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## Conclusions

Transnational teaching, learning, administration, and scholarship—including this study—are inflected by both broad and quotidian considerations of being—the “whole world” that Lei (2008, p. 219) attempted to net as the possible range of influences on language development (also see Larsen-Freeman, 2014). So as much as both my university and the nation of Korea (through various expressions in its Ministry of Education, the Incheon Free Economic Zone Authority, and the Incheon Global Campus Foundation) may have imagined a smooth and straightforward experiment in transnational education, the Asia Campus’ establishment and early development instead bring to relief some rich, rough terrain—the “terroir” that Chris Thaiss (2012) invokes metaphorically with reference to international writing programs’ “geographic, cultural, and personal histories and ambitions” (p. 6). In my study, I am only hinting at that fecundity by focusing on a small group of students and faculty members and a limited and, at times, uneven data set. Since the university—and the Asia Campus in particular—has continued to evolve, my conclusions are also necessarily limited: enrollments are growing; new Asia Campus majors are being added; faculty, staff, and administration are changing; and the entire global enterprise of international and transnational education has been disrupted by a pandemic whose effects will likely last years.

But that global enterprise will continue, pressuring scholars, teachers, and program administrators to balance neat institutional directives against the lived realities that studies like mine have detailed. Even if transnational setups such as mine may not make sense for some other institutions given the challenges and risks of branch/extended campuses I noted in Chapter 1, working across borders in many forms will continue to compel colleges and universities, and such work will continue to require close coordination; communication; tolerance of unpredictability; awareness of different (and potentially divergent) educational, administrative, and even national values and goals; and adaptation. Given such needs, there is clear value in the situatedness and focus of a study such as this one: against a curricular and institutional backdrop of writing “in” courses and “in” disciplines in a transnational educational institution, students and instructors consistently interact, position, negotiate, and evolve, enmeshed in networks that are certainly academic and proto-professional but also political, economic, spatial, and physical/material. Administrators and researchers are enmeshed in many of the same networks,

especially to the extent they themselves may also be teaching as well as orienting to new places, new people, and new policies and processes.

As I have observed, documented, analyzed, and directly experienced these complexities, I have approached the goal I articulated in my introduction—to understand what happens to writing as a highly privileged academic activity in a dynamic transnational context. And I have learned much about a very specific “whole world” (Lei, 2008, p. 219) of affordances for and constraints on writing and other literate activities. Of course, those affordances and constraints always surround learning, but they have revealed themselves in especially sharp relief in this study in ways that are relevant to teaching and learning, administration, and ongoing research. In this final chapter, I discuss some concluding observations about and implications for teaching and learning, and also about the activities and considerations that not only surround the transnational academic enterprise but are inextricably bound with it.

## Complexities of Teaching for Transnational (Disciplinary) Transfer

The idea that teachers should focus at least as much on multilingual students’ experiences and abilities as they do on their academic and language learning needs is not new; however, many institutions and writing programs continue to address students from diverse language backgrounds solely in terms of pedagogical support, if not remediation. As I reviewed in Chapter 5, even the more progressive scholarly efforts to understand students’ creative “coping” strategies, for instance, tend to position students as needy language workers—and their instructors and professors as staid and intransigent targets. But the diverse backgrounds, experiences, and negotiations of even the small number of students and faculty members at the Asia Campus highlight a range of alternatives. Students there arrive from domestic Korean high schools and from in-country and foreign international schools, and many have traveled for brief or more extended periods outside Korea. Some, such as David and John, may have at least as much comfort with English as they have with Korean, and they may not necessarily identify primarily as “Korean” in the first place. Others, such as Alice, may be motivated by academic language goals but also by goals of acquiring English for broader social purposes. At the same time, faculty members, all motivated by and eager for the opportunity to teach transnationally, will adapt differently depending on prior experience, ongoing adjustments to the location and the student population, and investment in disciplinary goals. That is, faculty members and students alike will “transfer” knowledge and practices from prior/overlapping literacies into

their transnational contacts, and the students will also “transfer” knowledge and practices into subsequent academic, professional, and social literacies.

But as I have noted previously, *transfer*, while a term that circulates widely in WAC/WID, will remain imprecise as a way to describe the development of this sort of complex transnational literate community. Students—and faculty—in my study act as ongoing experimenters, repurposing what the scholars of transfer refer to as “boundary objects”—information or practices durable enough to be carried from one literate context to another but malleable enough to be adapted, often for unpredictable purposes (see, e.g., Roozen, 2009; Wardle & Roozen, 2012; Yancey et al., 2014). David’s recall of generic features of psychology articles he read as a hobby, Alice’s comfort with the informal language of popular media and her attempts to make her English seem more “natural,” Professor W’s conversion of classroom space to a “newsroom,” and Professor E’s use of car traffic patterns to analogize brain structures are all reuses/reapplications of previous knowledge/practices. But even where adaptations are not necessarily positive—such as the potential overreliance Professor B noted among students who were perhaps becoming too comfortable with the small enrollment and their closeness to faculty members—they are nevertheless evidence of teaching and learning that is predictable in its unpredictability. So, as Jwa (2019) argues, students’ “educated guesses” about what writing and other literate activity can do in the *next* context require teachers and researchers to focus less on discrete skills or concepts and more on the *ways of transfer*. Alice employed a range of strategies to make her English more “natural,” and that goal likely positioned her as a particularly effective teaching assistant for Professor O and as a potential “star teacher” herself. Professor W revised his pedagogy to use the constraints of the Asia Campus as a way to emulate the professional environment of a newsroom. Attending to the “ways of transfer” in this context means attending to creative adaptation to a transnational scene marked by culture and language differences, media saturation, and even the material affordances of built environments (cf. DePalma & Ringer, 2011).

Of course, disciplinarity itself is part of the diversity of such a transnational educational institution, and it is an explicit focus of this study. While faculty participants demonstrated their embeddedness in and their sensitivity to the complexities of their transnational work, they certainly remained intent on the goal of facilitating students’ professional literacies. But the specific meanings of “disciplinarity” varied, pressured in part by differing perceptions about the roles language correctness plays in disciplinary competence. As I have related, anxieties in Korea about “correct” and “natural” English inflect the experiences and observations of several of my participants. For instance,

on one hand, David's positive experience writing in the already familiar genre of a literacy narrative in his own first-year writing course reinforced what he had learned before coming to campus, and it arguably gave him confidence about his own abilities as he encountered complex expectations in his major and across campuses of the transnational university. On the other hand, David and Professor A both expressed some impatience with what they perceived to be a gap between general writing instruction/support and the specific supports students seemed to need in writing-intensive disciplinary courses, such as the psychology research class. That is, Korean teachers and students who may have felt anxious to demonstrate a high level of English proficiency believed errors in language and formatting needed to be addressed as early and as insistently as possible. While Alice, David, and Jane did perform well academically throughout their careers at both campuses, they might have benefited from more of the two-campus perspective Professors M and W had: arguably, those faculty members' experience at both campuses allowed them to contextualize linguistic and generic concerns within the broader transnational university. And as David particularly experienced after his own transition, faculty at the U.S. campus demonstrated flexibility—an observation that suggests a more complex major/disciplinary target than some Asia Campus students and faculty members anticipated.

Foundational awareness of transfer's—and more broadly literacy's—particular complexity in transnational settings is vital to curricular and course planning, including close articulation from introductory to more advanced courses. The small number of sustainable majors at a branch/extended campus such as this one creates a structural opportunity for more coherent WAC/WID than is usually possible at larger and less centralized campuses. However, a transnational university's extension across space (and time zones) poses a clear challenge for academic departments' cohesive identities. Developing students as emerging academics/professionals who “think like” journalists or psychologists or members of other fields is no doubt a common and important goal, but it is one that requires especially careful coordination where students, faculty, facilities, and other resources are usually widely dispersed. Scheduling and budget constraints may mean different departments stretched across multiple campuses must plan for faculty travel/exchanges individually and inconsistently; however, such movement is an important investment because it affords direct experience with diverse students and with instructors/faculty members who may not ordinarily see one another even though they are formally members of the same department. And as I have related with respect to the dense interconnections among teaching, learning, and the everyday social and material considerations of the Asia Campus, that movement is also im-

portant as a way to help faculty members experience, compare, and contrast local conditions.

## Cultivating *Terroir* for Transnational WAC/WID

The potential benefit of more cross-campus perspectives on writing as a key university literacy activity hints at the value of a transnational administrative effort to recruit and develop writing-focused faculty colleagues from disparate departments and across an ocean. Even on a single, cohesive campus, WAC/WID scholars consistently observe that faculty members' investments in reflective writing instruction vary drastically: faculty in many disciplines, including those I have briefly surveyed in this study, believe broadly in the importance of writing but often lack professional incentive and/or training to spend time teaching it directly. Writing programs/departments have considerable professional incentive to focus on writing pedagogy. But they may not have staff or resources to lend to fuller WAC/WID coordination or, if they do, they may not want to risk retrenching ideas that writing faculty exist to serve other disciplines. Indeed, the early experience I related in Chapter 2 of advising faculty colleagues across the curriculum to coordinate among themselves and with writing instructors reflects patterns of miscommunication familiar in WAC/WID. While initial faculty colleagues (with one exception) did not express a need for such coordination, Psychology Professor A certainly suggested a need for more cross-communication as the student population grew and as more writing-intensive courses were scheduled.

Apart from professional divisions of labor and the uncertainty that can result from a curriculum-in-progress, all faculty members in the kind of transnational institution my study features confront location-related challenges: if they are working at the "home" campus, for instance, they may be distant enough in space and in real time that connections with faculty colleagues at the branch/extended campus may seem tenuous at best. Relationships they otherwise could have developed with promising students for undergraduate research or for professional mentoring/networking may not form before those students transition—which may not happen until late in the students' majors. Meanwhile, faculty at the branch/extended campus face their own professional and personal challenges. For example, while it was highly unusual for me, a tenured professor, to be working at the Asia Campus, my presence made sense given my research interests and given that I was not under the same kind of publication timeline pressures junior colleagues often must negotiate. Nor was I expected to teach as much as colleagues who were permanently assigned to the Asia Campus. I was privileged that my partner and son could

travel to visit me several times during my year there. But the combination of space constraints, inchoate city resources, and lack of primary and secondary education options would have made it highly impractical for them to move to Korea with me full time. Even now, these sorts of constraints mean applicant pools for faculty members at the Asia Campus can tend to be limited to very early-career professionals unattached to families, late-career professionals with personal interest in international teaching and travel, or a small number who have personal ties to Korea. Differences in faculty status between campuses, challenges of maintaining departmental identities transnationally, and personal and familial complexities can lead to faculty turnover—a clear administrative challenge, and one that can pose particular problems for efforts to develop cohesive WAC/WID approaches.

Such programmatic, departmental, and institutional complexities interanimate with many others within the nested ecosystems that constitute transnational campuses such as this one. While scholars including Chris Anson and Christiane Donahue (2015), Donahue (2009), and Martins (2015) specifically examine differences in writing teaching, research, and administration across very different and otherwise unrelated institutions in different countries, their notes of caution are also appropriate within a single “extended” transnational institution. Anson and Donahue (2015), for example, critique monocultural perspectives on writing administration by metaphorically relating travelers’ tendencies to think of all agricultural activities as “farming” in terms with which they may already be familiar. But not all arable lands and crops, the authors go on to note, are cultivated or managed the same way. With the equally grounded metaphor, *terroir*, Thaiss (2012) suggests the specificity, locality, and fecundity of local conditions that may be somewhat predictable from afar but that ultimately require close attention and cultivation. In less metaphorical terms, *terroir* translates to students’ cultural, linguistic, and educational differences compared to the students with whom many faculty (especially those from another campus of a transnational university) may already have long become familiar. It also translates to the often unexpected and superficially invisible differences *within* a “diverse” student body owing to the co-evolution of a host country and of privileged English language practices. It also means ripple effects of staffing and administrative turnover, faculty visits, the appearance of new courses/degree programs, changing relationships with other universities sharing space and resources, and communicative and structural challenges between national educational bureaucracies. For me, it invokes the experiment within an experiment within an experiment that has been the site of my study—the extended campus of a major U.S. university that operates on a larger multinational campus in a still-new city while all of that is still under construction.

## Transnational WAC/WID and a Whole World

Any scholar-teacher who is involved with transnational WAC/WID efforts will be an attractive candidate for administering those efforts as well. So the lines among scholarship, teaching, and administration that are already blurry in the field may be even more blurry at sites such as mine. As this theoretically informed grounded study demonstrates, continuous empirical sensitivity is vital. While I believe this study has benefited from my approach, I am well aware that this kind of research takes a significant amount of time. And time is rarely a friend to scholars who either lack the resources to conduct such research or who may have the means but also have the pressures of consistent, quantifiable scholarly production. I was fortunate to attract support for travel from willing partners on both campuses; to receive ready and able assistance from eager undergraduate and graduate students; and to carve time to think, analyze, write, and revise from and around other responsibilities. Even in my own privileged position, I cannot always count on that combination.

But I believe scholars, teachers, and administrators working in transnational institutions can and should cultivate their own sensitivities to writing and to writing's surrounds—whether they are conducting formal research or not. Many of them may have been recruited/relocated as part of universities' efforts to promote sameness across transnational space—the unidirectional and isomorphic “smoothness” Wilkins and Huisman (2012) critique. But such plans made “on spec” encounter on-the-ground realities: many of the usual complexities of educational experiences can easily be magnified as the emerging transnational ecology in which students, faculty, staff, administrators, and other community members interact takes shape. And writing as a common and highly privileged academic activity will record, represent, and refract such an ecology.

In fact, writing scholars, teachers, and administrators working in institutions that are not as explicitly extended across space as my own should cultivate similar sensitivities. It can be easy for college and university recruiters, administrators, and even scholar-teacher colleagues at U.S.-based institutions to assume that international and multilingual students' diverse experiences, abilities, and instances of transfer level out “on the ground” through straightforward processes of acclimation. But this study and others demonstrate that language learning is rarely if ever linear, that transfer is complex and even idiosyncratic, that histories and trajectories are always relevant even if they are not immediately available for reflection, and that writing can trace the daily, lived experiences of all of us working in internationalist institutions whether relating those experiences was explicitly part of a writing task or not. As

college and university mission statements continue to trumpet international goals—perhaps in new ways in the wake of a pandemic and of geopolitical instability—transnational, quotidian, messy realities will emerge.

Participants in my study and I could not help but co-build and inhabit a “whole world” (Lei, 2008) of affordances for and constraints on literacies that always surround acquisition and learning. For us, the surrounds in which we and our students were working and living were especially sensible as we inhabited a startup within a startup within a startup. But wherever the *terroir* on which writing and other literate activities occur among those of us who have transnational ties, there is tremendous value in research, teaching, learning, and administration that recognize the co-embeddedness of curriculum, nation, disciplinarity, intercultural anxiety, educational ambitions, identity—the list could easily go on, exemplifying the ways transnational experiments are both very wide ranging and very much grounded.