Biliteracy Agendas for WAC/WID Research and Teaching – On Mundane Genres, Translation, and Systemic Change[1]

Joseph Anthony Wilson, Syracuse University

Abstract: This article addresses key issues in WAC/WID regarding translation and biliteracy. Informed by translingual scholarship, genre studies, and history of the English language research, it first defines translation politically and historically, and as always involving negotiations of meaning-making across linguistic repertoires and genres. It then reviews WAC/WID biliteracy scholarship to consider how colonially inflected translation ideologies might be addressed to support more socially just biliteracy research and teaching initiatives in WAC/WID. To anchor this otherwise theoretical/methodological conversation, this article narrates and revisits a scene where an interdisciplinary faculty council from a United States university discusses mundane scholastic genres, with implications for linguistic diversity across that university's multi-campus system. The article concludes with place-based, localized strategies for revising mundane genres toward specifically anticolonial translation initiatives as part of a broader translingual activist project.

Introduction: Genre and Institutional Systems

In the fall of 2019, I participated in a faculty council at a prior university that gathered to consider departments' curricular revision proposals and broader university scholastic regulations. As the liaison from the Graduate Student Senate to this inter-department council, I understood my role as advocating for graduate student concerns when they arose during meetings, as well as listening and learning about the ways that universities operate. I often took notes as we all got into the weeds of seemingly mundane institutional genres such as "requests to adapt curricular prerequisites." I learned how this faculty council, which hosted around twenty members, discussed genre conventions of scholastic regulations. This genre knowledge supported my later efforts to interpret scholastic regulations to fellow graduate students.

My experiences with this faculty council helped shape my orientation to WAC/WID research. Having briefly defined this context, I want to pause to highlight some of this article's key assumptions, as the above council participation supported my thinking in relation to them. First, I believe genre theory can benefit scholars of institutional systems and histories who advocate for systemic change, whether through broader institutional governance systems described here, or in the day-to-day work of teaching. Second, systemic change necessitates both rhetorical and linguistic interventions that implicate the mundane genres of writing programs and university ecologies; genres such as scholastic regulations may not be sexy to analyze or revise, but writing specialists (consciously or not) interact with them regularly with material consequences. These assumptions stem from histories of transdisciplinary scholarship on genres, which Devitt (2021) understands as typified

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social actions contingent upon "*both* linguistic and extralinguistic components" (p. 49, emphasis added). Devitt argues that such bifold linguistic/extralinguistic genre research necessitates methodologies attuned to complexity in pluralistic literacy events on the one hand, and linguistic change and historical sedimentation of language on the other. Toward such methodologies, Devitt argues that History of the English Language (HEL) scholarship on the one hand offers robust understandings of language sedimentation and probes how linguistic changes can inductively reveal community heterogeneity, symbolic violence, and resistance across historical periods. On the other hand, rhetorical orientations to language advance extra-contextual methodologies to investigate how genres shape and are shaped by the uneven labor of individuals and communities within and beyond classroom spaces (Bawarshi, 2016; Kimball, 2021; LeMesurier, 2017). At these convergences of HEL and WAC/WID, genre research supports efforts to identify domains of genre knowledge, recognize the historical and ongoing power of languages and writing and, most importantly, diachronically center the values of the communities to whom genres are meaningful.

In the aforementioned faculty council, genre inquiry clued me into language ideologies that emerged in a conversation about institutional standards. One Friday afternoon, in an otherwise routine discussion, council members turned to our university's standards for the general education core curriculum, and specifically its first-year composition requirement (referred to as C credits).[2] Several council members (with no connections to the English Department) wanted to revisit these standards and drew from specific domains of what applied linguist Tardy (2009) describes as *genre knowledge*. For example, faculty demonstrated formal and process genre knowledge domains of prior guidelines (genres that act prescriptively as part of the university's broader scholastic regulations) as well as subject-matter knowledge via public-facing digital information from the English Department and its WAC programs (genres that act didactically on the English Department's website to communicate the writing course requirement to the broader campus community). With this knowledge, some faculty council members proposed the following statement as an official scholastic regulation: "A distinguishing feature of [C courses] is their treatment of writing as the core focus and subject of the course. In [C courses], student writing itself should be a primary text of the class and should teach transferable habits and dispositions..." Reading this statement, I was honestly surprised. I had thoughts, of course, but given that scholars have demonstrated how writing best practices can often become interpreted outside our departments through the lens of competing institutional assumptions and priorities (Saenkhum, 2018; Townsend, 2016), I appreciated how faculty from disciplinary backgrounds ranging from architecture to physics had proactively sought to learn discourse I associated with writing studies to propose these standards.

The council's conversation gradually transitioned to an otherwise unplanned discussion of scholastic regulations for advanced writing credits (beyond the C requirement, typically WAC courses, referred to as W courses) – course requirements that I knew faculty in the English Department, and especially those associated with our WAC program, were currently reviewing as part of a dean-commissioned "W Task Force." The council, I learned, possessed no knowledge of ongoing W revisions. After quickly projecting the current standards for such courses on a large screen, the council members shared their first reactions to this older institutional scholastic regulation that defined W credits, largely for the sake of the registrar. Council members' generic uptakes to this outdated text (that, for example, described the number of pages students must write in a W course for it to count) indicated commitments to student writing development and fears that students and departments alike might circumvent such W requirements. For example, faculty expressed concerns that departments might someday propose courses like Coding for Software Engineering as W credits. The conversation largely probed how to ensure that W requirements actually taught writing as defined by the scholastic regulation. A general consensus solution proposed by the council involved including language into the binding regulation that writing courses be required "in English." Some faculty

referred to the English language here and others to the English department. Another faculty proposed "a natural language" as a possible inclusion. When I mentioned that the English Department had assembled a task force to review these guidelines, the council quickly offered to learn the perspectives of the English Department and its WAC program, and then moved on from the conversation.

No changes to the W requirement transpired during this meeting, yet I am still interested in how relationships to genres mediated the council's meaning-making practices and proposals. This is in part because, in addition to the task force, the English Department had already incorporated specifically translingual orientations to language that push against monolingual, English-only practices into nearly every aspect of curriculum and teacher training as part of a broader commitment to social justice. Yet the well-intentioned faculty council was unaware of these practices (or the term translingualism). Instead, they drew in part from genres they had encountered before—scholastic regulations, outdated website pages on the English Department website—when assuming that "in English" would best preserve the ethos of W instructors and courses.

Many readers can probably recall similar encounters with faculty across disciplines, perhaps even with faculty less well-meaning; I share this experience several years later for three reasons. First, I want to clarify my investment in rhetorical orientations to even mundane institutional genres (such as academic standards) and their often unseen and under-acknowledged significance to teachers and students who may never read them. Second, this scene impacted my thinking regarding how to enact specifically translingual orientations in WAC/WID programs in the particular place of that institution and given its history of language use. Like other praxis-driven translingual WAC/WID studies (Cavazos et al., 2018; Meier et al., 2023), my translingual theorization here has roots in cross-disciplinary conversations and approaches to genres. Toward this goal, I consider how even mundane genres participate in affording or limiting the uptake of translingual-oriented scholarship, with implications for linguistic justice initiatives in WAC/WID and beyond. Third, I share this story to be transparent about where my ideas are coming from, including experiences such as this one in a United States institution; while I have collaborated to enact WAC/WID programs in multiple international contexts, the histories delineated in this article are ultimately motivated and limited by my situated perspective as a WAC instructor and researcher with the most experience navigating North American scholastic regulations, writing epistemologies, and histories of linguistic (in)justice. I will return to this opening scene at points throughout this article to ground otherwise theoretical and methodological arguments. Additionally, I hope that the perspectives shared here are insightful for scholars across transnational contexts, while cautioning that such arguments are not automatically scalable.

This article forwards two inter-related arguments. First, I contend that genre research should contribute more dynamically to social justice efforts to transform institutional systems. To lay groundwork for this argument, Section Two considers a strand of translingual-oriented scholarship I find salient to Devitt's (2021) bifold interest in linguistic and extra-contextual genre research as well as toward systemic change. Specifically, I explain and extend Bou Ayash's (2019) vision of *translingual activism,* where translation is central. While her vision has found acceptance by HEL scholars, it has been viewed with suspicion by some WAC/WID researchers. For this reason, I then argue that genre approaches in much WAC/WID scholarship presently support naturalization processes (Bonilla-Silva, 2014) that preclude social justice. I outline and defend this argument in Sections Three and Four through sustained critique specifically of genre and biliteracy research across WAC/WID similarly invested in translation. I then conclude with tangible examples of what translingual activism might look like when genres are approached rhetorically and historically.

Translingual Activism

Translingual orientations to writing and literacies have taken several forms over the past two decades, and generally foreground individuals' and communities' dynamic and relational maintenance and negotiations of language as labor (Horner & Alvarez, 2019), push against static and prescriptive definitions of students' linguistic repertoires (Gonzales, 2015; Sugiharto, 2015), alternatively work toward anticolonial and/or antinormative epistemologies of multiplicity in meaning-making (Milu, 2022; robinson, 2019), and assume language difference as the global norm. This research extends linguistic theories that view English not as a static entity but always in translation (Pennycook, 2008), made and remade through dynamic use. Rather than encouraging a particular type of writing or language difference, translingual orientations offer what Sugiharto (2015) describes as a "political and conceptual break" (p. 120) that Bou Ayash and Kilfoil (2023) contend "can help dismantle hegemonic language hierarchies," (p. 5) including capitalism, and that "values writers' creative capacities to work across languages, dialects, genres, and registers to meet communicative exigencies" (p. 4).

In my U.S. context, translingual research has encouraged writing scholars to intentionally account for language and linguistics in their research, teaching, and service, and by doing so work against a long history of delegating critical linguistic training to second language (L2) writing. However, by considering language, translingual orientations have at times problematically become equated with codemeshing or substituted for L2 writing/TESOL research. Alternatively, Guerra (2016) argued many years ago that translingual orientations should delay theorizing what language is in favor of interrogating what language does as students negotiate with language resources, contexts, ideologies, genres, etc. Divergent from more product-oriented linguistic approaches, Guerra defines this latter focus as rhetorical sensibility. Adopting an explicitly anti-capitalist perspective, Horner and Alvarez (2019) clarify what language does under translingualism as concrete labor in maintaining and revising language—turning writing practitioners to political economic forces mediating what language does in ongoing translation, rather than to language acquisition alone.

While much has been debated related to translingual orientations to writing and literacies along these premises, perhaps their most enduring critiques consider gaps between theorization about language fluidity/difference and students' and communities' lived realities using language. This critique—particularly of U.S. writing researchers—contested early-on the rhetorical construction of the linguistic everyperson in translingual scholarship as leveling difference (Gilyard, 2016; Villanueva & Moeggenburg, 2018). Similarly, from a critical applied linguistic perspective, a rhetoric of translingualism as a universal construct had left whiteness unmarked, despite its "intrinsic but veiled element in the construction of mainstream English" (Motha, 2006, p. 497). Responding to these critiques, scholars passionately explicate how language users negotiate linguistic differences with material consequences (Bou Ayash & Kilfoil, 2023), arguments in line with the earliest seeds of the translingual movement (Lu, 2006).

Of course, these are also not entirely new insights. Transnational queer and Black studies scholars have long critiqued Western approaches to researching boundaries and borders, whether at the national or linguistic registers. As Capo Jr. (2020) illustrates, the ongoing impacts of trans-Atlantic slavery are sustained via regimes that always transgress those very states' (national, linguistic) borders, and that have always "valorized certain bodies" (p. 42) as more fluid, more mobile, more productive, and ultimately more human than others. These legacies "produced grammars" (p. 43) of the national (nuclear) family that inflect any study of linguistic or geopolitical mobilities, translingual, multilingual, or otherwise. In the United States, these histories are more often acknowledged in basic writing studies than WAC/WID, leading scholars to justifiably question translingualism's abstract value (Villanueva & Moeggenburg, 2018). As a white, multilingual, neuroqueer, settler scholar in the

United States, I want to practice accountability to transnational scholars who have moved beyond such abstraction and adopt an anti-racist, anti-colonial, and anti-capitalist approach to language work. I contribute to translingual activist projects delineated by Bou Ayash (2019) that emphasize translation, and I consider relationships to genres translated through WID programs to either support or stall social justice initiatives.

Translingual activism here refers to Bou Ayash's conception of a collective political project that critically interrogates language epistemologies embedded across classroom and societal structures through translation research. For Bou Ayash, translingual activism operationalizes a material-historical perspective of translation as always involving negotiations of meaning and power within and across languages. Affirming this premise, I argue these translations implicate genres as well.

Conversely in many academic traditions and professional contexts, translation methodologies occlude messy relations of power implicated—yet often retroactively occluded—by all translation activity. Such invisibility, the subject of radical and translingual orientations (e.g. Bassi, 2017; robinson, 2019), precludes meaningful opportunities for linguistic justice. Rather than considering the rhetorical practices and power asymmetries relationally embedded in the translation process, invisibility promises a seemingly neutral professional translation praxis reduced to cognitive activity. In reality, translation can never deliver such neutral transfer of meaning-making. Yet translation, when measured "objectively," can support the academic needs of large universities and the multi-national universities who employ their students—both of whom want to claim the financial benefits of globalization without actually valuing the linguistic labor of students and workers.

For readers of this journal, Bou Ayash's (2019) efforts to centralize translation in translingual activism might be especially salient given the global scope of WAC/WID. Despite the imperial export of English teaching enterprises, local languages and translation practices have always persisted to facilitate multilingual learning (Beiler & Dewilde, 2020; Pennycook, 2008). Medium-education research in WAC/WID has also shown how even contexts where specifically English-medium education systems are enforced by the state, translation remains a common classroom practice across global educational ecologies (Krulatz et al., 2016). Moreover, translation is a central focus of studies of linguistic justice and inequality in language policy research outside of North America, particularly in relation to transnational migration and political economy (Terrelonge, 2016). In consequence, when transnational scholars cite translingual research, they (perhaps more easily than many U.S. peers) adopt either translanguaging frameworks (e.g., Sugiharto, 2015) or translation frameworks (Bassi, 2017; Beiler & Dewilde, 2020; Bou Ayash, 2019; Wilson & Portz, 2024).

It has thus been surprising to encounter skepticism of translingual activism expressed by WID practitioners, and especially by those with translation backgrounds in particular. Given the promise of translation for WAC/WID in regard to translingual activism, this article addresses such skepticism. I juxtapose translingual activism with critiques from a biliteracy translation perspective. I locate issues of naturalization and colonialism in biliteracy research, as well as divergent theories of genre as critical points of tension. To reorient genre's relationship to translation in WAC/WID, I further center rhetoric to argue for a translingual activist project that engages language repertoires and genre performances, including even mundane genre performances. Returning to the scene of cross-departmental dialogue described above—where the translingual values of individuals in a WAC program unintentionally clashed with the council's uptakes of scholastic genres—I consider how a sustained emphasis on translation justifies the inclusion of *transforming genre systems rhetorically for linguistic justice* as a key initiative in localizing translingual activist projects in WAC/WID.

Diverging Perspectives – Biliteracy and Translingual Approaches to Translation

Translingual program designs are beginning to emerge across WAC programs that benefit from multilingual writing specialists (Cavazos, et. al, 2018; Meier, et. al, 2023). Still, Hall (2023) reports that translingual orientations remain "the new kid on the block in WAC/WID circles'' (p. 21). This is partly due to justified skepticism by transnational scholars of translingualism's often U.S. focus (Navarro, 2023), concerns about enacting translingualism amid high-stakes testing regimes (Crusan & Ruecker, 2018), as well as prominent misreadings that conflate all translingual scholarship with early work on codemeshing.

Given translingual activism's interest in translation, more collaboration with WID scholars who adopt a translation approach would benefit the field. However, leading scholars in this research area caution against translingual frameworks. For example, nearly two decades of Gentil's highly influential biliteracy WID translation research in Canada could enrich translingual activism. A former editor of the *Journal of Second Language Writing (JSLW),* Gentil offers dynamic, transdisciplinary biliteracy pedagogies for post-secondary WID rooted in translation, yet accompanies these pedagogies with direct, definitional criticism of translingualism across multiple publications. Toward commensurability, this section first summarizes and then close-reads biliteracy research via non-generative semiotic methodologies for secondary source critique articulated by feminist and queer theorists (Ramírez-D'Oleo, 2023; Schulman, 2016). From this analysis, I attend to biliteracy approaches' present theoretical affordances and constraints, including limited attention to settler colonialism and under-theorization of genre. Getting a bit into the weeds of divergent perspectives here, I urge WAC/WID to move beyond disciplinary siloing to reap benefits from collaboration in translation research and teaching.

Biliteracy agendas for WID, often simplified as "the ability to read and write in two languages" (Gentil, 2018, p. 122) actually overlap considerably with translingual approaches. Biliteracy research shares views of language resources as culturally situated (Casanave, 1998), identifies some writing genres as colonial, rather than neutral, literate tools (Hornberger, 1988), refuses the monolingual language user as the standard for analysis (Fredericksen & Baca, 2008), considers how pre-writing in one language might benefit students writing texts for another language (Gentil, 2018), and commits to "the creation of social conditions that make [learners'] commitment to biliteracy sustainable" (Gentil, 2005, p. 459). Despite these similarities, WID scholarship positions biliteracy and translingual agendas as oppositional. In my reading, biliteracy scholars' critiques from a translation perspective are ultimately threefold. The first is citational: translingual activism would benefit from deeper engagement with translation studies scholarship (Gentil, 2023) as well as research on biliteracy and L2/multilingual writing (Tardy, 2017). Beyond citation, a second critique concerns language status in reference to nation-states. Centering Francophone communities in Canada, for example, Gentil (2018) asserts language rights rhetoric analogous to strategic essentialism. After hedging that translingualism supports translation "by helping students identify the conversations they want to contribute to as they learn to problematize the language-nation-identity link," he immediately advocates for the "leveraging [students'] linguistic and national moorings to affirm their voices" (2023, p. 79). In other words, Gentil remains concerned about the implications of translingual theories for the language rights of French language users in Canadian universities. Similar critiques of translingual agency have been made by Silva (2017) and other multilingual writing scholars as well. A third critique grounds biliteracy agendas in cognitive theories across both translation and genre studies. From this perspective, translingual activists privilege intralingual translation (translation within a language), to use translation theorist Jakobson's (1959) term. Meanwhile, interlingual translation (across languages, again Jakobson) remains undertheorized, despite the value for deep learning that accompanies negotiations of equivalence across languages.

The leading advocate for biliteracy approaches in WID, Gentil once explained this third cognitive critique by citing benefits of struggling to translate the term agency into French in preparation for his response to a colloquium on genre knowledge (Tardy et al., 2019). Cognitive exigencies, Gentil argues, aid biliteracy scholars in "distinguishing language difference at the level of registers, *genres*, and languages, and across historical, ontogenetic, and moment-to-moment time scales'' (2023, p. 78, emphasis added). Building from Gentil's (2018) work, the findings of a study by Ene, McIntosh, and Connor (2019) illustrate how feedback terminology such as "synthesize" may pose translation difficulties for multilingual writers and perhaps preclude successful translingual pedagogies. These findings are instructive. As a teacher with a background in L2 writing and applied linguistics and transnational teaching experiences in the Global South, I have collaborated with translation specialists to localize literacy autobiography, terminology, and research assignments detailed in biliteracy WID research. I learned much from and deferred to local translation epistemologies and the expertise of faculty and students enrolled in translation programs. I agree that many compositionists downplay the added sociocognitive labor of interlingual translation and that considerably more citations of biliteracy and translation scholar-practitioners, as well as critical multicompetence research that rejects the normative role of the native speaker (Cook, 2016), is needed across WAC/WID research.

However, I argue that the three critiques from biliteracy WID research reviewed here, which often consider interlingual translation alone, may unintentionally reproduce ideologies of linguistic naturalization to affirm language boundaries. I also contend that biliteracy researchers in WAC/WID must reconsider their approach to genre boundaries. In other words, biliteracy scholars are keenly aware of multilingual students' lived experience navigating power imbalances. However, the implications of considering translingualism exclusively in relation to multilingual students and genres may reify those power imbalances rather than deconstruct them. I am indebted here to translingual scholarship by Rowan (2022), who discusses how processes of naturalization occlude race by implicitly suggesting translingualism as only relevant to those who naturally have come to speak multiple languages/Englishes, without substantial attention to how racism and/as monolingualist epistemologies deem such writers as deviant. By naturalization, Rowan operationalizes Bonilla-Silva's (2014) term to articulate violent assumptions of racism as natural, gradual ontogenetic unfolding. Rowan claims:

> When we begin to link translingualism with particular groups of speakers or writers (and in ways that don't articulate race but are racially driven), then we are participating in the rearticulation of translingualism toward a hegemonic colorblind status quo… Consistently attending to the ways writers identify racially and are racialized serves as a necessary corrective to the tendency to ignore issues of race and racism in scholarship about White monolingual writers and multilingual international writers… often not read through race-conscious lenses. (pp. 31-32)

In other words, vagueness around race and power in labeling practices perpetuates dominant discourses about historical and ongoing linguistic segregation and sedimentation practices, leading to theories such as translingual activism to be associated exclusively with multilingual students. Similarly, Haddix's (2008) findings and critique of sociolinguistics demonstrate how pedagogies that discuss linguistic diversity do not necessarily redirect students to resist anti-Black attitudes and colonial naturalization processes. In addition, Mississippi Ojibwe and Mdewakanton Dakota scholar Lyons (2010) addresses how Indigenous language endangerment "was initiated by the federal government [in the United States] and not some 'natural' process," (p. 140), similarly resisting linguistic naturalization ideologies. Lyons argues that translation framed as a sociocognitive tool aids naturalization to displace Indigenous epistemologies. When translation is understood collectively in

relation to place and positionality, however, translators can resist naturalization (Nordstrom, 2021; Hill, 2017). Researching translation, these scholars argue, risks color-aversion to language difference without sustained attention to settler colonialism and racialization (or the lack thereof) when applied to white monolingual *or* multilingual students in colonial contexts such as Canada and the United States.

Transnational, translingual scholarship offers important paths forward toward deposing naturalization. Toward this goal, Milu's (2022) translingual findings at the intersections of race, ethnicity, and language with Black immigrant multilingual students in the United States alternatively address linguistic boundary work while historicizing colonialism.[3] She explains how, "In Africa, racialization also involves ethnicization/tribalization practices aimed at classifying and controlling numerous ethnic and linguistic groups [which] started to disrupt Africans' ethnic identification and multilingual practices, which were originally characterized by fluidity" (2022, p. 123). In HEL, Makoni and Makoni (2010) similarly discuss how colonial missionaries standardized several Indigenous African languages and actually often rejected English education, such that many speakers referred to the standardized African languages as now frustratingly colonial themselves, a form of colonization additional to that of forced English or French acquisition. Further, Milu (2022) recognizes present hierarchies among European languages and Indigenous languages with implications for Black immigrant students who navigate them. Milu then compellingly argues that a race-conscious translingual approach must directly confront dynamic "layers of European linguistic imperialism" (2022, p. 125) embedded in transnational meaning-making across evolving time scales.

It is important to hedge that critiquing naturalization does not require dismissing all attention to linguistic boundary work, and my own collaborative translation scholarship has acknowledged moments when students may briefly leverage and exploit linguistic boundaries and resist oppressive notions of hybridity (Wilson & Portz, 2024). Instead, rejecting naturalization will raise important questions for biliteracy scholars working across boundaries via translation. For example, what does it mean to discount translingual orientations' investment in intralingual translation in the name of a colonial language, such as French, in colonial institutions and their associated academic genres? How does biliteracy scholarship account for transnational students' histories beyond those of the nation-state in which they study? Does having fewer exigencies for French studies across Canadian campuses make that language any less complicit in the historical and ongoing settler-colonial naturalization? How are French language users, English language users, etc. positioned differently in Canadian, U.S., or other settler colonial contexts?

These questions seem more urgent when regional scholars cite linguistic and generic institutional boundary-making to critique translingual theories of linguistic fluidity without similarly sustained critiques of the colonial institutions that reify those boundaries. For example, the French Academy in 1635 is often cited in Canadian biliteracy WAC/WID scholarship not to critique its ongoing colonial naturalization practices today in Canada, but as evidence of translingual activism's limitations. A generous reading of these moves would infer that scholars are trying to get at the present incapabilities of practicing truly decolonial translingual work within institutions and nations that make such work impossible. After all, it is important to remember that English language teachers, although to different degrees/extents and contingent on positionalities, are complicit in sustaining imperialism. However, such critiques necessitate a careful self-reflexive and citational praxis of accountability to those communities most impacted by naturalization throughout the research process, as well as a clear commitment to anticolonial praxis both in researching and teaching translation (and here I am referring to both intralingual and interlingual translation). Such efforts, particularly for Western scholars steeped in colonial research methodologies, are not easily enacted and require continual unlearning. I am not arguing against all empirical research here but am cautioning against common methodologies and methods for conducting empirical research on

translation in WAC/WID. For my own unlearning, the growing body of translingual activist scholarship, anticolonial translation research from the places of my work, and transnational genre scholarship have offered needed methodological support before the selection of research and pedagogical methods.[4]

Finally, I argue that tacit ideologies of naturalization are also enabled by methodological problems in biliteracy studies that include researchers' approach to genres. Put simply, while biliteracy WID research recognizes languages as systems and actions, this same research too often emphasizes what genres *are* at the expense of what genres *do.* As a result, the onus remains on writers themselves to cultivate rhetorical and linguistic strategies in taken-for-granted colonial systems. While deftness in negotiating genres surely benefits students and remains an open area of study, such methodologies leveraged specifically to critique translingualism often reduce critical translation practices to interlingual translation and/or process genre knowledge, allowing for naturalization to go unnoticed. My argument here is evidenced by rhetorical moves common across a larger body of multilingual genre research, where active voice narrates cognitive practices of individual students, but passive voice gestures toward broadly construed audiences, systems, and power structures in genre or task enactments. Further evidence of naturalization here includes instances when field-defining biliteracy scholars even dismiss countless Indigenous languages as not "viable" due to a perceived lack of genres or speakers as a justification for positioning biliteracy translation research across two or more colonial languages.

In other words, biliteracy WID agendas acknowledge then often methodologically elide sustained interrogation to the political and historical contexts that shape genre performances, including ongoing colonialism and anti-Blackness, in favor of language boundaries, sociocognitive empiricism, and genre knowledge*.* Of course, I am not advocating for a zero-sum approach to biliteracy research and translingual methodologies. Instead, I remain concerned that such elisions presently place the burden on the individual writers and researchers to seek out contexts that honor generic and linguistic proficiencies in taken-for-granted academic systems, a kind of burden empirically documented in multilingual writing scholarship (Hanauer et al., 2019). Biliteracy WID studies ought not preclude translingual activist visions that question what language *does* and what genres *do,* and positioning translation as simultaneously across both languages and genres brings translingual rhetorical sensibilities (Guerra, 2016) to the fore. Toward a transdisciplinary path forward, I turn to rhetorical conceptions of genre uptake in relation to often mundane genres.

Divergent Perspectives—Genre and Translation

To review, rhetorical approaches to WAC/WID recognize genres as social actions (Miller, 1984) that implicate both linguistic and extra-contextual phenomena (Devitt, 2021) over different time scales (Kimball, 2021). Alternatively, linguistic research on genre and translation has empirically evidenced multilingual writers' struggles and strategies for developing genre knowledge (Tardy, 2009), and fields such as comparative stylistics have attempted to quantify these struggles to provide more efficient translation strategies. This scholarship advocates for translation as a sociocognitive tool for language users (Tardy et. al., 2020), admirably assuming multilingualism as a norm. Yet by instrumentalizing translation, these latter applied linguistic approaches may too abstractly incorporate theories of genre performance.

This section considers genre research alternatively interested in genre *uptakes* to dynamically account for rhetoric and power—with methodological and theoretical promise for translation initiatives. In applied linguistics and L2 writing, uptake often signifies a measurable use of a skill (Ene & Upton, 2018). In rhetorical genre studies (RGS), uptake is more dynamically defined as when an illocutionary force elicits a perlocutionary effect; put more simply, uptake considers how myriad

users and technologies unpredictably and often unconsciously enact genre relations. Uptake theory first found its way to HEL, rhetorical genre studies, and later WAC/WID via social semiotics scholarship (Freadman, 1994). At a time when genre scholarship tended to focus on form and convention (written products), the transnational conversation on uptake in social semiotics was more influenced by translation theories such as Jakobson's (1959) when theorizing genre, despite many early uptake scholars' backgrounds in Australian semiotics and education research. When Freadman (2002), an oft-cited scholar of uptake in writing studies, reoriented conversations about uptakes in relation to genres, she reinterpreted genre as implicated specifically within intralingual translation theories. In my reading, this link supports connections across uptake scholarship and a translingual activism Bou Ayash (2019) articulates as invested in critical translation praxis both *within* and across languages. Now over two decades after Freadman (2002) brought uptake to genre studies, RGS researchers in HEL have found uptake valuable for emphasizing social contexts, institutional placemaking, and situations before/over specific genres themselves, their forms, and knowledge (Devitt, 2021). Both genres and (discourse) communities benefit from sociocognitive theories and to attention to language registers (Devitt, 2015), of course, but researchers interested in uptake also understand genres as less stable or easily measurable (Bawarshi, 2016).

Such theoretical nuances allow for transnational conversations about privilege, power, and settler colonialism in uptake research as an alternative to schools of genre research laser-focused on access and inclusion via knowledge and negotiation. Dynamically researching power requires methodological interventions that do not privilege integration into academic norms and that help rhetoricians and writing scholars alike consider systemic change and action beyond theorization and access (Macklin, 2019) and against settler colonialism (Bawarshi, 2015). RGS scholars adopting uptake theory thus take seriously Miller's (1984) argument that a rhetorically sound definition of genre views action as a methodological point of departure (p. 151). Put another way, instead of privileging cognition, RGS foregrounds genre uptake rhetorically and features transformations of genres that occur beyond classroom walls and across a range of professional, scientific, and academic contexts. In and beyond WAC/WID, scholars have leveraged uptake to analyze citizen resistance to a range of oppressive discourses. These include resistances to transnational scientific communication in the wake of nuclear disasters (Rea & Riedlinger, 2016), to multilingual writing classrooms (Macklin, 2019), to constructions of the mind/body split in research on genre performance (LeMesurier, 2016), and to the ongoing silencing and displacement of Palestinian people alongside the theft of land (Bawarshi, 2015).

Similar to research on genre uptake, the Brazilian school of genre research adopts ecological orientations to teaching and research.[5] For example, some Brazilian scholars, such as those who practice critical genre analysis, combine critical discourse analysis and the kinds of "ethnographic context exploration" common to new rhetoric approaches (Motta-Roth & Heberle, 2015). Vian Jr.'s work in particular often draws from critical genre analysis, Freirean critical pedagogies, as well as some French linguistics scholarship, to "critically examine the complex ways that genres constitute social relations" (2015, p. 104), with an emphasis on social complexity/inequality. However, Vian Jr. argues that Brazilian approaches should foreground grassroots critical ethnographic methods, assume hybridity and multiplicity as a norm, and enable post-colonial critique. For this article, I am interested in how Vian Jr. draws parallels across his perspective within the Brazilian tradition and RGS perspectives, and Bawarshi's work in particular, insofar as RGS critically articulates how genres participate in local mobilities as inequalities.

These approaches to genre uptake and ecology differ from those common to biliteracy approaches to WID. To understand different approaches to genre, consider the scene of the faculty council meeting with which I opened this article. Sociocognitive genre approaches common to biliteracy research might emphasize the linguistic features and genre conventions of the scholastic regulation (as a

rather mundane institutional genre) in relation to genres digitally housed by the WAC program, the values embedded in the (pleasantly surprising) inclusion of writing studies disciplinary discourse codified in that standard, and what those genres and their linguistic features might teach us about the broader social context of the regular faculty council meetings, the university and its multiple departments, and WAC/WID research as a whole. Concerned as they are with access and rights, such approaches would benefit scholars interested in acquiring genre-specific knowledge (Tardy et. al., 2020) necessary for composing scholastic relations, process knowledge (Tardy, 2009) of how to submit such regulations for review to the council, rhetorical and conditional knowledge (Tardy et. al., 2020) of when campus stakeholders should propose scholastic regulations to the council for review, and multiple forms of metacognitive knowledge necessary for learning how mechanisms of universities operate, including the different audiences intersecting in the moment that the faculty council projected those W standards onto the screen.[6] As a graduate student, I adopted these genre knowledge approaches to make inferences about the values of the council from the vantage point of a young scholar with a novice degree of scholastic regulation composition experience, as well as to practice appropriate self-regulation (Negretti, 2017) when later adapting genre knowledge for graduate student audiences in the larger Graduate Student Senate. More broadly, I learned how to better integrate into university systems given my minimum threshold level of access.

Both Brazilian and RGS genre studies researchers might also begin inquiry with the scholastic regulation, such as via critical discourse analysis (Motta-Roth, 2008), but they could adopt a more horizontal, rhetorical perspective. In other words, they would likely be more interested in foregrounding the power dynamics, including racial and cultural dynamics, and the material conditions mediating the contextual *response* to the genre from the interdisciplinary faculty. For example, the group's rather unpredictable, "non-linear" (Vian, 2015, p. 106), silent, and likely unconscious negotiations of meaning that motivated their suggestion to add "in English" to the standard would generate questions about the impacts of the regulation on the screen; hallway conversations about prior computer science departmental scholastic regulation change requests that sought to subvert writing with coding classes; publicly available website materials in need of an update; the impact of bylaws governing the committee; English-only schooling and colonial histories of language maintenance; or whether or not the advising office—uniquely concerned about performing this genre in student guidance meetings—was present for the conversation. Although beyond the scope of this article, a rhetoric of uptake, such as the naming of specific uptake enactments (Dryer, 2016) and uptake remainders (Macklin, 2019), could methodologically support this analysis.

A rhetorical view would prioritize questions of power politically and historically, including how the faculties' positionalities shaped their genre performances, as well as how the faculty council meeting (as a scene) and the scholastic regulation (as a genre) mediated those memories, resources, and power relations. Moreover, a horizontal methodology would illuminate how performances of these genre regulations might lead, even unintentionally, to the more vertical enacting or upholding of racist monolingual systems and standards through the processes of naturalization Bonilla-Silva (2014) and Rowan (2022) critique. Notice, for example, the consequences of power relations made visible in this opening scene before any genre analysis might be offered (given that I have not treated readers to the actual regulation for the W credit). Did my ultimate genre performance (my decision to speak up and redirect the committee to the English Department's writing task force) extend just from my contextual, task, and genre knowledge? Or was this performance further mediated by my whiteness, which conditioned me to anticipate respect from colleagues in high-stakes conversations despite my graduate student and novice scholastic regulation writing status, and that likely mediated the affirmative response from the faculty council? How did my trust for my department's writing program administrator (WPA) influence my efforts to center her (and the W task force in which she participated) in all conversations about writing? How did monolingual assumptions, such as how

most colleagues and researchers regularly assume that I, as a white U.S. citizen, am monolingual, shape what Dryer (2016) calls uptake enactments (by faculty council members) to my own uptakes to the academic standard?

By foregrounding dynamic, asymmetrical relations of agency in ecological genre uptake performances, and by positioning such performances as intralingual translation, I understand Brazilian and RGS approaches as most aligned with a translingual activist project for WID translation pedagogies, institutional change, and scholarship. Some researchers already point to these convergences, including Gonzales (2015), who brings together translingualism, genre, and multimodality. Her focus group analysis strategies revealed how multilingual writers leverage embodied strategies for translation such as gestures to negotiate with generic agency: practices perhaps conscious and unconscious. Gonzales's findings join scholarship cited in prior sections by contradicting racist, deficit-orientations to novice multilingual students' communicative practices. Rather than conflating multilingualism and translingualism, these findings urge the "continue[d] unbinding [of] genres from rigid forms, languages, and classrooms, seeing and teaching them as ways of meaning-making across contexts" to emphasize particular resources multilingual students bring to writing.

Building from Gonzales's work, Bawarshi (2016) considers meaning-making that occurs between genres to identify asymmetrical power relations, or "how individuals move and *translate* across genres" (p. 246, emphasis added). Here, Bawarshi positions uptakes as translations directly in ways that influence my own definition of translation in this article. In light of my opening scene, Bawarshi considers how an illocutionary force—*such as the faculties' proposition of adding the phrase "in English" to an academic standard*—elicits a perlocutionary effect—*which would have included sustained and reinforced whiteness embedded in mainstream English—in that institution's WAC program*. Bawarshi's (2016) pivotal insight—that genre uptakes methodologically allow translingualism to transform genre research—has encouraged a growing body of research on genre learning and/or innovation that considers uptake rhetorically in relation to linguistic *and* generic boundary work, marking a return to uptake theories' initial engagement with translation theory. From this line of research, I am arguing biliteracy scholars can support translingual activism by foregrounding uptake, and thus by being proactive in transforming institutional genre systems rather than primarily reactive to those systems by beginning research once with students in the classroom.

From a methodological perspective, Dryer (2016) laments how much multilingual writing research often still attenuates uptake to the simple application of a learned skill, including oft-cited research in written corrective feedback. Although written almost a decade ago, Dryer's critique remains valid, as a simple search of *uptake* in leading journals in applied linguistics such as *JSLW* will find the term used to index and quantify students' writing decisions as "(in)effective" or "(un)successful." I consequently echo Dryer's critique while also emphasizing language; I am interested here in how genre uptake *as* translation further disentangles translingual activist projects from the interlingual/intralingual binaries that have long plagued conversations about translingualism in relation to multilingual writers in U.S. institutions. Put another way, a translingual orientation to genre might dynamically approach uptake to contextualize what genres and other semiotic resources *do* and the ideologies and systems upheld (Bawarshi, 2016). This approach to genre remains urgently needed when approaching translation research in WAC/WID.

Sometimes, uptakes do involve genre knowledge geared toward resistant, liberatory, or transgressive teleologies. In articulating a queer orientation to translation, Bassi (2017) illustrates conscious subversions of generic uptakes that enabled Italian internet users to shed the heteronormative, neoliberal, and even humanistic origins of the "It Gets Better" genre of YouTube videos that address LGBTQ+ youth grappling with ongoing homophobia. Adopting an explicitly translingual orientation to genre analysis, Bassi analyzes the translation decisions of Stefania, who

describes coming out as transgender in a small town, to reveal a) a "non-translation" of phrases like *coming out* and *transgender* to resist rights-based discourses of sexual liberation, and b) a translation of the term *creatura*, or creature, to describe a personal identity and to "make space for different ways of conceptualizing subjectivity" (p. 244). Many of Bassi's examples of what I read as uptakes of Italian "It Gets Better" videos ultimately showcase how translation not only across English and Italian but also uptakes across typifications of this genre subvert hyper-capitalist and temporally linear notions of progress common to "It Gets Better" videos in the United States, generally via narratives of privileged queer people moving to a large city, securing a good job, and publicizing one's otherwise successful adulthood. This translingual orientation does not reduce translation to process genre knowledge, assume integration into academic and/or normative contexts or disciplines, or see such assimilation as automatically beneficial.

At other times, uptake performances perpetuate systemic inequalities. Particularly vital here is LeMesurier's (2017) rhetorical concept of "uptaking race," via which LeMesurier delineates a history of stereotypes about monosodium glutamate (MSG) and its progressive association with Chinese cuisine and by extension Chinese people. Expanding from her embodied orientation to uptake (LeMesurier, 2016), she traces how the medical community's racist tropes in sarcastically dismissing any substantial issues with MSG consumption were interpreted literally by the Western media to propel misinformation about MSG's potential health risks in tandem with racist stereotypes about Chinese communities and their food. She follows racialized uptakes of medical genres to newspaper articles and other journalistic genres composed by non-medical specialists and ultimately marketed to a broad consumer base. From these analyses, LeMesurier argues, "Genres are social actions, but they are also structures with fundamental insecurities…To realize how genre uptake can perpetuate tacitly coded racist behavior across contexts is to realize the limits of personal intention as a guard against racist ideologies'' (2016, p. 20). This research probes the power—and limits—of genre, as scholars explicate how uptakes sustain linguistic and generic mobilities beyond human knowledge with racialized and gendered perlocutionary effects. As researchers engage translation across genres and linguistic repertoires both politically and historically, uptake reorients translingual methodologies through horizontal, rhetorical attention to asymmetrical genre relations in and beyond their local contexts. Such reorientation further enriches attention to vertical transformations of power relationships and systemic practices in which faculty and students alike may unconsciously participate.

Genre, Translation, and Systemic Change

Translation is neither a neutral activity nor an objective tool for crossing languages. Instead, translation involves rhetorical negotiations of language repertoires and genres. Translingual activism invites WAC/WID practitioners to recognize that translation labor, including the asymmetrical power relations always implicated in translation yet often retroactively rendered invisible by any final textual product. This article extends translingual activism to address the mundane, considering how genre uptake performances across institutional ecologies foment naturalization and constrain social justice. While I have considered genre uptake performances against naturalization here, translingual activism might benefit from other dynamic approaches to mundane genres. Additional examples of ethical, localized translingual activism across transnational contexts are also urgently needed. As Navarro (2023) cautions, no "collective agreement—based on the premises and histories of central, Northern countries—is to be expected or desired elsewhere" (p. 274). Given these caveats, this section concludes by offering non-scalable considerations from my U.S. university position to inspire ideas, critiques, and dialogues with others across this transnational field.

First, genres can support students in locating and localizing multiple translation epistemologies—both distinguishing translingual orientations to translation from multilingualism and precluding (often unconscious) settler colonial and anti-Black practices of naturalization. Toward this end, scholars in North America should research, critically and collaboratively reflect upon, and ultimately foreground specific translation epistemologies already shared by the Indigenous communities whose specific lands they occupy. Such accountability benefits all students. As a settler scholar new to the land of the Haudenosaunee (Six Nations) Confederacy, I have found Hill's (2017) historical research, among many projects by Haudenosaunee scholars, supportive for understanding and becoming accountable to Haudenosaunee translation epistemologies as a new faculty member at Syracuse University. Hill delineates the relationship between translation and Haudenosaunee relations to land, explains generic actions of the Ayenwahtha Belt, and historicizes ethnographic, legal, and archival genres leveraged by the state and universities to sustain ongoing colonial displacements. Further, Hill argues that discussing already extant English translations of traditional Haudenosaunee narratives, while such translations are problematic, may preserve living Haudenosaunee stories that do not belong in colonial academic discourse. Hill generously reminds settler teachers and students that some genre knowledge is not for us. Uptaking Hill's writing alongside other works on anticolonial translation praxis, my students and I then discuss, for example, genre performances of our university's land acknowledgement, as well as the extent to which students can trace these (non)performances beyond their original illocutions. These translation epistemologies further guide our now-scaffolded reading of public-facing websites Onondaga Nation of the Haudenosaunee Confederacy requests of settlers on their land.

The goal here is not considering how students cultivate genre knowledge of how to write land acknowledgements as genres, nor to elevate Hill as the singular carrier of all Indigenous knowledge, nor to hybridize Indigenous epistemologies for synthesis with Western translation research. Instead, I hope to support students in learning how institutional placemaking practices, rhetorical sensibilities, and primary source engagements transform when local Indigenous translation epistemologies are centered. Just as this article and my teaching cannot transcend my own settler culpability as an uninvited guest on Onondaga land, these pedagogical efforts serve as only one step in ongoing processes of accountability to Indigenous communities. As Cushman (2016) further argues, redirecting orientations to "difference within difference" (p. 238) through a translingual framework can support anticolonial practice, but decolonization is still not guaranteed.

Second, translingual activists might interrogate systems beyond classroom contexts as well: questioning mundane genres implicated in placement systems and high-stakes writing requirements. Saenkhum (2016) already discusses how advising documents, for example, shape how multilingual students are treated and placed across writing programs. Further analyses of scholastic regulations, hiring documents, tenure and promotion materials, transfer student advising materials, calls for applicants to a program, registration documents, and course descriptions all ought to clarify our linguistic epistemologies and values as we predict how they perform beyond our intentions. At the graduate level, scholars have critiqued how many students in my U.S. context do not receive substantial, critical training in linguistics or translation (Pawlowski & Tardy, 2023) or about linguistic histories beyond the United States and Canada (Milu, 2022; Navarro, 2023). These remain urgent issues in graduate education. I would add that we might question the areas of translation scholarship we hope students might benefit from. Not all translation scholarship, as I have demonstrated, resists naturalization. Further, it is also too common for WAC/WID educators to only assign academic readings for graduate students using standard forms of English (or another language) in conventional academic genres. How, then, can graduate faculty expect the uptakes of those assignments to engender critical translation choices (whether within or across languages) on the part of students? Many published scholars discuss their work in podcasts and other forms of

multimedia, and incorporating alternative, public-facing forms of knowledge production can further support students in envisioning futures for academic work beyond the academy.

To this end, assigning multimodal primary sources, such as "It Gets Better" videos analyzed by Bassi (2017), can invite uptakes from students that enable learning and critiquing genre performances by doing. I contend that foregrounding uptake in meta-linguistic conversations signals that an instructor takes students' full linguistic repertoire seriously. I first assigned "It Gets Better" videos when teaching an upper-level writing course where students, having heard me reference queer theory, complained that they had never learned from an openly queer professor or a course on queer theory. Engaging "It Gets Better" videos allowed us to collectively discuss the relationship between heteronormativity, class, and whiteness by reflecting on the history of this genre through uptake artifact critique (Dryer, 2016), as well as practices of interlingual translation through Bassi's (2017) queer analysis. Inviting students to engage the videos *before* reading the Bassi text, however, allowed for collective intralingual translation practices that showcased a variety of student uptakes and reactions to the video, ranging from appreciation to ambivalence or even outright rejection of the videos' assumptions, as well as a discussion of how queer scholars might engage translation differently from linguists and writing studies professionals.

In the case of white instructors such as myself, it is important to recognize that often racialized multilingual students should not be asked to simply believe their instructor will not punish them for innovation. In addition to "It Gets Better" videos, my own classes often leverage a variety of modalities, including podcasts, trips to analyze primary sources in special collections or the university's art museum, or graphic novel excerpts toward this goal. I am not equating translingualism with linguistic difference or soliciting linguistic difference from students' writing here; nor am I rejecting students' choices to adopt dominant translation practices amidst well-documented ongoing linguistic inequalities. I am simply arguing that students have no reason to trust their instructors' commitments to linguistic justice if class discussions operate as uptake performances to assigned readings in white English.

Translingual activism begins before students ever enter the classroom by considering what Vian Jr. (2015) articulates as ecological, or local/transnational, textual mobilities. For example, in my own course description (housed on the program's website) for a qualitative research writing course, I included a sentence in Mandarin Chinese that explicitly stated that interested students could write and conduct research in Mandarin. As institutional genres, course descriptions participate in complex monolingualist ecologies in the United States that force segregation of Mandarin language users' literate resources across U.S. institutions. However, these institutions then simultaneously recruit and profit from such exclusions by advertising native-speaking instructors, increasing tuition dollars on international Chinese students, refusing to dedicate resources to address anti-Asian hate, and citing specifically Chinese students' presence on campus as evidence of marketable globalization, as well documented in translingual and transnational scholarship (Romero & Shivers-McNair, 2018; Zhang-Wu, 2021). Given these concerns, I sought to signal commitments to multiple languages extending from my own proficiencies, without requiring students speak or write in Mandarin for their white teacher in the United States, who they had no reason to trust. At the level of genre uptake, I later learned that this simple sentence addition meant that some Chinese students intentionally enrolled in the course and proactively sought translation opportunities, such as through a discourse analysis project of WeChat users' posts about a Chinese football team. With proactive student engagement, we more democratically discussed students' collective negotiations of meaning-making across Mandarin and English, across multimodal features of voice messages, or just within Mandarin. We also considered how students' own narratives of language use might historicize their present learning and engender imaginative possibilities for resistance to segregated linguistic resources.

Power dynamics remained unequal, of course, yet in this respect, biliteracy WID agendas and translingual activist projects mutually supported one another.

Finally, faculty can acknowledge how other genres not obviously connected to WAC/WID genre networks, such as mundane scholastic regulations narrated in my introduction, might further shape translingual activist goals. While translingual orientations may remain new or under-cited to many WAC/WID professionals (Hall, 2023), multiple translingual projects are already underway across contexts and disciplines. I invite language teachers and scholars to consider how commitments to social justice are enabled and constrained by the translations that genres facilitate across our local ecologies.

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[2] A full history/description of C standards is beyond my scope here, but the interdisciplinary faculty council's discussion of C credit standards implicated the English Department, which administers the vast majority of them.

[3] My capitalization of Black here follows the recommendations of many Black scholars and activists in rhetoric and composition, WAC/WID, and education studies cited in this article.

[4] For a distinction between methodologies and methods, as well as a discussion of place and Indigenous epistemologies in selecting appropriate methodologies, see Nordstrom (2021).

[5] This approach should not be conflated with ecological research in U.S. WAC/WID and HEL scholarship.

[6] It is beyond the scope of this article to define different domains of genre knowledge due to my investment here in genre uptake. For a comprehensive introduction to this terminology, see Tardy et. al. (2020).

Contact

Joseph Anthony Wilson
Assistant Professor of Composition and Literacy
Department of Writing, Rhetoric, & Composition
Syracuse University
Email: jwilso56@syr.edu

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