion of Canagarajah’s model.

A reflective writing activity I assigned about the CARS model offers a possible explanation for this difficulty. After our discussion of Swales’ model, Canagarajah’s strategies, and this multidirectional audience activity, I had students answer the following questions:

• Do you think it is OK to deviate from the CARS model? Why or why not?

• What reasons might you have for wanting to deviate?
Most students, I found, believed it was appropriate to deviate from CARS model to achieve their own purposes, but in the end believed that accommodation was their best choice for their research proposal. One student wrote, for instance,

I think it is fine to deviate from the CARS model as long as we have supportive knowledge to do it. However, I will not deviate from that model at this time since I think this model is easy to understand for me as a new English writer and also fluid. We can follow the model but we can still be creative in doing it. The reasons for wanting to deviate, I think, are the different nature of academic culture, audience and purposes.

Here she signals her belief that, to use Canagarajah’s terms, appropriation or opposition are acceptable modes when considering different cultures and audiences, but because she is so new to academic writing in English, she will not deviate at this point. Another student points to the model’s newness as his reason for accommodating: “I think CARS model is really new for me and it can enrich me how to create a research space by following the steps offered by John Swales.” In its “newness,” the CARS model seems quite useful to this student writer. In addition to the possibility that this model may “enrich” students’ rhetorical repertoire, these responses, and others like them, may also point to the idea that one must understand the “rules” before bending them, a pragmatic position given students’ positions as academics new to English writing in an institution with less than clear audience expectations.

Other students, however, pointed to power—and with that, to the link between English and the West—rather than “newness” as their reasons for accommodating Western genre norms. One student wrote, quite bluntly, “It is hard to deviate from CARS because it is such a ‘universal guide’ in Western research writing. I do not want to deviate. I just want to follow this model. Maybe in a perfectly new territory, it can be deviated.” Though signaling the possibility for new territories to expand textual
possibilities in English, he has no desire to deviate because of the CARS model’s “universalized” use in English academic writing. Another student echoed his belief that deviation was dangerous: “The risks for deviating from the CARS is our research is likely to be considered as non-academic.” Because of the genre’s pervasiveness in English academic circles—or, to return to Bakhtin, the pervasiveness of the model in students’ backward-looking English audiences—deviation is risky.

Why, then, didn’t students discuss specific ways to deviate from the CARS model in relation to the “Charting Multiple English-Using Audiences” activity? Frankly, they didn’t seem to want to yet. As their reflective writing activity shows, they were very aware of power—of their positions as new and thus less powerful academics, and of the power that Western models hold in relation to English academic writing. After all, English backward-looking audiences who accommodate Western norms far outweigh those who challenge them. Furthermore, the fact that their texts would be circulating solely within our English Academic Writing classroom context, with a limited evaluative and peer audience, could have influenced their decision to accommodate. After all, this was only one small classroom sequence, introduced by a woman who—though encouraging them to be critical of the norms—was still interpellated as a “native speaker” by a long history of linguistic imperialism. My positionality as “Western” evaluative audience, in turn, probably held more sway than their immediate Indonesian peer audience, even if, as discussed above, students chose to imagine these peers as their projected audience when writing in English. Within this closed classroom context, writing in English could still have meant writing to the West, regardless of projected audience, and my burgeoning critical contrastive pedagogy.
We will see, however, that in my second semester pedagogy, I hoped to move students’ writing past this closed classroom context to more public forums of their choice. I thought that if students chose to write to a public Indonesian audience in English—one similar to Dr. Sivatamby’s English-using “public” Tamil audience—that they might be more willing to de-link English from Western structures. Perhaps then the students who chose Indonesians as their projected audience would tailor their actual texts accordingly.

**From Classroom to “Public” Audiences**

My focus on the public had a more pragmatic purpose as well; after all, the PhD students in my course would be expected to use English in broader public forums than my classroom or ICRS in the very near future, so encouraging them to write to a “public” audience fit with programmatic goals. Halasek defines the *public audience* as a real world audience to whom students can address their texts to enact real social change in the Freirean sense. This audience moves classroom writing from its status as an “exercise in proficiency” to “productive discourse” (79). Though I would argue that the classroom isn’t discrete from the public—that in fact, it’s one public amidst many publics and that productive discourse can happen there too—I do agree with Halasek that there are distinctions to be made between the classroom “public” and the wider “public” she envisions, particularly in relation to scope and circulation. As mentioned above, I suspected that students would write differently to me and their peers within the closed classroom context than they would to a public Indonesian readership.

Halasek also implies that such an audience is less common for teachers to focus on than other audiences, which shows her first-year writing focus. Graduate students,
though, have much more pressure to imagine a *public audience* for their work, as they are encouraged to publish, go to conferences, and take part in broader public discourse to gain academic recognition. Indeed, both faculty and students prompted me—during the academic board meeting, and in their student evaluations, respectively—to address more public genres in my classroom second semester. As such, I created essay units focused on the opinion piece, the conference paper, the book review, and finally, the research article. To help students view these assignments as “real world,” rather than solely classroom focused, I encouraged them to locate actual venues—English-medium newspapers, academic conferences, research journals—to write for, and, if they chose, actually submit their pieces to. In keeping with the local-global focus at ICRS, these venues could be Indonesian, non-Indonesian, or both. Furthermore, similar to the first semester, and in keeping with my critical contrastive pedagogy, I introduced dominant Western genre norms while also encouraging students to critique their ideological underpinnings and make conscious choices related to audience.

**Identifying Multiple Public Audiences**

To help students identify these audience choices, I coupled the in-process generative activities I describe below with a cover letter assignment that occurred after they had written their texts. In this letter, I asked students to outline the specific “publics” to whom they wrote and the textual choices they made pertaining to these audiences. I gave them the following prompt:

**Table 6: Cover Letter Prompt (Continued on next page)**

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>This semester, please write me a short cover letter for each final essay, where you reflect about your writing processes and your final written piece. This cover letter will teach me how to read your paper, helping me, for instance, read from the perspective of the audience you were imagining when you wrote your essay. To help structure your cover letter, please answer the following questions in casual letter form:</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>• To what audience do you address your paper? An Indonesian academic audience? An international</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
This assignment reflected my second semester hope that students would continue to critique power, ideology, and dominant forms, while also making more conscious writing choices about the real and not necessarily Western or evaluative audiences their texts might serve.  

**Incorporating the “Real” in a Local-Global Context**

I began the semester with a unit on the opinion piece because several students had already been published in the English-medium newspaper, the *Jakarta Post*, and thus it represented a viable and “local” audience for students’ words. To give them a heuristic for understanding and interpreting argument, I introduced them to the rhetorical appeals—ethos, pathos and logos—as well as typical logical fallacies.

We then used the appeals as a heuristic to analyze both an *NPR* opinion piece about the earthquake in Haiti and an Indonesian opinion piece from the *Jakarta Post* critiquing a radical Muslim group who wanted to ban women from dying their hair and taking wedding photos. This comparative analysis led to a discussion about audience and the ways that rhetorical appeals might differ depending on cultural context. For example, one student pointed out that the author of the *NPR* opinion piece used the fact that there was no electricity and running water in Haiti to engage in pathos for his U.S. audience.

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20 As Chapter 6 will explore, students chose to write to a variety of audiences, whether Indonesian or “international,” and they did make conscious choices in relation to their audiences, though in many cases they chose not to actually submit their work to public venues. In this case, the classroom stood in for the “public” venue they imagined, and, I would argue, still acted as a valuable and real audience for students’ words. As mentioned previously, audiences are not discrete entities, as Halasek’s model implies. For this reason, I move in the next chapter from Halasek’s clearly delineated model to the more fluid term “forward-looking audience.”
But, he explained, for an Indonesian audience who was accustomed to daily rolling blackouts as well as non-potable water, this appeal was less than effective. To Indonesians, he explained, these facts were more “normal” than “shocking” or emotion-inducing. Likewise, when it came to the Jakarta Post opinion piece, another student, who had studied abroad in the U.S., pointed out that the woman writing the piece engaged in ethos by explicitly pointing to her identity as a pious Muslim woman. My student explained to the class that in the more secular U.S. media—and in a U.S. that was less than friendly towards Muslims—drawing on this identity for ethos might not be as effective as other approaches. Using the rhetorical appeals as a heuristic for understanding argument was effective, then, in highlighting the ways that textual form changes in relation to audience and context.

When I introduced students to the logical fallacies, there was another rather heated discussion about context and “logic” that pointed to the ways my Indonesian students and myself had very different ways of understanding the world. I drew from Andrea Lunsford’s Everything’s an Argument to create a handout listing the primary logical fallacies for each rhetorical appeal. For many of these fallacies, I revised her examples to be more appropriate to an Indonesian audience. However, when it came to the “faulty analogy,” I used her example without thinking of my Indonesian audience. She describes the “faulty analogy” as an “inaccurate or inconsequential comparison between objects or concepts” that is “pushed too far or taken too seriously” and uses the following example to explain:

*The universe is like an intricate watch.*
*A watch must have been designed by a watchmaker.*
*Therefore, the universe must have been designed by some kind of creator.* (512)
To someone interpreting from a secular positionality, this analogy does indeed seem to be “pushed too far” to be logical. My Indonesian students, however, because of their deeply religious context, took this analogy very “seriously.” Rather than commenting on the “logic” of this argument, they discussed its merits. My teacher notes read as follows:

After explaining this “faulty analogy,” immediately two students’ hands shot up and they said this was an argument they had read somewhere about creationism and an interesting debate about the analogy sprang up where they didn’t address the fallaciousness (or not) of the analogy, but rather, what it implied about religion and whose idea it was. I backpedalled a bit and explained that the analogy may hold true for some audiences because they assume a creator, but for others the logic might seem faulty. I mumbled something about the clock being a human creation and the analogy as well, and therefore relying on the clock to point to the presence of the divine wasn’t logical since the clock and the divine aren’t on the same planes of existence… but this discussion opened a whole can of worms I wasn’t ready to discuss as someone used to leaving religion out of the classroom.

Despite my discomfort, this miscommunication as to what is “logical” and what is “fallacious” to different audiences led another student to ask if there was a “right way of doing logic,” or something that was the “opposite of these logical fallacies” out there. Before I could answer, another student suggested that the “rhetorical appeals” might be a right way of arguing, but whether they were logical depended on context. Another student then intervened to suggest that some people’s fallacies might be some people’s truths, and he suggested that the “Javanese way” of arguing might be different than Aristotle’s way. Indeed, these discussions highlight the important role that audience plays in “logic”; they also suggest students’ acute awareness that the logic, textual form, and writerly ethos they draw forth in their texts might be different depending on the English-using audience to whom they choose to address their texts in this local-global site.

Similar conversations regarding dominant Western textual practices sprung up during the final three units of the semester: the conference paper unit; the book review
unit; and the research article unit. In keeping with my critical contrastive focus, I both made Western genre norms explicit and opened up space for students to question them in relation to audience. For instance, for the conference paper unit, I had students locate real Calls for Proposals, and they found a diverse set of English-medium conferences to which they wanted to apply—in Indonesia, in Singapore, in the Netherlands and in the U.S. We then discussed ways to tailor their present research projects to their audience’s expectations to create a proposal they could send in, and finally students actually wrote their conference paper by revising an already present paper into a shorter oral presentation. To make Western genre norms explicit when it came to writing their paper, I gave them the following “tips”:

Table 7: Western Conference Paper Norms Prompt (Continued on next page)

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Western Conference Paper Norms</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>These tips will help you consider the difference between a seminar paper and a conference paper.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>The major difference, of course, is that your audience is listening, not reading, so it’s important that you are clear because your audience cannot go back and re-read your information.</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

**CONTENT TIPS:**
- Highlight at the beginning of your paper the current conversation in your field and state explicitly how your research adds to the conversation, keeping in mind the conference theme.
- State your argument/thesis/research question clearly at the beginning of the paper.
- Then, locate the thesis/question in a body of knowledge/literature in a short literature review.
- Make the theoretical significance of your ideas clear.
- Use clear examples, metaphors and analogies to help the audience better understand your concept.
- Be aware of audience: if you use an Indonesian example at an international conference, give more context.
- Use clear terminology, but use as little specialized terminology as possible, or, if necessary, define your specialized terms.
- Use a “bullet” conclusion. In the final part of the paper, repeat your thesis or the question posed, then explain how you addressed the question, and why the question is relevant. End with a statement of the larger implications of your question.

**WRITING TIPS:**
- Because you have limited time, avoid complicated arguments. Make only a few points and make them clearly.
- After each section of supporting evidence, explicitly remind the audience of its relevance to your main thesis or question. It’s OK to be a little repetitive in an oral presentation.
- Don’t show the entire thought process, just the end points. Remember, the primary purpose of a conference paper is to present new information that you want to add to the conversation, not to repeat in detail past research.
- Use short sentences and simple syntax.
I was careful to couch these tips with thorough discussions of audience—after all, texts written for a local ICRS audience would look very different than those written for a Western audience because of certain assumed knowledge. We also discussed whether form was fluid depending on audience, and ways students might negotiate these Western norms in relation to audience and their own purposes.

Similarly, for their Book Review, I had students locate a book they wished to review, and a venue where they’d like to publish their review—whether this venue was the ICRS website, an academic journal, or the Jakarta Post, which has a book review section. We analyzed sample book reviews from these venues in relation to Motta Roth’s model for Western book reviews, (cited in Swales’ English 183). According to Roth, book reviews make these general moves:

**Table 8: Roth’s Book Review Model (Continued on next page)**

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>General Aim</th>
<th>Specifically Accomplishing that Aim</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Introducing the Book by:</td>
<td>• establishing the topic and/or&lt;br&gt;• describing potential readership and or&lt;br&gt;• providing information about the authors and/or&lt;br&gt;• making generalizations about the topic and/or&lt;br&gt;• establishing the place of the book in the field</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Outlining the book by:</td>
<td>• highlighting the general organization of the book and/or&lt;br&gt;• describing the content of each chapter or section and/or&lt;br&gt;• referring specifically to non-text material such as graphs, tables and appendices</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Highlighting parts of the book by:</td>
<td>• providing focused evaluation by making general, positive commentary and/or&lt;br&gt;• offering specific, negative commentary</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Providing final commentary and recommendations by:</td>
<td>• specifying the scope or usefulness of the book and/or&lt;br&gt;• recommending (or not recommending) the book, despite limitations, if any</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
By looking at sample genres—both Indonesian and non-Indonesian—in relation to this chart, I hoped students would see that genres are flexible and capable of shifting forms in relation to audience and their own purposes in writing the book reviews.

We did similar audience-focused genre analysis exercises with the research article, a genre that students would need to understand for work they did both within ICRS—for seminar papers, and, later, in longer format, their dissertations—and in the broader publishing world, for when they wished to submit their research to English-medium academic journals. To begin our exploration, we discussed Swales’s IMRD model (Introduction, Methods, Results, Discussion) as a Western heuristic for structuring their research. To foster this discussion, I gave them the following chart:

Table 9: Swales’ IMRD Model (Continued on next page)

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>MOVE</th>
<th>PURPOSE</th>
<th>NOTES</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>INTRODUCTION</td>
<td>The introduction provides the purpose for the paper, and usually moves from a general discussion of your topic to the research questions or hypothesis you are investigating. Your introduction should also work to attract your audience.</td>
<td>The CARS model, which we discussed in Unit 3, is a useful way to structure Western academic introductions.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>METHODS</td>
<td>This section usually outlines your research approach, your research context, and specific methods you used to obtain your data.</td>
<td>In the social sciences and humanities it’s important to make a distinction between research approach and methods. A research approach is the overall orientation to your study in light of a coherent set of philosophical assumptions, which, in the social sciences and humanities, you should make explicit (i.e. if you believe that the social construction of meaning varies depending on the community, then perhaps the context-specific research that ethnography allows is a good approach). Methods, on the other hand, are specific ways of gathering information to satisfy your research approach (i.e. ethnography often relies on interviews, participant observations, etc.).</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>RESULTS</td>
<td>In this section you describe your data</td>
<td>In the social sciences and humanities,</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
and findings in relation to your research question or hypothesis. Researchers usually provide some preliminary commentary and analysis of data in this section. Don’t just report your findings—explain their significance in relation to your research project as well.

| DISCUSSION | This section (which researchers also sometimes call their “conclusion”), synthesizes in a general way broad themes in your results and their importance to your research field and audience. Swales suggests that three moves are common: Move 1 involves “points to consolidate your research space (obligatory)”; Move 2 involves “points to indicate the limitations of your study (optional but common)”; and Move 3 involves “recommending a course of action and/or to identify useful areas of further research)” (AW 270). |

To emphasize that genres are flexible and that they should be negotiated to fit context and audience to accomplish students’ own purposes, we placed the IMRD model in conversation with a diversity of research texts—from international journals as well as past theses written by Indonesian MA students at CRCS. In doing so, I wanted to emphasize to students that the research article as a genre has continued to change as diverse scholars, coming from diverse contexts, with diverse approaches have entered the academic discourse community. I hoped this genre-based analysis, as well as previous conversations regarding audience and dominant Western norms, would help students choose the model that best fit their context-specific goals as researchers and writers working from a local-global context and writing to the multiple public audiences that English, as the global lingua franca, suggests.

**Conclusion**

These audience-focused critical contrastive goals seemed to be realized, as we can see above, during in-class discussions. Indeed, to close this chapter outlining my critical contrastive pedagogy, I’ll end with one more in-class discussion that I found particularly

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21 I searched English-medium peer-reviewed Religious Studies Journals for texts written by Indonesian authors, and was unsuccessful. As ICRS is so new, there were no model dissertations to draw from, so I brought in MA theses written by Indonesian students from ICRS’s sister program, CRCS.
powerful in light of my pedagogical focus. This discussion happened mid-semester, during the conference paper unit, after students had participated in multiple generative activities in relation to audience, form, and cross-cultural analyses. My notes read as follows:

A quite productive and interesting discussion was spurred by a “Conference Paper Tips” handout I gave students (it listed Western genre norms like using metadiscourse, active voice, short sentences, etc). Interestingly, this happened in the grammar section of the handout, where I suggested that the active voice was thought most effective in the conference paper, and to avoid derived words (ation/isms) because they are indirect. One student raised his hand and explained that 15 to 20 years ago, an Indonesian advisor told him to write in the passive voice to seem more “objective.” He explained, once again, that in Indonesian culture, directness is impolite and often seemed arrogant. Another student countered that in the West, the use of “I” means accountability and responsibility for your research. The first student questioned whether that was “why there aren’t so many articles by Indonesians published in international journals. Because these journals label the writing wrong because they aren’t aware of cultural ways of writing.” I reframed the argument by suggesting that the West needed to learn to listen to other ways of viewing the world, at which point this student quipped that when I was an editor of a Western journal, I could accept different text types. Another student asked “What happens if we’re not writing to a Western audience?” and suggested if they are writing in English to an Indonesian audience, perhaps it would be appropriate to use the passive voice so they don’t seem arrogant. And that maybe if they are writing in English to an international audience, where directness is more appreciated, they might want to negotiate with these expectations.

Here we can see the three threads of my critical contrastive pedagogy surfacing in students’ discussion: an ability to critique cross-cultural differences in ethos; an understanding of the power that Western audiences have in defining appropriate English use; and the possibility that English can be used differently depending on one’s audience—that in fact, English might be malleable. It’s also important to note that consensus about “appropriate” English use wasn’t reached in this discussion; indeed, consensus would deny the complexity of writing from a local-global context where multiple identities, aims, and audiences suggest themselves.
To understand this complexity, the next chapter will turn to an analysis of my case study students’ actual texts in relation to the audiences they located in their cover letters. My diachronic analysis of audience as it occurs in these students’ texts will highlight multiple audiences at play in their local-global compositions—voices both Western and Indonesian, which populate varying positions as backward-looking, present, and forward-looking audiences—and with that, multiple ways of using English in relation to these audiences. There, I hope to also answer some of the questions that have arisen from this chapter and the previous one: whether, after our rather intense discussions about audience, power, and rhetorical choice, students felt comfortable de-linking English from Western rhetorical structures in their actual texts; whether students’ Indonesian projected audiences influenced their rhetorical choices when writing to a “public” Indonesian audience, or whether there was still a disjoint between imagined and real when it came to the actual texts they produced; or whether students even felt it necessary in the first place to de-link English from Western genre norms to represent their Indonesian voices and purposes.
CHAPTER 6
TO WHOM, WITH WHOM, AND HOW? IMAGINING A LOCAL-GLOBAL RHETORICAL SITUATION IN ENGLISH

The previous chapter offered my pedagogical answer to Dr. Atun’s question—“To whom do we have students write?” The audience-focused critical contrastive pedagogy I developed asked students to take into consideration the multiple audiences implied by ICRS’s local-global positionality, to understand power in relation to language use, and with that ways they might challenge the dominant assumption that writing in English automatically means writing to the West. As we’ll see in this chapter, students did challenge the idea that writing in English means writing to Western audiences, though not necessarily in the ways that I had expected.

A major assumption of my pedagogy was that students could draw from already existent Indonesian rhetorical devices—indirectness, passive voice, etc.—to challenge Western genre norms and signal their public audiences. After all, as discussed in previous chapters, Suresh Canagarajah argues that multilingual writers are capable of de-linking English from Western rhetorical structures in order to reach audiences of their choice. As my classroom notes showed, students did critically engage with audience, power, and textual choice in generative activities and large-class discussions. I had hoped, in turn, that this pedagogy might spur students, in the actual texts they composed, to negotiate with, rather than merely assimilate to, the dominant Western genre norms I introduced in class. That said, one of the most important underlying assumptions in my critical pedagogy was that students were agents, capable of assessing for themselves the English audiences to whom they wished to write, and given these assessments, making their own conscious rhetorical choices regarding their writing. As we’ll see below, they certainly
did so, challenging, in turn, some of my assumptions regarding what it means to write internationally, in English, while also affirming the important role a diachronic understanding of audience might play as we imagine and articulate local-global rhetorical situations.

This chapter, then, will explore the following questions: What audiences—of the multiple backward-looking and present audiences discussed in Chapter 4—did students bring to their writing portfolios? And how, in turn, did they signal these audiences as they wrote to their forward-looking audiences in English? To begin this discussion, I’ll first turn to students’ post-course interviews, where they discussed with me which audiences they imagined most often when writing in English and why these audiences were important to their writing processes; we will see from these discussions that the projected audience each student locates as most primary, or ideal, to his or her writing process—and thus writerly identity—is directly linked to his or her language history and purpose for using English. That’s not to say that the audience students located as primary in their interviews didn’t shift when it came to specific assignments, as their cover letters indicate; after all, with each unit, the rhetorical situation also shifted and was mediated by multiple factors—my pedagogy, the subjects students chose to address, their interactions with other students, the texts they chose to draw from, the genre they were working in, and so on; in effect, as students’ backward-looking and present audiences shifted, so too did their forward-looking audiences. And as we’ll see, having a broad and shifting repertoire of past and present audiences to draw from—whether Indonesian or

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22 I analyzed only those texts to which students attached a cover letter; as we’ll see, only Nina attached a cover letter to her research paper, meaning that her portfolio consisted of four texts, rather than three, like the other students’ portfolios.
Western or both—enabled students to better engage with English to write to their future local-global purposes.

**Faqih’s Portfolio: Complicating the Notion of Discrete International Audiences**

Faqih, as Chapter 3 explores, believes his purpose in writing is to serve his community and to spread gender justice; despite an awareness of English’s imperialism, and its ties to the West, he imagines local possibilities for the language and the information that English transmits. In keeping with this civic ethos, when I asked Faqih, in his post-course interview, “What audience do you imagine most often and why?” his answer highlighted the local as his primary audience:

Actually my imagination is only my Indonesian English-speaking friends and my English friends who don’t know Indonesian well at ICRS, so not farther than here. So it’s local. But foreigners also; foreigners here. I don’t have any imagination to talk to American people or Australian people over there. I feel difficult to write when I imagine Western people because I don’t know their context. Because my life is to serve people in Indonesia, so intimate audience makes it easier and more comfortable to write down.

Faqih points to the importance of his immediate, or local audience, as he writes in English—and to the ways that the audience at ICRS, despite being a mix of Indonesian and Western English-users, is also “local” in many regards, as opposed to the Americans and Australians “over there.” He attributes the fact that he most often imagines such an “intimate audience” to his desire to “serve people in Indonesia,” a reference that harkens back to Chapter 3’s discussion of civic ethos as the driving force for his English research in the first place. The following sections, then, will turn to the texts Faqih wrote second semester and the audiences he located in his cover letters to explore how his “localized” English imaginings might have influenced his textual approaches. Faqih’s work, we will
see, highlights the fact that in our increasingly interconnected world, audiences are rarely
discrete entities.

**Let’s Talk about Sex: Negotiating Rhetorical Appeals to Reach an Indonesian Muslim Audience**

In keeping with his belief that his writing can reach local religious populations and encourage them to embrace gender justice, Faqih highlights in his cover letter of his opinion piece that he addresses an English-using Indonesian Muslim audience. He begins by writing,

> I am addressing my paper to English readers of the *Jakarta Post*. I decided my words in order that my readers will come to main points through my paper; that spiritual Islam is not against sexual activity and that equal marital relationship is a fundamental part of Islamic tradition.

Though he begins his cover letter with a rather general local-to-Indonesia English-using public audience—the *Jakarta Post* is read by English using Indonesians of all religions as well as by foreigners living and working in Indonesia—he then narrows this audience with a reference to religious education. He continues:

> I think my paper will effectively reach them since most of them are introduced to the Qur’an rather than the prophetic traditions (Hadith). I quote some texts of the tradition in order to let them know more.

Faqih’s pronoun “them” refers to fellow Muslims; as discussed previously, in the deeply religious Indonesian society, very few people are educated outside of their own faith, indicating that Faqih’s audience, as people “introduced to the Qur’an” are, in fact, Muslim English-users. Faqih, in his actual piece, effectively cues this audience through pronouns, language use specific to his religious community, and by “quot[ing] some texts of the tradition” in ways that people reading from a non-Islamic and Western perspective might find unpersuasive.
He begins his rather risqué-for-his-context opinion piece with a reference to shared knowledge: “Let us trace back our entrusted heritages and traditions. Is there, according to Islam, any spiritual insight in sexual activity rather than only for bodily pleasure?” Here Faqih’s moves to establish his Muslim ethos before delving into a topic that might be a bit unorthodox for his religious audience. As he explained in his cover letter, “I feel uncomfortable to write on sex and religion. However, I need to do it.” By immediately highlighting in his opinion piece that he is religious and part of his audience’s “heritage” and “traditions” he avoids alienating those he addresses with his open reference to “sexual activity.” He continues, throughout his opinion piece, to indicate shared knowledge and connection with his religious community, through content and with his pronouns. For instance, he writes,

Prevalent knowledge perpetuated since I was child, was that the revelation came down to the Prophet in the cave of Hira during khalwah. It is true but not the only means in which the Prophet received the revelation. He also received it in the home where he lived with his wife ‘Aishah, while they were both together in ‘one blanket.’ Thus, the most sacred event of Islamic revelation occurred within the context of physical intimacy between the Prophet and his beloved wife Aishah. What does it mean for us? I may unearth some insights accordingly and you may raise others.

Here we can see that Faqih draws from his own personal understandings of religion as a child—that the “revelation” happened in a cave called “Hira” during “Khalwah”—to establish connection with his Muslim Indonesian readers. Indeed, here his audience is explicitly Muslim; as a non-Muslim reader, the term “khalwah” meant little to me. When I asked Faqih about it, he explained that it is something akin to “spiritual meditation.” A Muslim audience would undoubtedly be aware of this meaning, however, indicating that Faqih is using his language intentionally to cue his audience. He uses shared experience and vocabulary to establish this connection before moving to the rather controversial idea.
found in the less known prophetic tradition—that the Prophet also received revelation during sexual intercourse with his wife. In effect, he establishes his religious ethos to forge connections before introducing a controversial subject. The sentences he ends this section with—“what does it mean for us? I may unearth some insights accordingly and you may raise others”—establish further connection while also hinting at writing and reading as a process of creating knowledge collaboratively as a community, which harkens to his preference for an “intimate audience.”

Faqih does more than use vocabulary distinctive to a Muslim audience in his opinion piece; he also cites passages from the Qur’an to substantiate his argument, a move, as discussed in the previous chapter, which may seem unpersuasive to audiences reading from a secular Western tradition. For instance, after re-iterating his own opinion that sex is not antithetical to Islamic teachings or spirituality, Faqih quotes the Prophet:

‘By Allah, I am more submissive to Allah and more afraid of Him than you; yet I fast and I eat food, I do sleep and I also marry women’, the Prophet says to us in the Collection of Sahih Bukhari.

Faqih doesn’t just talk about the religious text as artifact; he cites the Prophet as author, just as one in a Western academic tradition might cite an “academic” source to establish logos. Faqih uses the fact that the Prophet slept with women and even received revelation during the sex act to re-interpret patriarchal constructions that place women as purely sexual beings, outside of the spiritual realm. Faqih writes:

Women, in [the patriarchal] construction, belong to the body and are not eligible of being spiritual, while men are only the eligible ones as they belong to the soul. The tradition above indicates resolutely a unity of women and men, the body and the soul, and the sexual and the spiritual. So, the unity here is not only a feminist notion but also Islamic.
Here Faqih uses the Prophet as logos to build bridges between his local religious community and a feminist reading of sexual intercourse—a reading that most likely springs from his access to Western texts related to gender and sexuality.

His Western perspective on sexuality does not overtake his religious belief system, however. To conclude this paper defending sexual intimacy, he writes:

God is with us constantly any way. It is up to us whether we intend to feel Him or we exclude His presence until we are ready. I think it will be better to include God’s presence in our daily lives. Not only is the tradition above acknowledging human sexual pleasure, it urges us, I think, to move forward on the spiritual experience of sex. So, when somebody asks you: why should you have sex? You may answer her or him: I want to raise my spiritual experience. Of course, it should be, according to Islam, only in the lawful manner: marriage.

Faqih matter-of-factly states that God exists, once again establishing his religious ethos, before moving to directly addressing his readers to tell them that sex is okay, as long as they are married.

In many ways, then, Faqih, despite writing in English, tailors his information and content to effectively target the audience he highlights in his cover letter. Although he does draw from the Western rhetorical appeals I introduced in class to structure his argument—he uses a balance of ethos, pathos, and logos throughout—the way he engages these appeals differs from what one would expect if one was reading from a Western context. His opinion piece illustrates that he can make use of rhetorical strategies within the Western classical tradition, and at the same time “serve” his local Indonesian audience. In fact, as we saw with his references to the Prophet and God, he populates these Western forms with a backward-looking Muslim audience. By working from within the Western tradition most often linked to English, and populating Western classical forms with local Muslim ways of being and doing, he suggests that Indonesian and
Western rhetorical exigencies aren’t necessarily at odds, that in fact, opposition to Western rhetorical forms isn’t necessary to achieve his purposes in targeting an Indonesian audience.

**We Indonesians, We feminists: Drawing Together Islam, Feminism, and Local-Global Audiences**

If Faqih draws from a Western feminist tradition to target an Indonesian audience in his opinion piece, in his conference paper he draws from his Indonesian religious experience to target Western scholars interested in promoting gender justice within Indonesia. Although he does wish to address a “Western” audience with his words, this audience is one that works within Indonesia; this public audience, then, is in keeping with the projected audience he describes in his interview, where Western people could be part of his intimate Indonesian context. He maintains his focus on the “local,” while forwarding that his “local” consists of multiple actors, both Indonesian and non-Indonesian. He writes in his cover letter that,

> In general, I address my paper to Western people. I hope they will know, from my experience, how works of gender justice should be conducted in Muslim societies such as Indonesia. I make a conversation in the paper, of course, between my perspective and other perspectives followed by friends of mine in the field of gender justice among religious community.

Here we can see Faqih’s desire to draw from conversations with a local backward-looking audience of “friends” to engage and further future feminist conversations about religion, related, in particular, to perspectives on religion and gender justice in Muslim societies. Indeed, in his paper, Faqih draws from his own experience as a Muslim feminist to argue that, rather than dismissing Islam entirely because of its patriarchal aspects, feminists, both Western and Indonesian alike, should work from within the Islamic tradition to engage in feminist social justice.
In keeping with the Western audience he points to in his cover letter, throughout his conference paper, Faqih accommodates the Western norms I introduced in class. For instance, the “Western Conference Paper Tips” handout makes the following recommendation: “Highlight at the beginning of your paper the current conversation in your field and state explicitly how your research adds to the conversation, keeping in mind the conference theme.” Faqih begins his paper by establishing the conversation:

In order to highlight religion’s responsibility in establishing gender equality, considering its cultural dimension is a necessary work. Unlike many feminists who often highlight patriarchal reference of Islamic resources in addressing gender justice, I would work rather within the dimension in which Islamic resources can bring “positive meanings” culturally to the lives of people. After establishing here that many feminists in his backward-looking audience focus on only the “patriarchal” aspects of religion and that he’s going to take a different tactic, he then moves to the next suggestion on the “tips” sheet: “State your argument… clearly at the beginning of the paper.” Faqih writes, “I would like to make a claim—as many Muslim feminists do—that justice is the essence of Islam and feminism.” Similar to this introduction, in the rest of his paper, he follows the “Western Conference Tips Sheet” almost verbatim; this assimilation to Western norms shows his desire to target a Western feminist audience that he thinks is more likely to dismiss the Islamic religion as patriarchal than draw from it to promote social change.

Indeed, his first supporting example specifically targets his Western audience. To draw attention to the ways it’s problematic to interpret Muslim faith—and with that, gender—from a Western Christian perspective, he turns to the story of Adam and Eve. This story, though central in feminist readings of the Bible as patriarchal, can actually be
interpreted as egalitarian in Islam. According to Faqih, in the Qur’an the verse goes as follows:

But Satan whispered evil to him: he said, "O Adam! Shall I lead thee to the Tree of Eternity and to a kingdom that never decays?" In the result, they both ate of the tree, and so their nakedness appeared to them: they began to sew together, for their covering, leaves from the Garden: thus did Adam disobey his Lord, and allow himself to be seduced. (QS. Tâha, 20: 120-121)

Faqih uses this verse to argue to his Western audience that in Islam “both Adam and Eve conducted disobedience against God by eating the forbidden fruit.” He further explains that in the Qur’an “they asked forgiveness from God and they both were eventually forgiven by Him.” Faqih draws from this passage to argue that “the story of Adam and Eve in Islam therefore is not a depiction for ‘original sin’ or that women are created from and less important than men.” That Faqih’s first religious example pertains to a religious passage that resounds powerfully in Western culture—and with that in Western feminist circles— shows that he is purposefully cueing his audience; if he were writing to an Indonesian audience, such detail regarding the Qur’anic passage would arguably be unnecessary.

However, he then moves from this blind spot in Western interpretations of gender in the Qur’an to a blind spot that both Western and Indonesian feminists share, pointing, in turn, to his local-global perspective. He points out that Indonesian feminists have discounted the Hadith, or “the prophetic tradition” that is “the second most authoritative text in Islam after the Qur’an,” as being “of minor importance” and that Western feminists are unaware of this alternate tradition in the first place. He then uses passages from the Hadith to show that women in the Prophetic tradition “were strong women, intelligent, independent, and integral to the emergence of the new faith in seventh-century
Arabia,” ultimately arguing that these passages may serve as valuable resources in promoting social justice for women in the deeply religious Indonesian context:

Since we already have a lot of work on less gender-biased interpretations of Qu’ranic interpretations circulating in many centers of Islamic education in Indonesia, it is time to have a good portion of works on the Hadith. Unless a feminist hermeneutical method is made in producing a “positive interpretation” of the texts of the Hadith, we will fail to gain cultural acceptance of our work in establishing gender justice in Indonesia.

Here he references his backward-looking audience’s blindspot when it comes to the Hadith to issue a call-to-action to his forward-looking audience, which he interpellates with the pronoun “we.” Who, though, is “we?” Given the audience he points to in his cover letter, he may be referring to Western scholars interested in promoting gender justice in Indonesia, but the fact that his own participation is implied in this pronoun may suggest a more complicated audience, one that includes both Western feminists working in Indonesia and fellow Indonesian feminists; indeed, I would argue that Faqih uses this pronoun strategically throughout his paper to signal local-global community.

For instance, at the beginning of his paper, right before his Adam and Eve example, he writes, “We Indonesian Muslims have a good portion of literature on the Western feminist critique about Islamic sources of knowledge,” which implies that he is writing as an Indonesian Muslim to Western feminists, as his cover letter states. Later, though, he moves to the more “inclusive” “we” with which he ultimately ends his paper. After he points to the blind spot regarding the Hadith in both Indonesian and Western feminist scholarship, he writes, “If we have a good portion of positive examples of prophetic traditions, why should we exaggerate patriarchal references in Islamic texts when analyzing and addressing gender injustices against Muslim women?” Given his
prior critique of both Indonesian and Western feminists—to return to Halasek’s terms, his “previous audiences”—this “we” seems more inclusive.

These shifts in “we,” I would argue, point to Faqih’s desire to bridge the communication gap between Western scholars and Indonesian feminists—he draws from his ethos as both a Muslim Indonesian and a feminist capable of interacting, using English, with the West; as such, his shifting use of “we” may signal his desire to bring these traditions together to benefit his intimate Indonesian context. By bringing his backward-looking, present, and forward-looking audiences together with his use of “we,” Faqih challenges the notion that audiences are ever discrete in our increasingly interconnected world. To return to his cover letter—and to the description of his “intimate audience” in his interview—his “friends” in the “field of gender justice” span borders through the English language, to the benefit of his local Indonesian context.

You, Dr. E, and My Colleagues: Negotiating a “Local” ICRS Audience

In fact, the mixed yet local Indonesian audience Faqih creates textually through his use of “we” in his conference paper is quite literally embodied by the public audience to whom he writes his book review. The “local” is already “global” at ICRS. As he writes in his cover letter,

I imagined that my readers would be my Indonesian colleagues in class, especially your class and gender and religion class. At most, you and Dr. E surely will read my article. I thought that peers may benefit from my article. At least, they will read for their class.

Faqih points first to his immediate audience of Indonesian peers, his “colleagues in class,” because he believes that they, as an audience, might benefit from reading his book review; indeed, during class discussion he mentioned that book reviews were useful for

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23 I’ve changed this professor’s name to protect her privacy.
letting friends know whether they wanted to commit to reading an entire text for their own research. Once again, Faqih writes to “serve.” This peer audience was also a valuable resource to Faqih. Later in his cover letter he explains that:

At first, I did not imagine my article to published in certain newspaper or magazine. Although, when [my peer] suggested me to publish my article on ICRS's website, it came to my mind to think it. I may revise later my article to be friendly for publishing, I hope so.

Having his “colleagues” read and urge him to publish his book review encouraged Faqih to imagine a broader public audience for his work, something that the multiple in-class genre analyses we did of published book reviews and my encouragement as their teacher that they submit their work to a more public audience could not do. The fact that Faqih lists his Indonesian colleagues as his first audience and that he gives them credit for encouraging him to publish indicates that they play an important role as audience, pointing, in turn, to the intimate projected audience he imagines most often as he writes. That said, after pointing to his peer audience, his cover letter indicates that Faqih includes in this “local” audience the instructors who would be reading his work. He refers in his cover letter to the dual evaluative audience discussed in Chapter 4: both Dr. E, a visiting religious studies professor from the U.S., and I would be reading and evaluating his book review. Once again, Faqih’s forward-looking audience was complicated: not only did he address his Indonesian peers, but he also addressed two instructors springing from Western academic culture. Despite having his Indonesian colleagues as part of his projected audience, Faqih quite clearly assimilated to Western norms I introduced in class, suggesting, as his other work has shown, that Western norms are not necessarily at odds with Indonesian audiences.
As mentioned in Chapter 5, I introduced the class to Roth’s model for Western book reviews, where she highlights four “moves”: introducing the book; outlining the book; highlighting parts of the book; and providing final commentary and recommendations.24 Faqih follows her steps almost verbatim.

He introduces the book he chooses to review, *Women and Religion*, by Majella Franzmann, in three of the ways Roth suggests. He first “establishes the topic,” then the “place of the book in the field:”

The revolutionary assumption in feminism is that being women is cultural rather than natural. Consequently, when women are not in the center of the production of cultural values, they inevitably will be in the margins of the traditions. Majella Franzmann in “Women and Religion” generally expounds very well the very basic feminist assumption in religion, that is, that in the name of ‘the nature’, ‘the normal’ of social orders, and the ‘divine values’ of religion, women are neglected and marginalized. Yet she elucidates also ways to bring women in the centre of understanding of religion, and make their voices heard in the world of religious realm.

He then discusses the possible readership, as Roth’s model suggests is typical when introducing a book review:

For those who want to apply step-by-step feminist perspective in understanding religion, the book is very useful. The author seems to write a handy manual book on women’s perspective in religion, yet she explains well philosophical background of the perspective. Even though the book was actually designated for students taking religious studies or gender studies in the universities, ordinary readers will benefit from it due to its easy organization and its simple explanation. The book also provides ample examples rooted in daily-life experiences of women in their relationship toward religious traditions in Western context.

Having introduced possible audiences for the book, Faqih then moves on to the second move in Roth’s model: “highlighting the general organization of the book.” He is quite thorough in his discussion of organization, as the topic sentences of his next several paragraphs indicate: “The book is organized in five chapters with helpful introduction in

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24 For a complete list of possible strategies within these steps, please see Chapter 5.
the beginning and valuable suggested readings in the end”; then, “I would divide the book into two major themes”; and “The second major theme is a proposal of feminist hermeneutical approach in studying religion, religious texts, beliefs, and activities.”

Having satisfied step 2, he moves to Roth’s step 3. He highlights and comments upon specific parts of the book, as indicated in the following paragraph:

The goal of the book is clearly to make women become subjects in our understanding of religious traditions and the foundation to do so is obviously their experiences. However, it is still problematic to define women experiences. Whose experiences? What kind of experiences? How do we reconcile different and conflicting experiences? Franzmann realizes the problem. She starts to discuss that some feminists differentiate between “woman’s experiences” and “women’s experiences”. The singular term refers to biological experiences which are shared among women of the world, while the plural term refers to myriads diversities of women in local cultures as well as global ones. Some feminists also distinguish “female experience”, “feminine experience”, and “feminist experience” (Franzmann, 2000: p. 7-12). In general, Franzmann comes to the conclusion that the term ‘experiences’ in feminism generally refers to the feeling of otherness women feel in their relation to religious traditions and the reaction to this otherness within cultural, political, and social systems that are dominated by males.

He begins with rhetorical questions of his own and moves on to Franzmann’s answers to his questions, indicating that this section of the book resounded with him as a reader, and that he believes it might also be useful to his ICRS audience.

Finally, as Roth suggests, Faqih concludes by “providing final commentary and recommendations”:

For feminists, women’s experiences are obviously very important in doing feminist hermeneutics on religious traditions. Yet in the later development, they disagree about exclusivity of women’s experiences to put them as the center of the act of interpreting. Using the concept of gender, some feminists remind us ‘that the experience of women has been and always is in relationship to men in the whole of human society’ (Sue Morgan, “Feminist Approach”, in: Peter Conolly (1999), Approaches to Study Religion, p. 65). This is to say, I think, that “Women and Religion” should be put in the context of “Men and Religion”. However, Franzmann does her task successfully showing the centering of women
in religion, and the next task is how to put it in the relation of the context men’s existence in religion. Here we can see that Faqih draws from non-Indonesian backward-looking audiences to justify his argument for a more relational understanding of gender dynamics, indicating his comfort in aligning his own Indonesian voice with non-Indonesian authors. Despite his critique, he also acknowledges that Franzmann “does her task successfully” by bringing women’s experiences with religion to the fore. He successfully “recommends” further research, while commending the work as a whole, satisfying Western genre expectations. Faqih adopts a “Western” style despite writing to a mixed yet local-to-ICRS audience.

**Conclusion**

What, then, does Faqih’s portrait tell us about what it means to write internationally, in English? First, in his actual texts, Faqih chooses to address a Muslim Indonesian audience, a Western audience, and a mixed Indonesian and Western forward-looking audience with his words, suggesting, in turn, his belief that his English can reach a variety of forward-looking audiences in addition to the Western one usually linked to English. Furthermore, he ties all of these audiences—whether Western or Indonesian or mixed—to his Indonesian context in some way, suggesting that, as he mentioned in his post-course interview, his “desire to serve” his fellow Indonesians encourages him to write in English “locally.” Indeed, Faqih’s writing straddles the intersection between local and global; he challenges the notion that audiences are discrete entities in our increasingly interconnected world in order to argue for social justice in Indonesia, suggesting, in turn, that with globalization we must re-conceptualize the rather static boundaries we place between English-using audiences. Notably, Faqih’s portfolio also
suggests that this re-conceptualization of audience does not necessitate a re-conceptualization of Western genre norms; in fact, his portfolio suggests that as a writer, he is comfortable drawing from Western rhetorical structures as resources, and populating them from within with both Western and Indonesian backward-looking audiences to promote his Indonesian purposes.

Nina’s Portfolio: Towards a Multi-faceted Notion of Identity

Similar to Faqih, Nina also prefers to ground her projected audience in the “local.” Nina, if we remember from Chapter 3, is motivated to study religion at ICRS because of her desire to promote social justice for oppressed groups, whether for Ahmadiyya Indonesians— the religious group to which she belongs— or for women migrant workers in her hometown. Nina’s long exposure to English within Indonesia, both as student and as teacher, in turn affects her perception of English as non-imperialist and capable of representing Indonesian needs. She once again highlighted her Indonesian experiences with English when I asked her, in her post-course interview, what audience she imagined most often and why. She explained:

Ok, usually at least graduate students. Indonesian and also foreigners here. I think because I started writing in English when I was in graduate school here. So when writing in English, I always think graduate students, at least my friends, my colleagues and classmates, because they know English— although Indonesian English— but they know English, so they will understand what I wrote about. Because for my friends, my English will be more understandable for them. They know my capacity in English at least.

This focus on the local as a starting point for her writing, and the fact that this “local” consists of both Indonesians and foreigners, is in alignment with Faqih’s preferred projected audience. We can see that Nina grounds her English in her local context because writing for an immediate peer audience helps her begin writing in a language
she’s not entirely comfortable with. Furthermore, she explains that her friends “understand” her Indonesian English, implying that “Indonesian English” might serve valuable communicative purposes in her local context. That said, she also complicated this “local” Indonesian-English-using audience by adding,

But I have to think internationally now, so internationally, I have to give an explanation about Indonesian terms. That’s why most of my things don’t explain enough about terms. Because I think of my Indonesian friends as audience. I think I need to write for international academics. So they can have PhD’s, can be graduate students or undergraduate. Because international undergraduate programs are also in English; because in Indonesia, in Gadjah Mada here, they have international programs for undergrads too.

Although she initially distances her local Indonesian context from the “international” audience she desires to reach by explaining the necessity of defining her “Indonesian terms,” she also points to the fact that “international” programs exist in Indonesia, implying that the “international” can be local as well, just as Faqih does.

Thus, although Nina imagines her graduate student friends who understand her “Indonesian English” to help her construct English texts, she also sees the need for an “international” English that is both local and global—an English that can reach both Indonesian and non-Indonesian audiences. As we turn to the actual texts she wrote second semester, and the specific audiences she located for her English words, we will see how Nina writes internationally, in English, and whether the audiences she locates for her texts affect her negotiation with the Western genre norms I introduced in class.

**Reaching International Readers in Indonesia: “An Ideal Composition between Pathos, Ethos, and Logos”**

The audience to whom Nina addresses her opinion piece very much reflects the “Indonesian” yet international audience she wants to reach, according to her post-semester interview. She writes in her cover letter that,
I was imagining that my audience is international readers in Indonesia, particularly who read English newspaper, the *Jakarta Post*, which is published in Indonesia. Besides that, I also hope that people who concern about women migrant workers also read my article.

Although “international,” the audience she imagines for her opinion piece is also grounded in Indonesia, and interested in Indonesian women migrant workers; her “international” audience is very much in alignment with Faqih’s understanding of “international” as both Indonesian and non-Indonesian. What, then, does an “international” yet Indonesian text look like, to Nina? She continues in her cover letter to explain that “the ideal composition between pathos, ethos, and logos makes my writing seem well-written for me. :)” Nina, as we can see from her emoticon, is happy with the Western norms I introduced in class, and feels that they contribute to a well-written paper for her Indonesian, international audience.

She does use the rhetorical appeals to successfully target an Indonesia-interested audience. She begins with a first-person anecdote that establishes her connection her subject matter:

I was shocked when my ex-student in High School, who just returned from Saudi Arabia, told me that she had to give a sum of money to a broker (calo), a person who works for migrant worker recruitment agencies (PJTKI, Perusahaan Jasa Tenaga Kerja Indonesia), who sent her to Saudi Arabia, and because she only gave 100,000 rupiah, the calo told everybody that my ex-student made a big mistake and is a stingy person. I then asked my ex-student, do other women migrant workers do this also? She answered that it is like an unwritten rule among women migrant workers who were sent by that calo that they should give a sum of money or things as an expression of gratitude because they go abroad because of her. Hearing that, a question came to my mind, who gets the most benefit from women migrant workers, actually?

Nina establishes her Indonesian ethos in this opening paragraph by referencing a former Indonesian high school student as a backward-looking audience; in doing so, she grounds her concern about “informal” gifts that, though the requirement is unspoken, are still
expected from migrant workers. She also addresses her international, yet local to Indonesia audience by translating the Indonesian term “calo” into English the first time she uses it, though she then moves to using it without English translation; as she mentioned in her interview, here she defines her Indonesian term to signal her international audience.

She also signals her academic ethos in the body of her piece, pointing to the multifaceted ethos she mentions in her literacy narrative (see Chapter 3). She begins a paragraph with the phrase, “Based on my former MA research,” before explaining that many women migrant workers have to go abroad to make enough money to support “the family, send the children to school, and to buy rice fields” because of the poor economic situation in Indonesia. She then juxtaposes the amount of money calos are paid for each migrant worker by the agency that employs them and the amount of money an average migrant worker makes:

Besides getting informal money directly from women migrant worker candidates, the calos also get money from the agency for every woman they can send. For one candidate they get one to two million rupiahs, and in a month they can send 10 to 15 candidates, so every month they can earn 10 to 30 million easily. When we compare the amount of money earned by a woman migrant worker to the calo, there is a big gap. A woman migrant worker only earns one and a half to four million a month by doing hard work abroad and sometimes experiencing violence, sexual harassment, or death. In contrast, a calo can get 30 million plus easily without any hard work. So, why do they still need some additional money from women migrant workers then? Why don’t they let women migrant workers benefit from their own money?

Nina draws on statistics from her research to argue that women migrant workers sacrifice much more than a calo, while making much less, successfully engaging in pathos and logos, as we discussed in class; furthermore, in keeping with her audience, we can see she doesn’t translate Rupiah into U.S. dollars or Euros, indicating an Indonesia-based
international audience “in the know” about Indonesia currency. (1 million Rupiah is about $100 US.)

To end, she again moves back to her identity as an Indonesian woman: “As a woman who lives in a village where most of the women are migrant workers, I can feel how hard this life is for them. They place their life at risk by being migrant workers whereas the calo does not need to worry about her life. So, I think, the calo is the one who should thank the women migrant workers, not vice versa.” We can see in her concluding remarks her local community’s importance to Nina’s writerly identity, as Chapter 3 discusses. Indeed, to argue for social change in this community, Nina moves in and out of her Indonesian identities as teacher, researcher, and village person to engage—using the Western rhetorical appeals I introduced in class—with her international yet Indonesian audience.

**Writing in English to a Southeast Asian Academic Audience**

Nina shifts to a different “international” audience in her conference paper; although she draws from her MA research on migrant workers in both texts, rather than addressing an “international” Indonesian audience, she envisions a Southeast Asian international academic audience. As she writes in her cover letter,

> In this unit, I was imagining that my audiences are graduate students and professor from any disciplines who join the 5th Graduate Student Conference in ARI NUS, Singapore. That is why I explain my context in bit more in detail to give complete description to my audiences.

Once again, she focuses on the importance of defining her terms and moving past her Indonesian context; she chose this conference because, she writes, “the issue that I bring about migration is popular in Southeast Asia and I portray it from religion which is rarely discussed by researchers.” Migration isn’t just an Indonesian issue; it’s a regional
Southeast Asian issue, making it, in turn, an “international” issue. Nina’s belief in her
dpaper’s regional importance was founded: it was accepted at the conference and she was
able to travel abroad to Singapore to present it. She never would have submitted it,
however, had it not been for her immediate peer audience. She writes in her cover letter:
“Since my classmates think that my paper is quite interesting, I have decided to actually
send my paper in.” As she mentioned in her post-course interview, her Indonesian
graduate student audience plays an important part in giving her confidence in her English
writing.

What then, does a text written to an international audience of graduate students
and professors in neighboring Singapore look like? Not surprisingly given her belief that
English is non-imperialist, her conference paper, similar to her opinion piece, follows the
Western genre expectations listed on the “Western Conference Tips” handout I gave. For
instance, she begins her paper just as the tips sheet suggests, by establishing the
conversation, how she’ll add to it with her paper, and her research questions:

Many researchers have studied women migrant workers from different points of
view, like diaspora, migration, multinationalism, family and violence studies. However, no one’s research has focused on religious issues and migration. I
believe, though, that studying women migrant workers’ religiosity is important. In
this paper, I will answer the following research questions: “How does women’s
migration affect the marital relationship?” and “How do couples deal with the
circumstances based on their understanding of Islamic teachings?” To answer
these questions, my talk will describe the impact of the wife becoming a migrant
worker on the marital relationship, based on couples’ Islamic understanding as
members of the Muslim community of Mojolawaran village in Pati, Central Java,
Indonesia.

She then moves on to some metadiscourse, as suggested by the “tips” sheet: “In this
paper I will first explain the context of my research within Indonesia circumstances.
Second, I will outline the theories and methods used in the research. Third, I will present my major findings, and finally conclusion will be drawn from my overall presentation.”

Indeed, she uses Western genre norms to tailor her talk to an academic audience of researchers throughout; for instance, before launching into her data, she clearly defines the theoretical framework for her study by defining “family systems theory” and “attachment theory” as approaches that forward, respectively, an understanding of family as an interconnected system, rather than as isolated parts, and the spousal relationship as sustained by community-linked motivations as well as emotional attachment. She then draws from an Indonesian backward-looking audience, the Indonesian Marriage Law No. 1/1974, and its relationship to Javanese values, to help her non-Indonesian listeners understand the inter-relatedness of marriage, law, and her participants’ notions of the ideal marital relationship:

Participants’ understanding about an ideal family is influenced by values outlined in the Indonesian Marriage Law No. 1/1974 Article 34 verses 1 and 2 which state: (1) “a husband should protect his wife and fulfill all family needs in appropriate with his ability; (2) a wife has the obligation to manage the household business as she best can”. Furthermore, the attitude of participants is also influenced by Javanese values which consider a good wife to be a friend for her husband, a caretaker for the children, and a manager of the home. In addition, it seems that the patriarchal system is strongly adopted by participants.

She places this contextualization in conversation with an interviewee’s understanding of the role Islam plays in the definition of marriage:

Based on religion (Islam), husband and wife should not be separated, and every family hopes that, but family needs have to be fulfilled, and immediately fulfilled. All families always want to be together, but economic conditions can create the desire to go work overseas. But I think the couple should stay together, according to Rasul {The prophet Muhammad SAW}25, they should stay together except in special cases.

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25 After she had turned her paper in, Nina explained to me that SAW is short for “ṣall Allāhu ʿalay-hi wa-sallām,” which means, in Arabic, “May Allah honor him and grant him peace.” I encouraged her to explain this term for her Southeast Asian audience as she revised her paper for her actual presentation.
Nina uses this participant to further highlight the tension Indonesian families must feel when the wife is forced by economic circumstances to separate from her family. Using Indonesian backward-looking voices such as the one described above, Nina shows throughout her paper that “Living overseas as migrant worker affects the running of the husband wife relationship.”

Nina concludes her paper just as the “tips” sheet suggests: she repeats her thesis, explains her results, and “ends with a statement of the larger implications of [her] question”:

In this paper I have shown that Islamic teachings influence the attitude of women migrant workers family in dealing with their husband-wife relationship and family matters. Moreover, from the findings we can conclude that religiosity highly affects maintaining a husband wife relationship to keep working and having no significant problems. Finally, I can state that questions about the importance of religious teachings to women migrant workers’ attitudes is very pertinent so that we can deal with some problems faced by women migrant workers from a religious point of view.

The “larger implications” Nina sees for her project, as the last sentence indicates, are both academic and civic: she argues to her audience that they should continue “questioning” how religion is related to migrant workers’ lives—pointing to a call for more research—while also, with her use of “we,” implicating this academic “international” audience in her call to help solve “problems faced by women migrant workers.” Not only does she unite her civic and academic ethos in this conference paper, but she does so in a Western rhetorical style, indicating her comfort using English in Western ways to represent Indonesian voices to a Southeast Asian forward-looking audience.

**Using Western Norms to Critique a West-Focused Book**

Nina also accommodates the Western norms I introduced in class when writing her book review of *Introducing Theologies of Religions* by Paul Knitter. In fact, she
discusses in her cover letter that “In my opinion, in this unit, the Roth model in the ETRW\textsuperscript{26} book is effective since I can refer to it if I find difficulties to continue my writing activities because I got stuck with my ideas.” Models and heuristics are important when learning a new genre, she implies. She explains her audience as encompassing both academics and laypeople:

Since the book that I reviewed is about theologies, of course I was thinking about academicians in inter-religious studies as my audiences. But I do not only intend my book review to them but also to laypersons who are interested in inter-religious dialogue and want to deepen their knowledge about Christian theologies.

Despite signaling this somewhat broad public audience, she still implies, similar to Faqih, that this particular book review was merely a classroom task for her: “After doing this task, I think I want to develop my skills in writing book review since now I’m thinking of writing book review and then submit it to Academic journal or newspapers.” Having an immediate and evaluative public audience for her first book review makes her want to share her words to a broader public audience in the future.

Her book review follows Roth’s model step-by-step, highlighting, as she mentions in her cover letter, that she’s comfortable writing in English to inter-religious scholars and laypeople in a Western style. In fact, she shows that she is quite capable of working from within Western genre norms to critique the Western Christian focus of the book. After detailing the book’s organization and that this was a strong point, Nina writes:

It would have been better if the author had not only compared Christian theologies to Buddhism mostly, but also to other religions. It might have happened because the author is more interested in Buddhism than other religions. Nina is gently critiquing blind spots in Western understandings of religion here—when I asked her about this critique during an individual writing consultation, she explained that

\textsuperscript{26}ETRW is an abbreviation for Swales’ \textit{English in Today’s Research World} where Roth’s model was published.
she believed that Islam is less accepted than Buddhism in the U.S., and thus addressed less in scholarship; interestingly, she didn’t include this information in the revision of her book review, pointing perhaps to the Indonesian hesitancy to directly critique published authors.

She also points out that Knitter’s style, in addition to his content, might alienate some members of her book review’s audience:

He also uses provocative language to persuade the people to carry out his ideas later on. We can see it from his subtitles which are mostly questions, and the most frequently asked is the “What about Jesus?” question. It is because of the importance of Jesus in Christian theology. On one hand, his way of provoking is very functional in persuading Christian readers, but on the other hand, sometimes it can create resistance from the readers who are not familiar or do not connect with Christians theologies.

Focusing primarily on Jesus as a backward-looking audience, “in a book called Theologies of Religion,” Nina suggests, might alienate non-Christian readers (perhaps like herself) in his audience. The audience she recommends in her concluding remarks highlights her critique:

Since there are few shortcomings in this book, I would like to emphasize that this book is really invaluable for Christian laypeople or common people, and highly recommended for people who are interested in interreligious dialogue, especially academicians in religious studies and Christians religious leaders.

Nina, though she does accommodate Western genre norms, still draws, although indirectly, from her Indonesian Muslim identity to critique Knitter’s Western Christian approach—and with that the fact that he doesn’t take into consideration that non-Western readers like herself may be in his public audience. In essence, she argues that he needs to be more expansive when invoking his backward-looking audience in order to reach a broader forward-looking audience. Indeed, Nina herself seeks, as she discussed in her
post-course interview, to address both an Indonesian and “international” audience with her words, a more inclusive approach than Knitter’s Christian-focused text seems to take.

**Educating A Mixed ICRS Audience about Ahmadiyya**

If Nina chose to address her book review to a more general “academic audience,” she chose to address her final paper of the year, her research paper, to her English-using professors and classmates at ICRS. She wrote in her cover letter, “I was thinking about my professors and my classmates as my audiences. Therefore, sometimes I do not explain for some terms that I think they are already familiar with.” Her purpose in addressing her local to ICRS audience was twofold. First, she was writing the paper both for my Academic Writing class and as a “final paper for the course ‘Religion, Politics and Identity,’” so pragmatically, she was writing for a grade. However, she also has more idealistic purposes in addressing her “local” ICRS audience. As she explains,

> I think my topic is interesting and a bit of a hot topic, since my topic about Ahmadiyya in Indonesia will attract people to know further about it. I am lucky that I am an Ahmadi and also a PhD student so that I can write about my religious community in academic way. Moreover, I can give the correct information about Ahmadiyya since what most Indonesian people know is not correct because they get it from people who do not like Ahmadiyya at all.

Nina suggests that she can draw from her oppressed religious identity to “correct” misconceptions about Ahmadiyya her fellow English-using Indonesians at ICRS might have; she also, once again, connects her religious identity to her motivations for getting a Ph.D., suggesting, in turn, that writing academically is a way to engage in civic social action.

However, in keeping with her desire to “internationalize” her writing, she also points out that she wants to eventually revise this ICRS-focused paper for a larger English-using audience: “I also hope that broader international audiences will also read
my paper in the future, so maybe I will revise again if I want to publish it in a academic
journal.” Nina believes that her paper on Ahmadiyya may benefit not just people at ICRS
but broader audiences as well, and if we take into account her post-course interview, this
“international” audience will most likely include both non-Indonesians and Indonesian
English-users like her colleagues at ICRS.

She ends her cover letter by once again pointing to her peers and the Western
norms I introduced as important to her writing process:

I think, in this unit, the most effective one is when we share our paper with our
friends and then they give suggestions and critiques to us. Besides that, IMRD
model is very effective to guide us in writing paper and also make us aware about
our own style in writing paper. When we examined some paper written in
academic journal is also really helpful for us to recognize different styles of
writing.

After acknowledging her immediate audience as important to her writing process, Nina
also references the activity discussed in Chapter 5— where students analyzed Swales’
IMRD model in relation to other published researchers who took different approaches
according to their projects—indicating that both her Indonesian peers, and these
published backward-looking audiences were resources as she wrote her research paper.

In her text, Nina, as she suggests, does assume some shared knowledge with her
audience, while also assimilating, for the most part, to Swales’ West-focused model. Her
introduction, for instance, clearly takes a CARS approach, as the introduction move of
Swales’ IMRD model suggests she should. Her opening paragraph points to her topic’s
“centrality” to her Indonesian context:

In the recent political situation in Indonesia, there is a growing trend of bringing
back the issue of religiosity, especially Islam. It can be seen from the growing
number of Perda shari’ah (Shariah local regulations) in some areas like Aceh and Cianjur. This trend, in fact, calls some responses both supporting and opposing.
On one hand, the Perda Shari’ah makes Muslims feel more free to conduct their religious activities and also express their religious identity through their appearances and events. On the other hand, it tends to subjugate minority groups outside Islam like Christians and other religious followers and also inside the Muslim community itself like Ahmadiyya followers.

Nina points to a resurgence of Islamic values in Indonesia, resulting in the adoption of strict Islamic laws in Aceh and Cianjur, ultra-conservative Muslim regions in Indonesia that her Indonesian audience would recognize without much explanation. Interestingly, though, she does translate Perda shari’ah from Arabic to English, perhaps for me, as her evaluative audience, or because of the desire to begin defining her terms that she mentions in her interview. Although Shari’ah laws are most often critiqued because they are oppressive to women, Nina takes a different approach in her critique, despite her feminist identity; she acknowledges their importance in forwarding Muslim belief systems, yet also argues that with this increasing focus on Islamic law, there is also increasing oppression not only against non-Muslims, but also against non-mainstream Muslims. By acknowledging positive aspects of Shari’ah first, Nina establishes her identification with Islamic values, despite the fact, as she’ll reveal later, that she herself is a member of Ahmadiyya; this move allows her to assert her credibility as a practicing Muslim before she moves, as Swales suggests she should, to “establishing” and “occupying” her “research niche.”

After outlining various accusations that have been made against Ahmadiyya by fellow Indonesians—that they have been called by fellow Indonesian Muslims “heretics,” “deviants,” and “even defamers of Islam”—Nina explains that in 2008 the Indonesian state passed a law, “Surat Keputusan Bersama (SKB27), which restricts Ahmadiyya from

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promulgating their teachings” in public. After drawing from these Indonesian backward-looking audiences to establish context, she establishes her research niche by pointing to the issue of identity formation, and how this law makes it “difficult for Ahmadiyya to actualize themselves as Ahmadi.” In turn, she seeks to occupy this niche by “explor[ing] how Ahmadi women preserve their identities in the Indonesia nation state context and the way they negotiate their Ahmadi identity after the issuing of SKB banning them from spreading their teachings.”

Interestingly, Nina begins the body of her paper with a literature review focused on defining the Ahmadiyya faith for her readers; that she feels such contextualization is necessary for her Indonesia-focused audience points to her purpose in writing this paper—to alleviate misconceptions about her faith circulating in Indonesian society. Notably, this literature review is also populated by both an Indonesian and non-Indonesian English voices. She begins her literature review by referencing an Indonesian backward-looking audience. She writes,

Trianita (2009) finds that identity as Ahmadi for Indonesian Ahmadi women has become their source of strength and confidence, particularly when they face challenges from other mainstream Muslims, since, being Ahmadi in Indonesia they have to deal with certain kinds of hostility from their Ahmadiyah’s counterparts.

Nina’s reference page notes the title of Trianita’s piece— *Women's agency in religion: the experience of Ahmadi women in Indonesia*—which indicates that Trianita’s research is written in English, though it still remains an “Unpublished thesis.” She then moves to published research done by Muslim-Americans in California to establish more context. That Nina places Trianita’s unpublished thesis before other published, yet non-

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28 There is the possibility that Nina translated an Indonesian title into English, but, since she didn’t do so with the titles of her other Indonesian references, I assume that this thesis was written in English.
Indonesian research highlights Nina’s belief that Indonesian backward-looking audiences are valid resources—just as Western published scholars are—in her local-global rhetorical situation. English can bring together both Western and non-Western research to further her Indonesian, yet international purposes.

After her detailed Ahmadiyya-focused literature review, she becomes much more vague as she turns to discussing mainstream Muslims in Indonesia, indicating, once again, her attention to her forward-looking audience:

In terms of worship, the Ahmadis follow the five pillars too like other mainstream Muslims. They vow the same shahadat, do sholat the same as other Muslims do, pay zakat, and perform their hajj in Mecca also. Therefore, actually there is no difference at all between Ahmadi and mainstream Muslims in doing obligation as Muslims.

Nina relies on shared knowledge about Islam and Arabic here, which contrasts with her detailed Ahmadiyya-focused literature review; by assuming shared knowledge and code-meshing in this section, she targets an ICRS audience that, even if they aren’t Muslim, most likely know important religious terms because they grew up in largely Muslim Indonesia. In doing so, she establishes connection with her audience that, as she suggests in her cover letter, may have misconceptions about her religion’s validity.

The rest of Nina’s paper does the same; she accommodates the IMRD model while assuming an Indonesian audience with her terms and examples. There’s a methodology section where she discusses her research methods, while also pointing to her own positionality: “Since I am an Ahmadi woman, I posit myself as researcher and also as an insider. As a researcher I place myself at a distance with my research’s site. However, my own identity as an Ahmadi woman will also enrich my findings.” There’s a section where she discusses her “results,” highlighting, for instance, that Ahmadiyya
women differ based on their age and education level in their willingness to acknowledge
and discuss their Ahmadiyya identities with other Indonesians; and the ways that
Ahmadiyya follow the “rules” that say they shouldn’t “promulgate” their faith, while still
congregating to celebrate important holidays. Finally, there is her “discussion” section,
what she terms “concluding remarks,” that echoes, in many respects, her literacy
narrative’s discussions of identity in relation to the English language.

First, she highlights beliefs she shares with her fellow Indonesian audience:
“Indonesia, as a pluralist society, admits the differences among its people and ideally
should treat them equally regardless of their ethnicities, religions, race.” Despite the gap
between this “pluralist ideal” and what her research and experiences show, her next few
sentences indicate that she still believes in following the rules:

In the context of nation state, every citizen has responsibility to maintain the
harmony by obeying law, rules and regulations applied in the state. However, they
can still hold their identities tightly. Their citizenship identity is Indonesian. But
their other identities are varied.

Nina forwards a negotiation model where Ahmadiyya can follow the rules, while still
asserting their religious identities within these rules. She continues, explaining that,

The Ahmadi woman’s community, as a part of Indonesian community, realizes
their obligation as citizens and tries hard to follow the law applied in Indonesia
although sometimes the law that was issued restricts their activities. From my
research, we can see that identity, particularly religious identity, sometimes brings
about difficulties for them in interacting with other people in the context of the
nation state. In order to deal with that difficult situation, they negotiate their
Ahmadi identity by adjusting with the context.

This notion that Ahmadiyya women should strive to “follow the law” despite their
religious oppression, and that flexibility of identity is important as they shift contexts is
strikingly similar to the ways Nina envisions her identity as an English user.
Indeed, if we recall from Nina’s Unit 1 literacy narrative, she explains that
“Writing in English doesn’t mean we don’t respect our Bahasa [Indonesia]. We respect it.
But as a part of being international academicians, we have to admit that English is used
by many people.” Similarly, she implies above that following the nation-state’s rules does
not mean that Ahmadiyya people don’t respect their religious identities. In her literacy
narrative, Nina writes, “I do not find any difficulties in grasping English since I put
myself not only as a Javanese but as a Javanese who is using English.” Similarly, she
might say that the women she studies don’t have difficulties following Indonesian laws,
since they put themselves not only as Ahmadi, but as Ahmadi who are also Indonesian.
As she suggests above, the Ahmadi “citizenship identity is Indonesian. But their other
identities are varied.” And finally, regarding English rules, she writes, “I do consider that
if we want to learn language, it means that we also have to embrace and understand the
culture; but it is not necessary to be involved in that culture.” Similarly, as she implies
above, if Ahmadiyya want to be part of a pluralist Indonesia, they should “embrace” and
“understand” the nation-state’s rules; that doesn’t mean, however, that they must abandon
their religious beliefs. Nina views identity as multi-faceted, and thus capable of
accommodating systems of power while maintaining non-dominant beliefs.

Conclusion

Nina’s writing, then, involves accommodating Western genre norms while
populating them from within with her Indonesian identities and purposes. She pointed to
multiple forward-looking audiences for her English words—an international, yet
Indonesian audience; a Southeast Asian audience; an audience of inter-religious scholars
and laypeople; her ICRS classmates and professors—but for the most part she followed
the rules set out in prompts, despite my audience-focused critical contrastive pedagogy. Within these Western conventions, she did contextualize more or less depending on which audience she was addressing, signaling that she was also working within these rules to target specific audiences. She struck a balance between relying on shared local knowledge and providing explanations for those who might be unfamiliar with her references. Like Faqih, she imagined a more inclusive international public audience, who included not only Indonesians but more specifically those Indonesians who have been subject to misperception, prejudice, and even oppression—and to target these audiences she drew from both Indonesian and Western backward-looking audiences. What’s noteworthy, as she suggested in her post-course interview, is that her most important audience may be her peers at ICRS, but these peers can also be situated within international audiences that include both Western and non-Western people, a situation that may require, as she suggests in her literacy narrative, a multi-faceted and flexible English-using identity.

**Ninik’s Portfolio: Teaching a Western Audience to Listen**

If Nina’s portfolio suggests a multi-faceted and flexible writerly identity, Ninik’s portfolio highlights that audiences should also show flexibility in accommodating writers interpreting from different contexts. Unlike Faqih and Nina, Ninik reported in her post-course interview that she most often imagined a “foreign audience” for her words. This difference can be attributed to Ninik’s language history. As Chapter 3 discussed, Ninik did her M.A. degree in Hawaii before coming back to Indonesia to study at ICRS, an experience that helped her forge what I term a “cultural ambassador” ethos. It’s not surprising, then, that in her post-course interview, Ninik explained that English was a
way for Indonesians like herself to communicate with non-Indonesian audiences about religious topics that may be “old news” in Indonesian academic conversations:

Maybe for Indonesian academics, religion is not interesting anymore. Because every day we are dealing with this same topic, and there are thousands and thousands of books and articles discussing this topic. But how about other people? Other countries? I think in Indonesia we have different culture, but same religion as other countries, Islam. But our culture and Islam in the Middle East, for example, is very different, and I think it would give more advantages for other people to have this information. And I think this is kind of bridge to harmonize religious people internationally.

That English can help her build bridges with non-Indonesian audiences was proven for Ninik by the fact that her MA thesis on pesantran was quite successful in Hawaii, but questioned at ICRS, as she explained in her literacy narrative. In keeping with her outward-looking lens, when I asked her what audience she most often imagined and why, she explained that, “In English, I think foreigners. Not Indonesian people.” When I asked her whether, even at ICRS, she imagined “foreign” people as her audience, she expanded:

Yes. So at ICRS my writing is very basic about religion. And Indonesian and particularly Muslims will withdraw from my article because they already know it. It’s already known. Yeah. I think my knowledge about religion is only average in comparison to Muslim Indonesian academic knowledge so nothing special for here.

Ninik, then, imagines an international audience not only because she wants to spread religious harmony, but also because she feels that her knowledge of religion, unlike her knowledge of English, is too “basic” for an Indonesian English-using academic audience. She sees her English both as a way to connect international audiences and as a way to negotiate friction she feels concerning her academic knowledge about religion, (and Arabic as Chapter 3 explores), when working within her Indonesian context.

Interestingly, after this explanation for why she writes past her ICRS context, she backpedaled a bit, and said,
Actually, I don’t think about audience at first, particularly in class papers. I just follow the topic in class, what is interesting, but I always think about what topic in this class I can relate to women issues. Then, after I’m done, I revise for different audiences I think would like my writing.

Ninik sets up a much clearer distinction than other students between her in-process projected audience (or lack thereof) when writing for a class, and the public audiences she may wish to reach with her words. This multi-tiered understanding of audience manifested itself in nuanced ways in Ninik’s cover letters as well as the texts she wrote during her second semester at ICRS: as we’ll see, she used her cover letters to encourage me, as an evaluative audience from the U.S., to shift identities to accommodate her Indonesian perspectives.

**Please put Yourself as an Indonesian Woman… not an American Woman**

Contrary to what she reported in her interview, Ninik chose to address her opinion piece to an Indonesian public audience. That said, she explains in her cover letter, just as she did in her interview, that she began her writing process by ignoring audience to “free-write,” a technique she learned in her Hawaiian English composition class:

> When I write something I never think about my audience. I just attempt to write whatever that comes on my mind. After I finished writing, usually I just start thinking about the possibility of my target audiences. For my editorial, I think I hope some groups that can read it that are Indonesian women, activists, doctors and the government. People who read the *Jakarta Post*.

Despite what she says in her interview, Ninik seems to be comfortable writing to an Indonesian public audience in this case, most likely because, unlike with religion, she feels her feminist knowledge might shed valuable light on women’s issues in the developing Indonesia. She can act as cultural ambassador when it comes to women’s issues.
That said, her cover letter signals that she does have another, more “international” audience in mind: me. She uses her cover letter to make a direct request of me as her evaluative audience:

When you read my editorial, please put yourself as an Indonesian woman since if you just think from the side of an American woman you will find it difficult to feel what I want to deliver to my audiences.

Interestingly, Ninik points to the disjoint between me, as her American instructor, and the audience to whom she is writing her text. It is only by grounding my own identity within her Indonesian context that her opinion piece will be effective for me as a reader. Indeed, throughout her piece Ninik draws from Indonesian examples, and even Indonesian languages, populating the Western rhetorical appeals I introduced in class with her Indonesian purposes.

A “typical” American audience, for instance, may “find it difficult to feel” the type of pathos Ninik wishes to engage in with her opening example because we are interpreting from vastly different social contexts. She begins her piece as follows:

The day was January 14, 2010. I sat on the bus with my sister, traveling from Jombang to Surabaya. As it was a full bus, there were some people who had to stand. The weather was hot, because the bus did not have AC. Suddenly a pregnant mother was standing next to me. I spontaneously stood up and gave my seat to her, but she who maybe was in her early 30s waved her hand as a sign of quiet refusal, and she said, "Matur nuwun ya, Saya mau ngamen (Thank you, I want to sing to beg)." I was surprised, then smiled to this beautiful woman and sat back. Not so long amid the smell of stinging sweat in a bus full of passengers, this mother was singing a song and using an instrument made of a series of bottle caps on a piece of wood.

Ninik paints a powerful image of a pregnant woman begging on a crowded, hot bus. That she is writing to an Indonesian audience is clear by her reference to Jombang and Surabaya—Javanese cities that most people reading from a non-Indonesian context would be unaware of—and by her use of code-switching when relating the pregnant
woman’s words; though Ninik translates the Bahasa Indonesia into English, the English, rather than the Bahasa Indonesia, is in parentheses, most likely indicating an audience that draws from the Indonesian language first and English second. Furthermore, that Ninik merely “smiles” and “sits back,” signaling her acceptance of the woman’s begging, might give someone interpreting from an American context—where beggars are seen as “lazy” rather than “needy”—pause. Ninik, however, grew up in a culture where begging is, if not accepted entirely by governmental agencies, a fact of life for many Indonesians, many of whom feel it is their duty to donate small change to those less fortunate. Indeed, Ninik, rather than condemning the mother for her decision to beg, continues:

As a mother, I felt touched when I heard this mother’s song. Sweat poured from her forehead, and she repeatedly had to protect her stomach with her hand or lean into passengers every time there was a rise or fall or when the conductor walked back and forth to collect tickets. The burden of life has forced her to do this. Of course, she gathered the coins. Coins from passengers are to continue her life. They could be for childbirth preparation. Sacrifice makes truly a wonderful mother.

Ninik successfully portrays the discomfort the woman must feel on the crowded bus, and the poverty that forced her to such a situation; this allows her to interpret the mother’s begging as “sacrifice,” rather than “endangerment” of an unborn child, as unsympathetic people interpreting from a non-developing context might. Ninik was probably quite aware of this cross-cultural difference concerning begging because of her time in the U.S., which might have spurred her request that I read her text as she and her Indonesian audience would.

Ninik then steps back from pathos to acknowledge that the mother’s actions were “risky,” and to make her argument that reproductive health needs to be addressed in Indonesia:
What this mother did is not without risk. Economic ability is the main reason that she is doing it. Besides that, there is also the possibility she did not have enough knowledge of the risks. Here in Indonesia, reproductive health does not include in the ranks of importance in household budgets, particularly for middle to lower class families. The need to eat, and school for our children is more important than the funds which are allocated to reproductive health. In addition, access to health services in Indonesia is very limited. In one village, there is usually only one health service, but not all villages have this service.

Though these facts may seem obvious to many Indonesians, she positions them as shared knowledge with phrases like “here in Indonesia” and “our children,” showing, once again, that her audience is an Indonesian one, and that Indonesians needed to have more “knowledge of the risks” involved with pregnancy.

Ninik then moves on to an example from her own life, where, because of faulty pre-natal care, her Aunt died needlessly during childbirth. Her aunt had eclampsia, or high blood pressure, when she went into labor, and was scheduled for a Cesarean section, but, because of a lack of doctors, she was forced to wait for four hours for the doctor to come and do the procedure. Her aunt—with the nurses’ permission, because they lacked knowledge concerning the condition—made the choice to have a natural birth despite the fact that, “Medically a person with high blood pressure is ‘Forbidden’ from giving childbirth naturally.” Ninik’s aunt eventually passed away. As Ninik explains,

Finally, God gave the best way for her. On Friday January 15, 2010 at 9:20, God called this mother to a peaceful end. Innalillahi wa Innalillahi rojiun.

Ninik draws upon God in ways an “American woman” like myself might consider strange in an opinion piece for a national newspaper. As we had discussed in class, however, appeals to religion are only unconvincing to those interpreting from a non-religious background. Ninik’s use of Arabic further indicates that her audience is comfortable with and capable of understanding Muslim religious references. She
explained to me in her post-course interview that the phrase means, “‘Everything will go back to God.’ Usually if we have sad tragedies, we always say it. It means that everything is from God and everything goes back to God. This is very common in Indonesia, so even if I publish it in the *Jakarta Post*, it’s OK.” Ninik implies that even though the *Jakarta Post* is an English-medium newspaper, it is still Indonesian, and thus accepting of common religious references.

Ninik ends her piece with logos, by citing World Health Organization statistics that place Indonesia’s mortality rate at “307 dead from every 100,000 births,” which makes it high on the list of countries with already high infant mortality rates. She reports:

The World Health Organization (WHO) estimates that 37 million births occurred in Southeast Asia every year, while maternal mortality is estimated 170 thousand. As many as 98% of all maternal and child deaths occur in India, Bangladesh, Indonesia, Nepal and Myanmar. Indeed, Indonesia is one of the highest countries according to MMR. So what should we do for our mothers?

Ninik draws from a global backward-looking audience, while arguing, as an Indonesian herself, for social change in Indonesia. We can see, then, that Ninik draws from her Indonesian background—as a mother, as a Muslim, and as a feminist concerned with women’s issues—to argue for increasing awareness of maternal mortality rates, while also using ethos, pathos and logos strategically to target her Indonesian audience.

Although Ninik explained in her interview that she most often directed her words about religion to non-Indonesians, we can see that when she writes about women’s issues, she is very comfortable sharing her knowledge with an Indonesian public audiences. In fact, in her interview, she explained that she had already sent in her piece in:

I already sent it to the *Jakarta Post*. I can wait 3 weeks usually and then if it is not published, no problem. Because actually I have three stories in my editorial that I can share other places. I rewrote it in Indonesian on Facebook, but I didn’t give any logos. Only pathos. Just giving the stories. I got many comments. But I hope
through writing everybody can accept this reality. They never realize this is important until they read it on Facebook.

Ninik highlights her belief that her words and experiences matter, whether in English, or in Indonesian, and that through writing, whether on Facebook or in the *Jakarta Post*, she can spread social awareness through deliberate rhetorical choices—by including or leaving out logos, for example. Indeed, she requests in her cover letter that I, as an American woman, should view her choices as deliberate and context-specific, disrupting the notion that English can only represent Western interests.

**Poverty, Religion, and Arranged Marriages: Opening a New Door for Researchers, Women Activists, and Academics**

If Ninik’s opinion piece targeted an Indonesian English-using audience, her conference paper looks outward, to the “foreign” audience she discussed in her post-course interview. In her cover letter, she once again addresses me as an audience member who’s outside of the Indonesian experience. This time, though, I happen to be a member of the public audience she wishes to inform. She writes,

> When you read this paper, I hope you can find the real problems of Indonesian women regarding arranged marriages. I am quite sure that as an American, you do not have any experiences regarding arranged marriages. Therefore, this paper, I hope, will open a new door for researchers, women activists, and academics regarding this topic.

Rather than asking me to shift identities, as her previous cover letter did, she implies that this time I should interpret her words from an American academic perspective; she addresses me as an American, and thus as representative of the wider audience she wishes to reach with her Indonesian knowledge, implying, in turn the “foreign” audience she discusses in her interview. It is not surprising, then, that her paper conforms to the Western conference paper tips I disseminated in class.
She begins, for instance, by establishing the importance of her topic to the field, beginning with a broader Asian context, and then narrowing the conversation to Java:

Arranged marriages are still common in many countries such as India, Pakistan, Japan and Indonesia. In Indonesia, especially in Java, the practice of arranged marriages is shaped not only by traditional culture but also by popular interpretation of Islamic teaching.

She then moves on to discussing poverty, religion and arranged marriages in Indonesia:

In some areas of Indonesia, poverty can cause arranged marriages. Poverty occurs in everywhere in social life. Many people deem poverty as a big problem, so they have to surmount with various ways. People’s views on poverty and how they deal with poverty cannot be separated from their understanding of religion, especially in Indonesia. Religion of course influences how they think about their life including how they see about arranged marriages. Indeed, discussion about poverty, religion, in this case Islam, and arranged marriages is essential. In this paper, I will examine arranged marriages in light of the tenets of Islam and poverty.

Here, she satisfies step 3 of the Western Conference Paper Tips by explicitly stating her thesis. Furthermore, unlike in her previous paper, where she talks as an Indonesian, in the introduction of her conference paper she takes a more distant role, and talks about Indonesians, as seen in her pronoun “they” when referring to her fellow Indonesians; as Ninik’s audience widens, and her topic shifts, so too does her writerly identity.

That said, in the body of her paper she writes both as a researcher and as an Indonesian, in keeping with the “personal” style she enjoys (see Chapter 3), while also accommodating Western genre norms. In her discussion about her methods, for instance, she points to her “researcher’s identity” in a scholarly manner:

I have used a number of sources from books, journals, and interviews. My data also consists of interviews with women in Banyuwangi regent, East Java, Indonesia. The respondents included married women, and I observed some families in this area. In compiling this data, I carried out personal interviews due to the private nature of arranged marriages and Javanese reticence to discuss the topic openly. Accordingly, I cover the identities of my participants. I chose this area because I am also originally from this place and so I have more open
opportunities to perform personal interviews.

Though part of the community that she researched, as she acknowledges in the last sentence, she is careful here to take an objective tone to target her international academic audience. She begins the next section of her paper, however, with a personal anecdote:

One day when I was a junior high school student, I asked my teacher why most Moslem countries are poor. Then, the teacher explained, “There is a difference between Moslem and non-Moslem’s belief. Moslems believe that life today is temporary, so their focus in life is not on collecting wealth. Unlike Moslem, many non-Moslems do not believe in life after death. As a result, they only think about the life in the world, so they pile up wealth.” This explanation brought me, as a child, to new understanding that Islam supports people to be poor.

Here, Ninik draws from her personal experiences as an Indonesian child to set the stage for a more scholarly look at Islamic beliefs about poverty. Indeed, she quickly moves to temper this childhood experience:

Although right now I do not think that this belief is the only cause of poverty, in the rural areas, religious teachers still keep this argument. For me, people who use religious belief to justify poverty fail to interpret the religious tenets because they only notice one side of the Koran’s verses. Indeed, in many verses, the Koran supports people to work hard and balance their activities of collecting wealth and worshiping. I do, however, agree that poverty links to cultures, customs and traditions in a community.

She then moves to a detailed discussion about the Qur’an, poverty, and arranged marriages to establish context for her international audience. She explains that according to Indonesian statistics, “Before 1960, the percentage of arranged marriages in the Central Java province was 90%, but since then, the number of arranged marriages has decreased to 50%” because of increasing access to education and “changes in interpretations of Islamic teaching.” Despite this decrease, she explains, there are still many cases of arranged marriages, and these are problematic from a feminist perspective because,
Usually, men are given the first chance to look at candidates for their wife, either openly or in secret. In fact, sometimes men look at the women without women’s knowing. Only rarely women are offered the first opportunity to see their candidates for husband. After that, all decisions are in the man’s hands. The process will stop if the man does not like the candidate for a wife. On the other hand, if the man wants the women, the process will continue. It seems evident, then, that marriages are really only ‘arranged’ for women, because men will have some say about whom they will marry and women effectively do not.

Ninik believes that arranged marriages—because they place the woman in a position of “object”—forward gender inequality. And often, she argues, the motivations for such objectification are economic, rather than, as past scholarship has suggested, Islamic.

To prove that “arranged marriage can be parents’ shortcut to get out of poverty”—and that the Qur’an can be used (problematically) as a justification, Ninik cites a passage from the Qur’an that most Muslims would probably be aware of, and translates, in parentheses, the Arabic terms for her “international” audience:

The Quran states in An-Nisaa’: 4 about dowry, “And give to the women (whom you marry) their mahr (dowry) with a good heart: but if they, of their own good pleasure, remit any part of it to you, take it, and enjoy it without fear of any harm (as Allah has made it lawful).” Thus, the meaning and purpose of dowry is actually a symbol of respect to women and women have the right to use the dowry for whatever they want. However, a dowry is sometimes regarded as a parental right, which means that the dowry is considered a symbol of financial aid given to her parents.

Ninik gives her international audience valuable context about basic Qur’anic tenets that “respect women”—most likely because of the many feminist critiques lodged against her religion—while also acknowledging that the Qu’ran is often misinterpreted in her Indonesian context, leading to a situation where arranged marriages benefit not the bride, but her parents. This contextualization sets the stage for her to invoke several Indonesian interviewees’ who had experienced arranged marriages as backward-looking audiences. One, for instance, was married off to a “rich old man” to pay off her parents’ “large
debt.” English, as Ninik suggested in her interview, can be used to represent Indonesian
and Muslim voices to international English-using audiences.

Finally, to highlight to this international audience that arranged marriage is a
custom linked to poverty, and not solely related to Islam, Ninik asserts:

This contrasts with what Islam recommends about marriages. The general purpose
of marriage in Islam is that the sexes can provide company to one another, love
one another, have children, and live in peace and tranquility to the
commandments of Allah.

Ninik, because she doesn’t cite specific passages from the Qur’an here, seems to be
drawing from her own interpretations of Allah’s commandments, signaling, in turn, her
religious belief system, just as she does in her opinion piece with her Arabic phrase; that
said, throughout this piece she gives much more context regarding her religion, indicating
an international audience that may include non-Muslims with preconceived notions about
her faith. In her conference paper, then, Ninik seeks to highlight to an international
audience, myself included, that poverty interacts with misinterpretations of the Qu’ran to
justify arranged marriages, and thus the oppression of women in her Indonesian context.
In keeping with this audience, she works from within the Western norms I introduced in
class, while also giving more space to Indonesia-specific and Islamic-specific context
than she did in her Indonesia-focused opinion piece. Ninik, then, is quite capable of
moving between local-global audiences to forward her feminist reading of her Indonesian
context.

**Reviewing a West-Centered Text: Put Your Identity Like Me**

In her book review of *Women and Religious Traditions*, a collection edited by
Leona M. Anderson and Pamela Dickey Young, Ninik once again discusses gender and
religion, while assimilating to the Western norms introduced in class. Though she’s less
explicit than in her other cover letters, Ninik’s primary audience in this text seems to be me as evaluator—and similar to her other cover letters, she asks that I assume a particular identity as I read her paper. To explain the perspective she’d like me to take as audience, she begins by discussing the ways her own identities influenced her reading of the book:

When I read this book, I put myself in different identities. First is as a Moslem. As a person with Islam as my religion, I really want to know how other religions discuss about certain topic. Second is as a woman. I have been active in women's issues since I was in undergraduate. However, the topic that I have been working on is only in Islamic tradition. So when I read this book, I was interested to learn a lot about the position of women in other religious traditions.

Ninik paints herself as a Muslim woman interested in other religions—as someone who draws from her faith background as she interprets, but who is also open to learning about “other religious traditions.” After describing her own interpretive lens, she suggests that I take a similar approach when I read her book review: “Thus, I suggest that you, when you read my book review, you may put your identity like me. I am sure that you will find such new things.” Ninik asks that I, as audience to her text, assume an inquiring identity about religion and try, once again, to understand her interpretations as linked to her context. By reading this way, she hopes that I too will learn “new things” about women and religion.

Ninik’s book review follows Roth’s heuristic almost exactly. She begins by introducing the book—a compilation of texts written by multiple authors—and recommending it to “beginning students on the issues of women and religions” because of the authors’ “general overview regarding each tradition in terms of women’s role,” satisfying Roth’s first move.

She then satisfies Roth’s move 2 by highlighting the general organization of the book. She writes that “each chapter contains five elements about the history and status of
women; texts, ritual, and interpretation; symbols and gender; sexuality; and social change.” She then adds her own commentary, establishing a response pattern she carries throughout her book review:

I think that these points are fruitful to address women’s issues. To illustrate, discussion of women’s position in religions cannot be separated from texts. Indeed, the tradition of religion usually just refers to the texts. However, texts do not stand by themselves. There is, for sure, interpretation from their believers. When we deal with interpretation, it is always connected to political reasons, and power. I can say that no single interpretation is free from individual interests. So this book is useful because the authors cover interpretation of texts in each religious tradition.

Interestingly, we can see the same perspective she takes on interpretation in her cover letter occurring here in her book review: there she also points out that any interpretation is subject to “individual interests,” and she is careful to highlight that my interpretations spring from my American context, while her own interpretations spring from her position as a Muslim woman.

Ninik successfully incorporates her response pattern throughout her book review, satisfying Roth’s move 3 that suggests that writers in a Western tradition generally make commentary about specific sections of the book they review. She quite explicitly draws from her Muslim ethos, for instance, when responding to a chapter written by L. Clarke, on women in the Islamic tradition. Ninik begins her discussion of this chapter with the sentence, “As a Muslimah (female Muslim), I am interested in discussing women in the Islamic tradition.” After outlining the general structure and aims of the chapter, she explains that “in this chapter, for me as a Moslem, I do not find any new things from her explanation. However, I do believe for those who are just beginners in Islamic studies will learn many things about women in Islam.” She highlights, for example, the section on “women in the Prophet Muhammad’s family” and his ethical treatment of them as
particularly important to people new to Islam, who may have misperceptions of her faith. She successfully adds to the conversation with her own Indonesian interpretations, as Western genre norms prescribe, indicating, once again, that Western rhetorical structures can represent Indonesian voices.

Indeed, in her final paragraph, she quite clearly shows her ability to work within the dominant Western genre norms to critique the West itself. In accordance with Roth’s model that suggests she provide final commentary and recommendations, Ninik writes:

This book gives more complete picture of women in religious tradition. However, the traditions that are covered in this book are only those that most often appear in religion courses in North American universities and colleges. This specification, for me, makes these topics of discussion too limited. In fact, there are many interesting religious traditions that are not known in Western academia. I am sure that this book would also be richer if the authors were not only Western-feminist scholars but also from other areas since they will have different understanding of women in certain religious traditions. I do believe that every area will contribute differently in term of religious understanding although their religions might be the same.

Ninik uses Roth’s final move to critique the lack of information concerning non-Western religions in the book, as well as the dearth of non-Western voices; after all, as she suggested at the beginning of her review—and in her cover letter—people interpret texts differently depending on their individual contexts, so including non-Western interpretations of dominant religions seems especially important. Similar to Nina, then, Western rhetorical structures allow her to critique understandings of religion that ignore non-Western backward audiences.

**Conclusion**

Ninik herself shows, in her writing, the possibilities for including non-Western writers in Western academic conversations concerning religion; while accommodating the “rules,” she quite literally adds her Indonesian voice to critique West-centered
interpretations of religion in both her conference paper and in this book review, showing that she can use English to communicate her Indonesian identities and thus interpretations effectively to the “foreign” audience she wishes to reach. That said, she also shows, in her opinion piece, that she can use Western norms to argue for social change within Indonesia itself. Her willingness to write to the West about Indonesian issues was undoubtedly influenced by her experiences as an Indonesian writing in a Hawaiian context, though, as we saw, she wrote just as well to her Indonesian English-using audience. Ninik is a flexible writer, and she asks her audience to be flexible as well.

Indeed, that she asks me to shift identities to accommodate her non-Western perspectives is indicative of her belief that the West must also learn to listen to people interpreting from “other areas.” Whereas Faqih constructs a more inclusive “we,” Ninik paints a clearer delineation between I, as an evaluative audience representing the West, and the Indonesian perspectives she espouses. This clear delineation probably springs partly from the two discrete English-using educational experiences she has had: as a language user, she has addressed audiences in Hawaii and in Indonesia, and therefore the line between the cultures is probably clearer than in Faqih’s primarily local and blended experience with English. In addition, that she asks that I, and with that, the West, take responsibility for listening to alternate perspectives also points to what she argues in her book review: “When we deal with interpretation, it is always connected to political reasons, and power.” Although she feels no friction adopting Western genre norms, the West, for Ninik, still has the power to “interpret” English-using conversations concerning religion. Ninik’s portfolio, then, even further complicates Dr. Atun’s question.

Constructing a productive international English-using conversation involves asking more
than “To whom do we have students write?”; it’s also a matter, according to Ninik, of asking, “Will they listen?”

**Tim’s Portfolio: Moving Towards a Grounded Perception of Audience**

Tim is quite similar to Ninik in the way he conceptualizes his ideal audience as Western, which can be attributed to the fact that, as Chapter 3 explored, he learned English primarily by reading West-oriented English texts, rather than negotiating with the language in his local Indonesian context. Indeed, when I asked him in his post-course interview what audience he most often imagined and why, he replied, without hesitation, “I think international academic experts is what I imagine when I write something, especially at ICRS.” When I asked him, “Is this audience Indonesian? Western? Asian? Mixed?,” to clarify what he meant by “international,” his answer was unequivocal: “No, because I write in English, I automatically imagine a Western audience.” Despite this West-focused projected audience, similar to Ninik, Tim *did* address his English words to his fellow Indonesians several times second semester, indicating, perhaps, that as he negotiated specific local writing tasks, his understanding of English as merely Western shifted a bit—and with this shift, we will see, came an increasing comfort with including his local voice in his texts, whether addressing an Indonesian or a Western audience.

**Speaking Out to Indonesians about Speaking Out**

Indeed, Tim quite clearly steps away from his “Western” imagined audience in his opinion piece, where he returns to the topic he explored in depth first semester—that of Indonesians “speaking out” and moving past their “introverted” characters. He writes in his cover letter that,

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Since I wish to publish it in the Jakarta Post, the first reader of this editorial would be the chief editor of the Jakarta Post. I hope he or she would accept my
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ideas and find them important to be published in the newspaper. However, the more important targets of my editorial are the Jakarta Post’s readers. I hope they would be more open to public opinion, and even encouraged to speak their own opinion out. In my editorial, I try to convince the readers that Indonesian people should set themselves free from the labeling of introvert character. I also give examples from some cases in which public opinion got its triumph in fighting for justice.

Tim uses his opinion piece, then, not only to speak out himself but to also encourage other Indonesians to voice their own opinions for social justice. To set the stage, Tim, in his opening paragraph, alludes in a general manner to the recent historical past in Indonesia, and to stereotypes that spring from this past:

Some may say that most Indonesian people are introverts, and that they tend to keep their feelings and thinking inside instead of speaking them out. However, I believe that such stereotyping is wrong because it is derived from a superficial observation of past conditions, without even asking for the reasons behind such phenomenon. In the past, it may be true that Indonesian people seemed to be silent towards any issue that came around them. However, from this we cannot then conclude that Indonesian people are introverts. In fact, they would not have kept silent if they had not been silenced.

In keeping with Western norms, Tim states his own opinion quite directly, using “I” and explicitly arguing that oppression led to stereotypes about Indonesians being somehow passive and introverted. That said, he still veils his critique of these essentialist readings by avoiding mention of specific actors: for instance, rather than pointing to those who hold essentialist notions about Indonesians specifically, he writes that “Some may say”; and in his final sentence, rather than stating immediately who did the “silencing,” he uses the passive voice, rather artistically, I must admit, to say that Indonesians were silent because they “were silenced.” Tim’s introduction, though he does take on a direct tone regarding his opinion, also mimics his sugar and tea analogy, as discussed in Chapter 4, where he suggests that when it comes to critique, the passive voice is considered more “polite” and “artistic” in Indonesian discourse.
The backward-looking audience that Tim draws on next, Mochtar Lubis—political prisoner, and arguably one of Indonesia’s most famous journalists and authors—further works to solidify Tim’s connection to his Indonesian audience. Tim writes:

Nearly twenty years ago, in one of his articles, Mochtar Lubis dreamed for a “glasnost” of Indonesian culture. As a cultural observer, he was concerned with the Indonesian culture that was tightly restrained by both the Old Order and New Order regimes. In those eras, Indonesian people did not have an open chance to share their opinion or to be critical about what were happening in their surroundings. Lubis’ dream, read in context of mass media, means a change in relation between Indonesian people and the media they read and watch. They should not be passive readers or watchers anymore, instead actively share their responses.

Because he writes to Indonesians, he doesn’t need to explain who Mochtar Lubis was, or even that the Old Order and the New Order regimes were eras of dictatorship under Sukarno and Suharto. He uses Lubis’s call to action to make his own: that Indonesians should use the mass media actively to speak out. At this point, Tim, after drawing from Lubis for back-up, shifts from talking about Indonesians, to talking to them, and with them. He writes,

Lubis’ dream of cultural “glasnost”, which is also our dream, is now coming into reality. We can see the phenomena of "glasnost" in some “big” events, in which Indonesian people did not merely read and watch the news passively, but instead were actively involved in responding to the events. Moreover, some cases that recently happened have proven that public opinion can be a moral force that determines the end of the story (my emphasis).

Tim signals, with his use of “our” that he too is deeply invested in using the media to speak out. To prove that Lubis’ dream is becoming reality, he turns to recent incidents where Indonesians actively questioned authority to enact social justice. He cites the Bibit-Chandra case, where “Many people who regularly followed the case in the media believed that the police had done wrong in arresting Bibit S. Rijanto and Chandra M. Hamzah, two deputies of Komisi Pemberantasan Korupsi (Corruption Eradication
Commission).” Note here that Tim puts the English in parentheses, signaling his Indonesian-language audience as primary. Tim then moves on without giving more context about the case, signaling a forward-looking audience well aware of Indonesian current events. He describes the way an Indonesian man, Usman Yasin, “initiated a blog in an internet social network site,” with the “target of collecting a million people to support the release of Bibit and Chandra.” This target was reached, according to Tim, “in a few days,” causing the president to set up a special task force, who eventually released the two prisoners.

He then cites the “Prita” case, where Indonesian people used social networking sites, and in particular Facebook, to enact social justice. Tim writes: “the people that believed that Prita Mulyasari had been a victim of an unjust court decision collected coins to cover the fine of Rp 204 million, which she had to pay to the Omni International Hospital.” Again, Tim assumes knowledge of current events; his *Jakarta Post* audience would be aware that Prita, a poor woman, was fined (in U.S. currency, $250,000) because a large hospital took her to court for defamation when she publicly complained about misdiagnosis. Because of social media, and public support in the form of coins, the hospital dropped the fine. Tim, by citing these powerful examples of Indonesians “speaking out,” speaks out himself, challenging the dominant stereotypes of the “passive” Indonesian he begins with, while also issuing a call to action for other Indonesians. Drawing from an Indonesian backward-looking audience, then, seems to push Tim past the “passivity” he discussed at length in the first semester.
After discussing the role of social media such as “telephone, short message service, and internet community sites,” as valuable sites for “public response,” Tim concludes his piece with an optimistic call to action:

After the era of information, there will follow an era of participation. In Indonesia, whose people number more than two hundred million and which has very rich cultural background, people’s participation in media could be an incredible transformative force. Are you ready?

Tim ends with an affirmation of Indonesia’s cultural wealth—an aspect of national identity which most Indonesians I encountered were quite proud of—and a direct address to his audience, engaging, in turn, in pathos and ethos. In this piece, Tim successfully engages in the Western rhetorical appeals I introduced in class, while also adopting the “bold” voice he discussed in his literacy narrative, most likely, I would argue, because he grounded his analysis in his Indonesian context: he associated himself with an Indonesian-backward-looking audience to spur his Indonesian forward-looking audience to action.

Localizing Audience Mid-Process: From the West or Southeast Asia back to Indonesia

Unlike his opinion piece, which Tim wanted to publish for a public audience in the Jakarta Post, when it came to his conference paper, he had no desire to move his words past our classroom context, probably because he lacked confidence in his final product. He begins his cover letter by explaining, “Although I have no plan to send the paper in to a real conference, I wrote this paper as if it would be presented in a conference.” Despite the classroom-focused nature of his task, he does highlight a shift in his in-process projected audiences:

At first, I imagined a Western or Southeast Asian regional conference to be the target of this paper. However, I thought then, the most suitable audience of this
topic are Indonesian people, especially Muslim and Christian theologians. In my opinion, they are the most appropriate persons to take benefit from my research and follow the suggestions I give accordingly.

This in-process audience shift, I would argue, indicates his increasing comfort using English for Indonesian purposes. That said, despite his Indonesian forward-looking audience and class discussions about tailoring one’s English to one’s audience, Tim still shows, in his cover letter, his desire to accommodate to the Western Conference Paper norms I introduced in class. He writes,

Despite having revised this paper many times, I am still not satisfied with my work. There are at least two reasons for this. First, I feel inconvenience with my explanation on Paul Knitter’s models since it consumes four pages of my paper and there’s no space for my research data. I wish I could give it in a smaller portion. Second, I have not done the “Paramedic Method” well. Many sentences in this paper need shortening.

Tim lacks confidence in the ways he addressed my in-class activities related to Western genre norms—norms that, as the classroom discussion that ended Chapter 5 shows—are at odds to Indonesian norms. We had discussed, for instance, the importance of focusing on one’s own research most in Western conference presentations—of spending more time adding to the current conversation than merely re-iterating past research in a short paper. Indeed, Knitter, as a backward-looking audience, does take up the majority of his paper, forcing him to put much of his Indonesian data in an “Appendix;” he explains in his cover letter that for now, “The final form of the data enclosed as appendix may be the best thing I could do.” Tim’s Western backward-looking audience dominates the Indonesian backward-looking audience he wishes to share, in this version, at least, though I would argue that Tim’s own voice is still quite evident in his final piece.

He also feels uncomfortable with his use of the Paramedic Method. I had shown students this editing method from the Purdue OWL website, which helps writers adopt a
direct style by reducing their sentence length and writing in the active voice, to satisfy the
tip that calls for “short sentences and simple syntax.” Tim feels his sentences don’t yet
live up to this conference paper tip. Although, as the class discussion with which I ended
Chapter 5 showed, I had couched these West-focused activities with critical discussions
about audience and rhetorical choice, Tim still felt that his paper was inadequate because
it didn’t live up to Western norms—which, ironically, probably kept him from wanting to
actually share his research with a public Indonesian audience.

Despite the lack of confidence he shows in his cover letter, Tim does, for the most
part, follow the Western Conference Paper Tips sheet I gave, while targeting his
Indonesian audience from within these norms. He begins by situating his research, as the
tips sheet suggests, in current Indonesian conversations:

Interfaith dialogue is important for the future of Indonesia, in which peoples of
two great religions in the world, Islam and Christianity, are involved in a complex
encounter, both in the past and present. Many attempts have been done to find
and promote an effective dialogue between these two religious groups.
Accordingly, many articles have been written to report and analyze its
development. However, a new discourse of dialogue has not been observed, i.e.
the dialogue that happens among internet users.

After establishing his niche—inter-religious discourse on the internet—he moves to
contextualize and explain the importance of his research to his Indonesian audience:

Some facts show that cyber-space will be important media for religious dialogue,
especially for Indonesian Christians and Muslims. First, the number of
Indonesian internet users is drastically increased in the last five years. According
to some surveys, the internet users in Indonesia in 2005 were only about 16
million. This number was increased to 30 million by the end of 2009… Second,
along with its increasing role as information media, there is also increasing trend
to use internet to spread one’s ideology and religious belief. Police findings of
internet usage for recruiting terrorists is an obvious example for this phenomenon.
Third, in many sites, Indonesian Muslims and Christians seriously discuss their
beliefs and traditions. Internet searching with the keywords “dialog islam kristen”
(Muslim Christian Dialog) will result in about 200,000 sites, in which thousands
of Indonesian people are involved. It means that Indonesian Muslims-Christians
dialogue in cyber-space is a developing new discourse. It is important for us to pay attention to this new field of Muslims-Christians encounter. Four, compared to other media, the usage of websites and blogs has some characters that are beneficial for an interfaith dialogue, such as anonymity, simplicity, accessibility, and wide publicity. These characteristics are important for us to build an effective interfaith dialogue.

Tim uses meta-discourse to signal his points—with his first, second, etc.—in keeping with the tips sheet, but he also clearly signals an Indonesian forward-looking audience with his use of pronouns—he uses “us” several times to indicate shared interest in inter-religious dialog.

We can see that Tim views his research as useful for shared action as he describes his paper’s focus—a move in keeping with the Western tips that encourage coming to one’s argument quickly—but that is also, we can see, addressed to his Indonesian audience:

This paper attempts to observe how Indonesian Muslims and Christians do an interfaith dialogue on the internet. This research is focused on public websites or blogs, both individual and organizationally owned, which can openly accessed by internet users. The research will observe Indonesian Muslims and Christians involved in the dialogue, and the approaches they use to respond to other religious traditions. Thus, we will find who are involved in the dialogue and what kinds of approaches they used. These findings will help us to understand what is happening in Indonesian Muslims-Christians dialogue currently and to determine what we have to do with this new discourse (my emphasis).

Though Tim distances himself from his research by placing his research as the actor in his first few sentences, rather than himself as researcher—a move that hints at his “objective” predilections discussed in Chapter 3, as well as his Javanese preference for “passive voice” as discussed in Chapter 4—in his final sentences he implicates himself in his endeavor with his use of “we” and “us.” Though the Paramedic Method would suggest he make his first three sentences more “active,” Tim still, with his use of
pronouns, suggests that Indonesian voices are not at odds with a genre shaped by Western conventions.

As he discusses in his cover letter, Tim then goes into a 4-page description of Paul Knitter’s 4-part heuristic for understanding the ways Christians view other religions, which Tim suggests can also be used to understand Muslim views of other religions. In brief, he explains that there is the “replacement model,” which forwards that Christianity is “the only true religion” and people should convert; the “fulfillment model” which forwards that Christianity is the one true religion, but that “by admitting universality of God’s love, they believe that other religions are of value, in which one can also find God”; the “mutuality model,” where “unlike the Replacement Model, that regards Christianity as the only way of salvation, or the Fulfillment Model that includes other religions’ truth but regards Christianity as the absolute one, the Mutuality Model admits that there is also salvation in other religions”; and finally, the “acceptance model,” which forwards the idea that “dialogue should be done by setting one’s own religion aside and start making conversation with people of other religions. The dialogue needs neither rules nor agendas.” Though Tim feels that he spends too much time discussing this model at the expense of his Indonesian data, I would argue that for an Indonesian audience new to notions of inter-religious dialogue, such information is important, particularly given Tim’s findings that the majority of Muslim-Christian internet dialog in Indonesia follows the exclusivist “replacement model,” where, in Tim’s words,

The exclusivists often use aggressive strategies to the people of other religion, such as attacking the validity of their scripture, delegitimizing their God and prophets, showing the weaknesses of their doctrines, questioning their rituals, and reporting the apostasies of people of other beliefs to their own religion. The dialogues are usually done in the atmosphere of enmity, in which both parts use bad words to condemn and to mock their counterparts.
Knitter’s model, and Tim’s careful explanation of it, may open up possibilities that his Indonesian forward-looking audience hadn’t considered in a country new to the idea of “inter-religious dialog,” in turn helping them understand why Tim views such exclusivist conversations as unlikely to “achieve fruitful results.” His Western backward-looking audience is not at odds, in this case, with his non-Western purpose.

He attributes his other finding, that Muslims are more likely to initiate dialogue than the minority Christian population in Indonesia, to majority-minority dynamics:

Many Indonesian Christians recognize themselves as part of a minority group and the issue of Christianization has been a threatening stigmatization for them. Since the early years of the New Order era, the issue of Christianization has disturbed Muslims-Christians relationship (for the detail, you can see Aritonang, 2005). Such a sensitive stigmatization also often overshaed Christians’ deeds. That is why Indonesian Christians more reluctant to make a public claim of a victory in a debate or a conversion of a Muslim to Christianity. This is certainly good from a certain point of view, for example, to avoid further conflicts. However, this attitude is also harmful since it often makes them tend to avoid the dialogue. The avoidance to the dialogue will never make Indonesian Muslims-Christians relationship better.

Tim highlights that people of his own faith, as minority, are reluctant to be accused of proselytizing, but that despite these fears, they should “speak out” in public dialog anyway, returning, once again, to the dominant theme in his portfolio. As far as audience goes, we can see that Tim assumes knowledge about the New Order era, as well as the ability for his audience to read Indonesian; he references Aritonang as a backward-looking audience, whose book is titled, according to his references page, Sejarah Perjumpaan Kristen dan Islam di Indonesia.

His conclusion, notably in the “bullet format” suggested by the tips sheet I gave out, is a call to action for both Muslim and Christian Indonesians to move forward in their understanding of electronic dialog:
Considering those two related findings, I would like to give two suggestions that will advance the Indonesian Muslims-Christians dialogue. First, Indonesian Christians should be more active, both in initiating and in responding to every opportunity to do the dialogue. To be more active, in one sense, requires Indonesian Christians to liberate themselves from their minority syndrome. Second, both the Muslims and the Christians should move from the Replacement Model to other three models. Everybody who is involved in the dialogue is responsible for more constructive and fruitful models. This survey of the Internet shows that the frequency of Indonesian Muslims-Christians encounter will increase sharply in the future. Unfortunately, the interfaith models used in the encounter do not improve as fast as enthusiasm. Like driving an old car in a fast track, the increasing enthusiasm in Muslims-Christian dialogue will bring nothing, if not a disaster. Developing a new and better dialogue model is not easy, yet is undeniably urgent.

Tim clearly and directly states his suggestions, while also using figurative language—fulfilling the tip that suggests that he should “Use clear examples, metaphors and analogies to help the audience better understand your concept.” Indeed, in his post-course interview, Tim told me that this metaphor was his favorite sentence in English so far.

I believe that Tim—though he admits in his cover letter to feeling friction balancing his Western and Indonesian backward-looking audiences and in writing short, direct sentences—still shows his ability to work from within Western genre norms to target his Indonesian forward-looking audience in his piece. He may be uncomfortable doing so, but he does successfully knit together research from a Western backward-looking audience with his own preliminary research about inter-religious dialog in Indonesia in order to reach his forward-looking Indonesian audience with his English words. Furthermore, his wish to give more space to his Indonesian backward-looking audience, I believe, shows his increasing comfort in imagining English as capable of representing Indonesian voices, including his own.
Writing to the West: A Perfect Book Review for Perfect Readers

Though Tim grounded his first two papers within his local context to encourage Indonesians to “speak out,” when it came to his book review, he imagined and stuck with the audience he discussed in his post-course interview: the West. Normally one of my most “timely” students, for this assignment, Tim had writer’s block so badly that his paper was two weeks late. This writer’s block, he reports in his cover letter, was due in part to adding his voice to the book he reviewed, and in part due to the Western audience he imagined. Tim writes,

Reflecting to this process, I asked to myself, “Why did such a difficulty happen to me?” Although it was not easy, I tried to find one. I found my first answer in the character of this book. This book is a compact book, but contains so many ideas, so it is not easy to summarize. Moreover, in each single chapter, Saeed seams his ideas quite neatly, so that it is not easy to break.

Tim, echoing his earlier discussions of voice, refers here to his difficulty in adding his own voice to Saeed’s ideas—in “breaking” Saeed’s “seams,” or logic, to insert his own ideas. His second explanation has to do with the audience he imagined for his text:

Furthermore, I wished it would be a “perfect” book review for “perfect” readers, since I wrote it for an international publication. I also wished that my book review would be so helpful for my readers, so that they needn’t have to read the book by themselves. It was a stupid obsession, wasn’t it?

If we recall his post-course interview, to Tim, writing to an “international” audience means writing to the West when it comes to using English. That Tim views his Western audience as “perfect” can be linked to the West’s continuing power in defining “good English.” Furthermore, that Tim had writer’s block when imagining this “perfect” audience points quite powerfully to the ways an abstract Western tradition can circumscribe students’ voices as they work between rhetorical traditions to write in English.
Tim’s “obsession” with perfection when it came to satisfying Roth’s moves is quite obvious when we look at his book review, that, in its detail, would be “helpful” to those who didn’t wish to read the text itself. His introduction, as Roth suggests, begins by “making generalizations” about the topic, establishing the book’s place in current conversations, and describing the potential readership:

In the last decade, the study of Islam has attracted more scholars of many disciplines of social sciences, along with the increased awareness of greater role that Islam will play in the global society. Accordingly, the study of interpretation of the Qur’an also has greater significance. That is why both Muslim scholars and Orientalists published many books in this topic in some recent years. Among them, Abdullah Saeed is one of the best contributors. As stated in its title and subtitle, Interpreting the Qur’an. Towards a contemporary approach, this book is dedicated to Qur’anic scholars, especially those who are studying modern methods of interpretation. However, this book is also easy to discern by common readers who do not understand Arabic and are beginners in this field. Abdullah Saeed has successfully discussed this heavy subject in friendly language.

Tim, as Roth suggests should happen in move 2, then moves to a general discussion of the organization, in particular as related to the book’s Table of Contents, before launching into his painstaking, chapter-by-chapter summary and response to Saeed’s text, which, as Tim suggests, “proposes a ‘new’ approach called a Contextualist approach to interpretation, in which the meaning and application of [Qur’anic] verses are determined by looking at the socio-historical context of the people at the time of the revelation and the socio-historical context of the modern Muslims to whom they would be applied.”

Although Tim mentions in his cover letter that he had difficulty breaking Saeed’s “seams” to insert his own voice, as Western norms would suggest, he succeeded in his final draft, perhaps because he had been increasingly drawing, as the semester progressed, from his Indonesian perspective for the Indonesian audiences he imagined.
We can see his response, as well an understanding of Saeed’s book as West-centered, in his discussion of Chapter 9. He writes,

Chapter 9 challenges the Qur’anic exegetes who claim for complete objective meaning of the texts. The Textualist exegetes use two basic assumptions to claim their ability to determine an objective meaning of the texts. The first, the Arabic words that are used in the Qur’an can provide the true meaning of the texts and we can find them by looking at their usages and citations. The second, that the meaning of these words can be supported by the related statements of the Prophet, the Companions, or the Successors. Saeed argues that those two basic assumptions could never guarantee objectivity since interpreters always come to the texts with their own experiences, values, beliefs, and presuppositions (p. 103). I believe that the modern readers might easily accept Saeed’s philosophical critiques to the textual exegesis, but the traditionalists would not. Instead, they would say that such a critic is falsely Western influenced.

After paraphrasing Saeed’s point that all interpretation is socially constructed, making an objectivist interpretation of Qur’anic verse impossible, Tim draws from his own non-Western perspective to point out that such a social constructivist approach is Western in origin, leaving Saeed open to possible critiques that he is an agent of the West.

Despite his critique, Tim clearly shows his affinity for Saeed’s approach in his conclusion, where he writes:

One may argue that Saeed’s book is too small to discuss a big controversial issue, the modern interpretation of the Qur’an. However, Saeed’s efforts should be appreciated since they are motivated by his spirit of making the Qur’an relevant to his contemporary world. Saeed’s struggle represents many other modern Muslims, who want to live sincerely in Islam faith without being a victim of its past history. Saeed is trying to point out a place where a good Moslem can stand in the midst of modernity.

Tim ends by pointing, as Roth suggests he should, to the “scope or usefulness of the book” to modern-day Muslims. We can see in Tim’s book review that despite his initial writer’s block, which he attributes to his “perfect” Western projected audience, he successfully assimilates to Western genre norms, while working from within them to
suggest possible critiques from others that the author’s lens is too West-focused.

**Conclusion**

What, then, does Tim’s writing second semester say about what it means to write internationally, in English? Well, a major tenet of my audience-focused pedagogy was to help students re-imagine “international” English-using audiences as more than just “Western”—as also local and composed of multiple rhetorical traditions and actors—and based on that information make conscious rhetorical choices with their English. Tim, as evidenced in his opinion piece and his conference paper, did imagine a “local” audience for his English several times, despite his belief that English is a Western language and his tendency to want to write past Indonesia because of it; though he didn’t directly oppose the norms I introduced in class, he did, like the other students, work from within Western genre norms to target his Indonesian audiences. He made conscious rhetorical choices.

Furthermore, his reflective cover letter regarding his book review may shed valuable light on the importance of helping students “ground” their forward-looking audiences in the local, even if they wish to eventually assimilate to Western genre norms. Faqih and Nina, we saw, felt much less tension as they wrote in English because they grounded the “global” audience implied by English, re-imagining it as local and immediate to their Indonesian contexts. Despite writing in English, they both imagined people in their local Indonesian context, rather than, to use Faqih’s words, people “out there.” Such “grounding” was not necessary for Ninik, I would argue, because the West wasn’t as “abstract” to her as it was to Tim; Ninik first began to write in English, with real people, in a Hawaiian literacy context, meaning that even if she did imagine a Western audience for her words, she could ground it in “real” experience and
interactions. Tim’s contact with Western-English users, on the other hand, was primarily textual before coming to ICRS, probably making it much more difficult for him to imagine that the West, in fact, is not “perfect” despite its powerful position—that the West, in fact, is just another local amidst a multitude of locals who use English differently to achieve their global purposes.

**Implications**

Indeed, this chapter has gone very “local” to paint a nuanced picture of individual students’ answers to what it means—and what it actually looks like—to write internationally, in English. We saw that students’ portfolios and their writing choices in relation to audience differed because of their differing language histories and purposes, highlighting, in turn, that it is problematic to create a monolithic picture of Indonesian English-users, or of any English-users, for that matter. We saw in their post-course interviews, for instance, that Faqih and Nina imagine as their ideal projected audience people within their local Indonesian context—whether for social justice reasons for Faqih, or because of past local English use for Nina—whereas Ninik and Tim reported that they imagined a Western audience most often—Ninik because she thought she lacked proper religious knowledge for her Indonesian context and Tim because he lacked experience using English for Indonesian purposes. The picture became even more complicated when we turned to particular writing tasks and saw the ways students shifted audiences to negotiate their shifting rhetorical situations. By focusing in on the details, we can counteract essentialist readings of multilingual writers that, by attributing all writing choices to “culture,” deny that students take agency to navigate their local and shifting material contexts. But what broader implications might these individual students’
writing portfolios have on our understanding of what it means to write, internationally, in English?

Towards an Understanding of “International” as “In Here” and “Out There”

Faqih’s portfolio, for one, challenges the notion that English-using audiences are discrete entities in our increasingly interconnected world. Through his textual choices and his repeated reiteration that the West also participates in his local Indonesian context, he constructed a rhetorical situation that challenges the notion that audience can be linked to national borders. Faqih, by weaving past, present, and forward-looking Indonesian audiences into his “international” English writing, speaks back to the friction discussed in previous chapters—that Indonesian concerns are not part of “international” or “global” conversations. The “international” isn’t just “out there,” his portfolio suggests, it’s “here” in Indonesia as well.

Nina’s portfolio, similar to Faqih’s, imagined an inclusive international English-using audience that includes Indonesian, Western and Southeast Asian audiences, whether these audiences took backward-looking, present, or forward-looking positions in her writing. For Nina, the international exists both within Indonesia and “out there.” She writes to an international Indonesian audience in her opinion piece, but for her conference piece she writes to an international Southeast Asian graduate student audience; in her book review and in her research paper she writes to a mixture of Indonesians and non-Indonesians at ICRS. For Nina, the term “international” both transcends and works within her Indonesian borders. Just as her understanding of international is fluid, so too is her understanding of identity. Throughout the year, she forwarded the notion that identity is a multifaceted construct, meaning that accommodation to dominant norms does not
necessarily involve entirely relinquishing non-dominant ways of being and doing. As she suggests in her literacy narrative, she imagines herself “not only as a Javanese, but as a Javanese who is using English.” Indeed, throughout her portfolio, she showed that she was a Javanese using English to draw from and reach a variety of audiences with her Indonesian knowledge.

Ninik, unlike Faqih and Nina, paints a picture of the “international” as out there, though her purpose in doing so is to spread knowledge about her Indonesian context to non-Indonesian contexts where Indonesia may be “off the radar.” As she mentioned in her interview, she prefers to write to an international audience because she believes drawing from her Indonesian context is a way to build “bridge[s] to harmonize religious people internationally.” Such international harmony, however, is conditional—her portfolio suggests that in order for this bridge to be effective the parties on the other side of the bridge must be willing to listen to her Indonesian perspectives. She asks me, as her Western evaluative audience, to shift perspectives multiple times to accommodate the rhetorical situations she imagines for her texts. In her opinion piece—where she successfully writes to Indonesians in English, despite her “international” perspective—she asks that I take the position of an Indonesian woman so that her rhetorical appeals are effective, indicating that although I’m from “out there,” I should also be able to interpret from an Indonesian perspective; in her conference paper, she asks that I remain in my position as international reader from “out there,” since she is aware that her information about arranged marriages might be new to me as a reader from the West, just as it is to the forward-looking audience to which she writes; and in her book review, she asks that I once again read from her Indonesian female perspective in order that I understand her
critical reading of a West-focused book. In international rhetorical situations, communication shouldn’t be a one-way bridge.

Similar to Ninik, Tim also suggests in his interview that he imagines an “international” audience as he writes in English, and, like Ninik, this audience is “out there” and distant from Indonesia. In fact, he suggests that writing internationally, to him, most often means imagining the West. However, when it came to specific writing tasks, he did situate his English within Indonesia. For both his opinion piece and his conference paper he targeted a forward-looking Indonesian audience by drawing from, in the case of his opinion piece, an Indonesian backward-looking audience, and in the case of his conference paper, both Indonesian and Western backward looking audiences. And in my opinion, he proved in these pieces his ability to “speak out.” Indeed, whether he included Indonesian voices in his backward-looking or forward-looking audience, their presence seemed to alleviate pressure Tim felt when writing in English. In contrast, when he imagined a Western audience for his book review, and had only his own Indonesian voice to rely upon, he felt so much friction that his assignment was two weeks late. Tim’s portfolio suggests the importance of “grounding” the abstract in the local; of positioning English as both local and global; as right here and out there, and as capable of representing Indonesian interests as well as Western ones.

Doing so, for these four students, meant invoking an Indonesian audience during at least one point of textual production. Indeed, except for Tim’s book review, all students invoked an Indonesian audience at least once per piece, whether this audience was textual or real, or in the backward-looking, present, or forward-looking positionality. We can see, then, that writing internationally, to my ICRS students, meant drawing from
both Indonesian and non-Indonesian backward looking audiences in order to intervene in multiple international conversations, whether that international conversation was within Indonesia, or without, and whether it included Western voices, or not. Overall, their portfolios, taken together, suggest that in our local-global English classrooms, we should help students complicate rhetorical situations that suggest that writing in English automatically means drawing from and writing to a static and monolithic Western audience.

**It’s not the Rhetorical Conventions; It’s the Voices Included Within Them That Matter**

I tried to do just that with my audience-focused critical contrastive pedagogy, though students’ strategies in negotiating audience differed from what I had expected. As discussed in Chapter 5, my pedagogy encouraged students to link rhetorical structures—both Indonesian and Western—to broader cultural ideologies so that they might de-link English from Western genre norms to reach the multiple local-global audiences suggested by ICRS’s positionality. As Canagarajah suggests, “equating one language with one discourse… is terribly limited” (601). In fact, he shows that Professor Sivatamby is fully capable of using English in accordance with dominant Western genre norms for an international audience, just as he is fully capable of using English in non-Western ways to reach non-Western English-using audiences. The activities I constructed in relation to audience and textual choice were meant to encourage students to follow Professor Sivatamby’s suit—to de-link English from the West and write in an Indonesian rhetorical style if they chose.29 The students above took a different approach, however.

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29 Joko sums up the Indonesian rhetorical style students constructed for me in class nicely: “Frankly speaking, as Indonesian people we have to pay attention to politeness of how to write. Not only just telling the truth, but also the way how to attract the reader. Not too straight away to the main idea. You need to be polite like having kind of
Rather than openly challenging Western genre norms, they populated them from within: with their Indonesian interpretations of gender and the Islamic faith; with information about Indonesian migrant workers; with their critiques of Western-focused books; with their ideals concerning inter-religious dialog in Indonesia; with social justice issues of concern to Indonesians, and so on. In short, they proved that, at least for now, translating their Indonesian content and perspectives into Western genre norms was sufficient for the audiences they wished to reach. Indeed, these strategies indicate that Western rhetorical conventions weren’t the problem, at least for these four students. The problem was the “distant” audiences suggested by English—and whose voices they saw as missing in the past, present and future audiences implied by a West-dominated international conversation. By using Western rhetorical structures, yet re-imagining audience, they were able to re-articulate the English language as capable of representing their Indonesian purposes to multiple audiences.

Do my students’ decisions to assimilate to Western rhetorical structures point to a failure of my critical contrastive pedagogy? Absolutely not. First, students actively chose assimilation, and despite assimilating they were still capable of achieving their Indonesian purposes. Second, I don’t believe that a critical pedagogy must be immediately or textually transformative. After all, my pedagogy involved more than teaching students to write a final product; through the processes leading up to the final product, I hoped to teach students to question the broader ideologies circulating through language so that in the future they might intervene in powerful discourses to assert their own voices, whether textually, or not, when and if they choose.

background and then actually the proposal is at the end. So it is very different from Western writing which is direct right away."
Furthermore, although the four students above didn’t feel the need to openly oppose the Western genre norms I introduced, I do believe, as Canagarajah suggests, that for some, revising textual forms may be liberating. In fact, four of the seven students who turned in their final anonymous evaluation drew from my critical pedagogy when asked what aspects of the course they would recommend keeping for future courses. One student, for instance, argued that Western academic audiences should be more flexible:

I think Western academic writing in future must also tolerate the style of Indonesian writing; for example, not direct and state the purpose in the back, because this style is part of our culture. We will consider it impolite to state opinion directly.

This student points to his or her desire to de-link English from the West, and that his or her future Western audiences should acknowledge that writing is linked to culture.

Another student points in a similar manner to his hope that future classes will acknowledge Indonesian rhetorical styles as legitimate, while also incorporating texts written in English by Indonesians, in an Indonesian style:

I hope in future classes we also can express our idea with more Indonesian way which is more poetic and artistic. Furthermore, it would be helpful if we can find some example of Indonesian author published about religion where the English is good but the way of thinking and writing is still Indonesian.

This student points to his or her desire for a previous audience that employs an Indonesian-English rhetoric, most likely so he or she can model his or her own textual choices after this author. Sadly, in preparation for my course, I had scoured English-medium peer-reviewed Religious Studies journals for texts that explicitly challenged Western norms, or even texts written by Indonesians, but I found nothing—a testament, perhaps, to the power Western norms and Western voices still hold in our global

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30 As Chapter 5 mentions, I did bring in unpublished MA theses written by Indonesians, but they, for the most part assimilated to Swales’ IMRD model.
academic conversations. Perhaps these students will be the first to articulate such an Indonesian-English rhetoric, linking the local Indonesian audiences they so often imagine to the rhetorical structures they produce in English.

Regardless of whether these Indonesian writers choose to challenge Western rhetorical norms, or to populate them from within with Indonesian voices, we can see that people at ICRS see English as capable of representing their local-global, Indonesian yet international purposes. To return to Benedict Anderson’s notion of imagined community, with every text they compose in English, they work to re-imagine a more inclusive international “we.” An international “we” that is flexible enough to encompass both Indonesian voices and non-Indonesian voices to work towards global inter-religious harmony. The question remains, however, as to whether an international English-using academic community long dominated by Western interests is similarly capable of imagining a “we” that includes non-Western perspectives, and perhaps even non-Western rhetorics. As Ninik’s portfolio suggests, writing internationally in English requires more than the ability to speak out: it requires an audience willing to listen. Teaching the West to listen, as the conclusion to this dissertation will suggest, may be a matter of “bringing the international home” to our U.S. composition classrooms.
CONCLUSION:

BRINGING THE INTERNATIONAL HOME

In this dissertation, I took what Horner and Trimbur term an “internationalist perspective” by conducting what many in the U.S. might term “international” research. I packed my books, my theories about the English language, and my U.S. passport and left the U.S. for a far-flung Indonesian literacy context to teach, research, and explore. My ethnographic teacher research at ICRS, when placed in conversation with the larger Indonesian sociopolitical context, has shown that despite English’s imperialist implications, Indonesians are quite capable of re-articulating the language to write themselves into local-global English conversations. The first section of this dissertation, “Articulating Identity in a Local-Global English-Using Indonesian Context” explored identity formation at ICRS and the ways that Indonesian people negotiated with English’s imperialist reputation to forge their Indonesian, yet international identities. The multiple possibilities people at ICRS see English opening up—for feminist social action; for access to scholarship; for empowerment of disenfranchised migrant workers; for international inter-religious communication—remind us that English, though it has long been linked to Western discourses and purposes, is still just a language. Language has power, but so do the people that use it to articulate their “localized” purposes, and with that, their language-using identities.

Writers negotiate these identities at the contact point between past knowledge, present circumstances, and future social action, as the second section of this dissertation, “Whose English? Towards a Diachronic Understanding of Audience, Friction, and Local-Global Negotiation,” explores. Taking a Bakhtinian lens to audience allowed me to
highlight the friction that occurred as my students negotiated with culturally different past voices, both Indonesian and English, and the different, culturally-inscribed definitions of “good writing” these voices put forth. That said, this Bakhtinian lens also moved us past the cultural-semiotic aspects of composing to highlight the material present, and the ways that the present voices of the real audiences working at ICRS mediated students’ writing processes. This Bakhtinian lens allowed me to acknowledge the multitude of voices, both discursive and real, Indonesian and English, from which students could draw and thus to whom students might wish to write in their local-global English-using context. And as we saw in Chapter 6, students drew from this vast repertoire of audiences to compose texts meant to reach multiple audiences, both local and global, Indonesian and international. Indeed, taking a Bakhtinian perspective allowed me as a researcher to unearth the complex interplay between Indonesian and Western voices as they occurred in students’ texts—highlighting, in turn, the important role Indonesian audiences, whether backward, present, or forward-looking, played as students composed in English, and in so doing imagined their local-global rhetorical situations. I hope, then, that this dissertation works on the theoretical level to highlight Bakhtin’s diachronic audience as a valuable model to understand the complexity involved with writing internationally in English. Most importantly, however, I hope that my research has emphasized the capability of Indonesian English-users to re-imagine an English academic conversation long dominated by the West as willing to accommodate their Indonesian voices and perspectives. Such is the possibility English represents as “international” lingua franca.

To make this imagining a reality, however, I would argue that we in the West also have a part to play. Though my research is undoubtedly “international,” I would argue
that the very same research might and should be done within U.S. borders—and that
given the power we in the U.S. still have in defining “good English writing,” taking an
internationalist perspective about the ways we think about, use, and teach English is in
fact an ethical imperative. My Indonesian students’ portfolios suggest that, for them, the
“international” English conversation is both “close to home” and “out there,” and I
believe that we who work in the U.S. must begin to view the “international” as similarly
“close to home.” “Bringing the international home” would mean first acknowledging that
the international is already here, and then exploring the ideological, political and personal
ideologies that English both has represented and could represent in future local-global
contexts.

This exploration of past power and future possibilities, I believe, could begin in
our U.S. composition classrooms, to the benefit of our multilingual students—both
international and domestic—as well as our monolingual English users. This exploration
would involve what Min Zhan Lu has recently termed teaching “transcultural literacy.”

Transcultural literacy, for Lu, involves helping students, both multilingual and
monolingual,

[N]egotiate—explore options and make decisions in response to—heterogeneous and
often conflicting contexts (global/local, individual/collective scenes of
learning and writing), commitments (allegiances and interactions with groups
shaping and shaped by acts of learning and writing) and consequences (on
individual and collective identities and well-being, on the world we build through
our words and actions.) (“Metaphors” 289).

Although it’s problematic to transfer pedagogies from context to context without
reflection and revision, I believe that aspects of my audience-focused critical contrastive
pedagogy might be useful to writing instructors wishing to teach “transcultural literacy”
in their U.S. classrooms.
As Chapter 3 explored, I began my Academic Writing course with a literacy narrative, where students read Shen’s *The Classroom and the Wider Culture* and reflected upon the multiple language contexts they were part of, and the ways these language contexts, and the identities and ideologies implied therein, might interact with discourses circulating through the English language. As we saw, the Indonesian students in my class used this literacy narrative unit to articulate the link between language, identity, and context, both on the national-cultural level and in more specific language contexts. They articulated, in discussion and in their texts, differences in Indonesian and English discourse conventions having to do with voice, directness and relationships to authority that might cause friction as they sought to inhabit Western rhetorical conventions—which opened the stage, as the course progressed, for critical discussions about the West’s ownership of English, and with that, “whose English” they might adopt to best achieve their local-global purposes. My critical contrastive pedagogy made the link between genre conventions and ideology explicit, and then allowed students, based on their own assessment of the contexts, commitments and consequences involved, to make the choice for themselves whether to challenge dominant English language norms. Though the four students whose portfolios I analyzed chose to write within Western genre conventions, they did so as critical agents because of these explicit discussions.

Just as important as making space for discussions of rhetorical structures and ideology, I found, was making space for local discourse communities within our local-global academic writing classroom. In their literacy narratives, students located multiple discourse communities at play within their Indonesian cultural context—contexts, it seemed, that were just as important to their linguistic identities as their Indonesian
culture: religious communities, feminist activist communities, counseling communities, international communities, hometown communities, and so on. As we saw in Chapter 6, students populated their English academic writing with voices from these communities—whether students drew from them, as backward-looking audiences, to add to international conversations, or wrote to them as forward-looking audiences. I believe making space in my curriculum for conversations concerning language, context, and ideology as it occurred in my Indonesian students’ lives also made space for students to draw from these Indonesian contexts as legitimate resources to add to international English academic conversations. Transcultural literacy, as Lu suggests, involves acknowledging heterogeneity of experience and context so that students may use their writing to take agency and effectively negotiate, on their own terms, their diverse local-global commitments and contexts.

Given their vastly different language contexts and commitments for using English, transcultural literacy seems especially important to enable multilingual students like Faqih, Nina, Ninik, and Tim who are working within our U.S. composition classrooms to negotiate dominant English language conventions to suit their own purposes. However, Lu suggests that transcultural literacy would benefit all language users, not just the multilingual ones. She points out that a majority of her students in the U.S. consider themselves “native born,” and thus “monolingual.” That does not mean, however, that they are monocultural, and thus always in alignment with the ways of being, doing and interpreting suggested by dominant English norms. Lu writes:

[Mainstream students] regularly participate in and bring expertise from relations and activities outside of college classrooms involving languages, discourses, versions of English, modalities other than, and thus othered by standardized written English uses. (291)
Monolingual English-using students, though they consider themselves “native speakers” and thus “owners” of dominant English norms, should be encouraged to consider themselves multi-discoursal. Although they are not “multilingual” in the traditional sense that my Indonesian students were, “native speakers” also navigate a diverse set of discourse communities, with language practices that might be at odds with the “standard” when it comes to academic writing. English, as Pennycook suggests, is “worldly” in the sense that it is in the world and it is shaped by the world, and this “worldliness” pertains just as much to language use within U.S. borders as in Indonesia.

I believe that encouraging all students to view English writing as “worldly”—as both context-driven and linked to Western imperialist discourse—might de-naturalize the notion that English is a “neutral” language, and with that, the notion that there should be one universal definition of “good writing.” Though the audience-focused critical contrastive pedagogy I developed for ICRS was tailored to fit the Indonesian program in which it was implemented, I believe that similar activities might help writing students in the U.S. adopt a more “worldly” understanding of English. Students in the U.S., both monolingual and multilingual, could begin, just as my Indonesian students did, by exploring the various literacy contexts they operate in—and the languages, identities, and writing practices at play in these contexts—in relation to dominant English rhetorical conventions and the identities and ideologies suggested therein. This “contrastive” activity would highlight that linguistic diversity is the norm rather than the exception in

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31 Lu suggests in this article that monolingual English-using students are “multilingual” because of the multiple language contexts they navigate, but I believe that multi-discoursal is more appropriate given that they still navigate with one language, English, though the language shifts to accommodate differing communicative purposes in particular discourse communities.
the U.S., and that all writers, whether multilingual or monolingual, are multi-discoursal. We all feel friction, to varying degrees, when navigating English academic norms.

These literacy narratives could then act as a starting point to discuss rhetorical choice—and ways students might draw from their diverse literacy contexts to challenge dominant English academic writing norms in ways that might expand the possibilities English has for representing multiple voices and contexts, and with that, for reaching multiple local-global audiences. As Lu, in her “Professing Multiculturalism,” and Canagarajah, in his “Multilingual Strategies of Negotiating English” suggest, these rhetorical choices may occur on the sentence level; writers might choose to consciously break standard grammar rules, or to bring multiple languages together in the same sentence through code-meshing. These conscious rhetorical choices may also involve, as Canagarajah suggests in his “A Writing Pedagogy of Shuttling Between Languages,” the de-linking of English from Western rhetorical structures entirely. Or, as my research has suggested, assimilating to dominant genre conventions, yet populating them from within with non-dominant voices might constitute a conscious rhetorical choice. What’s important is that the decision if, when, and how to challenge dominant norms remains in students’ hands. Lu reminds us that we must foreground students’ agency, no matter what utterance they choose to make. Such agency involves, for Lu,

[Not] their ability and decision to transform standardized rules in all instances of their practice but rather their ability to decide how they are going to use a specific usage at a specific instance: Why to tinker, or not, with that usage, given the specificity of contexts, commitment, consequences of their work. (290)

Teachers interested in teaching transcultural literacy may make space for “tinkering,” but students’ own assessments of their rhetorical situation, their commitments, and their contexts should ultimately shape the texts they produce in a transcultural classroom.
Furthermore, I believe teaching transcultural literacy might do more than encourage students “write back” to power, if they choose; it might also teach them to be receptive audiences in our increasingly global English conversations. We saw in Chapter 6 that Ninik’s portfolio highlighted quite powerfully the idea that transcultural communication involves more than “speaking out” from a non-dominant perspective; it also involves an audience’s willingness to listen. Transcultural activities like the ones I mention above—by de-naturalizing the notion that there is one universal definition of “good writing” and then forwarding the possibility that writers might be making conscious rhetorical choices—might help students interpret non-traditional ways of using English as choice, rather than mistake. I, along with Lu and others such as Ryoko Kubota and Suresh Canagarajah, believe that we can work from within our composition classrooms to expand the notion of what it means to write internationally in English to encompass the different ways of being and doing—some of which my Indonesian students described in this dissertation—in our increasingly diverse English-using conversation. By helping all students locate the ideological in rhetorical traditions, and then encouraging them to make conscious choices in relation to the multiple audiences and contexts suggested by our global English-using community, we can expand our ways of seeing the world through the English language.

My choice to “bring the international home” from Indonesia in the conclusion of this dissertation springs from my belief that we in the U.S. must also ask ourselves “What does it mean to write internationally, in English?” To answer this question would involve more investigations of English’s role in local-global conversations—and the ideological and material circumstances involved in cross-cultural composition in specific contexts—
whether here in the U.S. or abroad. Such investigations, I believe, will further our understanding of what it means to use English in an international arena that is riddled with power, but also ripe with the possibility that English might link our “local” to other “locals” in a way that empowers and connects—rather than silences.


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