

The Scholarly Voice: Activity

1. Analyse the following two paragraphs.
2. What's wrong with the first text?
3. Why is the second text better?

Text A

Simon Coffey describes how the foreign language learner experiences the feeling of being 'strange' at home, and desires to "escape the limits of one's skin" (2013, p. 271). Claire Kramsch describes the foreign language experience as a threat to one's own "integrity as a subject" (2009, p.15), whether at home or abroad. Julia Kristeva describes what it is to feel like a foreigner "from nowhere, from everywhere, citizen of the world, cosmopolitan" (1991, p.147). She argues that to be human is to be foreign: "we are our own foreigners, we are divided" (1991, p.181). Brian Castro argues that in Australia in particular, "hybridity or its shadow, miscegenation, has always been viewed...with a kind of embarrassment or puzzlement" (1995, p.7). It is discomfort in familiarity, however, which challenges parochial loyalties (ibid). Theodor Adorno argues that "the highest morality is not to feel at home in one's own home" (1978, p.18).

Text B

This memoir also describes the persistence of “strangerhood” (Coffey, 2013) upon the foreign language learner’s return ‘home’: in the final chapter, the expectation of a seamless re-entry into joyful familiarity is shattered by the encounter with a home that feels not quite like home. Young Jen describes returning to Melbourne as a foreigner “from nowhere, from everywhere, citizen of the world, cosmopolitan” (Kristeva, 1991, p.147) whose recent experiences and the friendships she’s made are ‘untranslatable’. This is not a uniquely Australian experience, and yet one cannot help but agree with Brian Castro that in this island nation, “hybridity or its shadow, miscegenation, has always been viewed...with a kind of embarrassment or puzzlement” (1995, p. 7). And yet, it is this very sense of discomfort in familiarity that challenges “parochial loyalties” (Castro, 1995, p. 7) and the idea of a fixed cultural identity, offering opportunities for a much more encompassing view of the human condition, as Adorno’s quote about home in the epigraph to this chapter suggests.¹²

Extract from Anderson, J. (2017). *Ganyu: Writing Transcultural Memoir*. Monash University Phd (Creative Writing).

¹² see the epigraph to Chapter 1: “the highest morality is not to feel at home in one’s own home” (Adorno, 1978, p.18).

Activity: Text analysis

Text A He says, she says...

- Notice how in text A the graduate researcher's voice is invisible.
- She has allowed other writers and scholars to speak on her behalf.
- The reader is not sure how these citations relate to the current piece of research.
- This looks like a first draft where the connections the PhD writer is making are still only partly conscious.

Simon Coffey found that the foreign language learner experiences the feeling of being 'strange' at home, and desires to "escape the limits of one's skin" (2013, p. 271). **Claire Kramsch views** the foreign language experience as a threat to one's own "integrity as a subject", whether at home or abroad (2009, p.15). **Julia Kristeva describes** what it is to feel like a foreigner "from nowhere, from everywhere, citizen of the world, cosmopolitan" (1991, p.147). **She argues** that to be human is to be foreign: "we are our own foreigners, we are divided" (1991, p.181). **Brian Castro has observed** that in Australia in particular, "hybridity or its shadow, miscegenation, has always been viewed...with a kind of embarrassment or puzzlement" (1995, p.7). It is discomfort in familiarity, however, that challenges "parochial loyalties" (**ibid**), and **Theodor Adorno notes** that "the highest morality is not to feel at home in one's own home" (1978, p.18).

Text B **Much better**

- The researcher redrafted this section of text to explore the foreign language learner at home, abroad, and returned home again.
- This is the paragraph dealing with the return home.
- Note how the citations now support the researcher's reflections about her memoir and its claim to be transcultural in nature.
- The writing in blue marks *her* voice. She is now in control.

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