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Three Unrevised Discussion Posts
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In both of Kincaid's pieces, there is an overarching theme of the effects of colonialism on the colonized. "On Seeing England for the First Time" uses a literary jump cut between Kincaid's childhood and the glorification of England that she experienced growing up in Antigua, to then the experience of visiting England for herself as an adult and having it be completely demystified. Using descriptions of her everyday life, the reader grasps just how great of a presence the colonizers had on the natives on the island, from their foods, clothes, place names, to school habits. This is a form of subliminal messaging that perpetuates the power dynamic that England dominated over the islanders. Nevertheless, when she grows up and forms her own conclusions, Kincaid is struck by just how much she dislikes the experience of visiting Britain. In *A Small Place*, the notion of England's long-lasting effects on the natives is also perpetuated in a similar fashion. The British/visitors/outsideers are painted as having complete disregard for the life of the inhabitants. Instead of actively working to eliminate the vastly present elements of colonization, they are negligent to the experiences of the people who live there, who can't use escapism due to their lack of privilege. In terms of literary tactics, parallels regarding the displacement of time (between life under the British rule and after being a formal colony) are still drawn. Nevertheless, there are other, more nuanced devices, such as the employment of the second person "you" which seemingly attacks and demonizes the reader by subjecting them to the role of the tourist that is vilified throughout the course of the essay.

In her TedTalk, Lera Boroditsky gives a basic overview of the concept of language and communication, and ultimately attempts to respond to the question, “Does the language we speak change the way we think?” Through her many examples, including languages that require cardinal directions, languages with different organizations of time, those that don’t use numbers, and more, it becomes clear that, to at least some degree, people think differently if they speak one language and not another.

As a bilingual speaker (I learned Spanish and English simultaneously), I am constantly thinking about the interactions between the two languages in my brain and my life, and this video only affirmed for me that each has an affect on the way I view the world. Moreover, I have always been intrigued by the concept of grammatical gender, which Boroditsky acknowledges in the speech. Some of my questions after watching this video include the following: How would knowing more than one language affect one’s perception? Would they use a clear fusion of the two to look at the world, or would there be a preference of one over the other? I think this would be especially interesting to consider when it comes to the categories she surveyed (color, space, numbers, etc.)

When it comes to the late Toni Morrison’s speech, she uses a fable of an old, blind, black, American woman, who was the daughter of slaves, to frame her ideologies of language. I noticed that she gave all of these descriptions early on, a presentation which intrigued me. Why did she make the choice to identify this woman with all of these qualities right away? Perhaps, to a certain extent, Morrison herself shares or identifies with many of these same descriptors. If so, is she intending that the audience draws parallels between her and the old woman? Overall, I found

her philosophies on language both interesting and comprehensive, as well as very applicable to the content of this class. I look forward to referring back to this text as a framework for many of our other concepts/readings/discussions.

Language, nationality, and ethnicity are all closely related. By elevating the English language, there is an elevation of a eurocentric perspective, and a hierarchy is created with the American culture being superior to others. Even though English is not the official language of the United States, there is a clear bias towards it, and people who don't speak it are marginalized and alienated. In *Undocumented*, viewers can see the clear divides of this hierarchy with specific case studies of individuals who aren't US citizens, although some can still be considered white. These people have objectively difficult life circumstances solely because our systems discriminate against the people who were also born in the same places as them. Viewing *Undocumented* for me was particularly traumatic and disturbing. As someone who was raised at large by a Mexican family whose immigration statuses are complicated, this really hit close to home, as I saw a lot of my chosen family in some of the people the series follows. Through my life, I've been able to experience firsthand the utter goodness of the people in these marginalized communities, and it deeply pains me that others don't see the same, and thus, they are treated substantially worse than me by those we have chosen to lead our nation and others in our local communities, alike. I find it especially horrifying to note that, while many undocumented people pay US taxes every year, our own President doesn't pay more than a mere \$750, all while these people are among the most hardworking, and in the most treacherous of conditions, people I have ever met.