Open Words: Access and English Studies is dedicated to publishing articles focusing on political, professional, and pedagogical issues related to teaching composition, rhetoric, reading, creative writing, ESL, and literature to open-admissions and "nonmainstream" student populations. We seek original scholarship in areas such as instructional strategies, cultural studies, critical theory, classroom materials, technological innovation, institutional critique, student services, program development, etc., that assist educators, administrators, and student support personnel who work with students in pedagogical-ly difficult settings. Articles should consider the particularities of context—issues, for example, surrounding the identifier of "open access," intersections of race, class, gender, sexuality, and disability, regional and cultural differences, and the range of competencies students bring with them to classrooms—in conjunction with the goal of English studies to empower students' critical and creative endeavors. We value works pertinent to specialists yet accessible to non-specialists, and we encourage submissions that take into account what interactions with students teach us about the broader, democratic goals of open-access education and English studies.

Open Words is an established journal, which began in 2007, and has produced at least one issue a year since then with the support of Pearson. John Tassoni and Bill Thelin served as the previous senior editors. In 2016, the journal was handed over to Sue Hum, who brought on two additional co-editors, Kristina Gutierrez and Yndalecio Isaac Hinojosa. The work of producing an annual issue—reviewing submissions, identifying reviewers, sending manuscripts out for peer review, working closely with authors on revisions, creating proofs, and making copyedit corrections—is handled by the three senior editors. The first issue under their editorial leadership was published on March 13, 2017.

In 2019, the new editorial team transitioned the journal away from Pearson and to the WAC Clearinghouse for ongoing support and as the venue for publication. The open-ac-cess approach of the WAC Clearinghouse aligned with the philosophy of Open Words as an open-access journal with goals to cultivate a robust and dynamic body of scholarship on issues of access in higher education institutions and within communities. By address-ing issues related to class, this journal has been historically a part of the CCC Work-ing Class, Culture, and Pedagogy Working Group with a target audience that includes scholar-teachers and practitioners in rhetoric and composition, education, and affiliated disciplines who want to read critical discussions about issues of access. The scholarship published by Open Words complements the scholarship highlighting issues of access in other Clearinghouse journals, such as *The Journal of Basic Writing* and *The WAC Journal.*

Table of Contents

Introduction from the Editors

We are thrilled to present this special issue, **Access Necessarily Precedes Success: Multilingual Student Writers in Higher Education**, which focuses on how access remains a crucial factor for the academic achievement of multilingual student writers. This special issue also offers suggestions and recommendations for writing instructors and programs to enhance the access and inclusion of multilingual student writers.

We thank **Jagadish Paudel** of The University of Texas at El Paso for proposing this special topic and serving as this special issue's editor-in-chief. It has been a pleasure working with and learning from him.

In addition, we are deeply grateful to Associate Editor **Yanni Angelis** of Colorado State University for his knowledgeable, meticulous work in making line edits and producing the proofs for this issue.

Finally, we thank **Michael Palmquist** and the **WAC Clearinghouse** for their timely support and continued investment in the publication of *Open Words*.

Open Words seeks to facilitate conversations about how different types of access, such as linguistic, cultural, and institutional, shape the experiences and outcomes of these multilingual students in higher education settings.

Sue Hum, The University of Texas at San Antonio
Y. Isaac Hinojosa, Texas A&M University-Corpus Christi
Kristina A. Gutierrez, Lone Star College-Kingwood

Guest Editor's Introduction:
Access Necessarily Precedes Success: Multilingual Student Writers in Higher Education

Jagadish Paudel, Ph.D. Candidate
The University of Texas at El Paso

I have crossed a myriad of borders and barriers in my life—geographical, economic, cultural, and linguistic, among others. While I currently teach and study at a university on the border between the United States of America (USA) and Mexico, it was not until recently that I became fully aware of the nature and importance of these borders and barriers and their indelible impact on providing access to learning and academic success in a student's life. Pursuing a Ph.D. in Rhetoric and Composition Studies in the US after coming from Nepal prompted me to reflect on these borders and barriers, realizing how they can limit access to learning and impede students' success. I now understand that *access necessarily precedes success*.

At various points in my life, I have encountered significant barriers that restricted my access to educational materials. One such impediment involved is a geographical barrier. During my school years, we did not have access to transportation and nearby markets for purchasing essential reading materials. This lack of access resulted in delays in obtaining course books and supplementary resources, hindering our timely reading and academic progress. Similarly, after obtaining my master's degree in Nepal, I taught in a remote area where Internet and personal phone services were scarce, further limiting my access to online resources and communication. In contrast to urban teachers, I faced geographically limited access to resources and exposure to professional development programs and academically current scholars in my field.

Another barrier that limited my access to education was my economic status. I was born into a sharecropper family. As the son of a sharecropper and a first-generation student, I hail from a humble background and struggled financially. I vividly recall the days when I couldn't even afford basic supplies, like pens,

notebooks, and textbooks. Similarly, I had constraints for my study time. Sometimes, I had to plow the field with oxen before going to school in the morning, and even in the evening after returning from school. Consequently, I was constrained by both my financial situation and my household responsibilities.

Next, growing up in a multilingual society, studying with multilingual classmates, and teaching multilingual students, I realized how language plays a vital role in students' success when it provides them access to their ways of knowing and being. In my case, seeing my school and college education in Nepal from a language and cultural perspective, I was indeed part of the dominant majority group—that of the Nepali-speaking community in my country. But I also recall how my classmates from nondominant linguistic and cultural backgrounds—such as Gurung, Newar, Tamang, etc. —often encountered language and cultural barriers due to institutions' policies of favoring the dominant group of students' knowledge and ways of learning. I also remember instances when my classmates were subjected to ridicule because of their different, minority accents in dominant Nepali.

Ironically, it was when I later came to the US to pursue a Ph.D. as a multilingual student, that I understood how limited I am in communicating, studying, teaching, and writing due to my own linguistic and cultural borders. For example, in the early days, when I would speak, sometimes my peers would not understand due to my accented English. I further understood the complexities of multilingual students' lives while teaching undergraduate-level writing courses at my current university in the US, presenting papers at various national and international conferences, and hosting some speaker series events representing the Writing Program Administration Graduate Organization (WPA-GO), on the issue of multilingual writers, race, and accessibility. Through my study and professional service, I identified the vast difference that access to language and literacy practices makes in students' success and in providing access to them.

I share these examples from my own "felt experience," an experiential knowledge acquired through my personal learning journeys, to illustrate how *access necessarily precedes success*. I came to fully realize that assessing students' achievements without considering the access they have is deeply incorrect. Success alone does not reveal the intricate processes involved in achieving that success through access. Analogically speaking, it is like gauging a piece of writing solely by its final version, the final product, without understanding the extensive writing journey involved and all the labor that writing entails.

As U.S. higher education institutions are increasingly becoming more multilingual, how to give access to multilingual students is ever more important.

Over the last few decades, the number of international multilingual students attending U.S. colleges and universities is increasing exponentially, reaching a total of more than one million annually in higher education institutions in the United States between 2014/15 and 2019/20 (The Professionals in International Education, or PIE). PIE News also reports a 68 % rise in new first-time international enrollments in US higher education institutions for 2021/2022 (Nott).

Increased global movement and migration of translinguals have augmented the significance of multilingual education across the world, demanding that higher education institutions address multilingualism more consciously (Catalano, Shende, and Suh, 2018). In such situations, acknowledging and providing access to multilingual students' linguistic repertoire and experiences seems vitally important for promoting social justice in college education. When it comes to fostering writing skills in higher education classrooms, it is vital that instructors embrace a pedagogy that provides access to multilingual students; indeed, it is our ethical responsibility to do so.

Historically speaking, writing studies have long attempted to recognize and address the specific concerns of multilingual students. For instance, since 1975, the Conference on College Composition and Communication (CCCC) has affirmed the importance of "students' right to their own language" within the university classroom. CCCC has been consistently issuing its statements on second language writing and multilingual writers (e.g., 2001, 2009, 2020). Over the past five decades, numerous scholars (e.g., Suresh Canagarajah, Paul Kei Matsuda, among others) continue to articulate various perspectives and to offer different strategies, practices, and approaches that enhance access for multilingual student writers.

Having crossed several borders, and living the multilingual context of the contemporary U.S. university, I now also understand that providing access to multilingual student writers is in fact a key aspect of university education in the US. So, this special issue, **Access Necessarily Precedes Success: Multilingual Student Writers in Higher Education** in *Open Words* spotlights access for and fostering of multilingual students and their writing, enriched by their own experiences, within the learning process. This special issue contributes to opening, maintaining, promoting, and defending access for multilingual writers, offering various strategies for teaching multilingual student writers.

Providing Access to Multilingual Writers

Teaching undergraduate writing courses at a Texas System University and at Tribhuvan University in Nepal, attending my disciplinary conferences, and being exposed to Ph.D. courses in Rhetoric and Composition Studies, I recognize how some pedagogical practices and pedagogies that directly give access to multilingual writers, such as translingual practices, multimodality, decolonizing pedagogy, among others.

Research shows that translanguaging tends to create inclusive pedagogical practices, thus giving equal access to educational opportunities and allowing an increased degree of student participation in classroom settings (e.g., Creese & Blackledge, 2010). Horner, Lu, Royster, and Trimbur (2011) advocate for a broader shift from an outdated "English-only" approach to a translingual norm. A translingual approach provides better access for multilingual writers in various ways, such as, (1) "honoring the power of all language users to shape language to specific ends; (2) recognizing the linguistic heterogeneity of all users of language both within the United States and globally; and (3) directly confronting English monolingualist expectations" (Horner, Lu, Royster, & Trimbur, 2011, p. 305). It empowers language users to freely mix and change languages, without perceiving such mixing as a sign of linguistic failure, cognitive incompetence, or cultural threat (Horner & Tetreault, 2017).

Scholars argue that embracing multimodality (e.g., audio, video, color, image, etc.) in teaching writing facilitates access to multilingual student writers. During the writing process, multilingual writers often struggle with the English-only linguistic mode, while embracing other modes that can empower them (Pandey et al., 2021). Gonzales and Butler (2020) argue that multimodal activities and assignments can establish effective composition spaces for students using Spanish, American Sign Language, and/or other modes. Canagarajah (2013) has long asserted that real-world language users typically leverage all available semiotic resources for meaning-making, making it necessary for translingual theory to go "beyond words and accommodat[e] other semiotic systems" (p. 450).

Resisting dominant language practices and contents and welcoming multilingual students' knowledge and practices can give better access to multilingual student writers. Drawing ideas from Walter Mignolo's "epistemic disobedience," Medina (2019) contends that translanguaging has the potential for "implementing multilingual practices in [First-year Composition] classes by enacting 'epistemic disobedience,' by complicating the primacy of English as the language of knowledge-

building" (p.73). Writing about decolonizing methodology, Haas (2012) argues for the need to (1) redress colonial influences on perceptions of people, literacy, language, culture, and community and the relationships therein, and (2) support the coexistence of cultures, languages, literacies, memories, histories, places, and spaces—and encourage respectful and reciprocal dialogue between and across them (p. 297).

Additionally, in order to provide more access for multilingual students, instructors can develop assignments relating to students' own culture and previous language experiences, thus providing students with preferential options in their writing assignments. "Writing from Experience," for instance, is an assignment that encourages students to write an essay from their personal experiences (e.g., home literacy experiences, school literacy experiences, or broader social literacy experiences), which in turn enables them to make meaning which can be inspirational for their own and others' future. With the aim of connecting language and rhetoric while empowering students to draw from their authentic linguistic experiences, Corcoran and Wilkinson (2019) created a language autoethnography assignment to engage students through personal narrative writing and their linguistic abilities. Regarding assignments, the CCCC statement (2020) on second-language writing and multilingual writers states, "We encourage instructors to provide students with multiple options for successfully completing an assignment, such as by providing multiple prompts or allowing students to write in a variety of genres for completing the assignment." Indeed, offering multiple options while assigning assignments and allowing learners to articulate their work via multiple genres gives better access to multilingual student writers.

Numerous other theories, approaches, and practices exist to serve multilingual student writers. The articles included in this issue add to the current scholarship on multilingualism, specifically with reference to multilingual student writers, by programmatic interventions and efforts to support multilingual student writers, pedagogical practices, and writing centers' services.

Overview of the Issue

This special issue explores how teaching writing to multilingual student writers can provide them with access to various opportunities and resources. It includes topics such as translanguaging, multimodality, asset-based pedagogy, programmatic efforts and writing centers' services, and storytelling rooted in diverse cultures. These

articles showcase how effective access is granted to multilingual student writers, empowering them to enhance their rhetorical skills.

The issue opens with **Joyce Meier, Xiqiao Wang,** and **Cheryl Caesar'**s article, "Re-Addressing the 'Problem of PCW': Rethinking A Bridge-Writing Course in the Interest of Supporting Multilingual Students," which discusses the programmatic efforts for providing access to multilingual student writers of the Writing Program at Michigan State University. To be specific, the authors offer how their university's Preparation for College Writing (WRA 101) and first-year writing program evolved to give better access for its multilingual students through translingual, multimodal, and asset-based pedagogical practices.

Xiao Tan's work, "'How Can I Sound Politician?': A Case Study of Multilingual Writer Transferring Prior Knowledge in Multimodal Composing," is the case study that examines the process by which a multilingual student leveraged his prior knowledge to create a video proposal and how this multimodal project enhances opportunities for learning and reflection, thereby facilitating greater accessibility. Collecting data from screen recordings with a think-aloud protocol, a semi-structured interview, writing assignments submitted by the student participant, and class observation notes, Tan explores the participant-mobilized procedural, genre, and rhetorical knowledge at different stages of the project by integrating the multimodal composing experience.

Maria Isela Maier, in "Encouraging Language Negotiation in Institutional Spaces: A Qualitative Case Study in Pedagogies to Promote Translanguaging in Writing courses," focuses on the pedagogical practices employed by undergraduate instructors to encourage students to use their linguistic repertoires at a Hispanic-serving institution situated along the U.S.-Mexico border. Maier reports on how participant instructors establish inclusive writing pedagogies that embrace linguistic diversity and acknowledge students' unique communication practices, allowing students to translanguage in their writing.

In "Storytelling in First-Year Writing: Empowering Multilingual Learners with the Hakawati Tradition," **Anthony DeGenaro** and **Lena Hakim** advocate for access by inviting multilingual writers to embrace Hakawati storytelling, a traditional Arabic storytelling tradition, in first-year writing classes. The authors present their own practices of storytelling that have been implemented in their first-year classroom through their two assignments, the oral research narrative and the "I-Search" essay.

In their article, "Piloting a Language Autoethnography in a First-Year Writing Program: A Study of Five Multilingual Student Writers," **Michael J. Faris, Michelle E. Flahive, Elizabeth Hughes Karnes,** and **Callie F. Kostelich**

demonstrate the complexity of a project like an autoethnography, which aims to provide valuable learning opportunities for multilingual student writers. The authors offer implications for first-year writing programs and teachers that they need to explicitly interrogate academic norms with students and to provide professional development for teachers.

Marco F. Navarro, Sara P. Alvarez, and **Eunjeong Lee**, in "Multilingual Epicenters: First-Year Writing and the Writing Center as Critical Sites of Multilingual Sustainability for Language-minoritized Students in Higher Education" argue that both writing centers and first-year writing classrooms are places where justice and injustice get entwined for language-minoritized students. They correctly observe that mere access to sites of institutionalized writing instruction and policies is not enough to counter deep-rooted structures of oppression that target and pathologize racialized communities. Through their conscientious practices, including providing tailored feedback, designing assignments that prioritize language-minoritized students' needs, and ensuring holistic support before and after writing center services, the authors propose sustainable approaches for fostering multilingual meaning-making practices and thus to better enact justice in first-year composition classes and writing centers.

The article, "Increasing Support for Multilingual Student Writers in a Writing Center Context," by **Allie Johnston**, discusses incorporating responses from undergraduate and graduate tutors and the voices of multilingual student writers, and reports on the initiatives taken by a new Writing Center Director for developing support, training, and resources to support his multilingual student writers in tutoring sessions within his campus Writing Center. Johnston provides examples and ideas, particularly on three main aspects, as addressed by Blazer and Fallon (2020): understanding students' experiences with language; developing an open mind towards difference; and making and applying meaning to tutoring sessions for designing more inclusive tutoring practices for our multilingual student writers.

Conclusion

In U.S. universities, twenty-first century classrooms very often include a significant population of international and domestic multilingual students, who bring their unique linguistic, cultural, and educational backgrounds. When these students arrive at US universities, they often face various barriers, including linguistic issues, economic, cultural, and time constraints, etc. Given this situation, it becomes crucial to ensure equitable access for multilingual students and support their academic

success. When it comes to writing, scholars argue that some pedagogical practices give better access to multilingual student writers, such as translingual practices, multimodality, decolonizing pedagogy, etc. For example, translanguaging pedagogy proves beneficial for student writers as it accepts differing and diverse practices of student writing; decolonial pedagogy helps enact equitable pedagogy in the writing classes as it honors students' own epistemological roots, including varying educational and cultural norms. Additionally, multimodality enables students to better complete assignments by allowing them to employ multiple modes of composition (i.e., audio, video, pictures, graphs, etc.). I wholeheartedly recommend the articles in this collection as highly valuable resources for facilitating access to multilingual student writers in higher education. These articles provide instructors with tangible programmatic strategies, encompassing pedagogical practices like translanguaging, decolonization, asset-based pedagogy, multimodality, storytelling, and establishing welcoming writing centers. Through sharing their distinct experiences and viewpoints, these authors concretely contribute to fostering social justice within the multilingual landscape of contemporary American universities.

Now I invite you as a reader/scholar to explore two future steps: a call to action, and reflection. After reading the articles included in this special issue, I urge you to go into action by embracing strategies, practices, and approaches that provide access for multilingual student writers. Furthermore, I invite you to reflect on how the articles included in this special issue can inform and inspire your own teaching and learning of multilingual writing. I also encourage you to share your experiences and insights with other multilingual writers and instructors through various platforms and networks. How do you view multilingualism as a resource and a challenge for academic writing? With what kinds of strengths do they come? What are some of the strategies and tools that you use or recommend for enhancing multilingual writing skills and performance? How do you balance the expectations and conventions of different academic genres and disciplines?

I further encourage you to reflect on the strategies that you are practicing to ensure access to multilingual student writers. If you are in a program director or department chair position, then please think seriously about whether your programmatic policies provide access to multilingual student writers or not, what effort you would like to make to offer access to these students, what professional development activities you offer on the programmatic level to equip instructors to teach multilingual student writers, and what resources you have on hand for promoting multilingual student writers. Similarly, if you are a writing instructor, please examine yourself: How are you consciously providing full access to the

multilingual student writers in your classes? What pedagogical approach you embrace, what kinds of assignments you assign, how you assess students' work, what effort you would like to make to provide more access to the students, etc. Furthermore, if you are a writing center director or tutor, I urge you to make a critical reflection on your own practices of providing access for multilingual student writers and the implementation of necessary reforms for offering more inclusive and supportive writing center services.

I conclude this editorial note by repeating the mantra that *access necessarily precedes success*! So, first, let us provide access to our multilingual student writers through programmatic efforts, pedagogical practices, and writing center services, and then can follow success in multilingual student writers' academic lives.

Happy reading this issue!

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Jagadish Paudel is a doctoral candidate in Rhetoric and Writing Studies at the University of Texas at El Paso. His areas of interest include social justice in rhetoric and writing studies, policies in rhetoric and writing programs, multilingualism, translanguaging, decolonizing composition studies, critical pedagogy, and non-Western rhetoric. His scholarship has been published in the *RSA Quarterly, Rhetoric and Communications-E Journal* (co-authored), *Journal of NELTA*, among others. He is also associated with the Writing Program Administrators-Graduate Organization (WPA-GO) Leadership Council. Currently, he serves as its Chair for the year 2023-2024 and holds monthly meetings, plan for events and activities, oversee its committees, and advocate social justice issues.

Re-Addressing the "Problem of PCW": Rethinking a Bridge-Writing Course in the Interest of Supporting Multilingual Students

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ABSTRACT

This article describes how a first-year writing program evolved to provide better access for its multilingual students, many of whom are heavily represented in the bridge-writing course: PCW (or Preparation for College Writing) that precedes the program's required first-year writing course (WRA 101) at a large R-1 U.S. institution. Informed by a translingual approach and with the support of the department, a highly committed group of mostly non-tenured PCW teachers initiated and implemented changes that included three pedagogical changes: 1) the explicit framing of PCW students' languages and cultures as assets, sites of inquiry, and resources for learning; 2) the incorporation of multimodality as a primary tool for the students to use, as they expressed their ideas, cultures, and aspirations; and 3) an ongoing orientation of these students to the university and academic cultures. The article then provides specific curricular examples (activities and assignments) that enact these pedagogical innovations.

Key words: Translingualism, multilingual learners, asset-based pedagogy

Introduction

This article describes how a first-year writing program evolved to provide better access and support for its multilingual students, many of whom are heavily represented in its bridge-writing course: PCW (or Preparation for College Writing) that precedes the

required first-year writing course (WRA 101) at Michigan State University (MSU), a large R-1 U.S. institution. These changes were designed to meet the needs of a new student demographic and reflected our evolving understanding of first-year writing pedagogy overall.

Several years ago, six PCW professors and two administrators undertook a grant-supported review of the course, which at the time comprised as many as 80% multilingual students from countries such as China, India, and Venezuela, but also from the U.S. (children of migrant workers, refugees, and immigrants). At the time, the committee that advises the director of the first-year writing program had been discussing the 'problem of PCW'—a course that was widely recognized as a pedagogical headache, and one that many of our teachers, untrained in ESL, tended to avoid. But acknowledging this concern was also the impetus for change—as members of this committee formed a subcommittee that took on this course challenge, and with the support of the program director, wrote a grant to address it. Meeting monthly for the next two years (2012-2014), and drawing on translingualism (Lu & Horner, 2013) and asset-based pedagogies (Paris, 2012; Gonzalez & Moll, 2002), a team of first-year writing teachers then proceeded to revamp PCW, creating curricula and learning goals that now frame students' languages and cultures as sites of inquiry and resources for learning. In today's course, PCW's multilingual students are invited to incorporate aspects of home languages and cultures into their assignments, thus challenging many assumptions of standard English as an international lingua franca; conversely, it asks what ends up lost when a student's home language and culture are silenced. At the same time, PCW students are invited to place their languages and cultures in relation to the university and academic cultures of which they are also members. Finally, the revised PCW treats standard English, and academic culture, as respectively another "language" and "culture" to examine and question, along with the power structures embedded therein. Noting Canagarajah's (2013) remarks that the "trans" in "translingual" is also "transmodal," and that people utilize all semiotic means at their disposal (e.g., not just words) to negotiate meaning with others, the revised PCW has students expressing their languages and cultures *multimodally*: a pedagogical move that allows PCW multilingual learners to use means other than alphabetic text in standard English to communicate their ideas, cultures, and languages (Tan & Matsuda, 2021).

This paper describes the original PCW innovations, all designed to give the multilingual learners in this course greater voice, and provides curricular examples— many of which have also now been shared, vis-à-vis pedagogy workshops, with writing teachers on and off-campus. Indeed, PCW faculty and four multilingual undergraduates recently formed a team that has been researching linguistic injustice

across national borders (de Costa, 2020; Lippi-Green, 2012; Milu, 2021), and making related videos for use in workshops for teachers at Michigan State University and beyond. In short, our story is the story of how in querying the "problem of PCW," we developed an array of responses, curricular and pedagogical, that provide greater access and support for our multilingual students. Moreover, since the PCW teachers also teach the regular first-year writing course, and through their now-yearly workshops on teaching multilingual learners offered to all first-year writing faculty these PCW innovations have found their way into the other first-year writing courses as well.

Institutional Context and PCW History

The curricular moves detailed here occur in the context of a bridge writing class (PCW) at a large U.S. R-1 institution that experienced a marked increase in its international students—as high as 5 to 8% yearly—over a ten-year span (Statistical Report);[1] by 2012, one in every 13 undergraduate students was non-U.S., as well as most (as high as 80%) of the students in PCW.

The first change made to PCW emerged in response to this demographic shift. At the time, the learning goals and curriculum of PCW closely mirrored those of WRA:101, the required first-year writing (hereafter referred to as FYW) class that followed. Instructors dubbed the "old" PCW a "pre-peat" (and the WRA:101 a "repeat"): because minus one assignment, this version of PCW used the same FYW curriculum as the WRA:101 course that followed. PCW was also a course that instructors without ESL training tended to avoid. Discussing these concerns vis-á-vis a program committee and seeing the demographic change as an opportunity for pedagogical innovation, a group of six PCW teachers and two administrators (one of whom was the program's associate director) applied for and received an institutional Creating Exclusive Excellence Grant (CIEG) to implement curricular innovations that would support diverse students. From 2012-2014, seven of these faculty met monthly to query the PCW course, read and discuss relevant scholarship, and propose changes. In 2014, the FYW program held an all-day retreat, facilitated by the program's director, in which the group's work culminated in the first articulation of learning goals for the

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[1] Due to the pandemic, and changes in visa regulations during the Trump administration, that increase slowed, and in fact reversed over the past three years—though the university remains committed to its global mission, and anticipates bringing in significantly more numbers of non-U.S. students in the future.

course, which framed students' languages and cultures as "sites of inquiry and resources for student learning" ("Learning Objective," n.d.).

Then from 2015 to 2016, a group of PCW faculty—at the request of the subsequent program director—continued to gather. The result of this work was a shared Wiki page of resources, along with the elaboration of two additional PCW goals (as subsequently approved by the program director). These new goals included a focus on multimodality and the orientation of PCW students into the university; the Wiki page ties these goals to specific PCW assignment examples. Thus, as currently presented on our program's website, PCW learning goals are:

- Drawing on students' languages and cultures as sites of inquiry and resources for their learning.
- Using writing and multiple other forms of communication (multimodal, embodied, reading, speaking, listening) as means to identify, understand, and place the "self," and to communicate that knowledge to others.
- Fostering the students' introduction to, and integration into, MSU cultures. (WRA 1004/0102: Preparation for College Writing Curriculum)

In creating the second goal (multimodality), the PCW teachers were especially influenced by the program's biennial First-Year Writing Conference, an end-of-term celebration of students' work in remix form (e.g., videos, podcasts, games, websites). The teachers noted the extent to which PCW's multilingual students give the conference an international appeal — one which in turn contributes to the rich intercultural understanding noted among the U.S. students who attend and participate (Meier et al, 2018). Indeed, the conference helped underscore the extent to which multimodality was a key mode of learning and expression for the program's multilingual students overall, who readily relied on non-verbal forms (beyond alphabetic text) to communicate their ideas to others.

Evolving similarly from ongoing PCW teachers' conversations, the third learning goal—that of orienting its students to the university—reflects instructor commitment to providing access to the primarily multilingual (along with first-generation, U.S.) students in the course. Overall, PCW teachers have noted the extent to which these course goals position students as experts and as one another's teachers, through the sharing of home cultures, home languages, and their growing understanding of academic cultures. In turn, the frequently multimodal means by which these ideas and experiences are expressed enhances class communication and understanding; the ideas and cultures thus becoming more visible, more available to

all. This is not to say that such practices do not also inform the WRA 101 course, but rather that they are the heart of PCW. Whether examining and sharing their own languages and cultures, or growing their understanding of academic cultures and MSU, the PCW students learn within a pedagogical framework that explicitly views their ideas, backgrounds, and knowledges, along with their communication repertoire (languages, codes, discourses) as assets, not deficits, and as key resources for their shared learning.

In the intervening years since the first PCW group of teachers came together though, many changes have occurred. For one thing, ravaged by the pandemic and anti-Chinese sentiment in the U.S., the population of international students at our institution has decreased by nearly four percentage points. In addition, the FYW program instituted a directed self-placement module, and this plus a shift in advising structure means that all incoming students are now placed by default into WRA 101, the regular FYW course that follows PCW. These changes mean the PCW course has shrunk significantly, from eight to ten sections per semester, to only a handful now. Still, many of the shifts in the PCW course have moved forward into WRA 101. Since nearly 10% of our student population continues to be non-U.S., members of the original team of PCW teachers regularly offer an annual faculty workshop for their colleagues on teaching the multilingual learners in WRA 101, through which the translingual approaches and assignments of PCW are shared with the larger community of FYW teachers. In addition, two of the original PCW teachers now mentor a team of four to five multilingual undergraduates (from Thailand, Malaysia, China, and Mexico) and one graduate student (from Ghana) through the research and production of a series of animated videos, on various topics related to teaching multilingual students from a translingual perspective. Elements of these videos have since been incorporated into faculty workshops both at our own institution and beyond, including annual workshops for our own FYW teachers, trainings for the university's Writing Center tutors, and most recently, for teachers in our college (through an Inclusive Pedagogies initiative) and university (through the Center for Teaching and Learning). Finally, Multilingual Learners team members are in current discussion with university administrators about incorporating aspects of our teaching videos into the mandatory DEI training for all faculty, students, and staff.

Instructor Profiles

The proud granddaughter of immigrants, Joyce grew up in a bilingual household, where Polish was often spoken as much as English. While her doctorate (from the

University of Iowa) is in English and American literature, she has done research and taught courses in African American and ethnic American literature. For seven summers, Joyce taught intensive English to Japanese college students, as part of a preparatory program at Coe College, Iowa, before these students went elsewhere in the U.S. for their college exchange programs. Because of the high number of international students at MSU—at the time, mostly from China—Joyce has also taught college students *in* China, at the Harbin Institute of Technology, during the summer of 2015. She has led multiple program initiatives in support of international and multilingual learners, and most recently, has been working with a team of teachers to develop an anti-racist pedagogy handbook for FYW.

Xiqiao is a Chinese-English bi-literate scholar who came to the United States as an international student in her early twenties. She received her graduate degrees in rhetoric and composition and literacy education and had taught FYW at other institutions. Her own struggle to add English to her linguistic repertoire and familiarity with FYW curriculum and pedagogy helped her gain an appreciation of students' languages and cultures as assets. Her own ethnographic research into Chinese international students' literacies, identities, and mobilities has also informed her pedagogy, which aims to unravel the inherent heterogeneity of Chinese international students' linguistic and cultural repertoires. It was through the programmatic initiative described here that she became informed of translingual theory and pedagogy.

Cheryl earned a doctorate in comparative literature (English, American, French and Russian) at the Sorbonne, writing a dissertation on Bakhtinian literary polyphony. She found the experience of studying in a foreign language and culture endlessly fascinating. Seeking to enhance her understanding of second-language pedagogy, she did a postgraduate degree with a small cohort of twenty international teacher-students at the British Institute in Paris, and then taught ESL (English composition, literature, translation and phonetics) at the Sorbonne, the American University of Paris and the Institut Catholique de Paris, as well as businesses and government agencies, for 20 years. Returning to the United States, she began working with FYW students, finding a particular connection with international students facing some of the same challenges and opportunities she had herself experienced. After a few years of attempting to use the existing PCW curriculum, she wrote a proposal for a more asset-based and translingual approach and was invited to join the group engaged in redesigning PCW.

Other teachers who have invested considerable time in the teaching and re-configuration of PCW include a teacher originally from China, whose (U.S.) Ph.D. from Purdue highlights ESL; a teacher originally from Nepal, who speaks six languages

and who edits multiple journals and books in multilingual pedagogies (including the *Journal of Global Literacies, Technologies, and Emerging Pedagogies*); and most recently, a Ph.D. writing and rhetoric student from Korea, who engaged the PCW changes when she taught this course; this teaching in turn has impacted her doctoral areas of research. In other words, supporting multilingual learners through both PCW and now WRA:101 has gone from something that many of our teachers once dreaded, to something that many of our teachers now embrace. One remaining 'problem of PCW' is that the demand to teach PCW has increased while the number of PCW students has gone down; in other words, there are no longer enough sections of PCW to teach.

Scholarly Context: A Translingual Approach

Centering Students' Languages and Cultures

Informing our pedagogical innovations is the work of Horner, Donahue, and NeCamp, in their call that teachers move from "English only to a translingual norm" (2011). Such a view presents languages as fluid, negotiated, emergent, and contextual, rather than static and discrete (Lu & Horner, 2013; Horner & Tetreault, 2017), and grants "agency to language users" to mix and change languages without seeing such mix as evidence of "linguistic failure, cognitive incompetence, or cultural threat" (Horner & Tetreault, 2017, p. 4-5). The "translingual turn" in composition studies views difference as the norm, and as resources to be cultivated. Students are invited to "acknowledge and confront" their "relationship to language ideology" (Lee & Jenks, 2016) as well as to their own languages and cultures, thus developing a "disposition of openness and inquiry toward language and language difference" (Lu & Horner, 2013, p. 585) as well as a "rhetorical sensibility that reflects a critical awareness of language as a contingent and emergent, rather than a standardized and static, practice" (Guerra, 1998, p. 228). As Lee and Jenks (2016) argue, multilingual and monolingual students alike can engage in this examination of difference, as they consider the various practices of translanguaging, and their own responses to the languages of others. Such a view is coherent with translingual theorists' arguments that all meaning-making acts involve "traffic in meaning," where one manages the "passing to and fro of ideas, concepts, symbols, [and] discourses" (Pennycook, 2008, p. 33). It is this flow, co-constituted with languages and cultures, that PCW students are encouraged to surface and analyze.

The composition classroom is the ideal site for such translingual work, as it is a "space in which students develop a self-reflexive awareness of the complexities" of

the "ways in which knowledge is constructed and mediated through various forms of text and textual production" (Lee & Jenks, 2016, p. 322). Moving away from a deficit perspective, which views language differences and irregularities seen in student writing as problems to eradicate, a translingual approach supports student agency by building on students' funds of knowledge (Gonzales & Moll, 2002) and supporting students' practices and dispositions to explore "what they care about people, languages, and cultures in which they are identified and may identify, and how and why and when to do it" (Lu & Horner, 2013, p. 600). Within such an asset-based pedagogical framework, our instruction and assessment of writing honors, rather than punishes, students who produce language that differs from "the hegemonic norm" (Inoue, 2017 p. 129). Following Inoue's call, our classes theorize language difference as a "much richer matter than correct or incorrect usage" (Horner & Tetrault, 2017, p. 11): that is, as a resource that teachers respect, listen to, and work with students to negotiate. In our classes, assessments of student learning are tied to students' own metacognitive reflections on their own (trans)languaging practices, language conventions (e.g. grammar) are framed as rhetorical constructions rather than punitive standards, and cultural differences are positioned as venues for leveraging cultural expertise and developing cross-cultural communicative repertoires (Matsuda & Silva, 1999).

Expressed Multimodally

If translingualism focuses on the shifting complexities of linguistic negotiation as language users move meaning across languages, it becomes important to consider trans-modality as a key form of such communicative work. Students draw on their dynamic semiotic repertoires, encompassing sounds, visuals, graphics, gestures, and ecologies to make their stories, experiences, languages, and cultures visible to others. Canagarajah (2013) has long asserted that language users leverage all available semiotic resources for meaning making, making it necessary for translingual theory to go "beyond words and accommodat[e] other semiotic systems" (p. 450). Such theoretical insights have been supported by empirical research that demonstrates how multilingual writers exhibit enhanced sensitivity and communicative dexterity as they layer meaning through multimodal meaning-making (Gonzales, 2015; Wang, 2020). In similar ways, translingualism and multimodality speak against a monolingual/monomodal ideology that subsumes nonstandard languages, modes, and genres in ways that deprive students of access to valuable linguistic and semiotic resources (Horner, Selfe, & Lockridge, 2015). Scholars have called for strategies of multimodal composition as a means of cultivating students' rhetorical sovereignty: their "right to identify their own

communicative needs, to represent their own identities, to select the right tools for the communicative contexts within which they operate, and to think critically and carefully about the meaning that they and others compose" (Selfe, 2009, p. 618) and to provide multiple pathways towards meaning-making (Shipka, 2011; Wang, 2017). As Julia Kiernan (2015) puts it, "modality and semiotics are central components of the translingual approach" (p. 304).

Querying the University and Academic Culture

In a curriculum that centers students' languages and cultures, their broader transition into the university has evolved as a key site of inquiry, with the norms and practices of academic cultures becoming objects of analysis. Critiquing that teachers often attempt to "get students to engage with the academy, but not necessarily be inducted into it" (41), Canagarajah (2002) argues for a more critical and nuanced teaching stance that recognizes that multilingual students' relationship to the institution entails ongoing negotiation. Such negotiation begins with an acknowledgement of different axes of power; engages with arenas for negotiation as students shuttle between the linguistic and cultural codes of home, community, and university contexts; and provides space for students to develop critical and rhetorical understandings of how languages and cultures constitute axes of power in the world. Just as PCW students had been articulating in class their understanding of taken-for-granted codes from their own home cultures and languages, they came to see, identify, and interpret parallel (and differing) linguistic and cultural codes of the larger institution. Such work is particularly urgent in light of instructor reluctance to adopt a translingual perspective in their composition courses, as they are fearful of disciplinary or institutional pushback (Ozer, 2021). In PCW classes, learning and teaching about the languages and cultures of the university entail collaborative efforts to acknowledge, define, and question academic norms.

Considered together, these scholarly conversations informed the revised PCW as a site for translingual negotiation evoking ongoing processes of collaborative inquiry. Instead of approaching English as a lingua franca, PCW students' experiences with multiple varieties of English become resources that are surfaced and leveraged (Lavelle & Agren, 2020). Students in such a course gain authority through instructing other students and their teachers about their languages and cultures (Gramm, 2020), which creates a "learning opportunity" and a "nexus of inquiry" (Lee & Jenks, 2016). In short, a translingual approach has teachers "learning about, with, and from their students how to teach them" (Gallagher & Noonan, 2017, p. 168).

PCW Learning Goals, Enacted through Class Activities and Projects

The sections below describe three key projects by PCW teachers, along with accompanying assignment "riffs" from other instructors. Note that in presenting these, we present somewhat different projects that still fit one or more of the learning goals cited above. Our program's philosophy toward the PCW course is exactly this: as long as the course goals are met (and assessed through the program's Annual Review processes), assignment variations and innovations are possible, especially as teachers are then urged to share these out with the larger FYW community. Indeed, our shared PCW Wiki page is designed around the three learning goals listed above, with links to the specific assignment examples that meet these. Borrowing the metaphor from jazz musicians, who improvise based on a single line of music, the word "riff" suggests the collaborative, interactive quality of the pedagogical conversations that the PCW teachers have engaged in, as they evolved similar but differing curriculum that supported the newly articulated learning goals. Also, though each section illustrates a particular PCW learning goal, their implementation frequently addressed more than one.

Crossing Cultures: Multimodally

I Am From Poetry is an assignment that Xiqiao offered to support students' development of strategies for inquiring into linguistic and cultural differences. The assignment responds to calls to position translingual practices as enabling "students to construct and constantly modify their sociocultural identities and values, as they respond to their historical and present conditions critically and creatively" (Garcia & Wei, 2014, p 62). Undergirding the assignment was an interest in understanding transnational students' literacy identities as negotiated through the mediation of artifacts, rituals, narratives, and texts (Leander & Rowe, 2006; Wang, 2020). According to Stewart and Hansen-Thomas (2016), *I Am from Poetry* sanctions a space for students to purposefully examine transnational experiences, to experiment creatively with translanguaging, and to leverage cultural and linguistic resources for critical reflection, thereby encouraging students to understand their literacy repertoire and identity as shaped by and shaping their social worlds.

This poetry assignment consists of whole-class reading of multicultural texts, freewriting about cultural themes, sharing of artifacts, and collaborative writing and reading of multimodal poems. Each element connects to students' transnational lives and allows multiple opportunities for translingual performance. At the outset, the class

reads biographical poetry about the transnational life of Supreme Court Justice Sonia Sotomayor, and autobiographical accounts by multicultural authors (Amy Tan's "Mother Tongue," Judith Ortiz Cofer's "The Myth of Latin Woman"), with the conversation focused on understanding culture as a fluid composite of experiences. Such conversation is followed by inventive activities that encourage students to name culturally significant memories and experiences. Using photos from their personal albums, students explore visceral experiences with their home communities, with one student recalling the spectacular blossom of a magnolia tree planted by her grandfather, another describing a family ritual of making rice dumplings and yet another detailing daily trips to the local wet market for groceries. Students are then invited to select artifacts representative of such cultural experiences, which invite additional inquiry. Following such inventive activities, students use the original *I Am from Poem* template (Lyon, 1993) to develop sensory details encapsulating memories of homes, neighborhoods, cultural beliefs and practices, or culinary traditions. Using prompting questions such as the following, students integrate sensory details into a multimodal poem, with key concepts illustrated with photos.

- Which smell reminds you of your favorite season? Is it associated with a local plant, a cultural activity, a dish, or an animal?
- What is a childhood activity you enjoyed doing with your family?
- Which family tales were passed on from one generation to another in your family?
- Where do you spend the most time in your home? Why?
- What spiritual rituals are performed in your home?

This assignment provides students with an opportunity to explore important cultural, religious, and gender frames that shape their identities, as illustrated in the following example.

I am from farming hoes.
From ancient versatile and agricultural hand tools.
I am from a compound house painted in red and yellow colors.
From fairly, quiet, and small neighborhood, where residents are well acquainted with one another.

I am from the beautiful yellow tassels of corn cob, at all corners of the market.

From buyers bargaining for low prices and some sellers practicing black market.
I'm from moon-time stories of folklores and riddles from Nafisah and Amina.
I am from cooking, housekeeping, and guest hosting, from "a way to a man's heart is through his stomach" and "don't play with boys."

The above excerpts provided Albina, a Gender Studies major, with an opportunity to explore myriad cultural narratives that inform her social, academic, and professional identities. She tapped into a wealth of cultural tropes to represent and analyze her Ghanaian roots. In doing so, she explored the multifaceted and dynamic nature of her identity. As Albina's poem beautifully illustrates, her hometown, a small rural village in southern Ghana, still upholds conservative values that prescribe for young women, "a way to a man's heart is through his stomach" and "don't play with boys." In a culture where young women are ultimately placed within the boundaries of the domicile, parents are especially reluctant to send young women to attend schools. Simultaneously, Albina connects her experiences to her reading in gender studies to reflect on the various forms of injustice inflicted upon women and to explore ways in which literacy could help to liberate women and propel broader social changes.

Assignments like these give PCW students the opportunity to provide increasingly sharpened commentary and critical reflection on culturally inscribed norms and conventions. Such exploration positions students as agents of their own learning and their cultural experiences as objects of analysis, for which critical reflection and proud celebration are equally powerful tools to propel students' personal, academic, and professional growth. For Albina, this assignment provided one of many opportunities to articulate her interests in gender studies, which not only directed her coursework at the university, but also encouraged her to participate in and lead advocacy initiatives that help young women in Ghana to gain access to educational resources.

This curricular move specifically connects to the revised PCW learning objective, which encourages students to use writing and multiple other forms of communication (multimodal, embodied, reading, speaking, listening) as means to identify, understand, and place the "self." The poem, with its focus on the sounds of the household, sights of one's community, smells of food, and words of wisdom, creates many opportunities for students to discover the affordances and limitations of language in communicating the sensory, affective, and visceral parts of their experiences. Such limitations are often highlighted when students bring small objects that others could see and touch, inquire about, and connect with, therefore prompting

additional questioning, sharing, and experimentation with multiple modes of representation. Such moves not only create a space to discover and construct a multifaceted self through collaborative inquiry, but also invite students to engage with the challenging task of making the unfamiliar familiar to others. Doing so often requires that students suspend established assumptions, leveraging all available semiotic resources, and shifting frames of reference, all important strategies for cross-cultural communication and negotiation.

Riffs on Xiqiao's Assignment

If Xiqiao's *I Am from Poetry* project takes the form of a text with linked images, other PCW teachers engage their students in sharing their cultures through class activity. As do other PCW teachers, Joyce incorporates two activities—*Sharing Cultural Objects* and *Culture Circles*—into her PCW from early on. Both build classroom community and provide several in-the-moment opportunities for students to share and negotiate knowledge across axes of cultural and linguistic differences.

 Sharing Cultural Objects begins with the instructor sharing a "cultural object" of her own, telling a story about it, and then inviting the students to ask questions. Not only does the instructor thus model the class activity that follows, in which each of the students is invited to do the same, but her sharing gives the students the opportunity to know her better, and this pedagogical move also provides the opportunity for her to initiate class discussion around the fact that "culture" goes beyond just nationality to encompass family, school, club, and hobby (for example, sports, dance, video gaming, etc.), each of which has its own implicit language and codes of behavior.

 In the next class period, each student brings in their own object for sharing: the Thai student has an amulet her mother gave her, to keep her safe in the U.S.; the Chinese student a piece of calligraphy she has made; the Saudi student a turban that represents his tribe; the Dominican Republican student a "street baseball;" the U.S. student the golf ball that represents his awareness of the cultural tie between that sport and his major of business. The class forms a circle,[2] so that one by one, each student can talk about their object, and/or tell a story about how it is used, why it is valued, and what else we might need to know as background, to understand its meaning more fully. As each student speaks, the class passes the object around, so that everyone can *feel* it (a form of embodied learning), and in turn, ask more questions. After the object

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[2] Much of this activity derives from a restorative justice workshop that both Joyce and Cheryl attended on campus, in 2019.

has made its way around the circle, the owner is asked to place it on a table in the room's center, where it becomes a symbolic offering of individual cultural richness to the classroom community. Once every student has had a chance to both speak and to answer questions from their classmates, each student is then invited to go pick up someone else's object and return it to its owner, telling them why that object had meaning for them too (the returner). This activity invites keen listening and paraphrasing (or Say Back, to use Mimi Schwartz's phrase) for each "returner," as each listener acknowledges the original speaker and their corresponding cultural object in their own terms. The exercise becomes an exchange and negotiation across difference, so that both sameness and difference are acknowledged, examined, and refined. Another effect is to create multiple webs of community and connection across classroom lines of seeming difference.

In the *Culture Circles* activity that follows, students are organized into small groups that will constitute informal panels; on assigned days, each panel will do a mini-presentation, in which each student shares where they come from, using whatever resources they choose (objects, internet images, sample food/drink, aspects of clothing, and classroom demonstrations—for instance, how to skateboard or do calligraphy). Unlike *Sharing Cultural Objects*, this second activity focuses less on a single object, and more on the multiple experiences and backgrounds of each student, so that the objects shared here work in service of the students' points about their home languages and cultures. Culture is examined in the plural, as students in this exercise frequently choose to express and share multiple cultural identities and examples (for instance, their cultural identity as family member, high school student, ballet dancer, and Chinese student, respectively). Meanwhile, the others *listen*, take notes, and write/ask questions, so that the focus is again on listening to others, and to paraphrasing back. Frequently, classroom discussions ensue that build on the presenter's in-the-moment incorporation of a semiotic resource: for instance, in response to a U.S. student's question, "But why can't you just drive out to the country?" when a Chinese student showed images of his 14th floor Shanghai apartment, the latter responded by pulling up a Google map, to demonstrate just how many hours it would *take* to get to the "country" from Shanghai's urban center. The students rely here on images and other semiotic resources as well as stories (the "for example…") in making their cultures clear to their audience—and both resource and story may be leveraged in the writing activities that follow. As with *Culture Objects*, *Culture Circle* posits the presenter as the expert in this multicultural and multimodal communicative exchange—as, for example, U.S. students learn of the complex variability of Chinese cultures, and non-U.S. students learn of the rich social capital of

Detroit neighborhoods (a view that opposes their more negative stereotypes). In alignment with PCW course goals of centering the students' languages and cultures, such activities not only place students as experts of their own histories and stories, but the other students and teacher as learners.

Eventually, the students write an essay that reflects on these activities in terms of what was learned—not just about the objects and cultures of others, but also what they learned as "cultural" observers and speakers through this exercise. What, for example, did their sharing suggest about the complexities of explaining taken-for-granted aspects of their own home culture to others, those relative "outsiders" who lacked the same cultural construct or background? What steps did they have to take to make their own "story" clear? Conversely, what did they learn about themselves as a *listener* through this exercise? What did they notice about the steps *others* took, to make their stories and experiences evident? Which stories resonated most with them and why? Considerations of audience (Kiernan, 2021) and one's own positionality in relation to others thus become paramount. Such reflection also informs the *Translation Project* as well as the projects that invite PCW students to examine university languages and cultures, as described below.

Crossing Languages: Metacognitive Analysis of Translation Practices

In sharing aspects of their cultures in class and in writing, students (and their teacher) frequently evoke the metaphor of "translation," as in performing the activities described above, students work to explain their experiences and cultures to one another; an audience of classmates and teacher who do not share the same cultural context or background. This metaphor is of particular use in the *Translation Project*, in which students are asked to translate a cultural song/poem/story from their "mother tongue" (to use Amy Tan's phrase), then compare their own translation to those of a small group of classmates who have translated the same, paying attention to both the differences and similarities of the translations.

While this assignment has already been described at length (Kiernan, Meier & Wang, 2016), we wish to say a few words here, to demonstrate how such an assignment might be embedded within a translingual course such as PCW, that begins with the students' languages and cultures, and moves toward shared examinations of university cultures. As the activities described above reveal, the *Translation Project* invites rich classroom conversations about differences across cultures, and specifically across languages, as students examine the syntactical, lexical, and cultural challenges of translating and moving from one language/context to another. Such challenges

emerge for both multilingual and the "monolingual" (that is, speaking only one national language) students in class (e.g., the group of U.S. students who chose to translate, compare with one another, and share with the class a popular country and western song, full of culturally-determined phrasing and references). Ultimately, the students write translation narratives, in which each reflects on what they have learned of the challenges and opportunities of "translating," of negotiating communication across axes of difference (e.g., what gets lost, what is gained). They are also invited to compare the challenges evoked by the *Translation Project* to other translating moments experienced in their lives. Assessment of the narrative is tied to the extent to which the student brings into this work examples from their own translations and those of their classmates (including instances of home languages), to make their points about the translation process clear. Thus, not only does this unit surface discussion of multiple differences between and within languages—thus embodying that curiosity about language which so many translingual teachers identify as key to their pedagogy— but it also incorporates an inclusive mode of assessment: there is no right or wrong here, only examples that the students themselves chose, as "translation experts." The students' various assumptions about their audience also come into play: for instance, the extent to which they imagine their audience's knowledge about the cultural resonances of the original text, or of the linguistic patterns from their "mother tongue." This assignment also highlights how much language and culture are inextricably intertwined — a realization that both the multilingual and "monolingual" students come to acknowledge.

Orienting to Academic Cultures & Languages: MSU Student Clubs as Sites of Inquiry

The part of the PCW class that involves orienting to academic cultures and the university at large thus becomes a matter of translation, culturally and linguistically informed; that is, here we ask students to "translate," or make sense of, the multiple languages and cultures of the academic institution. Additional class activities that focus on the institution's language and scaffold up to this assignment may include having the students translate various iterations of the university's "language" (e.g., its learning goals, land acknowledgement, mission statement, etc.) into their home languages, and then back, to do the kind of comparative analysis among the translations that is cited

for the *Translation Project* above; for the monolingual [3] student, this may mean translating these statements into an English that they think the others in class will understand. Other exercises include having the students translate academic words typically found in their examinations and other assignments (such as *explain*, *synthesize,* and *analyze*—some of which translate to the same word in the students' home languages, even though these words have distinct meanings and expectations in academic English). Some PCW teachers also ask students to translate portions of a scholarly article. Such activities effectively invite PCW students to "turn the tables" on the institution, so that the students see the extent to which university language is itself "coded" and even inscrutable to outsiders, as the instructor asks, "What do such examples say about university cultures and values as well as its assumptions about audience: who its members are and what they already are expected to know and understand?"

Like Joyce and other PCW teachers, Cheryl incorporates Culture Circles into her scaffolding of the MSU project. Cheryl similarly works to have her students understand the concept of "culture with a small c" by having them work through a series of exercises that query the concept of "culture" itself: what culture is and might be. In Cheryl's view, when the PCW teachers first shifted the focus of PCW from "literacies" to the students' own cultures as resources and sites of inquiry, the experiences of the international students presented themselves as low-hanging fruit. That is, many of these students were ready to share in the Culture Circles the tourist-friendly features of their hometowns or regions, the giant apples or giant pandas. But then, Cheryl wondered about what to do for the home-grown students who protested, "I don't have a culture. I'm from Okemos [a bedroom community about four miles away from the MSU campus]?" To serve both cohorts, Cheryl intentionally foregrounds MSU culture(s), and the idea of "culture" itself, as subjects of inquiry in her PCW course.

Cheryl's MSU assignment asks students to choose a student organization from the list of hundreds recognized by the Associated Students of MSU, and then to investigate it, using the concepts of culture studies [see Appendix A] and the tools of ethnographic research. Adopting the metaphor of culture as an iceberg, the students examine its surface (artifacts, behaviors, insider languages, rules, official hierarchies), to better understand what lies beneath the water (values, beliefs, ways of seeing). Such scaffolding encourages PCW students to problematize the assumptions they are

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[3] Of course, all students are in some respects multilingual: that is, they speak various languages, or registers of language, on social media and/or in particular contexts, like sports or music, for example.

making about their university clubs, as well as to complicate more conventional understandings of culture.

After choosing their organizations, each of Cheryl's students emails the president of the club for permission to attend a meeting or event. While waiting for replies, they note their expectations or assumptions, and do some secondary research on their organization through their website and/or social media, articles in MSU's key publications (such as the *State News* or *MSU Today)*, and yearbooks in the MSU Archives. A research librarian devotes an entire session to helping the students find relevant sources. In turn, this secondary research forms one side of the triangulated research study, with the other two being field observations and interviews. The latter two stages allow the students to interrogate assumptions made during the first.

For this work, one invaluable text is *Field Working: Reading and Writing Research*, by Bonnie Stone Sunstein and Elizabeth Chiseri-Strater (2011). The two authors share their double-column system of taking field notes: objective sensory data on the left; thoughts, questions and interpretations on the right (This distinction alone can yield some deep reflections and discussions). They then suggest interrogating these raw data with the three ethnographer's questions: (1) What surprised me? (2) What intrigued me? (3) What disturbed me?

These questions reveal disconnects between prior assumptions and the reality of what was observed, as well as entirely new insights into a subculture. With peer response and discussion, the class uses the framework of these questions to locate their own robust and interesting research questions for their paper. After this, the class can proceed with the steps of brainstorming, organizing, offering peer review and revising. Along the way, students will realize that "research" isn't a rarefied activity that happens only in the library – that research just means asking questions and making new knowledge, and they have been doing it the whole time. Take as an example Cheryl's student who described an activity at MSU landmark The Rock and wrote that The Rock is located on Grand River Avenue. "But look at your photos! You can see that it isn't – that it's by the Red Cedar River!" "But I read this online!" she protested, in genuine bewilderment. "Who's wrong, then, you or the anonymous online writer?" Cheryl demanded. It was a genuine threshold moment for the student, an advancement in her sense of agency.

What kinds of organizations are researched, and what discoveries are made? Here are a few examples, from Cheryl's PCW class of the fall semester 2021:

The Artificial Intelligence Club at MSU is not just for learning about AI. They invent and carry out practical projects, like facial-recognition software to help professors take attendance in large classes. Mohammed, a Saudi student, was impressed by the level of work the club was

doing, which dovetailed with his own studies of engineering. He continued attending the club after the assignment was completed.

MSU Dance Club did not offer what I expected, classical dances like waltzes. Instead they did jazz and hip-hop, which were unfamiliar to me. But everyone was friendly, all levels were welcome, and we all got a good workout! Huseyin, a Turkish student, chose not to join the club, but he was proud of stepping out of his comfort zone, so to speak, by trying it out. He noted in his reflections that he felt more confident to sample new activities afterward.

MSU's chapter of the American Institute of Graphic Art is a hands-on group where students bring their designs-in-progress, and share feedback and resources. It is "dedicated to finding and inspiring people's understanding of the heart of design: the meaning." Xinyan, a Chinese student, continued to attend some of the group's meetings, and stayed on the mailing list. Later that year, she submitted a poster to a university-wide design contest. She also led her Remix group in PCW in creating an interactive poster for the First-Year Writing Symposium: the image of a Chinese woman in a flowing traditional garment revealed hidden messages about Chinese "deep culture," that is the underwater part of the iceberg, when the viewer held up a magic penlight.

From introductions on the first day through the final semester reflections, students in Cheryl's PCW class work together in pairs, in small groups, in whole-class presentations to uncover the mysteries of varied cultures—their own and the institution's—the tops and bottoms of the icebergs. These cultures (and the students' evolving understanding of them) *are* the course content: the "sites of inquiry and resources for their learning." While the skills developed involve active communication in multiple forms—reading, writing, speaking, listening and multimodal design—the students gain a third benefit that most were not expecting; that is, one or more pathways toward integrating into MSU cultures. As indicated by the quotes from Cheryl's class, many of the students also developed a relationship with a specific MSU community, such as a club that they subsequently joined. Such relationships foster PCW students' sense of belonging then, within the larger university community.

Riffs on Cheryl's Project.

While other PCW teachers created their own versions of the MSU assignment (one PCW instructor, for instance, has his students collaboratively make an infographic that defines, unpacks, and explains the otherwise inscrutable acronyms of the institution), Joyce's version closely mirrors Cheryl's ethnographic approach, with some minor differences. If Cheryl's project has PCW students ethnographically examining MSU *student* clubs, Joyce's students focus on MSU *sites* (e.g., the library's Map Room, the

campus's organic student farm, etc.). Also, if Cheryl's *MSU Culture Project* encourages PCW students' *belonging* to the institution, Joyce incorporates a critical lens as well. That is, while Cheryl begins the project with a series of scaffolded exercises enabling her students to better understand and define "culture," Joyce's project starts with the students' querying a range of MSU's various linguistic and cultural "oddities" (e.g., its mission statement, land acknowledgement, learning goals, and even the nature of an academic day that has classes scheduled at 10 and 20 minutes past the hour). Joyce also supports the students' using one another (and herself) as resources for their evolving projects; for example, she has the students name and share their topics early on, and classmates are then surveyed respecting their varied levels of pre-existing knowledge. The students may then interview and survey one another more extensively, for the purposes of gathering useful data (for example, a student examining MSU's cafeteria services may thus discover, and interview, a classmate who works there). Joyce also leverages her role as Associate Director of the writing program, and her extensive university connections, to help her students locate people across campus (as well as herself) to interview for their projects — a move that also enhances the PCW students' sense of belonging.

In Joyce's view, one of the project's main issues, though, is the challenge some students may have putting their growing information in relationship to what she and her students call the bigger "So What?" question—that is, the conclusions that an observation of a particular site or data piece might lead to (for example, why *is* the MSU Dairy Store located in central campus?). But *because* her students have already examined and discussed various iterations of the university's public messaging—unearthing contradictions and alliances between the institution's larger, outer-facing messaging, and the university as the student experiences it—the students are poised to think more critically here. In other words, Joyce encourages her PCW students to make claims that juxtapose the overarching values expressed by the institution with the students' own observations and experiences. Thus, PCW students come to understand the particularity of the local within larger frameworks and axes of power. Moreover, because this project evolves into a class presentation as well as a paper (with images), the assignment provides her students with the opportunity to trace their growing understanding of university culture. The students share their differently shaped understandings of the institution and its values, as informed by each person's particular view, and given their own positionality and cultural context (for instance, the Chinese student's stated surprise at the lack of "walls" separating the campus from the nearby town, because "that would never happen in our own country"). As the students "make

sense" of the institution's linguistic and cultural peculiarities, so too does the instructor, thereby seeing the university anew, with fresh eyes.

Overall, then, assignments like these provide PCW students with the opportunity to orient themselves to MSU practices and academic cultures, and to share their evolving understandings. The assignments can help students develop many practical skills, such as learning how to ask questions, take effective field notes, construct a survey and interpret its results, prepare for and conduct an interview, and incorporate multiple forms of data in one's own writing/presentation. But more importantly, such a project also encourages students to view their own (and others') evolving ideas and knowledge as resources for their learning and project production; to value their own expertise and observations; and to come to better understanding (and thus have better access to) the larger institution.

Conclusion

As a whole, these projects support the students' becoming resources for one another's (and the teacher's) learning: whether that be through their individual sharing of aspects of their languages and cultures, or through their collaborative learning and examination of the university. This sharing creates space for both metacognitive awareness (the students' growing articulation of their understanding of the importance of context and audience, for example), and for discussions around the underlying power structures that may shape our thinking on specific languages and cultures. Take as an example a signature class discussion in Joyce's PCW class, in which a Venezuelan student, fluent in Spanish and English, challenged the arguments in Vershawn Ashanti Young's classic piece on code-switching, demanding: "Why should I be encouraged to code-switch, in light of the fact that I am here on scholarship to learn the 'right' way to do things in English?" But then the Mongolian student piped up with examples from recent class periods, in which students had shared with great relish (literally) the foodways of their families, cultures, and countries. "If we want to celebrate and protect our home foods," this Mongolian student asked, "why should it be any different for our languages?" Discussions such as these are invited by opportunities for students to share their growing understandings of U.S.-centric academic practices and attitudes: for example, toward intellectual copyright and plagiarism, quoting other sources, peer-review, and group work. The impulse is both toward understanding, and toward questioning. Such pedagogy does not ignore the existence of dominant beliefs and conventions, but rather "facilitates students' ability to engage more critically in the standard that they live in" (Ozer 2021, p. 1428).

Moreover, our learning goals as applied have relevance for other courses, and for students who are marginalized in other ways than so many of the non-U.S. PCW students are. Isabel Baca asserts that good teaching for multilingual students is good teaching for all, a claim we can extend to students who bring different identities and backgrounds to the FYW classroom. For example, how might such learning goals apply to Black students, for whom African American Vernacular (AAV) is an important resource and a language in its own right? In PCW, we already welcome AAV into the students' writing, encouraging Black students to put such language strategically into their projects. What might such pedagogical moves look like in the WRA 101 course that follows?

Furthermore, we would argue the PCW changes were enabled by our program's overarching FYW values. Indeed, none of the PCW changes might have taken place were it not for this course nesting within overarching program goals that support reflection and metacognitive awareness, along with an overall focus on students' stories, experiences, and cultures.[4] Finally, the changes were enabled by the two first-year writing program administrators who supported, rather than stood in the way of, these curricular innovations. Overall, our program has a highly collaborative group of teachers, especially the PCW instructor cohort – the majority of whom are non-tenured, albeit with relatively stable, renewable three-year teaching contracts. Over time, the course has also attracted instructors of non-U.S. background, and/or with strong international and/or ESL teaching experience (e.g., Cheryl's 25 years teaching in France and Ireland; Joyce's teaching in China; still another teacher's extensive work with the multilingual students in our migrant worker program). In addressing the "problem of PCW," this group developed strong, synergistic relationships that continue into the present. PCW is now taught by a highly committed group of teachers who view the course as both intellectually rich and personally rewarding. Numerous projects, conference presentations, and scholarly papers have evolved as a result. In fact, in writing this very article, it was sometimes hard to determine where one teacher's ideas ended, and another's began – hence the metaphor of riffing, which allows us to discuss the inter-animating ways in which we continue to develop, refine, and repurpose our assignments, bringing the distinct melodic lines of our own pedagogical trajectories into a harmonic programmatic initiative.

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[4] The larger program goals for FYW include putting "learners at the center of learning," focusing on students' acts of "inquiry, discovery, and communication" in the context of "purpose, process, and cultures," supporting culture as an "idea that is surfaced, named, and referenced through writing and learning to write," and moving "students from reflection on experience to analysis of cultural and institutional values and discourses to inquiry into rhetorical production and to informed goal-setting" ("Learning Goals").

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Appendix A: Class activities for learning basic concepts of culture studies

1. **Four metaphors**. Culture can be seen as:
   - an onion;
   - a pair of glasses;
   - the water a fish swims in; or
   - an iceberg.

   I project images of each of these, and ask the class to brainstorm how culture might be like, say, an onion. ("You peel it and peel it, and sometimes you cry," said one astute class member.) Some generalities that emerge are:

   - Culture is like an onion because there's always another layer to peel;
   - Culture is like a pair of glasses because when you're wearing them, you don't see them; you just see the rest of the world through them;
   - (Similarly to no. 2) Culture is like the water a fish swims in because if you asked the fish to describe the water, it would only say, "What's water?"
   - Culture is like an iceberg because only a tenth of it (food, clothing, monuments, festivals) appears on the surface. But that surface tenth is supported by the hidden nine-tenths (values, belief systems, ways of seeing).

2. **Culture shock**. Choosing our MSU campus as a culture (with many underlying subcultures) to study offers advantages beyond the most obvious one of helping first-year students to adjust and feel at home. We all read Junzi Xia's article, "Analysis of Impact of Culture Shock on Individual Psychology" (2009), tracing the stages of culture shock and trying to locate our present position on the culture-shock curve. The article also proposes strategies for coping with culture shock and integrating into the new culture, which stimulate valuable discussions in the class.

3. **Capital-C Culture vs. small-c culture**. During this assignment, students begin to see culture in new and expanded ways: not just Capital-C Culture, like Shakespeare or the opera, but small-c culture in the multiple subcultures that all of us move among, every day. I ask class members to work together to identify the main groups that populated their high schools: athletes; academics; artists and

musicians; party people … How could we identify them? What artifacts (e.g. clothing)? What behaviors? What insider language? We can put these on the top of the iceberg, and then speculate about the values and beliefs underlying them. Here emerge some wonderful opportunities for students to become knowledge resources for each other, as the Chinese students explain the arduous *gaokao* examination, and American students demystify proms, homecoming and varsity jackets.

4. **Artifacts, behaviors, language and rules.** Another approach to understanding small-c culture is to think of a group activity in which we participate regularly, and ask students to analyze these aspects of its culture. Cheryl might give the example of a poetry open mic, showing the "hat" or other container where readers throw slips of paper with their names (artifact), explaining how an emcee-led open mic operates differently from a popcorn-style event or how to snap fingers to show appreciation (behaviors), defining phrases like, "You're on deck" (language) and sharing rules about length of reading, subject matter and trigger warnings, etc. Students are then invited to make lists or spreadsheets of the cultural elements of their own group activities.

5. **Personal, cultural or universal**? A standard Peace Corps activity asks students to identify behaviors as personal, cultural or universal. Sometimes I will stick the three words in various places in the room, then ask students to "stand where they stand" as I read out a list of behaviors. "Eating every day?" Most will say universal. "Eating with a knife, fork and spoon?" More will say, cultural. What about, "Liking spicy food"? There will be some disagreement here. I ask students to explain their choice of position, which leads to some interesting discussions.

6. **Some further concepts**. According to need and interest, I may also share some basic terms from culture studies, such as Geert Hofstede's six dimensions of culture, Edward Hall's work on chronemics, proxemics, haptics etc. and Fons Trompenaars's universalist vs. particularist cultures. These are all useful in mapping out areas below the surface of the iceberg.

Appendix B: Where I Am From Poetry Assignment

Our home cultures have significant impact on our positions in the world and the questions we ask. In this assignment, I invite you to reminisce about a community that reminds you of where you come from. Note that culture here is not defined in narrow, national terms (French versus Japanese culture), but rather extends to cover all the experiences one may have from being immersed in a community. Therefore, your home culture might include your childhood home, a familiar route to and from school, a bus ride you often took as a child, a neighborhood street where you used to play with friends, a park or a garden, or a restaurant or a food stand. To better focus your reminiscence of your home culture, please consider how authors we have read throughout our unit allow us to enter into their home culture through vivid depictions of sounds, sights, persons, plants, food, family activities, music, and many other manifestations of culture. Using Lyon's poem as a guide, please write your own Where I am from Poem. Please also search your personal and family album for images that you could embed into your poem. Details that you wish to highlight and illustrate with images are up to you. Please select images according to your levels of comfort with sharing aspects of your private life.

For this assignment, you are to work with others in your team to explore cultural differences while pursuing a shared theme. This project gives you the opportunity to see your culture from familiar and unfamiliar lenses. What makes your home culture unique? Which cultural assumptions and practices do people embrace? Which aspects of your culture most powerfully shape how you think, act, behave, and interact with others? Why are certain details and images important to you? How are other's interpretations of such details different or similar to that of your own? I invite you to consider these questions, which will generate materials for a short reflective essay (3 pages, double-spaced), in which you discuss your discoveries and learning about your home culture. Your essay should be reflective as well as informative. One particular writerly move required of you is the effective integration of evidence from your own poetry, your writing process, and your conversation with your peers.

Your past and present activities and tastes will guide you as you make a decision about what question to ask and how to answer it. Considering who you are and your own interests is going to be an important part of making this project meaningful for you, and this is true for most projects you engage in.

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"How Can I Sound Politician?": A Case Study of Multilingual Writer Transferring Prior Knowledge in Multimodal Composing

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ABSTRACT

This case study investigates how a multilingual student transferred prior knowledge to produce a video proposal and how the multimodal project could open up access to learning and reflection. Existing studies on writing transfer focus on how multilingual students draw on, reshape, and adapt knowledge across text-based writing contexts (e.g., DePalma & Ringer, 2011; Wilson & Soblo, 2020). With the growing interest in multimodal writing, there is a need to examine the transfer of knowledge across the boundary of modes and media. This study, therefore, intends to bridge the research gap by analyzing the multimodal writing process of an Arabic-English speaker in a first-year composition course. Data consists of screen-recordings with think-aloud protocol, a semi-structured interview, writing assignments submitted by the participant, and class observation notes. The findings suggest that the participant mobilized procedural, genre, and rhetorical knowledge at different stages of the project. The participant integrated the multimodal composing experience with his knowledge schema to form a more sophisticated and richer understanding of writing, although he also reported confusion. In light of the findings, three design features of the multimodal project are discussed to account for the positive observations.

Keywords: transfer, multimodal writing, multilingual writer, prior knowledge

Introduction

In recent decades, transfer of learning has received growing attention in the field of composition studies and second language (L2) writing (DePalma & Ringer, 2011; Robertson et al., 2012; Yancey et al., 2018; Yancey et al., 2014; Wilson & Soblo, 2020). Underlying such an increased interest is the assumption that writing pedagogy should equip students with the knowledge and skills that can be applied to various writing

situations (DePalma & Ringer, 2011). Motivated by this ultimate goal in writing education, scholars have sought to understand and theorize how students transform and reshape writing knowledge when they move from one context to another, in the hope of designing teaching practices that effectively facilitate writing transfer (DePalma & Ringer, 2011; Yancey et al., 2018).

Most of the existing research on transfer is conducted in the context of traditional text-based writing. However, today's communicative landscape, both inside and outside of school, is increasingly featured by the use of multiple modes (Yi et al., 2020). In response to this change, writing scholars proposed the pedagogy of multimodal composition that allows students to take advantage of "the full panoply of color and sound, still and moving images available" (Belcher, 2017, p. 81). One of the central arguments for multimodal composition is that the use of various semiotic resources helps bridge the literacy practices taking place in and outside of school, so that school assignments do not seem irrelevant to students' daily lives (Selfe & Selfe, 2008). However, only a handful of studies have investigated how multilingual students make such connections by drawing on their prior knowledge in multimodal composing (DePalma, 2015; Kang, 2022; Shepherd, 2018). This study intends to fill the research gap by exploring a multilingual student's use of prior knowledge during a five-week video project. The study contributes to the literature on learning transfer in a multimodal context; it also seeks to discuss how multimodal composing can be configured to provide more access to learning for multilingual students.

Literature Review

Using Prior Knowledge in Multilingual Writing

Learning transfer has been defined in different ways with slight variations in focus (DePalma & Ringer, 2011; Haskell, 2000; Yancey et al., 2018). Adopting a broad view toward transfer, this study draws on Haskell's (2000) definition that sees transfer as "how past or current learning is applied or adapted to similar or novel situations" (p. 23). In this process, prior knowledge plays a critical role, as it serves as the foundation for learning transfer. Previous studies have documented and theorized the ways in which students make use of prior knowledge (Robertson et al., 2012; Wilson & Soblo, 2020; Yancey et al., 2014). For example, Yancey et al. (2014) analyzed college students' experience with first-year composition (FYC) courses and identified three ways of using prior knowledge: assemblage, remix, and critical incident. Assemblage involves "grafting isolated bits of new knowledge onto a continuing schema of old knowledge"

(Yancey et al., 2014, p. 112), which oftentimes fails to generate a working schema compatible with both new and old knowledge. Remix, on the other hand, integrates "the new knowledge into the schema of old ones" (Yancey et al., 2014, p. 112), usually in a more holistic and organic way. Lastly, the critical incident could come in the form of unpleasant failures, but in the face of such failing moments, students take the opportunity to rethink writing and ultimately arrive at some sort of conceptual breakthrough (Yancey et al., 2014).

The transfer of prior knowledge not only takes place across rhetorical contexts, but also across languages and even media (DePalma, 2015; Kang, 2022; Wilson & Soblo, 2020). Wilson and Soblo's study (2020) of multilingual students enrolled in a FYC course demonstrates that the participants acted as "brokers" who "synthesize previously learned rhetorical strategies with those introduced alongside new genre tasks" (p. 6). The brokership was purposefully enacted, often with the consideration of potential audience in mind (Wilson & Soblo, 2020). Investigating how knowledge is transferred across genres and media, DePalma (2015) and Kang (2022) noted that the L2 students mobilized the genre and rhetorical knowledge that they have developed inside and outside of the academic context. Two participants in Kang's study (2022) even drew on their prior knowledge of multimedia communication to help with print-based writing. These studies provide valuable insights into the dynamic writing process experienced by multilingual students when they venture into a new task and rhetorical situation. These studies also invite writing teachers and scholars to consider what aspects of course design could better encourage the effective and innovative use of prior knowledge.

Access to Learning through Multimodal Writing

Historically, writing has been viewed as a set of discrete and decontextualized skills that students learn to master. For example, the controlled composition approach, inspired by the behavioral theory of learning, aimed at helping students construct correct sentences with minimum mistakes (Matsuda, 2003). This understanding of writing, along with the pedagogical methods that stem from it, has been proven ineffective or even hindering to writing development when learners are unfamiliar with the anticipated behaviors (Curry, 2003). For example, Curry's ethnographic study (2003) on a non-native English speaker suggests that the discrepancy between the student's pre-existing literacy practices and the academic conventions could lead to frustration. In light of the findings, Curry (2003) proposed that the writing curriculum

should allow room for students' diverse life experiences, so that "a course between 'reformulation' and 'challenge' can be navigated" (p. 15).

In recent years, writing scholars have explored how multimodal composition could be leveraged to provide multilingual students with access to various identities, literacy practices, and knowledge (Balzotti, 2016; Hafner, 2015, Jiang, 2018; Jiang et al., 2020). Multimodal composition concerns the strategic use of semiotic resources in constructing texts that meet social, cultural, and discoursal expectations (Kress, 2003). Through the "remix" of different semiotic resources, multilingual writers could develop a wider range of authorial voices that are not usually supported by traditional writing assignments (Hafner, 2015). During this process, some students repositioned themselves from passive test-takers to agentive multimodal designers (Jiang, 2018). In a longitudinal case study reported by Jiang et al. (2020), an ethnic minority student named Tashi, who took an EFL class with other mainstream Chinese students, created four videos about Tibetan culture. The fact that Tashi could include narration, sound, and image to present her heritage culture has positioned her as a knowledgeable individual with unique cultural insights, which eventually led to boosted confidence in English learning (Jiang et al., 2020). Employing storyboard as an innovative teaching pedagogy, Balzotti (2016) finds that explicit instructions on knowledge transfer across modes help basic writers internalize rhetorical concepts and develop a sophisticated understanding about writing.

The previous research (Hafner, 2015; Jiang et al., 2020) has shown that encouraging multilingual students to draw on their prior knowledge not only facilitates writing transfer across contexts, but also grants them access to more learning opportunities. Multimodal writing tasks, when designed properly, could create such a space for students to make connections between old and new experiences (Kang, 2022). Building on the literature, this study intends to explore how an Arabic-English speaking student makes use of prior knowledge throughout a five-week FYC project. More specifically, the study seeks to answer the following three research questions:

(1) What prior knowledge was mobilized by the focal participant in completing the video project?
(2) How did the focal student transfer his prior knowledge in completing the video project?
(3) How does the design of the multimodal project open up access to learning for the focal student?

Method

Research Context and the Participant

This case study was conducted at Arizona State University (ASU) in the United States. The FYC courses at this institution embrace the learning outcomes of enhancing students' critical thinking, rhetorical knowledge, and knowledge about writing process. The ASU Writing Program provides FYC courses designed specifically for multilingual, international students (ENG 107 and ENG 108), along with the mainstream FYC courses for domestic students (ENG 101 and ENG 102). The instructors of ENG 107 and ENG 108 receive at least one practicum that focuses on teaching second language writing. This study took place in an ENG 107 section, which is the first of the two-sequence FYC course.

The focal participant, Hassan (pseudonym), was identified through purposive sampling. Hassan is a 21-year-old male student from Saudi Arabia, who speaks Arabic as his first language. Before coming to the United States, Hassan received his education at an international school in his home country, which has prepared him for learning in an English-speaking country. Hassan reported that he likes reading and writing and that he has had quite a lot of experience with Arabic writing in the academic context. However, writing in English is difficult for Hassan, and it is mostly restricted to writing rigidly structured papers for standardized exams. In addition to writing experiences, Hassan also labeled himself as "a very deep thinker" (interview) who often contemplates philosophical issues. Majoring in psychology, Hassan has shown considerable interest in the current study and agreed to participate with enthusiasm.

The Multimodal Project Overview

The multimodal project was designed as part of a dissertation study that investigates students' multimodal composing processes. It was placed as the second project of the semester and lasted five weeks. For this project, students were expected to produce a three-to-five-minute video, in which they analyze a sustainability issue on campus and propose solutions to solve the problem. Several assignments were built into the project to scaffold video creation. On the first day, students watched Vox videos on the topic of sustainability and analyzed the genre of video proposal using a worksheet. In the following class sessions, students brainstormed ideas, proposed plans, conducted online searches, and documented their readings through an annotated bibliography. The instructor also gave mini-lectures on rhetoric-related concepts, such as ethos,

logos, and pathos. Then, students composed a storyboard (Table 1) as the first step of video-making. Before creating the first cut of the video, students received feedback on their storyboard, learned the basics of video-editing, and discussed how different semiotics afford argument-making. Throughout the project, the instructor provided timely assistance, and students had sufficient opportunity to work in class and interact with each other. The last assignment of the project was a written reflection that asked students to explore how their understanding about writing has changed over time.

Scene	Timeline (estimated)	Visual clues	Text on screen	Oral narration
1	0.01-0.08	Close displays of delicious food	-	I have to admit that when it comes to food, I'm a total sucker. Whether it's sugar or grease or carbs, pretty much bring it on!

Table 1. An example of a storyboard adapted from Kim and Belcher (2020)

Data Collection

This qualitative case study focuses on a focal student's writing process and intends to provide an in-depth understanding of the phenomenon as it plays out in a naturalistic setting (Casanave, 2010). Purposive sampling was used to identify the potential participant, since this sampling method ensures fruitful results by matching the sample to the research objectives (Campbell et al., 2020). Hassan was chosen as the focal participant not only because he is highly motivated and engaged, but also because he has demonstrated, from time to time, confusion and struggles that are valuable to our understanding of writing transfer in the context of multimodal composition.

Data include the student's screen recordings with think-aloud protocol, writings produced by the student, interview responses, and class observation notes. The screen recording is chosen as the primary method because it could uncover the ephemeral moments where prior knowledge and literacy practices have been enacted (Yi et al., 2022). Before the project started, Hassan received a brief training on how to record screen and perform think-aloud. Although I invited him to record the entire writing process, he was given the discretion to skip recording and/or think-aloud at any point. This accommodation was made out of ethical consideration and respect for the participant's privacy. To compensate for the loss of data, stimulated recall was conducted as the first part of the post-project interview to understand the behaviors observed in the screen recordings. The second half of the interview invited the student

to discuss their feelings about and experience of the video project. Over the five weeks of the project, I attended every class session as a non-participating observer and took notes of students' responses and interactions. Data collection yielded eight screen recordings of Hassan's writing process (256 minutes in total), a post-project interview (75 minutes), four written assignments submitted by Hassan, and class observation notes that I took during the project.

Data Analysis

As the first step of data analysis, I watched the screen recordings repeatedly and translated the screen recordings into descriptive language. The interview was transcribed verbatim into written English. Guided by Haskell's (2000) definition of learning transfer, I coded the screen recording transcripts, interview responses, and written reflection inductively, paying special attention to instances and moments where prior knowledge were enacted and transferred. Student's writing and class observation notes were used to triangulate the findings and generate a more holistic account of the student's actions and thoughts. To ensure research rigor, I asked the participant to member check the initial findings and confirm that the findings did not deviate too far from his perspective as the focal participant.

Findings

For the multimodal project, Hassan produced a seven-minute video about plastic waste on the ASU campus. His video features a fast-paced demonstration of the severity of the problem, deploying a mixture of images, upbeat music, and verbal narration. At different stages of the project, Hassan was observed drawing on procedural, genre, and rhetorical knowledge that he developed from various previous literacy activities. Moreover, Hassan's understanding about writing has been greatly challenged by the multimodal project, which led to a conceptual breakthrough. But at the same time, while highly engaged in the video creation, the student reported confusion when the expanded understanding of "writing" did not seem to fit perfectly into his existing knowledge schema.

Procedural Knowledge in Pre-Task Planning

As the first step of the project, Hassan created an outline to guide the subsequent researching and composing process, during which he intentionally repurposed the

procedural knowledge of managing information. The pre-task planning was an autonomous, self-motivated act neither required nor instructed by the teacher. In the first screen recording, Hassan was seen brainstorming ideas on a blank page. He first wrote "define the issue; highlight the seriousness; why we should work on it in ASU" as the three main points and then added a fourth one—"suggestion"—to the list. Under each point, Hassan included subsidiary ideas, usually in the form of questions. For example, under "defining the issues," he added two bullet points: "why recycling?" and "what is the issue of recycling." These ideas were presented both as complete sentences and sentence fragments. The seemingly "messy" planning, according to Hassan, is what he usually does "for assignment that takes long time to complete" (interview). He further explained that "I like to plan everything out because it's not like our nature. We forget" (interview).

It is important to note that Hassan used non-linguistic resources, such as color schemes and symbols, to help manage the process (Figure 1). For example, he highlighted the section titles in blue; at the end of the planning stage, he drew a downward-facing arrow pointing to the bottom of the page, under which he wrote, "I need to see first all the action that ASU did to help people recycle, and then I will add simple step that we need to take in the soon future." When asked to justify his decision, Hassan said that using different colors could help "distinguish between the main idea and information" (interview). Furthermore, Hassan explained that with the help of colors and symbols, he could form a "concept map" that contributes to positive learning outcomes: "I really like the concept map in every book, after each unit, we have something called concept map. So, this is the way where I do my concept map in different style. I link everything" (interview). The "books" that Hassan mentioned were textbooks in other disciplines, such as biology and geography. The interview response suggests that when designing his pre-task plan, Hassan was intentionally drawing on the idea of "concept map" that he developed in other disciplinary contexts. Hassan seemed to be highly aware of the importance of planning in completing academic assignments and the affordances of different modes in this process. The ease with which he mobilized the resources in creating the outline illustrated that he possesses thorough procedural knowledge of planning and managing information.
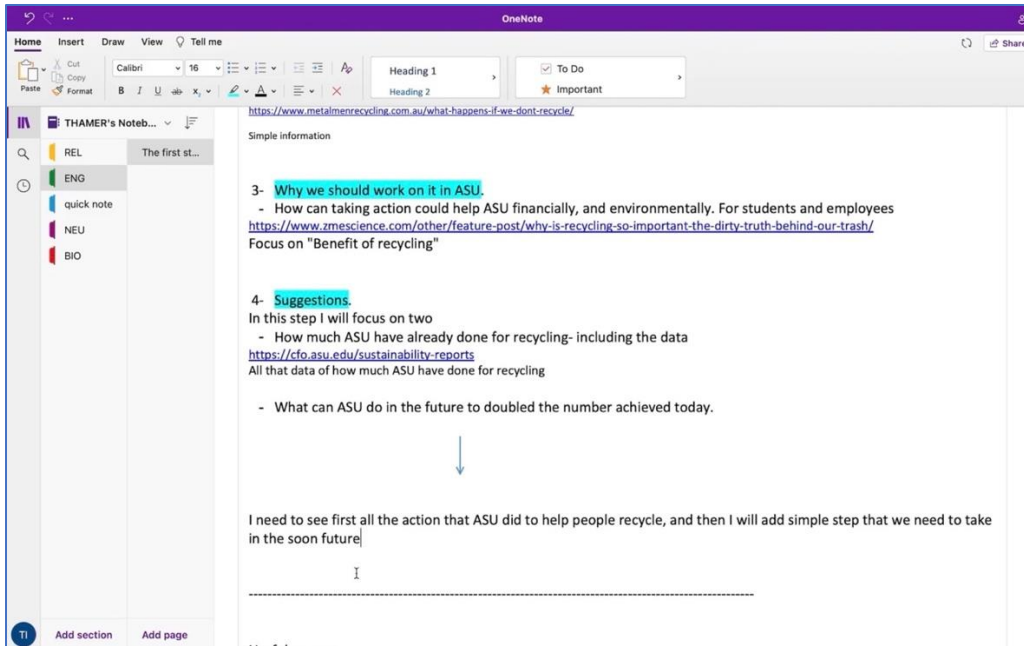
Figure 1. An example of Hassan's pre-task plan

Genre Knowledge in Bridge Text Construction

The second site of knowledge transfer was the construction of a "bridge text," where Hassan drew on his genre knowledge about "academic essay." The bridge text is another self-motivated piece of writing, and it is composed as a preparation for the storyboard assignment. The "bridge" metaphor shows that such a text functions as a midway path toward the final production—a table-format storyboard (Tan, 2023).

Hassan's bridge text consists of a title— "wording my story board"—and four paragraphs about ASU's effort to achieve sustainability on campus (Figure 2). Compared to the pre-task plan, Hassan's bridge text seemed to feature a more coherent representation of ideas. In the first three paragraphs, he introduced ASU as one of the most sustainable universities investing in numerous sustainability initiatives. He then narrowed the focus down to ASU's efforts of recycling wastes, generating green energy, and establishing research funds. This was followed by a rhetorical move shifting the attention to the discussion of current problems. After writing the four paragraphs, Hassan pulled up the storyboard template and transferred the texts to the "narration" column of the storyboard.
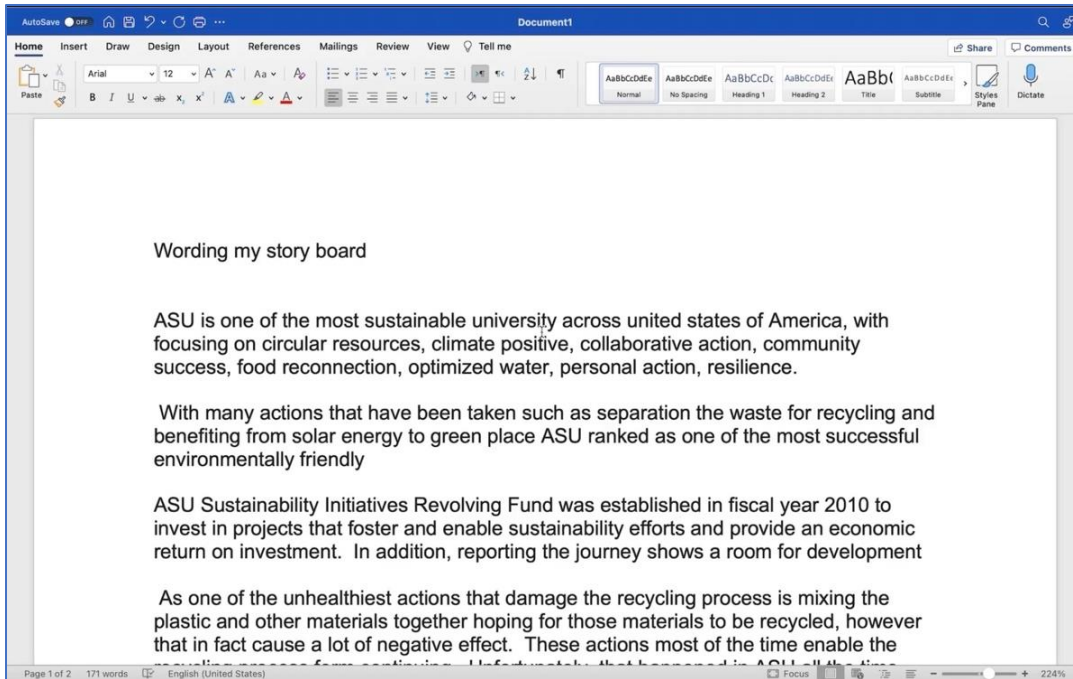
Figure 2. An example of Hassan's bridge text

As mentioned earlier, the bridge text was not part of the course requirement. When asked about why he took an "extra step" instead of starting with the storyboard template, Hassan provided the following reasons:

> Oh, I have never done storyboard. This is the basic way I think about things, because usually in an essay and the structure is very much like this [pointing to the bridge text]. And then once I finish it, I separated and distributed. And then I saw the time, how much it takes, how many times it takes, minutes, sometimes seconds. And then I started building a storyboard. But if I start with building my storyboard as the final structure, I don't think it's gonna be easy.

In summary, when faced with the new genre (storyboard), Hassan sought help from the genre that he is familiar with—an essay with predictable structures. The interview also reveals that Hassan was quite strategic in dealing with the challenge and that he was aware of the cognitive load demanded by orchestrating multiple modes at the same time.

Rhetorical Knowledge in Storyboard Composition

In constructing the storyboard, Hassan made an explicit effort to engage and convince the audience and to create a specific persona, which could be traced back to his experience of participating in speech competitions. At times, Hassan demonstrated an acute awareness of audience and rhetorical effect. A revealing moment came when Hassan was reviewing and revising his storyboard. After reading out loud the first three narrations, Hassan paused and asked himself: "how can I sound politician? Oh my god, I've never thought convincing people is a such a difficult job!" (screen recording #7). Following this reflection, Hassan rearranged parts of the writing and added another paragraph explaining ASU's sustainability effort. He then read out the narration again and commented proudly: "I think this one is gonna do well here. I introduced ASU. I introduced it very well!" (screen recording #7). In a subsequent one-on-one conference with the instructor, Hassan asked how the effect on the audience would change if he introduced the problem, instead of ASU, as the first rhetorical move in the video.

The behaviors described above were sustained by Hassan's knowledge of how argument should be conducted in the current rhetorical situation. In the interview, when asked about how he positioned himself while composing the storyboard, Hassan answered affirmatively that he saw himself as "an influencer," a person who masters the skills of persuasion:

> How much can I influence others? It's not about the storyboard, or not about being another, but it's actually very much about "Oh, can I have my idea go easily to others in order to change the idea of other?" That is very much what I was thinking about.

The "influencer" identity is enacted not only through language, but also through "face expression and changing voice" (Interview). Considering non- and para-linguistic elements while engaging in the text-based assignment is not a novel experience for Hassan. In fact, Hassan has developed keen awareness of exercising rhetorical appeals through participating in speech competition in his L1 Arabic, as he described in the following interview excerpt:

> Actually, I won a lot of awards in Arabic speech competition. When I talk, I can talk very good yeah. So, when I organize my structure, I didn't really focus on the words, but how can I use this word with my face expression and my voice in order to convince people. It wasn't the word itself, because my word is really limited in English. I may do this in Arabic, but not in English.

Drawing the connection between the previous experience and the current FYC writing task seems to be made more easily in the context of the multimodal writing. When I asked Hassan whether he would also position himself as an influencer had this been a traditional essay assignment, Hassan admitted that it would be difficult. He also offered his perspective on how a traditional essay assignment may limit his abilities to fully express himself:

> Yeah, and that is why most professors don't really get it. I guess they get it, but they don't think it is proper to do. That is why every time I have an essay, I have a problem, because my essay is based on how I talk. But I think English is not how you talk; it's how you write. So, every time with the structure of these things, it's gonna be weaker if it's just an essay. What's gonna be very helpful is I actually talk this. This is my problem in English.

The screen recordings, together with the interview data, reveal that while creating the storyboard, Hassan enacted a particular identity—an eloquent influencer and politician—that is not usually supported by a traditional essay assignment. Such an identity encouraged Hassan to draw on his previous experience of public speaking in L1 Arabic and apply the rhetorical knowledge to the current situation.

Hassan's Reflection on the Video Project

Reflecting on his experience with the video project, Hassan seemed to demonstrate somewhat conflicting viewpoints. On the one hand, he reported that the project was more intellectually challenging than he expected, thus pushing him to see "writing" as a dynamic and continuous process that involves various elements. On the other hand, the change in writing technology seemed to have caused some confusions about the boundary of "writing."

   To begin with, the video project has greatly changed Hassan's understanding of "writing." His old assumption associating writing with producing academic genres was replaced by an expanded view of writing as a dynamic process. This is best

demonstrated by the following paragraph from Hassan's post-project reflection in response to the question, "what was your theory of writing coming to ENG 107? How has your theory of writing evolved with each task?":

> I thought I was going to learn how to write academically, what I mean by how to write is that we are going to learn to write our introduction in English way. However, none of that happened in ENG 107. The curriculum was higher and heavier than just writing. I feel we learned how to use our brain critically first and then how can make up a piece on things and after that how to draw a clear map for your writing (post-project reflection).

As shown in the excerpt above, for Hassan, the meaning of writing is now extended to include not only the final product, but also the process of thinking critically and creatively. His interview response echoed this point, placing special emphasis on the mental activities in writing:

> Rhetorical analysis is how you use your brain, brain, brain. It's all about the brain. Can you analyze this reading? Brain, brain, brain. This is an experience of writing. It wasn't about really doing this, but the process of doing this.

Apart from the increased attention to "writing process," Hassan also demonstrated enhanced rhetorical awareness and rhetorical flexibility, as he explained how linguistic adjustment is needed in a new rhetorical situation: "Outside the classroom most of the audience are normal people and using academic language with normal people is inappropriate. In this class I learned how to adapt to any environment and use it to my benefit" (post-project reflection). In terms of academic writing, Hassan also adopted a more sophisticated understanding that places "how" before "what": "How can you convince people, audience? How can you have a strong argument or strong opinion? That is different from what I used to know about writing. It's not just putting your ideas. No, no but how you put" (interview).

But at the same time, Hassan also showed confusion in the interview, when he was invited to envision how he could apply the knowledge learned in the current project to future writing scenarios:

> So here is the thing, when you guys mention writing… Right now, I get so confused because before I take writing as a little thing, all writing is pen and

paper. Right now, the idea developed; it's more about actually thinking. It's more process here before you actually use it.

The analysis of Hassan's reflection and interview responses illustrate that the student developed a deeper understanding of composition in the digital age. But at the same time, Hassan also reported a sense of confusion when the definition of writing was extended far beyond the scope of "pen and paper."

Discussion

This qualitative study investigated how a multilingual student transferred prior knowledge to produce a video proposal and how such an experience affords opportunities for learning and reflection. The first research question explores the types of knowledge mobilized by the student in the context of a multimodal project. The analysis suggests that the student tapped into different domains of knowledge at different stages of the project. In pre-task planning, Hassan used the procedural knowledge of brainstorming and information management, which was developed and practiced in learning subject content in high school. While constructing the bridge text, he mobilized the genre knowledge to create "essay-like" writing. When drafting the storyboard using the template, he positioned himself as an influencer and politician and drew on the rhetorical knowledge practiced in the experience of delivering public speech in L1 Arabic. These findings are in line with the argument that multimodal composing could create a favorable learning space that allows multilingual students to draw on a wide range of prior knowledge and literacy practices (DePalma, 2015; Hafner, 2015; Jiang et al., 2020; Kang, 2022). More importantly, the current study shows that different kinds of knowledge were activated at different stages of the project and that the transfer of knowledge is afforded by different task conditions. This finding debunks the myth that multimodal writing is "something to do with digital stuff and having fun" (Bazalgett & Buckingham, 2012, p. 3). In fact, the current study suggests that the successful completion of multimodal tasks requires the students to possess some basic knowledge about writing and to actively access their knowledge repertoire throughout the process.

   The second research question seeks to understand how knowledge transfer takes place in the current multimodal writing context. The data analysis suggests a combination of "remix" and "critical incident" in Hassan's use of prior knowledge. In most cases, Hassan successfully integrated the new experience of video making into the existing knowledge schema, thus forming a holistic understanding of what it means

to "write" in the digital age. For example, in composing the storyboard, Hassan not only considered what information to present, but also how he could present such information in a rhetorically powerful way. The explicit focus on rhetorical effectiveness proved to be an important part in Hassan's public speaking experience, where he orchestrated various modal resources to reach the audience. Through the video project, Hassan was able to bridge the experience of delivering a public speech with the current and future context of academic writing, explaining that the latter also demands effective persuasion. These findings illustrate that the multimodal writing experience, as facilitated in an academic context, contributes to the formation of a sophisticated understanding of writing (Balzotti, 2016). However, Hassan also reported confusion about what counts as "writing." His interview response seems to suggest that by involving various digital composing tools and modes, the current project not only challenges his assumption about writing, but also blurs the boundary of writing. The single instance of confusion, however, should not be interpreted as a sign of failure. In fact, as shown in the findings, Hassan adopted a positive attitude toward the challenges and showed a willingness to embrace different writing scenarios. Although he might not be able to clearly articulate the definition of writing, the feeling is likely to be temporary and might signal a necessary transitional process (Yancey et al., 2014).

The last research question asks how the design of the multimodal project opens up access to learning. Three design factors contribute significantly to the positive observation. The first one is the process-based nature of the video project. The current project design incorporates several small assignments, such as the storyboard, to facilitate video creation. It is through completing these assignments that Hassan began to see writing more as a process than a product. Researchers of multimodal composition have advocated for an equal emphasis on the composing process and the final product (Shipka, 2005). Placing the focus on composing process not only lowers the stakes for students who have little experience with video making, but also allows them more room for problem solving through multiple trials. Second, the video project encourages students to make rhetorical decisions for themselves, which is conducive to fostering learner agency. Hassan was able to decide what persona he wanted to present and how he could most effectively persuade his audience. The imagined "politician" identity prompted him to draw on his public speaking experience and make rhetorical and linguistic decisions in accordance with the situation. Previous research on teaching for transfer has identified a sense of writerly agency as an important characteristic for constructing new knowledge (Yancey et al., 2018). Last but not least, the course design engaged students in discussing

writing-related concepts and invited them to develop their own "writing theory." These tasks could offer students the opportunity to critically examine their assumptions about writing, compare the new experience with the old one, make connections, and update their understanding, all of which are critical to developing rhetorical flexibility and facilitating writing transfer (Balzotti, 2016; DePalma, 2015; Yancey et al., 2018).

This study has several limitations. First, the findings about Hassan should by no means be interpreted as representative of all multilingual students. In fact, the purposive data sampling method intends to generate detailed insights of a particular case, rather than identifying a general pattern among a certain group. Second, the screen recordings collected in the present study may not capture the entire composing process, as Hassan was allowed to skip recording at his discretion. Thus, it is likely that some instances of knowledge transfer that took place in the actual process were not recorded and presented in the dataset. Nevertheless, the screen recording method, together with think-aloud protocol, allows the researcher to examine the situated and complex composing process in a digital context (Yi et al., 2022).

Conclusion

This case study sheds light on how knowledge transfer takes place in the context of multimodal composition. The analysis highlights the potential of the video project in supporting the use of prior knowledge and creating learning opportunities for multilingual students. The current study, as well as many previous ones (e.g., DePalma, 2015), focuses on how the use of prior knowledge contributes to the creation of multimodal texts. Few studies (e.g., Ball et al., 2013) were conducted to understand how the multimodal composing experience could be transformed to other, especially text-based, writing scenarios. Future research could explore how students make the connections between the multimodal composition practiced in a writing course, and other writing activities. Despite the scarcity of empirical data, teachers who want to facilitate the transfer of knowledge and skills from multimodal assignments to other rhetorical situations are advised to engage students in the explicit discussion of the similarities between current and future writing assignments (Ball et al., 2013).

The study reports positive knowledge transfer observed in a single case, thus personal idiosyncrasy should be taken into consideration. The fact that Hassan rather enjoys thinking and writing might play a crucial role in shaping this learning experience in the current video project. It is important to remember that the transfer of knowledge in multimodal composing might not happen easily or at all for some students

(Shepherd, 2018). Building on the literature of writing transfer, researchers could investigate what contextual and individual factors would enable or hinder the transfer of knowledge in multimodal composing. Such an inquiry contributes meaningfully to the discussion of a teaching-for-transfer framework (Yancey et al., 2018).

In terms of pedagogical implications, the study highlights the importance of adopting a process approach, allowing students to make rhetorical decisions, and engaging students in the reflection on writing concepts. Echoing Ball et al.'s (2013) reflection, I would also like to highlight that the three design features outlined in this study have the potential to offer students a meaningful learning experience. An important takeaway is that multimodal composition should be approached and taught as a rhetorical act enabled by the flexible use of old and new knowledge, rather than as a single, formulaic genre. Teachers who are interested in multimodal composing should bear in mind that different task configurations will create different learning opportunities, which leads to different learning outcomes. Thus, multimodal tasks should be designed in accordance with the expected outcomes and discussed in terms of design features. Instead of using the blanket term "multimodal writing," future discussions and teaching should attend more to students' responses to the specific task environment and their cognitive, behavioral, and affective engagement with the activity design.

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Encouraging Language Negotiation in Institutional Spaces: A Qualitative Case Study in Pedagogies to Promote Translanguaging in Writing Courses

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ABSTRACT

Drawing from a larger qualitative study that uses ethnographic research methods, I examine instructors' pedagogical practices that encouraged students to make use of their linguistic repertoires. The study was conducted in spring 2017 at a Hispanic-serving institution situated along the U.S.-Mexico border. In this piece, I highlight the experiences of two first-year composition professors and their students' responses to writing in a combination of languages. Within this context, I show how the instructors work to establish accessible writing pedagogies that promote linguistic diversity and acknowledge students' distinct communicative practices. By inviting bilingual students to compose writing assignments in Spanish or a combination of English and Spanish, instructors directly emphasize the dynamic and powerful contributions multilingual writers bring to the classroom. Students' literacy narrative examples presented in this article reveal that bilingual individuals specifically and rhetorically used translanguaging as placeholders by translating from one language to the other, and as a way to bring authenticity to an experience. This article aims to contribute to the efforts of writing studies' researchers and instructors working to dismantle the current dominant English Only movement and supporting the inclusion of students' varied languages into the classroom while pursuing a counter-hegemonic response that advocates for minority groups.

Introduction

This article is an attempt to address the gap and add to the nascent scholarship focused on instructors' efforts to leverage multilingual students' linguistic repertoires. By inviting bilingual students to compose writing assignments in Spanish or a combination of English and Spanish, instructors directly provide access to students'

linguistic background and emphasize the dynamic, and powerful contributions multilingual writers bring to the classroom. Students' literacy narrative examples presented in this article reveal that bilingual individuals specifically and rhetorically used translanguaging as placeholders by translating from one language to the other, and as a way to bring authenticity to an experience. Having access to multiple languages, students use translanguaging practices as tools for uncovering writing strategies. When I attended junior college in the early 1990s, I was a marginalized Mexican-American student, an economically disadvantaged, underprepared high school graduate. In retrospect, I feel the junior college, a Hispanic-serving institution, did not fully create a culturally and linguistically responsive learning environment. Phrases such as "Speak English," "This is an English class, no Spanish," and "No speaking Spanish" were commonly heard when students spoke in their home languages in class and around campus. At the time, I did not realize how this attitude was marginalizing other languages. I adopted a "that's the way it should be" attitude without questioning the ideologies driving these comments. Additionally, the recurring message about Standard Written English (SWE) being the only discourse in academia took root in my own thinking, and these policies and attitudes informed my own teaching style at the college level. Unfortunately, the idea of doing what institutional leaders claimed to be the best course of action for our students had been tacitly endorsed in my early college training. Therefore, it made sense for me to continue to support a system that privileged varieties of English.

Years later as an educator in the same college I attended and being cognizant of the English-only pedagogy adopted in higher education institutions, I was hesitant to speak Spanish in the classroom. After all, I was to be students' role model, teaching them to write in the dominant discourse of the academy. Oddly, I felt that I was doing them a disservice when I spoke Spanish by not showing them how to communicate effectively in the English language. Like some of my colleagues, I resisted the shifting and mixing of languages and held tight to an "English only" monolingual mindset; many instructors argued that, in order to learn a language well, students need sustained practice in the target language. While this is a true assertion, it does not preclude mixing languages. These experiences influenced the construction of my academic identity. Although I honestly believed that educators were doing students a service, increasing their linguistic capital, I soon realized that I was contributing to a culture that marginalizes students based on their language differences. By further participating in a monolingual approach in the teaching of reading and writing in composition classes, I, like other educators, promulgated an environment that marginalized students' linguistic varieties. Although we may not do this intentionally, we "play a role in

promulgating a standard language ideology" (Mangelsdorf, 2010, p. 113). This is especially true if writing instructors follow a curriculum that does not support other languages in the classrooms, besides English, or when they promote a "mythology that they may or may not fully understand" (Dance & Farmer, 2011, p. 794). When the field requires that instructors teach in the hegemonic language, it may be difficult to validate students' languages. Thus, the nature of teaching composition in the dominant English discourse suggests a hierarchy positioning one language above others. This linguistic containment posits that there is only one correct and standard language. Mangelsdorf (2010) notes that that belief in SWE has been around for so long that writing instructors may feel compelled to support this notion based on the assumption that by adopting a standard language, students can successfully participate in the mainstream culture. It is important to note that moving away from a standard language ideology may not be easy, especially when this belief has become a part of our discipline and professional identities (Watson & Shapiro, 2018). As a result, instructors are faced with the conundrum of teaching what is expected of them or accommodating linguistic differences in a space that privileges English.

In this article, I would like to contribute to the efforts of writing studies researchers and instructors working to dismantle the current dominant English-only movement and supporting the inclusion of students' varied languages into the classroom while pursuing a counter-hegemonic response that advocates for minority groups. I do this by showcasing two literacy narrative samples where students use translanguaging practices, including translation and place-holding in their writing. In one narrative sample, Daniela (pseudonym), uses translations as placeholders. As she composed her narrative, Daniela inserted Spanish words or phrases to hold her place as she continued the writing process in English. Translation allowed her ideas to flow without interrupting her train of thought. In the second narrative sample, Jacob (pseudonym) inserted Spanish words and phrases in his story. In his case, incorporating Spanish in his assignment made the message or story real. Despite being an English classroom, mixing languages allowed Jacob to relate his story with more accuracy. He expressed that as long as the teacher is okay with him mixing his languages, he would continue doing it.

Drawing from a larger qualitative study that used ethnographic methods, which was conducted in spring 2017 at a Hispanic-serving institution situated along the U.S.-Mexico border, I examine instructors' pedagogical practices that encouraged students to access their linguistic repertoires. I highlight the experiences of two first-year composition professors and their students' responses to writing in a combination of languages. Within this context, I will show how the instructors work to establish

accessible writing pedagogies that promote linguistic diversity and acknowledge students' distinct communicative practices. By using translanguaging practices, instructors provide access to and support for bilingual writers' voices, which are often neglected in English-only writing instruction. Focusing on students' language differences as assets rather than deficits, I argue that, as educators, we can become multilingual writers' allies and advocates by restructuring classroom content at several levels, including but not limited to language. First, I provide an overview of the theoretical perspectives that support this study, and then I introduce the study and highlight instructors' translanguaging pedagogies and challenges, and students' responses to this approach. I conclude with a call to conduct more studies focusing on pedagogies that validate students' linguistic and cultural identities in academic spaces.

Literature Review

Translingual Inclinations

Much research has focused on addressing students' linguistic resources in the classroom. With the goal of recognizing students' varied languages, in 1974, the Conference on College Composition and Communication (CCCC) passed a resolution on language which affirms "the students' right to their own patterns and varieties of language -- the dialects of their nurture or whatever dialects in which they find their own identity and style" (CCCC). This resolution supports students' rights to use their languages as a means to become competent in rhetorical practices, and, thus, establish their own style and identity. This resolution would create a space for varied communicative practices to be considered as a way for students to bring their languages into the classrooms, but also as a way to value their home dialects. Their home dialects are important to recognize because this is a border community where language is used to connect with others both in and outside of the classroom. Since the resolution, there has been a growing body of scholarship that advocates for adopting a translingual approach in the teaching of writing. In doing so, educators, teachers and scholars have developed models which not only value linguistic practices, but also study how students enact such practices (Ayash, 2019; Alvarez et al., 2017; Canagarajah, 2012; García, 2009; García & Wei, 2014; Horner, 2018; Horner et al., 2011; Lu & Horner, 2016; and Mazak & Carol, 2017).

Diverse Multilingual Practices

There are numerous terms and conceptualizations used to describe diverse multilingual practices such as code-meshing (Canagarajah, 2011b; Young et al., 2014); code switching (Young & Martinez, 2011); translanguaging (García 2009; Wei, 2018b); transcultural literacy (Lu, 2009); translingual writing (Horner et al., 2011; and translitearcy (You, 2016). In the following sections, I will use the term translanguaging to refer to bilingual students' and instructors' dynamic and fluid communicative practices in first-year composition courses. I specifically incorporate García's (2009) definition of translanguaging as the "multiple discursive practices in which bilinguals engage in order to make sense of their bilingual worlds" (p. 45). García's conceptualization of how bilinguals communicate is one that most resonates with my own experiences both in and outside of the classroom. Because language clearly flows across borders, my language background and that of students living in border communities is influenced by the constant interaction of the Spanish-speaking and English-speaking culture. Given the large number of bilingual students attending the university where the study was conducted, most students fall within the bilingual continuum, and Spanglish—a so-called non-standard language variety and a popular form of the language of many Hispanics in the U.S.—is frequently used in and outside of the classroom.

Heritage Language and Spanglish

There are several definitions describing heritage language learners. One of the most popular and widely used definitions in scholarship is a person who is raised in a home where a non-English language is spoken (Valdés, 2000 p. 1). Students who attend this university may have acquired their heritage language, Spanish, from birth as they grew up with family members and relatives who spoke Spanish. Few participating students welcomed the idea of mixing and combining languages, while others expressed hesitation. Study participants were familiar with the term Spanglish and often used the term to describe their language practices. Similar to English standard language ideology, there is also a Spanish standard language ideology. These ideologies influence the way bilingual speakers respond to combining and mixing their English and Spanish languages.

This language ideology stems from the "ingrained, unquestioned beliefs about the way the world is, the way it should be, and the way it has to be with respect to language" (Wolfram & Schilling-Estes, 2006). Subscribing to the belief and the legacy

of pure Spanish or Castilian Spanish, this language is positioned as having a higher status and is deemed as the "purest" and most "correct" form of the language compared to other Spanish-language varieties (Pennycook, 2001). As a result, bilingual speakers are likely to be marginalized based on their language choices. In this study, attitudes towards Spanglish have been mixed; while some participants describe this language variety with pride (indicating that the mixing of languages supports their identity as someone who is bilingual and knows two languages), other participants express criticism towards those who mix and combine languages. The latter perceive Spanglish as "ugly", "wrong", and "incorrect." Otheguy and Stern (2011) contend that the term Spanglish "is often used to disparage Latinos in the USA and to cast aspersions on their ways of speaking" (p. 86). Not only is Spanglish stigmatized in the U.S., but also in Mexico (Mangelsdorf, 2010). Students participating in this study indicated that when they traveled to Mexico, many of their family members made fun of the way that they mixed their languages, often calling them *pochos*—this term implies that they are "Chicanos who have lost their connection to Mexico and who cannot speak so-called Standard Spanish" (Mangelsdorf, 2010). Instead of being viewed as individuals who can negotiate multiple interactions, bilinguals are seemingly stigmatized for their language practices. Unfortunately, to echo García's (2014a) views, bilinguals are "caught between the imperial designs of the United States and Spain" (p. 75).

Translanguaging

The term translanguaging has been studied and defined by scholars in both applied linguistics and in Rhetoric and Composition. Scholars have described translanguaging as "shuttling between languages" (Canagarajah, 2011a); "using different languages together" (García, 2009); and "a process by which students and teachers engage in complex discursive practices that include ALL the language practices of ALL students in a class in order to develop new language practices and sustain old ones" (García & Kano, 2014, p. 261). Other scholars use similar terms such as "using both languages together" (Lewis, Jones & Baker, 2012); "mobilizing linguistic resources" (Li & Zhu, 2013); and "using one's idiolect, that is one's linguistic repertoire, without regard for socially and politically defined language names and labels" (Wei, 2018b, p. 19). Translanguaging then refers to "the constant, active invention of new realities" as the process of languaging both shapes and is shaped by interaction in specific contexts (Mazak & Carroll, 2017). A key feature to underscore is that in a translanguaging act, there is one "integrated repertoire of linguistic and semiotic practices from where

bilingual speakers draw" (Mazak & Carroll, 2017, p. 2). This integrated repertoire is one system that contains features from all of students' languages.

For the purpose of this piece, and as I examine two students' literacy narrative samples, I define translanguaging as combining or mixing English and Spanish words, phrases, and sentences in written assignments. The terms combining, and/or mixing languages will be used in place of "translanguaging." The reason for doing this is that during the study, I felt that participating students may have not been familiar with this term and its various definitions. As a result, the terms combine/combining, or mix/mixing of languages were used in place of the term translanguaging. This approach was purposely taken so participants could clearly understand the practice of using different languages in their communicative practices.

Translanguaging Theory

The theoretical foundation for the study was informed by translanguaging theory (Canagarajah 2011a, 2012; García, 2009; García et al. 2017; García & Wei, 2014; Wei, 2018b) since this theory is primarily concerned with the language use of bilingual individuals and their communicative practices in specific learning contexts. I use a translanguaging lens to examine the communicative practices of bilingual college students to illustrate the concept of dynamic bilingualism, and to demonstrate that this communicative practice allows for the disruption of constructed language hierarchies, which place one language over other non-standard languages. García (2009) defines translanguaging as "the complex languaging practices of actual bilinguals in communicative settings" (p. 45). This definition positions bilingual communicative practices as complex, but also privileges bilinguals' languages by placing all languages as equally important. It is important to highlight that translanguaging is not using two separate languages to make meaning, but rather using two languages simultaneously in a dynamic and integrated manner (Baker, 2011). In a translanguaging act, languages occur at the same time and help bilinguals organize and mediate mental processes (Lewis, Jones & Baker, 2012). Ongoing research in translanguaging has added to these theoretical propositions, as García and Wei (2014) emphasize, "Translanguaging refers to the use of languages as a dynamic repertoire and not as a system with socially and politically defined boundaries" (p. 1). By participating in translanguaging practices, speakers freely combine languages in a way that may not necessarily align with the social or political expectations of Standard Language ideologies. In other words, bilingual individuals may access their languages organically as needed to negotiate meaning.

Translanguaging Pedagogies

In recent years, the emergent body of research on translanguaging, particularly in higher education where the language of instruction is English, has brought translanguaging pedagogies to the forefront (Andrei et al., 35 2020; Panezai, 2023; Rivera & Mazak 2019; Rodríguez et al. 2021; Van Viegen & Zappa-Hollman, 2020). The growing scholarship broadens our concept of translanguaging both in theory and practice. Explaining how translanguaging pedagogy operates in the classroom, García and Kano (2014) describe the process "by which students and teachers engage in complex discursive practices that include all the language practices of all students in a class in order to develop new language practices and sustain old ones" (p. 261). This joint exploration occurs when instructors facilitate linguistic interactions where students learn from each other and their peers.

An approach to including students' heritage languages in academia is an important step for language diversity advocates, as well as a significant move toward shifting the way we teach writing. In a 2021 study, Rodríguez et al. examined instructors from different disciplines and their translanguaging stances by reviewing instructors' syllabi and course design. The authors discovered that when instructor participants intentionally and purposefully used translanguaging pedagogies, student learning was maximized (Rodríguez et al, 2021). Most importantly, the study revealed the vital role that instructors in Hispanic-serving institutions play "in the development of a linguistically inclusive approach to instruction in higher education" (Rodríguez et al., 2021, p. 353). It is important to lead by example; if students see us valuing their languages and cultural experiences in classroom discussions, lessons, and assignments, this practice may help reduce the "tacit feeling of exclusion, as it is often the standard that you expect in a university classroom" (Perez, interview, May 1, 2017). Consequently, as instructors, we are social actors and can embrace translanguaging despite monolingual constraints.

It is understandable that educators cannot make huge departures from what the institutions request such as teaching in English only, but enacting translanguaging pedagogies represents a significant start in valuing students' linguistic backgrounds. Purposely making space to enact translanguaging practices in the classroom can be either a welcoming proposition, or this approach may be rejected by students. Wei (2011) proposed the concept of incorporating a translanguaging space in the classroom. A translanguaging space may not necessarily be a physical space; it can also be a space that bilinguals create in their minds as they engage in the translanguaging process. During their thought processes, bilingual speakers are free to combine and

mix their linguistic tools, acquired from lived experiences, and create meaningful acts. On the other hand, in the classroom, a translanguaging space can represent a physical social space that allows bilingual students to bring "together different dimensions of their personal history, experience, and environment; their attitude, belief, and ideology; their cognitive and physical capacity, into one coordinated and meaningful performance" (Wei 2011, p. 1223). In this manner, all these aspects provide students opportunities for creativity as they generate new ideas.

Teaching on the Border

As the literature advocating for linguistic diversity in the classroom continues to grow, it should be noted that there is limited research dedicated to studying educators who explicitly encourage language-negotiating practices to create an inclusive learning environment for multilingual students in higher education. More specifically, there are scant studies focused on border institutions where there is a large student population of bilingual and multilingual students. Identifying ways to include languages other than English in writing courses not only supports multilinguals by offering them agency to make rhetorical language choices that can facilitate the writing process, but also invites them to incorporate their voices and lived experiences in institutional spaces. García (2017) argues, we must open "espacios for different people to act equitably in their worlds through their own languaging" (p. 256). However, while existing scholarship focused on border institutions, specifically on the US-Mexico border is limited, research opportunities abound.

At a border institution, writing program directors understand the importance of becoming linguistically and culturally inclusive to address the population it serves. For example, Rosenberg & Mangelsdorf (2021) advocate for a writing program that "draws on and enhances the many communicative strengths that students living on the border bring to the classroom" (p. 174). In their respective roles (past and present) as directors of FYC and RWS at a border university, the authors describe long-term and current initiatives, both curricular and programmatic, that center students' multiple languages in writing classrooms. These initiatives range from offering community literacy programs, all of which are nonprofits that serve the bicultural, bilingual area communities, piloting a bilingual Spanish-English first-year composition course, as well as supporting student and faculty research that position students' languages as assets (Rosenberg & Mangelsdorf, 2021). Making spaces for diverse students in the writing classroom is the focus of Cavazos' (2019) study. In this study, she identifies students' experiences from linguistically diverse writings noting the

importance of listening to students' translingual writing experiences to "develop effective writing pedagogies and partnerships that focus on learning with rhetorically aware translingual writers, professionals, and citizens" (p. 53). Border universities, where most of the student population is of Hispanic descent, represent unique research sites to examine how students negotiate their language repertoires to achieve effective communication in the academic environment.

My goal in this article is to provide two case studies that illustrate instructors purposefully creating spaces for bilingual students to leverage their linguistic repertoires. This approach not only supports multilinguals by offering them agency to make rhetorical language choices that can facilitate the writing process, but also invites them to incorporate their voices and lived experiences in institutional spaces. Before continuing, it is important to clarify that participating instructors did not create assignments requiring translanguaging practices, but they did incorporate translanguaging practices by inviting students to use all available means to be clear and persuasive in their writing, including using diverse languages. Initially, the study was to focus only on students' organic translanguaging communicative practices. However, one instructor mentioned his language experiences and encouraged students to embrace their linguistic repertoires. While this was not an initial goal of the study, it certainly added another component.

Language of Instruction in Writing Courses

While there is an increasing number of multilingual students entering higher education, universities in the United States are perceived to be English-only institutions where the language of instruction is in English. However, at border institutions, bilingualism is common and expected both inside and outside of the classroom. As a result, diverse communicative practices or mixing and combining of languages often occur. At the university where the study was conducted, instructors teaching first-year composition courses received a sample syllabus template created by the First-Year Composition (FYC) program in the English department. The syllabus included institutional and department policies, and suggested readings and assignments. Nowhere in the syllabus does it mention that all assignments should be written in English, or that communication, written or oral, should be conducted in English. Although the course syllabus for composition courses may not explicitly support an English-only approach, a tacit English monolingual policy exists. One of the participating instructors indicated that while he does not have a language policy in the classroom, there is an expectation from the department and an expectation by society because "of the nature of the class"

(Barcena, interview, April 11, 2017). In short, the English language is traditionally used in an English writing course. Unfortunately, an English monolingual policy works to dismiss students' heritage languages by focusing solely on the target English language.

Institutional Context

The university where the study took place is considered a commuter institution, drawing students from the U.S.-Mexico border communities. It is a large public research institution with a population of 23,922 students registered in the fall 2016 semester (University Communications, n.d.). The 2014-2015 fact book stats, which were available when the study was conducted, indicate that nearly 80% of the students are Hispanic; 5% are Mexican International; 8% are white non-Hispanic; 3% are African American; and the remaining 4% are of other races (University Communications, n.d.). According to a New Student Survey administered in Fall 2016 by the Center for Institutional Evaluation Research and Planning (personal communication, July 7, 2017), approximately 39.9% of students identify themselves as bilingual in English and Spanish, 48.6% of students are most comfortable speaking English, and 10.6% of students are most comfortable speaking Spanish. The statistics mentioned above reflect the numbers when the study was conducted. Based on current data, In the fall of 2022, there were 20,141 students enrolled with approximately 84.3% identifying as Hispanic according to the university fact book (University Communications, n.d.). Because the university is situated on the border, the university attracts students living across the border in Mexico. These students can be classified as international students (with a non-immigrant student visa), or they can also be U.S. citizens with dual citizenship. It is quite common for transnational students to travel back and forth to attend school in this border region.

Research Site: First-Year Writing

The study was conducted in two separate first-year writing sections offered in the spring of 2017. For the purpose of this article, I will refer to the writing course as first-year composition (FYC). FYC is an introductory core curriculum-writing course required for undergraduate students attending the university. There are two classes, taught during two separate semesters, which make up first-year composition—RWS 1301: Rhetoric and Composition I and RWS 1302: Rhetoric and Composition II (RWS stands for Rhetoric and Writing Studies). Each section of RWS 1301 has a maximum of 25 students per class. According to the course description, the goal of RWS 1301 is

to develop students' critical thinking skills in order to facilitate effective communication in different contexts. Students in this class are exposed to concepts including discourse communities, audience awareness, genre, rhetorical strategy, and the writing process. I chose to conduct research in the first section of the FYC course, as opposed to an upper-level division course, because of the diversity of the students enrolled in this class. Regardless of students' career goals, most students will have to sign up for the first section of FYC, providing me with a wide sample population. Since the focus of this article is about instructors' pedagogical approaches to teaching first-year composition advocating for linguistic diversity, I will primarily concentrate on data collected on the instructors in the study.

Data Collection Methods

The ethnographic methods used in this qualitative study included surveys for recruitment, participant observation as well as informal participation observation and interviews before and after class, semi-structured interviews, and artifact/document analysis. Artifact or document analysis was conducted by accessing instructors' assignment sheets and syllabi as well as reviewing students' drafts and final projects.

Survey Data Collection

I surveyed two first-year composition sections, each with a cap of 25 students per course. Since the goal of the study was to examine the communicative practices of bilingual students in college-level contexts, specifically in writing courses, the student survey was the main instrument for the recruitment of participants. The survey became the first step in getting to know my participants and a way for me to gauge their linguistic background, their feelings about academic writing, and their areas of study. There were two versions of the survey, one for students and one for instructors. The instructors' survey consisted of 10 questions and the student survey consisted of 14. The instructors' survey was used to gather descriptive information on their educational and language background as well as their teaching experience. Overall, I received 45 completed surveys from both sections and one survey from each instructor. Based on these completed surveys, I determined that 23 of the students were eligible to participate in the study, based on their descriptions of their language practices.

Participant Observation or Fieldwork

I attended class sessions throughout the semester, taking field notes and observing students' verbal and nonverbal expressions as they interacted with their peers and instructors. One class met twice weekly while the other met three times. Combined, I observed a total of 51.5 hours in the classroom environment. Communication practices were also captured using visual and audio equipment for cross references.

Interview Data Collection - Instructors' Semi-structured Interviews

The most significant source of data gathering was the semi-structured interviews. I conducted three separate face-to-face semi-structured interviews with both instructor participants and participating students. I conducted 80 student interviews for a total of 13.5 hours and 3 instructor interviews for a total of 2.5 hours. Instructor conversations were a bit lengthier compared to the students' interview sessions.

Participating Instructors

First-year writing courses are taught by professors, full-time and part-time lecturers, doctoral assistant instructors, and by graduate teaching assistants. Based on potential candidates' enthusiasm about the study, their availability, vast teaching experience, and their genuine desire to help bilingual students succeed, I chose Professor Barcena and Professor Perez (pseudo names); both instructors were English-Spanish speakers. Having two bilingual instructors, which was also another criterion for participating, was important since I felt that students would be more willing to use their linguistic repertoires in the classroom when their instructors, who were bilingual themselves, invited them to combine their languages. Both participating instructors also had years of teaching experience at Hispanic-serving institutions. Bilingual instructors bring a wealth of experiences and knowledge from their own backgrounds, which could possibly encourage them to create opportunities for communication in different languages. Following is a brief discussion on instructors' practices and challenges teaching on the border.

Professor Barcena

Although Spanish does not have a significant role in his course, Professor Barcena sincerely believes it should have a major role based on the diversity of students

enrolled. Given the opportunity, he would like to structure his classes so that the students can draw upon their multilingual backgrounds (Barcena, interview, March 9, 2017). One of the challenges that surface in his students' work is how Spanish may mistakenly influence their writing. He addresses this by commenting on students' papers or speaking with them in person and explaining how students can structurally change a sentence and place it in a different order when writing in English. He commends students when they express themselves freely, especially if their native tongue is Spanish, "I think that [providing feedback] motivates them to also work a lot harder with their English. I think it helps them; it reminds them that they are intelligent beings" (Barcena, interview. April 11, 2017). In one of our conversations, Professor Barcena stated that since his participation in the study, he is more aware of students' linguistic practices in the classroom. He added that he had several bilingual students in his class, and that as a teacher, he felt that he needed to explore different ways of structuring the class so that the students could draw upon their multilingual backgrounds:

> I am inviting students to use multiple languages or a combination of languages in their reflection blogs, and I would like to put more thought into how to do that, in other assignments and in future classes because I am a big proponent of bilingual education from early on (Barcena, interview, April 11, 2017).

Professor Barcena takes a sincere interest in creating opportunities for students to draw on their linguistic backgrounds in their writing assignments. Recognizing the benefits of knowing multiple languages, Professor Barcena shared that "There are some situations where students will use Spanish, where they will draw on their Spanish to use a little bit more advanced vocabulary words in English" (Barcena, interview, April 11, 2017). For example, there are many words in Spanish that have an equivalent or cognate in English. He explained that some of these Spanish words are "sophisticated". The word "apellido" (last name) in Spanish; in English it is appellation. He stated that he truly believes that being able to speak another language influences students' ability to speak English. "I can see that students who have integrated Spanish, I think that has helped them with their English as well" (Barcena, interview. April 11, 2017).

Professor Perez

Approaches promoting translanguaging in Professor Perez's class vary. Before the study began, he had already crafted assignments and activities that gave students opportunities to use their diverse language skills. For example, early in the semester, students were assigned an activity where they analyzed the article "El correcto empleo del español" (2017) which is written in Spanish. The activity aimed to bridge the concepts of multilingualism, rhetoric, and information literacy. Perez wrote instructions bilingually and students responded by mixing their languages as they addressed the prompts. In their responses, students wrote that the activity was "challenging," "interesting," "fun," "frustrating," and "entertaining". Generally, most students appreciated the activity but realized that maybe they did not understand academic Spanish that well. Other students were surprised they knew more than they thought, referencing some of the terms presented. One student noted that she felt comfortable since Spanish is a "huge part of her life anyway," and another stated, "I thought it was refreshing since my first language is Spanish and it was fairly simple for me" (Ruby, [discussion post] March 22, 2017). Professor Perez actively encouraged students to think about their relationship with language and to consider whether that is a theme that they want to explore in their own assignments. Interestingly, he emphasized that "if it's rhetorically effective and appropriate, students can bring in Spanish terms or dialogue or analysis to their work" (Perez, interview, March 22, 2017). Connecting this idea with Aristotle's definition of rhetoric and the concept of using all the available means of persuasion, and that if language, or having Spanish language skills, helps students gain access to certain communities that they otherwise wouldn't be able to access, "that can be a way of drawing on those available means or resources into doing something practical and learning something that otherwise you would not have been able to learn" (Perez, interview, March 22, 2017). Perez is aware of the challenges that are present in FYC courses with a diverse student population. He noted that there is a variety of linguistic experiences, competencies, and skills sets, adding that students' linguistic challenges run the gamut "from having a very tenuous hold on English, to students who are skilled, very skilled in many cases, writers in English and presumably in Spanish too, but who are still dealing with issues of grammar and conventional phrasing" (Perez, Interview, March 22, 2017). He was challenged to create an environment where students at all different levels, "all different points on the spectrum can find a point of engagement and find something that they can productively do to improve in their writing and learn about writing and leave the course as more confident writers" (Perez, Interview, March 22, 2017).

When I approached Professor Perez about the study, he indicated that he currently incorporates students' linguistic backgrounds into his classes and was looking "forward to reflecting more deeply on how to facilitate opportunities for students to draw on their linguistic resources in my classes" (Perez, interview, March 22, 2017). Drawing upon his own language resources is something that Professor Perez often does. He noted that there was one student who met with him, "we'd speak primarily in Spanish, but we reached for shared English words when that was the only way to make ourselves understood" (Perez, interview, March 22, 2017). It is clear that Professor Perez acknowledges the benefits of mixing languages especially when this negotiation affords students a clearer understanding of important class material. In short, the instructors' eagerness to assist, the students' willingness to participate, my presence as a researcher and the open invitation for students to translanguage in the classroom, influenced participants' performances. Before focusing on the participating instructors' translanguaging approaches related to the study, I would like to share my own practices and challenges stemming from experiences teaching at several higher-level institutions situated along the US-Mexico border.

My Own Practices and Challenges

In addition to including readings from scholars that focus on blended languages such as "How to Tame a Wild Tongue" by Gloria Anzaldúa and "Mother Tongue" by Amy Tan, I also share my lived experiences with language. On the first day of class, I talk about learning English and the struggles and obstacles that I encountered in academia. I share my research efforts in identifying methods that can help non-native speakers communicate. I talk about my accent and how people sometimes laugh at it (still) and even mention words that I cannot say in English that more than likely embarrass me every time I attempt to pronounce them. An example would be Twin Peaks (the popular 90's television show) which sounds like *Twin Picks* among others. I reinforce the fact that bilinguals' languages matter and are valued in my classroom. At the end of the class, several students will approach and thank me for my revelation; they speak to me in Spanish with a sense of freedom and comfort evident in their words, smiles, and handshakes as they exit the room. While this approach is simple, it has made a huge difference in my writing courses. Students' demeanors change and I become more relatable and approachable, which helps as they embark on their journey in academia.

The challenges that I encounter are seeing students struggle with writing, especially those whose first language is not English. I encourage them to draw on their

languages and mix or combine languages if it helps with the writing process. Sometimes I feel, as bilingual individuals, we need to be reminded that all of our languages play a role in our learning. Additionally, in reviewing my students' work, I try to understand their writing by focusing more on the communication effort instead of form. By this I mean, that as a Spanish speaker, I can see how Spanish may have influenced their writing, and I clearly understand what they are trying to say. We work from the message and aim to communicate it clearly to both the writer and the reader. I can't help but see myself in a lot of these students. For that reason, I keep reminding them that being bilingual is an asset and not a deficit, being bilingual offers writing opportunities that monolinguals may not have.

Findings

Instructors' Pedagogical Practices in the Study

At the beginning of the study, instructors purposefully invited participating students to compose assignments where they could mix/combine their languages or write entirely in Spanish. In creating actual translanguaging spaces, bilingual language users are given the opportunity to engage in meaningful participation as they use their linguistic abilities to strategically communicate and thus achieve academic meaning. In this study, mixing languages or translanguaging was not required and students had agency to exercise this option. While there were many students who saw translanguaging practices as a way of assigning value to their languages, an aid for comprehension as well as a tool for negotiation to make new meaning, there were students who resisted practicing translanguaging.

Professor Barcena encouraged students to use their languages in low-stakes assignments including journal entries, reading posts, and discussion questions. Similarly, Professor Perez invited students to combine their languages or write in Spanish in any low-stakes assignments as well as their final assignment, which was a high-stake project. Most of the students who chose to combine their languages did so in their journal entries, discussion posts, outlines, and writing drafts for major assignments. Some major assignments were completed using translanguaging practices; for example, one student completed a research project combining languages, with most of the Spanish being used in dialogue. Surprisingly, one participant wrote a five-page research argument paper completely in Spanish. This piece will focus on the

literacy narrative essay where students seized the opportunity to leverage their languages by mixing/combining them as they related their experiences with language.

Literacy Narrative Assignment

The literacy narrative represents a common genre in FYC. Young (2004) documents the rise of literacy narratives in the field of composition dating back to the 1990s in his book "Minor Re/Visions." His book focuses on the rhetorics of Asian American citizenship in reference to literacy narratives. He describes literacy narratives as distinct genres of text stating, "While there are variations in the stories we tell about literacy, we usually rely upon (both in writing and reading literacy narratives) recognizable characters, themes, and actions" (p. 37). I assign literacy narrative essays often to learn more about my students' literacy experiences. The genre also presents an opportunity to highlight students' language and cultural backgrounds, broadening their concepts of writing. Composing a literacy narrative may involve the use of a variety of languages; this is a choice that students make. However, by encouraging or inviting students to mix or combine their languages, this genre creates a space for them "to practice and negotiate their language goals" and "to examine dominant discourses through witnessing how their peers' literacies have developed in relation to those discourses" (Wilson, 2020, p. 20). Canagarajah's (2011b) study on code meshing in literacy narratives posits that accessing the practices of translanguaging offers multilingual students "diverse options and resources" particularly because students can draw on their linguistic and cultural backgrounds as they compose their literacy narratives. Rodríguez et al. (2021) illustrate how one instructor leveraged students' bilingualism through literacy narratives. In their literacy narratives, students were asked to reflect on their experiences as writers and readers in multiple language contexts. In this case, students were encouraged to use their linguistic resources "strategically and purposefully" (p. 362).

One theme that resonated in these students' samples was how they focused on their lived experiences with language, adopting a positive and nostalgic approach. Both students highlighted examples where language played a prominent role in their lives. Alexander (2011) notes that literacy narratives encourage students "to negotiate and grasp various identities. They claim one identity and then move on to another" (p. 625). Daniela's literacy example illustrated her love for reading books in Spanish when she was a child attending elementary school. She focused on happy memories about her love for reading Spanish books at home. Jacob also was nostalgic and remembered with much fondness and excitement the time when he was first exposed to a different

language. He talked about a time that he spent with his "homeboys" listening to the radio. In each case, both students shared notable examples allowing the readers to see them in a different light.

In defining what translanguaging means, García states that "Translanguaging refers to the language practices of bilingual people" (García, 2012, p. 1). Based on my understanding and experience, these practices can include mixing/combining languages in a sentence, in conversation, and in writing. These practices can be evident in what individuals do or say, or they can also occur as individuals negotiate or create meaning in their thoughts. What these practices highlight though is the participants' flexible use of their complex linguistic resources to make meaning in their lives and their complex communications (García, 2014b). Additionally, having different languages at your disposal makes it easy to translate from one language to the other for specific purposes. While conducting the larger study, I witnessed bilingual students' communicative practices as they communicated with their peers, the instructor, and myself, as well as in the assignments they completed. One theme that surfaced in students' work was their use of translation. Translating words or phrases from one language to the other is not something new to translanguaging. I use translation and have seen my students use translation to understand words, phrases and concepts that are unclear. However, what was surprising about the larger study was the continuous use of translation and the multiple purposes that translation afforded students. The word "translation" and other words associated with this term occurred in a little under 100 instances in the data.

Another noteworthy observation is that by using translation, as a form of translanguaging, bilingual students can be seen as actively participating in the writing process. Translation provided a visual representation of the writing process for bilingual students, especially when students created written drafts. Some of the participants indicated that they translated in their head, and as such, we cannot see the process; however, one student's writing sample provided a visual representation of her translanguaging practices. The data revealed that bilingual students utilized their linguistic repertoires spontaneously yet strategically in an effort to make meaning and to communicate.

For the literacy narrative assignment, both professors asked students to examine their literacy history, habits, and processes. Professor Perez invited students to "bring in Spanish terms or dialogue or analysis in their literacy essay" (Perez, interview, March 22, 2017). He invited students to translanguage especially if rhetorically effective and appropriate. Professor Perez emphasized that he raises opportunities for language negotiation by encouraging students to, "bring multilingual

skills, largely Spanish skills into class projects" (Perez, interview, March 22, 2017). There were numerous samples where students combined or mixed English and Spanish languages; for the purpose of this article, I provide two examples that exemplify the most common practices of mixing languages. One example, authored by Daniela, combined languages using translation to serve as a placeholder. Using translations, the participant translated words or phrases written in one language to the equivalent or similar word or phrase in another language. The second example, composed by Jacob, combined/mixed languages in an essay to authenticate an experience where Spanish (or varieties of the language) was apparent.

Daniela's Literacy Narrative

The following example shows how participant Daniela used translation as a placeholder in the writing and thinking process when she combined or mixed her languages. Daniela, who was enrolled in Professor Perez's class, mentioned that translation took place in her head after she revisited her rough draft and used translation as a placeholder. The process of translating internally implies that the translation act occurs in the person's mind, which was the case with Daniela. However, before the translation act, Daniela inserted Spanish words or phrases in her writing as placeholders. In other words, while she was in the writing process, and she could not think of a word or phrase in English, Daniela strategically placed the Spanish equivalent to hold the place of the English term or phrase. She explained, "I know at times when I am typing I can't find a word in English, but I find it in Spanish. So, then I use that word and then when I come back to it, I am like, I got to replace you" (Daniela, interview, March 1, 2017). The last words, "I got to replace you" are notes, or a reminder that she had to come back to this section and address what she could not retrieve at that moment. Translation allowed her ideas to flow without interrupting her train of thought. Unlike other student participants, who used translation to generate ideas, Daniela already had her ideas formulated; therefore, translation served as a postponing strategy, something she had to return to, revisit, and revise. Daniela elaborated on the process:

> …because I had the idea down and like in Spanish and I just had to translate it into English, and then yeah, because the idea was down, it wasn't so hard to come up with an idea, as it was to translate it. The idea just being jotted down and then translate it, it was easier then like trying to figure how to put it in

English and then like...get that to work the way that I wanted it to. (Daniela, interview, April 4, 2017)

This means that Daniela expressed her ideas in Spanish as she was thinking about them and transferring them to her paper. The issue that she encountered when combining her languages was translating her ideas into English and making sure that it all made sense. It appeared that Daniela was keenly aware of how to use her Spanish as a holding place to continue writing without interrupting the flow. Early on as we discussed combining and mixing languages, Daniela made it clear that while she combined languages, she did not feel right about combining them in academic writing, especially for a grade. For Daniela, writing for academia had to be uniform or cohesive, in one language or the other. However, this thinking did not keep her from combining her languages when composing a draft. She explained her translation process: "I write words in Spanish, like when it is the first thing that comes to my mind, and then I translate it later to keep it, like, cohesive…" (Daniela, interview, March 1, 2017). As mentioned earlier, using Spanish as a placeholder allowed her to continue writing; however, she revisited her draft and made sure that everything was in one language to make it sound "cohesive." By this, she meant that since the assignment was in English, everything should be written in English. Furthermore, this translating process allowed Daniela to use translanguaging methods, combining English and Spanish, in her written assignments. This approach helped Daniela complete the writing task. Figure 1 illustrates Daniela's use of Spanish words and ideas that she later translated into English.
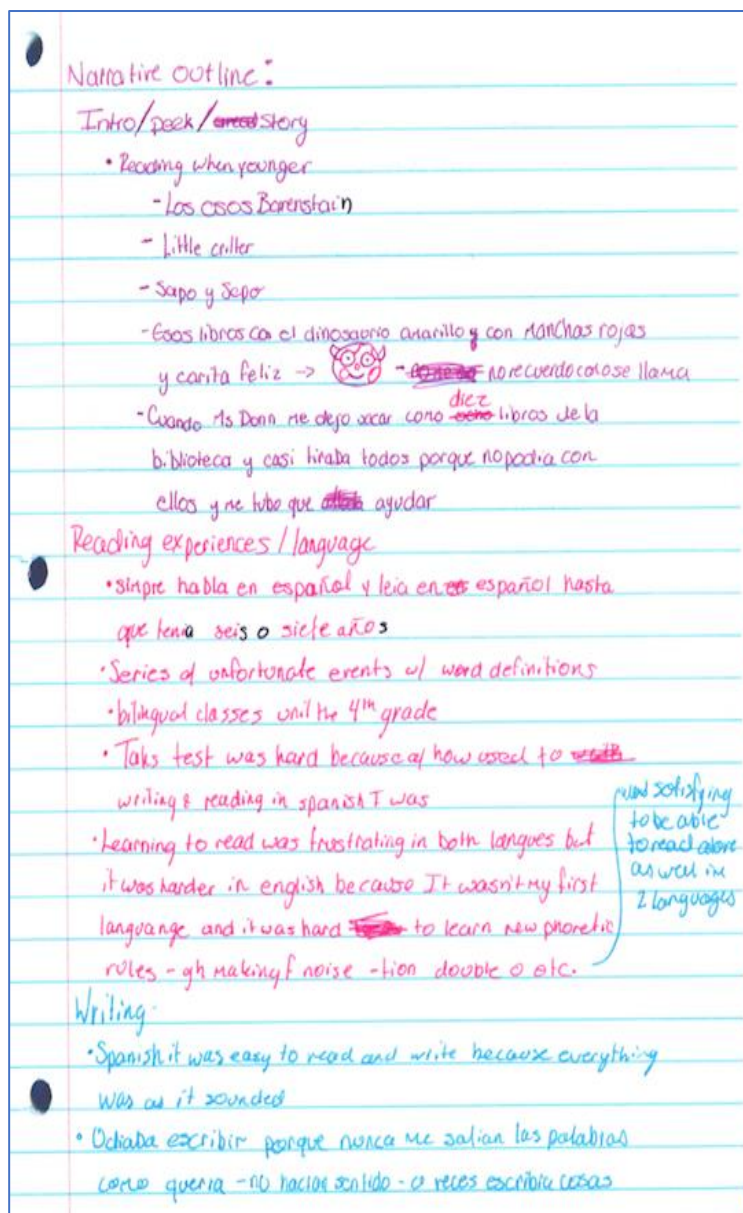
Figure 1: Daniela's notes for narrative essay

Jacob's Literacy Narrative

The invitation to combine languages in assignments sparked great interest in Jacob, who was in Professor Barcena's class. Being able to combine/mix languages is something that Jacob looked forward to when his instructor encouraged him. When I

asked him if he would like to combine languages his response was a direct "Oh yeah, hell yeah" (Jacob, interview, March 3, 2017). Jacob is a non-traditional student, having graduated from high school some 20 years prior. As an English language native, he began speaking Spanish as a freshman in college. He related that he and his "homeboys" would listen to oldies on the radio and play cards, and it was then that he learned to speak like his friends who "speak real like they are high" (Jacob, interview, April 18, 2017). Jacob brings a distinct variety of Spanish, a language that he has embraced with his friends and now with his professor. He expressed that he took advantage of the invitation to combine languages, especially in his research paper. He said that inserting Spanish phrases when you write about life experiences makes the message more "authentic, this is what actually happened." Once he knew his instructor was bilingual, he felt more comfortable mixing since his audience would be able to understand what he was saying. He emphasized that one should consider the audience but maintained that the purpose of the writing plays a role in mixing languages. In his case, incorporating Spanish in his assignment made the message real: "this paper has more effect…by using whatever Spanish I know because it is authentic" (Jacob, interview, April 18, 2017). Figure 2 on the next page shows an excerpt of Jacob's essay.

As shown in Figure 2, by mixing in some Spanish Jacob is maximizing his rhetorical potential. He did apologize for using curse words, but he maintained that the selection of language was done deliberately to make a point: "I think it adds more authenticity to some of my stories some of my…you know, I don't want to like to cuss but, you know, what I mean, it just sounds more [accurate]" (Jacob, interview, March 3, 2017). I asked him if his story would have the same impact if he omitted the cuss words. He replied, "No, it doesn't. I am not doing this to be like a bad boy… this is just the real deal; this is the way it is" (Jacob, April 18, 2017). Despite being an English classroom, mixing languages allowed Jacob to relate his story with more accuracy. He expressed that if the teacher is okay with him mixing his languages, he would continue doing it.

These excerpts also show two professors' attempts at creating inclusive environments. Being invited to access their linguistic repertoires in the classroom allowed students to communicate a message clearly and precisely. Used rhetorically, translanguaging practices allow for different levels of rhetorical and communicative effectiveness, and this approach helps create a strong case for the legitimacy of non-standardized languages.

Me: Ese mi Kiki wacha homeboy, you like my saco ese?

Kiki: Awwww man Jacob, aww man chignon brotha! Check out these pants I got off one.

of those French vatos for a beer, for a beer pinche puto!

Me: Yeah yeah yeah ok ok. Hey wait homes those are pretty nice carnal, hey put this on, aver how they look together.

Kiki: Jacob, I'm chingon!

Me: Y este pinche cadena??? Here put it on the belt, make it look like you got a lot of feria to spend and got gold chains.

*(**Me:** Hey there Kiki, look homeboy, you like my coat?*

***Kiki:** Awwww man Jacob, aww man s**t brother! Check out these pants I got off one of those French dudes for a beer, for a beer f**cking as**hole.*

***Me:** Yeah, yeah ok ok. Hey wait homes those are pretty nice bro, hey put this on, let's see how they look together.*

***Kiki:** Jacob, I'm f**cking great!*

***Me:** And this damn chain??? Here put it on the belt, make it look like you got a lot of dough to spend and got gold chains).*

Figure 2: Excerpt from Jacob's narrative essay

Discussion

As educators, we influence our students. We represent our language ideologies through our linguistic interactions and pedagogical practices in the classroom. Those teachers who taught me have informed my educational and pedagogical experiences. I embodied their behaviors, and for a long time, I carried with me their language ideologies as well. Today, I embrace my identity and heritage and continue to advocate for linguistic diversity in higher education by purposefully including readings featuring diverse voices, and by teaching bilingual courses or courses with a bilingual component. I employ translanguaging pedagogies in my classes validating students' lived experiences, emphasizing that language difference can be a resource for learning.

With that goal in mind, FYC directors can encourage their faculty to adopt a multilingual approach, including translanguaging, to teaching writing. But first, faculty should be educated on language-teaching practices through training or during professional development focusing on incorporating translanguaging and other translingual pedagogies that draw upon students' complete linguistic repertoires. At Hispanic Serving Institutions, I echo Rosenberg and Mangelsdorf's (2021) call for writing program administrators to "attend to their unique circumstances" and look at language differences as "qualities they [administrators] use to identify and influence initiatives they choose."

As researchers, it is important to take advantage of the changing educational landscape and explore methods, such as translanguaging as tools, for providing access to multilingual writers, especially in regions with diverse populations. Identifying approaches to leverage students' rich linguistic resources and experiences is important for student learning. These efforts can yield ongoing explorations on translingual practices offering differing perspectives for scholarship and pedagogy. This work is also an attempt to contribute to conversations about translanguaging approaches in the classroom more explicitly, so we can engage in practices that work to blur the lines between language hierarchies found in English centric spaces.

Limitations

The study where the data was derived for this article examined the translanguaging practices of bilingual students in first-year composition in a border institution. This was a qualitative study using ethnographic methods, and although an ethnographic approach allowed for an in-depth analysis of bilingual students' translanguaging practices, the length of the study was limited. Typically, ethnographic studies are conducted over a prolonged period. This present study was conducted during three months in the spring semester which limited data collection. Other limitations include delayed IRB approval as well as not being able to speak to previous instructors in the university who could offer insight on the language practices displayed by the participants in this particular study.

Recommendation for Future Research

There has been research conducted on translanguaging and other translingual practices (Cenoz, 2017; Creese & Blackledge, 2010; Canagarajah 2011a, 2011b; García, 2009; García & Otheguy, 2020; García & Wei, 2014; Hornberger & Link, 2012; Lewis et al.,

2012; Sayer, 2013; Wei, 2018a). However, there is limited research that focuses on translanguaging in higher education and specifically in border institutions. Most of the literature explores translanguaging in primary and occasionally secondary education contexts in the U.S. and UK (Mazak & Carroll, 2017). In considering a shift in policies and pedagogies, it is important to know how students' linguistic repertoires contribute to effective communication among multilingual students. Therefore, the challenge is in learning more on how bilingual students use language difference as a way to negotiate academic contexts.

My research was aimed at studying bilingual Spanish-English speaking students at a border institution. A similar qualitative research approach can also be used at other kinds of universities with bilingual and multilingual students. Educational sites with a diverse student population deserve to be studied in order to better serve the needs of all students. For example, places like San Francisco, California, where students might be bilingual in a variety of languages (Vietnamese, Thai, Chinese, and so on) are excellent sites to learn how students make sense of their multilingual worlds and how we can capitalize on their cultural knowledge and background. In addition, with the growing number of multilinguals entering colleges and universities all over the United States, regions far from the border such as the Midwest can also benefit from qualitative and ethnographic research methods. Areas such as the Midwest have experienced an increasing number of migrants who are or will be enrolling in higher education. These marginalized populations bring with them a wealth of cultural practices that can be highlighted in classrooms where their language and cultural background are valued.

Conclusion

Given the growing number of multilingual populations present in universities, it is vital to identify multilinguals' negotiating practices in the classroom and begin mapping or remapping pedagogical practices to include translanguaging. It is evident that multilingual speakers use their language abilities or rhetorical practices and cultural backgrounds. In this piece, I illustrated pedagogical practices instructors engaged in to provide access to multilingual writers. Literacy narrative writing samples clearly showed students' responses to the opportunities to use their full linguistic repertoires. Integrating similar translanguaging practices can be beneficial for bilingual students as they incorporate their various languages in their writings. Additionally, instructors are not only providing insights to translanguaging purposes, but also carving a space for students' heritage languages within the writing context in higher education. Making

space in academia is an important step for language diversity advocates, as well as a significant move toward shifting the way we teach writing.

However, creating opportunities for translanguaging practices can be challenging, especially for educators who unintentionally continue to uphold English-only policies in higher education; or when educators may not fully understand what translanguaging is and how it works. For example, some educators may still see bilingual students as equivalent to two monolinguals despite the research showing that they are different. García (2017) contends that all teachers, bilingual or not, can take a translanguaging stance, and can design translanguaging instruction. She describes this approach as something that needs to be "continuously adjusted…to keep in response to students' learning needs" (García, 2017, p. 262). For this reason, it is important that educators in higher education understand how bilingual students learn when they can leverage their linguistic repertoires. This may be possible by examining real classroom examples of translanguaging or by moving theory into practice. Therefore, this article is also a call to continue research studies focusing on pedagogical practices that foster flexible and dynamic spaces for multilingual students to thrive. In addition, educational sites with a diverse student population deserve to be studied to better serve the needs of all students. In considering a shift in policies and pedagogies, it is important to know how students' linguistic repertoires contribute to effective communication among multilingual students. I hope that this chapter encourages educators, scholars, and researchers to recognize writing classrooms as spaces where multilinguals students can access and draw on their robust and diverse linguistic proficiencies.

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About the Author

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Storytelling in First Year Writing

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ABSTRACT

This article offers a history of hakawati, the Arabic storytelling tradition, as well as offering a recent reassessment of storytelling in contemporary culture and first-year writing pedagogies. Authors DeGenaro and Hakim first theorize storytelling (hakawati, specifically) as a means to empower multilingual learners, drawing on our mutual experiences at the University of Michigan-Dearborn. We then model storytelling as a research method for students by providing our own stories as context for two assignment texts that operationalize hakawati and storytelling to achieve common learning outcomes in first-year writing curricula.

Keywords: hakawati, storytelling, multilingual learners, audience awareness, knowledge transfer

Introduction

Storytelling has an enormous capacity for facilitating learning, teaching, sharing knowledge, and making information accessible. This holds particularly true in the context of multilingual learners. In this article, we would like to tell a story that shares our experiences demonstrating storytelling's immense power to empower multilingual learners to consider the prior knowledge, experiences, and language practices they bring to the classroom as relevant rhetorical strategies. Our mutual story begins at University of Michigan's branch campus in the Detroit suburb of Dearborn, realizing the value of storytelling and its continued development through our individual teaching practices. University of Michigan-Dearborn (UMD) is a unique institution because while it is the size of a typical regional campus, it is a fully autonomous and

degree-granting institution with a vastly diverse population who come from unique backgrounds. According to the University's self-published enrollment data, UMD serves a student body representative of Dearborn, Michigan's unique and diverse population, home to about 42% Arab-Americans and immigrants from the Arab world, primarily Lebanon, Iraq, and Yemen. If you drive down either of the major thoroughfares in Dearborn and adjacent Dearborn Heights, you will find ties to these places: advertisements in Arabic script, mosque minarets reaching above Warren Avenue, restaurants like Cedarland painted all green as an homage to the fine Lebanese cuisine served. Within many of these Dearborn spaces, you can hear the various dialects of Arabic mixing in with English colloquialisms, just almost drowned out by the Arabic music playing overhead. Dearborn is unlike the rest of Southeastern Michigan, and really, unlike almost everywhere in the world.

We are Dr. Anthony DeGenaro, instructor of multilingual students, and Lena Hakim, multilingual graduate student. We both have taught at Wayne State University, also located in Southeastern Michigan, where Lena is currently pursuing a Ph.D. in rhetoric and composition. However, we first met at UMD, where Anthony was an adjunct instructor and Lena was a student and Writing Center consultant. Our previous shared campuses and love of creative writing and storytelling connect us across new institutions at new points in our careers as writing teachers. At UMD, our students and classmates were largely coming to the university from Arab American-populated high schools in Dearborn and the rest of Southeastern Michigan, or had recently completed international baccalaureate programs. Students there have uniquely diverse backgrounds and with them come their own unique experiences with languages, education, and writing. This is the context for our shared story about teaching and learning writing, and how stories create a rich narrative that highlights the necessity to implement writing and communication traditions, specifically the hakawati tradition, that support multilingual learners.

We argue that the hakawati tradition provides writing instructors a strategy through which they can empower and enrich the experience of multilingual students in first-year writing (FYW). The hakawati tradition implemented in FYW can allow students to consider their respective language experiences and skills as valid rhetorical strategies to be implemented into their individual writing ethos. We begin by first detailing the history of the hakawati tradition and what the tradition looks like in today's world in order to identify possible elements of the tradition that might be useful in the first-year classroom. Then, we move into an analysis of what the hakawati tradition specifically offers FYW multilingual learners, as well as writers of all language backgrounds in the FYW classroom. The oral storytelling tradition of the hakawati,

we argue, is a pedagogical activity and disposition that promotes audience awareness skills among writers, as well as introspective personal reflection. We believe that implementing oral and written storytelling assignments in the FYW classroom means students have an opportunity to learn how to draw on previous writing experiences and knowledge on communication to better inform their audience. We lastly offer model assignments based on each of our individual instructor experiences that incorporate written and oral storytelling that we believe may empower multilingual writers to become more informed and reflective communicators.

Hakawati: A History

The following section overviews the characteristics of the hakawati tradition, both in its historical and current form. Given the marginalization of Arab experiences and traditions, beginning with defining what the hakawati tradition is for instructors is an integral part of the conversation. Additionally, overviewing the history of the hakawati tradition in order to eventually identify its relevance towards multilingual learners in the writing classroom is important for three reasons. First, as instructors of increasingly diverse student populations, learning of representative cultural experiences that may inform some of our students' writing and communication practice should be an exciting and significant endeavor towards becoming more informed and supportive instructors to our students. Second, there are so few mainstream records of the history and description of the hakawati tradition that in order to have a sense of its application in FYW courses for multilingual students, it becomes necessary to describe the tradition. Lastly, to discuss the audience-awareness elements that the tradition provides, it is important to see how audience and kairotic decisions are a mainstay of the tradition throughout history. We begin with an overview of the history of the hakawati, tracing its significance within historical Arab culture and concluding with a discussion of current attempts at a mainstream revival in the Arab world and beyond. We round back by highlighting how throughout history, audience awareness and an understanding of the speaker's rhetorical toolbox are necessary characteristics among any hakawati.

Hakawati: Community Entertainment

Literally translated, hakawati means "storyteller": "Hekaye in Arabic means the story and haki means to talk. The one who talked and told a story was a hakawati" (Chaudhary, 2014). Historically, Arab villages oftentimes included a member who held

the position of community oral storyteller. According to "The Endangerment and Re-Creation," the hakawati also took the position "of being the source of news and information in the community," often becoming a "public figure" because of the hakawati's informative position (Malabonga, 2019, p. 37). Shalabi (2019) discusses how historically in the public sphere, male storytellers would share to groups of other male villagers in "cafes and they roamed from village to village" reciting "epics…[and] heroics." In "the private sphere", women also took on the hakawati role, sharing to other women "stories that held values, that held lessons…folk tales that had women's wisdom" (Shalabi, 2019). As evident in the history of the hakawati tradition, oral storytelling held a sort of "writing across the curriculum" ethos we strive for in writing courses: multiple speakers doing storytelling in multiple and transferable contexts. Moreover, hakawatis were integral in connecting members of the community together, as well as to their cultural and ethnic identity. Nasser (2006) in "Stories from under occupation: Performing the Palestinian experience" discusses how many of the hakawatis' tales often related "stories of a glorious past buried deep in the memory of the listeners" in order to revive a "collective experience" (Nasser, 2006, p.22) among community members. Overall, at the heart of the hakawati's role lies a similar significance regarding writing that instructors try to relate towards their students: to narrate information, news, stories, and entertainment in order to create a more informed and culturally-appreciative community.

Other scholars also highlight how at the heart of the hakawati was an understanding of audience awareness. Tabačková (2015) establishes the importance of the hakawati's audience and the connection forged between storyteller and audience member, highlighting that "every hakawati needs both a story and a recipient for this story. Without the listener (or the reader) longing to belong to a story...the story would not be able to survive" (Tabačková, 2015, p.203). Furthermore, Semaan et al. (2015) discusses the necessity for the hakawati to possess a plethora of rhetorical strategies to keep the audience engaged. Often, the audience gathered in "the qahwe (coffee shop)," the parallel to the Greek Agora, to hear the town's hakawati "recite stories and long tales" (Semaan et al, 2016, p. 99). The hakawati's tales usually "included conflict, which served to deepen audience involvement" (Semaan et al, 2016, p. 98). The storyteller might draw out the story over periods of days "to keep the audience engaged as they…hear how the story developed? (Semaan et al, 2016, p. 99). The conflicts in stories usually encouraged audiences to take "sides, experiencing the characters' actions vicariously. Sometimes real fights broke out between listeners identifying with opposing factions in these imaginary conflicts" (Semaan et al, 2016, p. 98). Raven and O'Donnell (2010) underline that hakawatis had "the ability to create an emotional

connection with others, to educate, to communicate perspective, to enable others to learn and understand from the experiences of others" (Raven, 2010, p. 205) in a time period before technology touched Arab villages. Yet, as evident in the following section outlining the revival of the hakawati in the modern-day, the core of establishing a connection between audience and storyteller, as well as audience and culture, is always at the core of the hakawati tradition.

Hakawati: A Modern Revival

Many sources regard the decline of the hakawati as a result of the shift towards technology in the Arab world. Brittanica (1998) discusses that "until the advent of broadcast media, the hakawati…remained a major fixture of Arabic-speaking countries" (Brittanica, 1998). In a news article on hakawati revival in the Arab world, Chaudhary remarks that the global shift to technology resulted in hakawatis "being sidelined" in favor of other forms of entertainment now more readily available (Chaudhary, 2014). Individuals like Shalabi agree with Skieker that the hakawati tradition has died out due to oral storytelling on community platforms being taken on in different mediums, such as television. However, both individuals fail to see how the hakawati tradition is being revived in new spaces beyond coffee houses, from classrooms to festivals, where the Arab population believes that oral storytelling still serves the community.

Chaudhary remarks that the Arab world is currently seeing a revival of the hakawati in the form of hakawati "festivals": "the hakawati is now reclaiming his pride of place." In Abu Dhabi, a popular theatrical performance of oral storytelling put on by modern-day storyteller Yousef is described as "inspiring the next generation of Emiratis to appreciate and engage with their heritage" (Chaudhary, 2019). In this modern revival where oral storytelling has become a theatrical artform, connecting community members to their heritage remains at the core of the hakawati tradition's characteristics. In Lebanon, Sewell remarks how "today, [hakawati] events" are reviving in parts of the Arab world "as public forum" in "Moth-like events" where individuals can share their experiences and stories with others around the community (Sewell, 2019). The Hakawati Project is taking a different approach, collaborating with "The Sundance Institute" to highlight "alternative narratives to the ones mainstream media amplifies" of how the Syrian War has impacted individuals. Additionally, instructors across the Arab world are also transforming the oral hakawati tradition into a multimodal experience. Semaan has turned oral storytelling into a technology-based art, describing "Digital storytelling…[as] a modern descendant of the ancient art of

storytelling" (Semaan et al., 2016, pp. 97) used to engross "students in each of the four language skills: listening, reading, writing and speaking" (Semaan et al., 2016, pp. 98). Raven et al. (2010) highlight a classroom study in the UAE geared towards turning students into "digital hakawati" (p. 201) where instructors encouraged students to hear the stories of their family members and create digital narratives of their family's history in order to increase a "national identity among Emirati students" (Raven et al., 2010 201). The researchers conclude that curating digital narratives pushed students towards "actively investigating social issues…by presenting their work in an interactive way to a wide audience using modern multimedia and web applications" (Raven, 2010, p. 205). Both works demonstrate how modern-day forms of empowering students to story-tell benefits all aspects of their writing skills, as well as empowering their cultural understanding. In the coming sections, we will demonstrate how the hakawati tradition further asks first-year writers to consider a development of kairos and audience awareness.

Hakawatis in First-Year Writing, Audience Awareness, and Multilingual Students

To be clear: every culture of language has storytellers. Given the characteristics of the hakawati tradition overviewed above, we believe that applying the hakawati tradition is one method to amend the obstacles in FYW that continue upholding singular structures of knowledge-making and communication, limiting the development of multilingual learners (Sewell, 2019). Having provided a robust and critical understanding of what the hakawati tradition is historically, we now continue by analyzing the benefits of adding the hakawati tradition into a FYW curriculum. Our goal is that instructors and scholars will be inspired to reconsider their current curricular designs to include more storytelling to achieve more inclusive practices in FYW classrooms, especially at learning sites that have populations of multilingual learners.

One of the main aspects of the hakawati tradition is the audience, as the audience is encouraged to come alive with the story and the feelings of the characters (Semaan et al, 2016). The hakawati tradition is rooted in the development of audience awareness and critical understanding of kairos in order to keep audiences engaged. To articulate why the hakawati tradition can be a valuable inclusion in FYW curriculum, we believe it necessary to first articulate why we need a better response for the development of students' audience awareness skills. Scholars such as Zakaria and Mugaddam (2014) in "Audience Awareness in the Written Discourse of Sudanese EFL University Learners" agree that "the purpose of writing is to communicate with an

audience" (11-21). Zakaria and Mugaddam also highlight, however, that often, student writers only consider their instructor as an audience member, rather than considering beyond-the-classroom audiences as well (pp. 11-21). Furthermore, Liu and Gua (2018) in "A survey on the cultivation of college students' audience awareness in English writing" highlight that writing studies does not focus enough on the development of students' audience awareness, focusing more on grammatical and linguistic details. Moreover, in their study of students' writing habits, Liu and Gua notice that students admit to focusing more on writing utilities rather than focusing on an emotional connection with their reader (Liu and Gua, 2018, p. 1736). Thus, in alignment with recurring research, writing classrooms can do more to help students develop audience awareness skills in order to be more well-rounded writers and thinkers.

Oral storytelling should therefore become a normalized genre for students to write in for them to better develop audience awareness. Among the benefits of the hakawati tradition is that it provides orators the opportunity "to create an emotional connection with others, to educate, to communicate perspective, to enable others to learn and understand from the experiences of others" (Raven, 2010, p.205). FYW courses that embrace the hakawati tradition offer an occasion for students to not only think more critically of the audiences they are writing to, but also encourages students, especially multilingual learners, to value linguistic practices beyond standard academic English and rote grammars. As students learn to construct their written stories, they should also be asked to take on the role of hakawati: present their research and writing in order to develop an understanding of audience awareness beyond only focusing on writing utilities. Asking students to construct a presented narrative, for example, in one assignment, by exploring their positionality in the world and sharing it with the class has the potential for students to consider genre awareness, audience, and reflect on self-positioning. Students have to consider how to best construct a narrative, story, or piece that ultimately does what the hakawati is trained to do: "keep the audience engaged" (Semaan et al, 2016 p. 99) at the same time as they "educate…[and] communicate perspective" (Raven, 2010, p. 205). Oral storytelling also allows students role-playing as their peers' audience to practice rhetorical listening, as they listen carefully and consider how to respect other perspectives. If one of the FYW goals outlined by the WPA is the further development of students' communication skills through writing ("WPA Outcomes"), then it only makes sense that students also consider how to respond to perspectives as well, a fundamental part of real-world and academic communication.

Additionally, we believe that the hakawati tradition is a prime communitive tradition to aid students in considering the value and applicability of their prior

communication and language skills. NCTE highlights the importance for FYW students to engage directly with the transfer of knowledge in "First-Year Writing: What Good Does It Do" (NCTE). Knowledge transfer is developed by first developing students' metacognition skills (NCTE), which we believe storytelling provides a robust opportunity for explicit discussions on writing transfer and the integration of prior knowledge. The assignment texts we share in the following section are informed by DePalma and Ringer's (2011) adaptive transfer framework, which they define as "the conscious or intuitive process of applying or reshaping learned writing knowledge in order to help students negotiate new and potentially unfamiliar writing situations" (DePalma & Ringer, 2011, p.135). Like this theory of adaptive transfer, we see a similar limitation in how conversations around transfer of writing often stop at reuse. We share DePalma and Ringer's assertion that the text is "simply a linguistic representation of the discourse-level organizational patterns that a writer has internalized" and that for L2 students "reading thus becomes a process of 'code-matching' wherein communication succeeds only if the writer and reader have similar expectations and commensurate codes" (DePalma & Ringer, 2011, p.138). We believe hakawati offers a path towards what DePalma and Ringer call "'reshaping' prior knowledge in order to achieve adaptive transfer which is/can be dynamic, idiosyncratic, cross-contextual, rhetorical, multilingual, and transformative" (DePalma & Ringer, 2011, p. 141). For example, Perez et al. (2021) highlight that students' work on their own stories and empowering themselves with their voices in a first-year writing class can help students develop "agency…[and] cultivate increased self-awareness, confidence in their writing, and awareness of their cultural strengths" (2021, p. 627). More importantly, writing narratives "prompts reflection" (2021, p. 628) which can "promote transformative learning" (Perez et al., 2021, p.628). Therefore, offering students the opportunity to write their own stories within the classroom allows them to reflect both on their cultural and prior experiences, which can then be used to inform their individual writing ethos.

From the vantage point of an adaptive transfer, then, curricular designs adapting hakawati traditions open up better, more robust, and more accessible reflection for multilingual students to not only activate prior knowledge, but begin to transfer knowledge. FYW, often a core requirement for students regardless of language status, is already burdened with the responsibility of instruction oriented towards writing across the curriculum. The dynamic view of writing provided by this theory mirrors our impression of:

student writers are also likely to shift when discussing students' conscious or intuitive processes of reshaping learned writing knowledge in novel situations. Rather than viewing students as novice writers, adaptive transfer allows for students to be perceived as agents who possess a variety of language resources and a range of knowledge bases that they might draw on in each writing context (DePalma & Ringer, 2011, p. 142).

As such, we can imagine students as capable storytellers but also participants in their own academic narratives. We might consider how storytelling is a recurring theme in conversations on transfer of knowledge with scholars such as Wardle, Beaufort, Robertson, and Taczak, or how adaptive transfer might influence an interpretation of Yancey's theories of reflection, but it all boils down to storytelling.

In the following section, we reflect on our own individual stories and how our shared ethos as storytellers informs our approaches to writing instruction. Then, we present writing instructors with two model assignments they can implement together or separately into any FYW syllabus. These draw on elements of the hakawati tradition to empower multilingual learners towards becoming both more audience aware as well as drawing on their personal writing and communication skills as rhetorical strategies.

Modeling Hakawati as a Method: Two Assignment Designs for Oral and Written Storytelling in FYW

Kan ya makan, fee kadeem al zaman - Lena's Story

My story begins in Metro Detroit, a hub of Arab America. I chose Metro Detroit to study writing as influenced by the local ecologies and cultural traditions of the area. However, evident from the FYW classes myself and my peers stepped into and taught, FYW curriculum in universities across the whole nation have yet to widely consider the rich rhetorical and literary traditions of the Arab world in the writing curriculum. FYW curriculums typically reflect and teach the writing and literacy conventions from canonized Greco-Roman traditions, instead of attempting to be informed by rich literacy and writing traditions of the members of its locale.

I began my education at a university known for its large Arab American population. Fellow peers and faculty commonly celebrated and respected the rich culture of the city, using the city to inform classroom discussions, assignments, and university events. Watching peers embolden themselves with their Arab backgrounds taught me to utilize the language practices of my Lebanese background. I began

implementing Arab traditions of writing and language: Arab words, sometimes with translation footnotes and sometimes without, popped up in many pieces I composed; narrative, or hakaya in Levantine-Arabic dialect, a common Arab communicatory tradition, became a common genre in written assignments, allowing me to explore my connection with the topic at hand. Experimenting with my second language and the traditions of my Arab ancestors led me to become a stronger and both more informed and more excited writer, and I realized I wanted more students who come from multilingual backgrounds to have a similar experience.

I am ultimately a byproduct of the hakawati tradition, an ancient Arab communicatory tradition that has imprinted oral storytelling and narrative sharing as a prime mode of communication, one that relies less on sharing perspective with an audience as a means of knowledge building and communal assembly. I am like many students across Michigan and the United States at large – my life is informed by my ethnic background. But with my knowledge of writing studies and communication, I became curious as to how one writing tradition of my local Arab American community might be applied to the local writing studies curriculum.

Lena's Assignment: The Student Hakawati

The assignment I describe asks students to consider how best to engage with audience members using writing, linguistic, and literacy skills they already possess and are also learning in the classroom. This project arrives in the middle of my FYW course at Wayne State University, and builds on a research argument essay. Drawing on the traditional research assignment that students are asked to write in class by considering their ethos as researchers, as well as how to communicate their research with their audience, the assignment sequence I provide here is in response to research that expresses a lack of audience engagement skills developed by students. As already discussed, students come to class with a wide range of writing skills but are often unsure of how to implement these previous writing skills with the research and rhetorical skills FYW teaches students. The following four-part assignment asks students to consider implementing existing writing and communication skills into a project that also develops audience awareness. The assignment is meant to take place before the major research project the majority of FYW courses have students construct.

In the *Oral Research Narrative*, students are asked to choose a research topic of their interest, or use existing research from previous written assignments. Instead of students writing with the instructor in mind, students are asked to compose their

research into an oral narrative meant to communicate the information to their peers, similar to the role of the hakawati. This differs from the traditional research presentation because students are asked to first reflect on what existing communicatory traditions they already possess or notice others around them possess. Moreover, many classes have students present their research to their peers only after they have typed their research into an essay. However, Zakaria and Muqaddam discuss how "to write to particular audience is far better to write with no audience in mind…writing programs should foster and enhance students' ability to generate ideas, and organize and transmit information to the reader" (2014). Therefore, providing students with the opportunity to develop an understanding of writing for an academic audience, allowing them to first practice writing for their peers and learning to effectively "make assumptions of what the audience knows and what they do not" (Zakaria, 2014) can help to strengthen their consideration of audience when writing for distant academic audiences. Lastly, part of the reading asks students to learn about the hakawati tradition, thereby also diversifying their knowledge of different communicative traditions across the globe.

The Oral Research Narrative:

This project is a bit different than other "research essay and research presentations" that you have done in other classes because we will be flipping the order. This project asks you to first consider how you will construct your research findings for a close audience - your classmates! We will be drawing on the hakawati method to communicate vital information that we are interested in researching and investigating to our classmates by presenting your research findings to your classmates. Then you will reflect on your classmates' response to your research presentation by considering how you can make your discussion more effective based on their responses and reactions.

Part 1: Pre-reflect and respond!

Watch Sally Shalabi's discussion of the hakawati tradition - Link found here: https://youtu.be/9lh7_THPZP4. After watching, write a discussion post in which you reflect on the power of oral communication and storytelling: how can discussing with others help to enhance your connection with people? How might discussing with others about your research make you a more effective writer and communicator? How does the hakawati tradition in the Arab world

seem different from the way we share stories and information in the United States?

Then, think about how we are all hakawatis in our own ways - we are always sharing stories and information! What are some unique ways you communicate with others in your own life? What are effective methods you notice others around you use to discuss research and information that you want to adopt?

Part 2: Choose your research topic

Is there a topic that seems particularly interesting to you as a university student? Construct a research question that you would like to investigate through the research methods and research process lesson we have previously discussed. Compose an annotated bibliography of five sources on this topic. At the end, reflect on what new lens you would like to explore on this topic. Moreover, who is your audience - are you writing for an undergraduate journal? Are you writing for a conference presentation? Identify what that space is and predict who your readers will be. What is necessary to engage the readers of this genre? What makes you nervous about writing for this audience?

Part 3: Present your research to the class

Construct a research narrative where you aim to inform your classmates - an academic audience - about your research argument and findings. You may utilize the annotated bibliography you composed for Part 2, as well as any other scholarly and relevant sources you need to inform your audience about your research. As you are beginning to construct your research presentation, go back to your response for Part 1 and ask yourself what prior communication skills from yourself and those around you do you feel would be effective to utilize as you inform your audience.

Part 4: Reflect

After presenting and answering questions posed by your peers at the end of your presentation, answer the following questions:

1. How did presenting your research in front of a live audience enhance your understanding of writing for an academic audience? Did you feel you had to communicate information in different ways than you usually would when talking to a friend, for example?
2. Will you be changing anything about your research after receiving feedback from your peers?
3. What do you believe is now the importance of considering your audience when constructing research?

"Poets Don't Wear Baseball Hats" - Tony's story

I became a writing teacher by way of being a poet and, at first, that was a tortured shift. I foolishly thought in binaries: I couldn't be a teacher, that would be a compromise. Poet or bust. A walking cliché, I remember a melodramatic session of introspection facing a sunset over the Pacific Ocean from a perch at Point Lobos in San Francisco, standing at the absolute edge of my world, telling some seagulls, "I didn't get a poetry degree to become a teacher." And yet, after finishing my M.F.A. (a program with no built-in teaching assistantship or emphasis on pedagogy) I ended up back in the Midwest, living with my parents, working at a nearby cafe. I'd become another cliché. I was hired as a manager under the auspices of my service industry experience in California to help the owner, who by her own admission was well out of her depth in the restaurant biz, train the high school-aged employees how to work. This was my first teaching practicum: substitute best practices on self-assessment for mop strategies in the bathroom, trade off generative end-comments on a rough draft for installing the virtue of calming a surly customer without sacrificing the dignity of the employee. It was brainless work, in the kitchen, at the counter, but it was rewarding with the staff as students. The highlights of any shift were those slow moments between afternoon and morning when the staff and I could talk stories, which began primarily with them seeking wild tales of California nights, but soon went deep into tales from all of our complex lives. One of the baristas was getting married, another's parents had just divorced, and the owner of the restaurant became a grandmother to twins. Kim gave one of her kidneys to her twin sister, Melissa. We told a lot of stories in their place until they both returned happy and healthy, an unknowing family of hakawatis weaving tales between trips to the dish pit and walk-in freezer.

The real learning in the cafe did not happen in something resembling a workplace training session, infrequently as I "ran" them. Our boss, while well-

intended, was misguided in her thinking that the kids needed firm direction. On the contrary, they needed something that I would come to learn as mutual inquiry. At the time, though, I just thought it made more sense to talk to them like adults. Real learning or training doesn't happen as a series of hierarchies handing off doctrine. That's not how Ross, one of the young employees of the cafe figured out the best way to load the dishwasher. He got through trading concert stories with me during chance encounters in the kitchen while listening to Straight Outta Compton. He was a peer, and while he relied on me for certain information, the best way to meaningfully transfer that knowledge was through mutual respect, from which was born a mutual desire to find success and a best practice for getting a day's worth of soup, salad, and cheese off some plates. As a "manager" I felt that:

> By embracing mutual inquiry, we gain at the very least a better understanding of what we warrant as belief-worthy; we gain also the humility that helps us to guard against such cynicism and doubt; very possibly, and more profoundly, we gain also the mutual respect and trust necessary to guard against misunderstanding, coercion, and violence. (Baker et; al, 2014, p.29)

Non-persuasion, valuing personal narrative, instruction vis-a-vis the subjectivities of learners, in a given context, was my approach to instruction at the restaurant. And it remained my approach to instruction when, at the end of summer 2015, I accepted a position as an adjunct instructor I'd applied to over the summer, wanting to do more with my terminal degree than make lattes. I would, instead, soon be teaching FYW at the University of Michigan Dearborn.

But the real story is this one: short and sweet, like a parable. The first weekend I lived in San Francisco I went on a walk with some fellow creative writers, also new to California. We walked, unknowingly, the exact route almost every tourist takes when visiting the city. We ate Cantonese, we saw a Pride parade, and we marveled at the majesty of the Golden Gate Bridge from the shore of the Bay in Ghirardelli Plaza. I stood with my back to the water, uncharacteristically wearing a Giants hat that was gifted to me as a going away present by my brother. My new friends and I took a picture. "Let's do another," I said, tossing the hat to the side, "Poets don't wear baseball hats."

Today, I can only find the picture of me wearing the hat. Today, I define myself—and by extension, students in my writing courses—not by what they aren't, can't be, or shouldn't be, but rather - by what they can. We begin to discover our

subjectivities from voice, and the best way to hear ourselves is by listening to the stories we share.

<u>Tony's Assignment</u>

In *The I-Search Paper*, Ken Macrorie (1988) introduces a genre that blends personal writing, narrative, and research; the result, as Macrorie says, is an essay that allows students to deploy their "natural curiosity" as opposed to their adherence to rigid correctness (p. 55). An I-Search essay builds a narrative around a central research question, one which is self-selected and tells a narrative about the finding of research or discovery of research literature. I believe that a successful I-Search should feature compelling storytelling that is engaging, reflective and productive for the author, and delivers some insights into the topic of their research and offers some metatextual conclusions about researching in general. Macrorie explains how this genre is useful: "in part, writing is designing or planning; in part, it's watching things happen and discovering meaning" (Macrorie, 1988, p. 55). Seeing the value in an assignment that blends storytelling and research, Wayne State University adopted this assignment into their common curriculum for FYW, which was how I encountered it. As a poet and storyteller, an unknowing hakawati myself, this assignment was a dream to me. Typically, the I-Search is the second essay in a sequence of four: it comes after a shorter rhetorical analysis of an argumentative article that can be a popular or academic source, and is followed by a research essay where students utilize academic articles as secondary sources. The I-Search, among building confident authentic voices within my student writers as storytellers, sets up students for reflection and practice in using various academic research tools. Here is an example of the I-Search assignment text as it has evolved for me over the years:

> **I-Search Essay**
>
> This essay is a little different than Project One. Instead of being purely analytical, you are instead being reflective, both of the sources you'll collect, and also your process in collecting them. A good way to think of this assignment, the I-Search, would be to consider it a "research narrative." You're going to tell me a story about the research you will conduct. Keep in mind, the sources you investigate for this essay, you can use in Project Three!

Ken Macrorie, in his book I-Search, describes this paper as a story where you search for answers and talk about the process of finding those answers. You'll write from the first-person perspective ("I" should show up many, many times!) to describe your research question, response to sources, and ideas about your subject as they develop.

Macrorie lists four parts of the paper (What I Knew, Why I'm Writing This Paper, The Search, and What I Learned), though, as he notes, this is flexible:

The Introduction (What I Knew and Why I'm Writing the Paper)

In the introduction you should:

- Present your research question (this will be like a thesis statement)
- State your topic:
  o Why you selected this particular topic (for example: it relates to your major, or a personal interest, etc)
  o What you know or think you know about the topic
  o What you hope to learn about the topic
- Your motivation for finding the answers to your question(s) or why you think this is an important question to answer

Your introduction may be one paragraph long but depending on your prior knowledge and interest in the subject, could also be longer. Think of the introduction as a section, not the first paragraph!

The Body of the Paper (The Search)

The bulk of your paper is the narrative (or story) of your search for answers and your reflection on this research process.

- In the beginning of the project, we will learn about the tools available to you through our library database. You will explore these library tools as you engage in library-based research on your topic.

  o Remember: this may be the first time you are using tools like databases to do research, describe the highs and the lows of the search!

There are three ways students generally plan the research process:

- You might pick a source you've already read for other assignments in this class (or other classes) and branch off your search from that starting point, or
- You might approach it more methodically, targeting specific journals or areas to locate specific articles on specific topics which might unlock further research questions for study, or
- You might just pull three totally random articles and use the narrative body of the essay to connect them, or talk about disconnects between them!

Then:

- Explain how you found your sources, be specific!
- Summarize each source and discuss how that source relates to your original research question
- Don't forget to discuss the reading / annotating / summarizing process alongside the information from those sources. This is a story about research as much as it is an informative essay!

The Conclusion (What I Learned)

This conclusion might be different than other essays and papers you've written because, as you'll come to learn, not every research question has a good answer. Not every research project is a success. In the I-Search, that's totally okay! The real goal, as the conclusion demonstrates to readers, is to offer a narrative accounting of the research process. We might not answer a specific research question, but we'll know some new things about how to conduct research in the future (or, at least, in the next project 😉).

Even if you are left with more questions than answers, even if you get no answers, you still told a great story, and that's worth writing about!

I recently taught a basic writing course that included a variation of the I-Search project that more specifically appeals to multilingual students (who predominantly made up that particular courses' enrollments). The theme of this basic writing course

was centered around language encounters both at school and at home and code-switching/meshing; as I described in my syllabus for the course: "while learning about the kinds of writing tools needed for academic writing and similar genres, we'll also reflect on the different voices (codes) we adapt and toggle between (switch) in our daily lives." Assignments and readings centered around concepts of language awareness, audience awareness, and code-meshing. The culminating assignment was a literacy narrative essay anchored by readings from Min-Zhan Lu's ideas about languages, codes, and education, and Gloria Anzaldua's ideas about language and dialectical difference. While during the course of the semester I did not yet know this practice by the name hakawati, the convergence of storytelling and "academic essay writing" proved to be generative and fruitful for my multilingual students. This variation, which I called a "Critical Narrative Essay," gets at the core goals of the I-Search with an explicit valuation of personal storytelling (as opposed to narrativizing the research process). Here is the assignment text:

Research starts with a researcher. In this instance, that's you! Once you get further into your area of study at university, you will be expected to create new knowledge within your field. If that sounds like a daunting task, don't worry - we're here to practice.

Like writing, research is a process, not a thing that is ever "finished." The goal for this project is for you to consider (via reflection, and by having an explicit awareness of how you do research) your ethos - or your own story - within a research area.

As we read in Gloria Anzaldua's "How To Tame a Wild Tongue," her interest and expertise in the subject area is clear. We discussed how Anzaldua's ethos contributes to her discussion of literacy and learning and teaching. For this paper, we want to model Anzaldua's writing to establish our own sense of ethos, and more importantly, make our first statement in our new areas of study and/or interest.

What in your life has led you to this classroom? Why are you studying what you've decided to study? What old thing that has already happened is part of the voice you'll use to state something that hasn't been said before?

If we can be critical and reflective about our own narrative experience, like Anzaldua, we can write about new things from positions supported by our experiences. Before we write a formal research-based argumentative essay

(that's Project Three), let's take stock of who we are, what we're writing, and how we're writing it.

Expectations:

> 1. Have clear thesis statements that answer the following questions (these might be different paragraphs or sections of your paper):
>   a. What is your area of interest?
>   b. What contributes to/supports/makes your ethos in this area?
>   c. Why is this your area of interest?
> 2. Write a first-person narrative that describes/explains your relationship to your interest that supports any or all of the above claims.
>   a. For example: Anzaldua is bilingual and lives in a bilingual area - she has a close relationship to writing about language usage.
> 3. Use your critical narrative to make a clear statement about/responding to/reflecting on your claims.
> 4. Have a clear research question that might end up being the subject of Project Three.
>   a. This does not have to be answered in this writing situation but must be proposed.

This assignment, like the I-Search, offers an explicit platform for storytelling and audience awareness, making it a prime example of how the hakawati tradition is already lurking within our pedagogy. In this "Critical Narrative Essay," students talked about academic writing in a storytelling context, directly engaging with their audiences and wanting to present compelling narratives about their history with education, free of the constraints of English language requirements via code-meshing. During the writing process, peer review conversations and reflections on the continued drafting of these essays—particularly the first-person narrative aspects—were proving grounds for students to engage with their own languages (be that literal or figurative). Not only did students convey a complex understanding of the genres and conventions of academic writing, they also engaged in deeper, more thoughtful conversations about academic writing and the opportunities to use other codes to interrogate or subvert readers' expectations in meaningful ways.

In these literacy narratives, students almost all talked about this as a key moment in their learning, not just of "standard academic English," but all their time as students where they were thoughtful in explicit ways about their audience and eager

to please, if not entertain, their audience. They became, in the oral performance of their projects, hakawatis.

Conclusion, or Rather, The Start of the Next Story

The hakawati tradition from Arab history is a necessary rhetorical tradition in first-year writing as one step towards liberating writing studies from its "Eurocentric foundations" (Ruiz & Baca, 2017, p. 227). The tradition enriches the experience of multilingual students in FYW achieve communicative and rhetorical knowledge goals by allowing students to focus on developing rhetorical listening skills, critical awareness, and empathy towards audiences. We firmly believe that every student walks into the classroom with their own writing toolbox, and as instructors our job is to help them develop their prior and new writing skills together. Storytelling via the hakawati tradition allows students to reflect on both how to connect with their audiences, as well as how they may connect with their own writing skills to become more empowered writers. What we presented here is not only the background of a communicatory and literacy tradition that has thus far been sidelined in favor of other communicative traditions, but how scholars and instructors might work towards providing students a method to uncover their own linguistic backgrounds. Our goal is to continue this story and find more meaningful connections with the research our colleagues are doing in changing the way first-year writing is understood by working beyond the euro-centric models of writing programs.

As we say, every story starts somewhere; all it needs are the writers excited for the unfolding narrative.

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Piloting a Language Autoethnography in a First-Year Writing Program: A Study of Five Multilingual Student Writers

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ABSTRACT
Texas Tech University's first-year writing (FYW) program initiated a pilot of a language autoethnography assignment to begin shifting toward a translingual theory of language. A translingual paradigm challenges how monolingual perspectives limit access for multilingual students by viewing their linguistic identities, skills, and experiences from a deficit lens. Based on interviews with five multilingual FYW students, analyses of their projects, and interviews with their teachers, this study shows that 1) students' language autoethnographies and interviews reveal rhetorical awareness and attunement toward language difference and practices, and 2) students' attunement to linguistic difference assisted them in transferring knowledge to the new situation of the academic essay, but their representations of language may have led to a reluctance to take risks in the essays. We conclude with implications for FYW programs and teachers, including the need to explicitly interrogate academic norms with students and to provide professional development for teachers. Ultimately, providing opportunities for students and teachers to engage in translingual practices alone does not create access. Approaches to translingual writing curriculum must also find ways to explicitly name and challenge monolingual language ideologies that limit access for multilingual students in writing classrooms.

Introduction

Writing programs have recently grappled with how to meaningfully, effectively, and ethically respond to the translingual turn in rhetoric and writing studies (Horner et al., 2011). Those advocating for translingualism in rhetoric and writing studies argue that writing programs, classes, and teachers should value students' linguistic diversity and resourcefulness (e.g., Bou Ayash, 2019; Canagarajah, 2013; Guerra, 2016, 2022; Horner & Tetreault, 2017; Lorimer Leonard, 2014; Lu & Horner, 2016). Many have critiqued monolingual education for enacting a "metadiscursive regime" that reinforces a hierarchy of language practices and consequently supports material and cultural status quos (Corcoran & Wilkinson, 2019, p. 24). A translingual approach, on the other hand, "sees difference in language not as a barrier to overcome or as a problem to manage, but as a resource for producing meaning" (Horner et al., 2011, p. 303). Consequently, a translingual approach requires "changes to writing programs in the design of writing curricula" (p. 309). While many scholars, teachers, and writing program administrators might agree with arguments for translingual approaches in theory, these approaches remain challenging to implement in practice for entire writing programs. Implementing a translingual approach for an entire program can be challenging in part because it requires professional development in translingual theories and practices, as well as collaboration across stakeholders (Canagarajah, 2016; Horner et al., 2011).

Driven by a desire to revise our first-year writing (FYW) program's curriculum and teacher preparation to encourage translingual approaches at Texas Tech, our research team developed and implemented a language autoethnography assignment. The assignment, adapted from Corcoran and Wilkinson's (2019), was piloted in 10 sections of our first-semester course in spring 2022. We hoped to learn from and with students and teachers to inform decisions and practices about potentially scaling up the assignment to the whole program and/or implementing other translingual practices and approaches in our two-course sequence.

This article reports on an aspect of that pilot study: the experiences and writing of five multilingual students enrolled in these sections, as well as interviews with their teachers. In this article, we focus on the following question: How might a translingual approach, such as the language autoethnography assignment, help to create space in higher education for multilingual speakers to draw on all their linguistic and cultural resources for rhetorical decision-making? While the findings we share here are based on early analyses of documents and interviews, we hope that these early findings are useful in understanding multilingual students' experiences with a translingual assignment in FYW and for other programs considering such an approach, particularly

for making writing programs more accessible for multilingual students and for encouraging translingual approaches by writing teachers.

We begin by overviewing the translingual turn in rhetoric and writing studies. Next, we provide our institutional context and gloss Corcoran and Wilkinson's (2019) language autoethnography assignment. We then turn to our research methods for this study, including a discussion of our positionalities as researchers and administrators. From there, we discuss our five student participants' projects and our interviews with student participants and their teachers. Based on our early analysis, we focus on three findings: 1) Students' language autoethnographies and interviews show rhetorical awareness and attunement toward language differences and practices—a finding that confirms much research and theory on translingualism (e.g., Bou Ayash, 2019; Corcoran & Wilkinson, 2019; Lorimer, 2013; Lorimer Leonard, 2014). 2) Students' attunement to linguistic differences assisted them in transferring knowledge to the new situation of the academic essay, but their representations of language (a term we define below) may have led to a reluctance to take risks in the essays. 3) Students' aversion to risk was confirmed by teachers in the pilot study, one of whom provided useful suggestions for reframing the assignment. We conclude with implications for writing teachers and programs hoping to develop and implement translingual approaches that might make their programs and classes more inviting and accessible to multilingual students.

Translingualism in Rhetoric and Writing Studies

While "translingual writing is still in search of its own meaning," as Matsuda (2014, p. 478) wrote nearly a decade ago, we understand translingualism in rhetoric and writing studies as an ideological approach that challenges the "metadiscursive regime" that values standardized Englishes in academia and suppresses, marginalizes, or ignores other languaging practices (Corcoran & Wilkinson, 2019, p. 24). Informed by research and theory from bilingual education and applied linguistics (Flores & Schissel, 2014; García, 2009; García et al., 2017; Otheguy et al., 2015), a translingual approach shifts teachers' focus from *forms* to *practices* (Canagarajah, 2013), thus understanding language as "not something we have but something we do" and conventions as continually formed, reformed, and transformed through these practices (Lu & Horner, 2016, p. 208; refer also to Pennycook, 2010).

It's helpful to contrast translingual approaches to other ideological approaches to language, particularly monolingualism (or eradicationism) and multilingualism (or accommodationism) (Bou Ayosh, 2019; Guerra & Shivers-McNair, 2017; Horner,

2017; Horner et al., 2011). The monolingual or eradicationist ideology values "a traditional and singular linguistic identity unwilling to acknowledge a role for any other language in public discourse" (Guerra & Shivers-McNair, 2017, p. 20) and, by extension, in academic settings. This view, consequently, plays out in writing pedagogy through the valuation of Standard Written English (SWE), which is seen as "definable, systematic, neutral, and transparent," and the exclusion or even eradication of "nonstandard" languaging practices or resources (Bou Ayosh, 2019, p. 27). A multilingual or accommodationist approach, on the other hand, sees value in (or at least tolerates) varieties of English and languages other than English (LOTE), but "assumes that each codified set of language practices is appropriate only to a specific, discrete, assigned social sphere," meaning that language practices at home are valid and appropriate but are separate from academic language practices (Horner et al., 2011, p. 306). The problem with this approach is that it views language practices as codified and separate (e.g., a separate, discrete, and stable language for home, one for work, etc.) and fails to acknowledge how power works to define appropriateness—for instance, how certain Englishes are stigmatized and deemed "appropriate for a specific private sphere" while other Englishes are privileged as appropriate for public or academic spheres (Horner et al., 2011, p. 306; refer also to Bou Ayosh, 2019). Consequently, as Horner (2017) argued, accommodationist ideologies share eradicationism's view of languages as existing without histories rather than as "the ongoing always-emerging product of practices" (p. 88). That is, both of these perspectives see languages as static and ahistorical rather than continually recreated (and thus evolving) through everyday practices.

Importantly, a translingual perspective is "not about fashioning a new kind of literacy. It is about understanding the practices and process that already characterize communicative activity in diverse communities to both affirm and develop them further through an informed pedagogy" (Canagarajah, 2013, p. 2). While the recent turn toward translingualism in the field may be confusing to teachers, Canagarajah argued that "students don't feel lost" because they are already engaged in translingual practices (as are all of us) (p. 8). The task at hand is "to make the classroom a safe house for such practices and facilitate such interactions for further development of these competencies" (p. 8).

While sociocultural theorists in second language acquisition (SLA) and applied linguistics often refer to language users' abilities to draw on their cultural knowledges to interpret and use language effectively in new contexts as *sociocultural competence* (e.g., Celce-Murcia, 2007; Moll & Arnott-Hopffer, 2005) or *multicompetence* (e.g., Cook, 1999; Hall et al., 2006), in this article we draw on Lorimer Leonard's (formerly Lorimer)

discussion of *rhetorical attunement*, which she described as "a way of acting with language that assumes linguistic multiplicity and invites the negotiation of meaning to accomplish communicative ends" (Lorimer, 2013, p. 163). In her studies of multilingual writers, Lorimer Leonard argued that many studies of multilingual writers focus on their awareness and prior knowledge—which risks "suggest[ing] that multilingual writers' resources are fixed and stable, traveling with them from one location or language to another as an unchanged repertoire of knowledge and skills"— rather than on their rhetorical and literate practices: "writers call on or create literate resources in the process of making do, asserting themselves, or communicating on the fly in specific rhetorical situations" (Lorimer Leonard, 2014, p. 228). Lorimer Leonard's suggestion to attend to writers' rhetorical attunement requires attending to "in-process and situationally specific" practices and "teaching for and assessing the relative success of language negotiation and play with specific audiences in certain situations" (Lorimer, 2013, p. 168).

We want to be careful as we discuss our translingual approach and multilingual students in our study. Second language (L2) writing teachers have warned that translingual approaches risk erasing the specific experiences and challenges of L2 student writers (Atkinson et al., 2015), and Matsuda (2014) argued that translingual approaches, if taken up uncritically, can turn into "linguistic tourism" (p. 483) by teachers who seek out "interesting examples—the more unusual, the better" from students (p. 482). Matsuda argued that students are unlikely to code-mesh when their teachers are monolingual and encouraged writing teachers and scholars to engage in research on linguistics and language differences.

Gilyard (2016) shared another concern, warning that translingualism can "flatten language differences" by ignoring issues of power and stigmatization (p. 286). As Gilyard observed, early movements in the field to value students' own language use—epitomized in the Conference on College Composition and Communication's 1974 resolution "Students' Right to Their Own Language"—advocated for students' language rights in response to collective oppression and stigmatization. Translingualism, however, risks individualizing differences and failing to recognize that "not all translingual writers are stigmatized in the same manner" (Gilyard, 2016, p. 286). Consequently, we must understand translingualism as not simply a matter of celebrating linguistic differences but also of investigating stigma and power.

We close this section by stressing that translingualism is not a description of how L2 writers engage with language. Rather, translingualism is an ideological approach to understanding how all language users engage with language. Importantly, translingual approaches afford the opportunity to make higher education—and writing

education—more accessible for multilingual students, and, for all students. We take Guerra's (2022) view that "writing teachers [are] not in a position to empower our students. The best we could do . . . was to create conditions in the classroom under which students could empower themselves—if they so choose" (p. 29). Our study of this pilot of the language autoethnography asks, in a way, questions about creating those conditions to help students empower themselves.

Institutional Context and Piloting the Language Autoethnography

The FYW program at Texas Tech is a two-course sequence with a standardized curriculum that introduces students to rhetoric, critical reading, and multimodality in ENGL 1301 and to inquiry, research, and public argumentation in ENGL 1302. The program serves roughly 3,500–4,000 students per semester. Texas Tech is also a Hispanic-Serving Institution: Roughly 29% of undergraduate students are Hispanic, though this classification does not necessarily designate students' multilingualism. Additionally, roughly 2% of undergraduates are international students. The curriculum in the program is standardized, largely because graduate instructors teach the majority of FYW sections. Many teachers are novice teachers, and teacher turnover is high, with teachers averaging one-to-two years in the program. A standardized curriculum provides consistency and continuity across sections and the program.

Seeking a way to shift our FYW program from a monolingual or accommodationist approach to a translingual approach, we identified Corcoran and Wilkinson's (2019) language autoethnography assignment as a potential way to introduce translingual approaches to the ENGL 1301 curriculum. Like Corcoran and Wilkinson, we believed our current curriculum did not honor "the rhetorical and linguistic expertise" of our student population (p. 19). Corcoran and Wilkinson designed a language autoethnography assignment that they hoped would "place language and rhetoric in a symbiotic relationship with one another, while, at the same time, positing students as language experts by having them draw on their own authentic linguistic experiences" (p. 29).

We shared similar hopes by adapting and piloting the language autoethnography assignment. Michelle first piloted this assignment in her summer 2021 section of ENGL 1301, and we expanded the pilot in spring 2022. As Corcoran and Wilkinson (2019) outlined, the assignment asked students to identify language episodes from their lives and reflect on those episodes as rhetorical languaging choices or practices. Further, the assignment prompt also invited students "to use any elements of [their] language repertoire to tell" their stories and encouraged students to think

about how they used and presented LOTE and "non-standard" Englishes (p. 28). We provide the prompt we used in spring 2022 as an appendix, which borrows heavily from Corcoran and Wilkinson's prompt.

Methods and Researchers' Positionalities

In fall 2021, we asked spring 2022 ENGL 1301 teachers if they would be interested in piloting this assignment to replace the first assignment in the course. Four teachers agreed, and we held a pre-semester workshop during which we overviewed translingualism, explained the assignment, and walked through potential approaches and in-class activities. We also provided potential readings that teachers might pair with the assignment, such as Anzaldúa's (1987) "How to Tame a Wild Tongue," excerpts from Cisneros's (1984) *The House on Mango Street*, and Alvarez's (2015) "Two-Minute Spanish con Mami" (languaging practices were not addressed in our textbook at the time). Also, during this workshop, Michelle shared her experiences teaching the language autoethnography assignment the previous summer. The four teachers taught the language autoethnography assignment as the first unit in ENGL 1301 across 10 sections, with an approximate total enrollment of 180 students.

In order to study teachers' and students' experiences and perspectives on the assignment, we designed an IRB-approved study that 1) interviewed teachers about their experiences teaching the assignment and 2) recruited student participants who a) shared their rough drafts, final drafts, and feedback from their instructors and b) participated in an interview about their experiences with the assignment (Texas Tech #IRB2022-182 for teacher participants and #IRB2021-1086 for student participants). Our participants include the four teachers who piloted the assignment in spring 2022 and eight students who volunteered to participate in the study.

While our ENGL 1301 curriculum is standard across sections, there are notable differences in the classes that piloted the assignment. While the classes taught by two instructors were open enrollment classes, one instructor's (John) section was limited to students in the Texas Success Initiative program with a focus on developmental literacy, which is now a co-requisite with ENGL 1301 in Texas. Another instructor (Brenda) had sections with a similar distinct focus: Advisors and the Director of First-Year Writing targeted struggling and/or repeat 1301 students for these smaller four sections in hope that the smaller class size and more focused instructor attention—with learning assistant support—would increase student retention and success.

We recruited student participants by visiting each class, talking about the study, and asking students to consider participating. We followed up with an email that restated the study's purpose and the process for participation. Eight students participated in the study: seven students provided materials and an interview, and one student provided materials but not an interview. In recognition of their time and labor, student participants received a $50 scholarship for sharing their projects and a $50 scholarship for participating in the interview. We similarly offered $100 to the teacher participants following their interviews. Out of the eight student participants, five are multilingual speakers.

Following the conclusion of data collection, the team transcribed the interviews, provided pseudonyms for participants, and removed all identification signifiers from materials before analyzing the content. For our initial analysis, we focus on the five multilingual student participants:

- Tara, a first-year student from India majoring in computer science. She grew up speaking Marathi and Hindi (and primarily Marathi at home) and learned English in primary school.

- Joshua, a first-year student from Nigeria majoring in business. He grew up speaking English, Pidgin English, and Yoruba.

- Antonin, a first-year student–athlete from Poland majoring in kinesiology. He grew up speaking Polish and learned English through formal education.

- Björn, a first-year student–athlete from Sweden majoring in economics. He grew up speaking Swedish and learned English through formal education.

- Darshan, a first-year student from India majoring in computer science. He grew up speaking Telugu and now speaks Telugu, Hindi, and English. (Darshan shared his language autoethnography but did not participate in an interview.)

Situating ourselves as the research team is necessary because our positionalities affect how we approach this study. Michael is a tenured associate professor and served as WPA (2018–2021). As a White, English-only speaker and writer, Michael became committed to linguistic justice and translingual approaches in FYW after conversations with multilingual, BIPOC, and international graduate students who expressed frustration and disappointment in how the FYW curriculum privileged SWE. Michelle, a PhD candidate and technical writing instructor, is Chicana from South Texas and

speaks Spanish as a heritage language. She earned an MA in Teaching English as a Second Language, and she previously taught ESL and researched and implemented bilingual STEM curriculum in K–5 after-school programs. As part of her graduate appointment, she has served as an FYW instructor (2018–2021) and assistant director of FYW (2019–2021). Michelle's own experiences as a Latina at a predominantly White institution and mentoring multilingual undergraduate and graduate students motivated her to seek approaches for incorporating linguistic justice into curricula that tend to default to and privilege White, monolingual ideologies of writing and being. Elizabeth is a White woman who grew up speaking English and began learning Spanish as a teenager. She taught emergent bilingual students in Texas public schools, becoming interested in translingual ideologies as a more accurate representation of her students' languaging practices than what was represented by educational policies. At Texas Tech, she researches and writes in English and Spanish as a linguistics PhD student and is a 2022–2023 assistant director for the FYW program. Finally, Callie taught in the program as an assistant professor of practice for FYW (2018–2022), and when she became an assistant professor in fall 2022, she also began serving as the WPA. Callie is a White, English-only speaker and writer and is committed to translingual approaches as a component of inclusive, antiracist practices in FYW curriculum and teacher preparation.

As teachers, administrators, and researchers, we recognize that our own languaging practices are necessarily different from those of the students in this study, which means we are outsiders describing particular languaging practices from limited evidence (student projects and interviews). We have attempted to take care to describe, interpret, and honor these student participants' languaging practices and perspectives.

Multilingual Students' Rhetorical Expertise with Translingualism: Joshua's Language Autoethnography

As previously discussed, a central premise of the translingual turn in rhetoric and writing studies is that students—whether multilingual or monolingual—already have "rhetorical expertise and linguistic creativity" when it comes to their own languaging practices (Corcoran & Wilkinson, 2019, p. 27). One goal of rhetoric and writing classes, then, is to help students develop awareness of and reflect on their practices in order to promote transfer and intentional rhetorical decision-making to new rhetorical situations.

Our research participants' language autoethnographies and interviews show this rhetorical expertise and students' rhetorical attunement, which should come as no

surprise to readers familiar with multilingual students or research in the field (Bou Ayash, 2019; Corcoran & Wilkinson, 2019; Lorimer, 2013; Lorimer Leonard, 2014). Teachers in our study also acknowledged that the assignment was meant to recognize students as rhetorical experts regarding their own languaging practices. For example, Brenda, an instructor in the program, observed that students developed some comfort with the assignment once they realized, "Oh, I know language. I know this rhetoric stuff. It's not that difficult, not as difficult as I thought it would be."

Joshua's language autoethnography provides one example of multilingual students exhibiting rhetorical attunement toward difference. Joshua wrote about the norms of talking to elders, particularly to parents, in Yoruba culture:

> All these are practices I carry out with my language usually used to show respect to older ones, they have a sense of formality and shows (sic) a sign of respect from whoever says it to whoever it is being said to. Growing up with all these practices has made me cultivate the habit of always addressing elders with sir or ma, speaking to them with respect, in return I get their respect.

Joshua actively navigated the sociolinguistic expectations of Yoruba culture so frequently that he developed a habit of identifying different sociocultural situations and shifting formality to meet appropriateness expectations of each situation, as evidenced by his awareness of how his language practices show levels of respect and formality based on audience. Joshua contrasted the formal register expected for talking with elders to the use of Pidgin English when talking with siblings and friends:

> I tell [my brothers] things like "Abeg commot here jare" basically means "Please leave here" but most of the time it is used sarcastically like the phrase "get out" while other times it means just what it means, for the person being talked to (sic) leave their current location, the meaning behind the phrase all depends on the intonation used and the facial expression given.

Joshua's discussion shows his rhetorical attunement to difference, including how language is multimodal, involving intonation, body language, and gestures (Shipka, 2016). The same phrase spoken to his brothers can be taken literally—"Please leave"—but by changing the kinesics of the delivery, Joshua can imbue frustration and command into the phrase's meaning.

In his essay, Joshua explained how Yoruba fosters this multimodality of language:

> Yoruba is naturally a high-toned language which heightens the emotions in whatever you say, your body language and facial expression is what would help the receiver of the message know how you are trying to pass the message across.

Joshua's metalinguistic awareness of audience as he shifted the kinesics of delivery shows the complexity of his linguistic repertoire. Because Joshua is aware of how he combines the linguistic forms of his languages with the multimodal elements of communication to match each specific environment, he overtly tunes his entire linguistic repertoire to each rhetorical situation.

Joshua's purposeful negotiation shows a point of access for multilingual students to apply their dynamic expertise to rhetoric and writing classes. Translingual assignments like the language autoethnography can make rhetoric and writing classes more accessible for multilingual writers by providing the space and opportunity to exhibit their own sophisticated rhetorical expertise.

Students' Representations of Linguistic Difference

By using Joshua's language autoethnography as an example, we have shown that multilingual students in our study exhibited rhetorical attunement and expertise in their language autoethnographies. In this section, we turn to students' representations of language practices in their interviews and essays. Bou Ayash (2016) has pointed out the importance of studying students' representations, or the "constructed ideas [they] entertain about their own languages and language practices . . . the value they grant to particular language practices and not others, and their appraisals of what they should do with their language resources in specific literate situations" (pp. 556–557). She argued that students' negotiation of language difference and new rhetorical contexts are mediated by "mixed and often contradictory representations" (p. 559), which can assist students in new linguistic situations or, alternatively, impede their ability to take risks in new situations.

Before turning to our students' representations of language practices, we want to interrogate our own representations. In our initial proposal for this special issue, we expressed disappointment that students in the study didn't explicitly code-mesh in their language autoethnographies. They provided explanations of their languaging practices across difference, but LOTE and nonstandard Englishes were only used when quoting oneself or others, never in the exposition of the essay itself. We were, at the time, the uncritical teachers Matsuda (2014) warned about who seek out exotic

uses of diverse language practices. After reading more of the literature in translingualism and returning to our participants' essays and interviews, we came to realize, as Guerra (2016) observed,

> we falter in our efforts to help our students understand what a translingual approach is because we have been leading them to think that we expect them to produce a particular kind of writing that mimics what we call code-meshing rather than getting them to understand that what we want instead is for them to call on the rhetorical sensibilities many of them already possess but put aside because of what they see as a jarring shift in context. (p. 232)

Indeed, we saw students in our study negotiate this "jarring shift in context" to academic writing by transferring their rhetorical attunement toward linguistic difference to a new rhetorical situation: writing an academic essay (on relationships between translingualism and transfer, refer to Lorimer Leonard & Nowacek, 2016). These students pointed to their previous knowledge and experiences with shifting register, tone, syntax, and vocabulary to meet their audiences' needs, particularly for their English-only teachers and classmates. For instance, in the following passage, Joshua translated for his audience:

> "ko n se gbo gbo igba le ma ma so oyinbo" my parents would say, telling us we don't have to speak English all the time, but it's not something my brothers and I would speak to each other, because speaking in English seems to be more comfortable.

This passage is emblematic of the writing we saw from our five multilingual research participants: They chose to quote LOTE rather than use home languages in exposition in their essays. Nowhere in Joshua's essay does he use Yoruba or Pidgin English in language directed toward his readers. When he was asked about why he didn't use Yoruba or Pidgin English in the exposition of the essay itself, Joshua explained, "It would be tough to translate, for the reader to understand." Joshua is attuned to his teacher and his classmates' linguistic repertoires: they didn't know Yoruba or Pidgin English. This type of rhetorical attunement—the awareness that using LOTE or nonstandard English in the exposition of the essay itself would be a challenge for this audience—was a theme in student participant interviews.

Similarly, Tara discussed her experience thinking through what she wanted to say in her essay and how she should best translate her ideas to her U.S. audience:

> The most challenging thing was […] just having some information that most of the people would know. Like we had this feedback and review from our classmates. Uh, so I just wanted to make sure that they understood my reference. But writing wasn't the most hard part. It was just a referencing to what I know and what other people know, and just making them feel like they know this.

Here, we see a window into Tara's strategies for negotiating meaning with her audience. She reflected on her audience's needs and background knowledge. This audience awareness showed up in her essay in multiple ways, like when she contextualized Hindi by explaining, "You might have heard of Hindi if you are fond of Bollywood movies." Because our student participants exhibited sophistication in transferring their rhetorical knowledge with linguistic diversity to academic audiences, they were overtly attuned toward writing in a university context.

Like some of Bou Ayash's (2016) student participants, some students in our study wrote about linguistic representations that were "discrete, reified, and fixed entities appropriate for distinct academic spheres and/or social domains" (p. 570). All five of our student participants' language autoethnographies exhibited this representation in some fashion, as the student writers often wrote about rather fixed dichotomies of formal/informal contexts. Joshua, for example, contrasted his respectful and formal language toward elders with his more casual linguistic practices with his siblings and friends. Björn contrasted his more formal language toward his coaches with his more casual, jovial, and code-meshing practices with his teammates and roommates. Similarly, Antonin contrasted the formality of his communication with professors with his more informal communication with peers. Tara briefly contrasted how her pitch changes when talking to her cousins compared to her elders. While the students were hesitant to write in ways that disrupted their language representations of academic writing, in the interviews they spoke about concrete examples that moved beyond fixed dichotomies.

While we didn't have the opportunity to interview Darshan, his language autoethnography provided two points of difference from the other students in this study. First, his essay provided more specific language *episodes* rather than contrasting languaging *trends*. He provided a specific scene from school in India in which he and a friend were punished by a teacher for disrespectful behavior and for speaking Telugu instead of English, and he discussed how he is both formal and intimate with his mother, while mostly only formal with his father. These two examples are a second

point of departure from other students in our study: Darshan represented languaging practices in writing that are not entirely distinct or bound by prefigured rules of formality and informality.

Darshan wrote using a translingual understanding of his linguistic practices, as he explained shifting between formal and informal registers with his parents. For example, he explained how, when his mother is present, he and his father can be more playful with language:

> I can't say the same [that Darshan is more informal] with my father since he is not so friendly like my mom. Even me and my mom laugh in front of my father and my sister to just tease them and my father and sister are say "meeru aapara meeku em pani ledha" in telugu which means don't you guys have any work, won't you stop now in a very cordial and comical way.

Darshan wrote about adjusting for audiences by using different discourses that bled into each other, showing that it's not only audience that matters, but also situation and context. However, while Darshan seemed to exhibit translingual representations in his language autoethnography, normative representations of academic writing seemed to loom large for participants. Like some of Bou Ayash's (2016) participants, several of our participants understood academic language as "standardized usages and conventions" that necessitate mastery (p. 571). These representations seemed to carry over into written academic discourse, which most participants seemed to see as a discrete and separate discursive realm from other linguistic practices.

Our pilot of the language autoethnography provided mixed results regarding spaces for multilingual students to draw on all their cultural and linguistic resources to engage rhetorically with academic discourse. On the one hand, these students exhibited rhetorical attunement toward language differences that led to transfer of their rhetorical expertise about language to their understanding of their teachers and classmates as audiences of their essays. On the other hand, for some of them, their rhetorical attunement led to language representations that stifled their abilities to take risks, as students were hesitant to write in detail about the complexities of language episodes. In the next section, we turn to our interview with Brenda, who had important insights into students' reluctance to take risks in their language autoethnographies.

A Teacher's Perspective: Risks and Possibilities

While all four of our teacher research participants provided useful insights for our study, we focus here on Brenda, who, during her interview, explored how students were reluctant to take risks and latched on to language mostly in terms of word choice. Early in her interview, Brenda observed that once the assignment had been introduced and they had explored languaging practices together, students quickly latched on to distinguishing their languaging practices with friends from their languaging practices with authority figures, like parents and teachers. While this distinction is an important rhetorical distinction to make, Brenda observed that it didn't involve many risks and that students largely focused on word choice:

> Everyone wanted to write about this is how I talk to my parents and this is how I talked to my friends, and getting them to think beyond that, like what are some incidents that have happened, what are some episodes that you might just want to press on? To start getting them to take that risk and think outside of the box.

In this passage, Brenda expressed three frustrations. First, that students immediately clung to rather commonplace dichotomies: how they talked with friends compared to how they talked to authority figures, like parents or teachers. Second, that students typically wrote in generalities, making large sweeping claims about this distinction rather than focusing on and interrogating specific languaging episodes. This second frustration is related to Brenda's third frustration: that students were reluctant to take risks in their writing. Savvily, Brenda attributes students' reluctance to take risks with the specter of her authority:

> I learned that if there is still an authority figure somewhere back there looming behind them that they're not going to try [to take risks]. They put it as [needing] "to speak professional language." They call it "professional language," that even with me pushing that "this is, this is your story. How would you tell this story to your friend or someone you know?", they still kind of have that authority figure looming behind them in their ear, like, "You can't write that. You can't say that." I feel like they all made a whole bunch of safe choices.

During her interview, Brenda observed that no matter how much she stressed that she wasn't looking for "professional language" in the essays, students still felt the need to write in formal (English and academic) language, which in part led them to take fewer risks regarding their language choices, genre choices, and formatting choices.

To attempt to counter this resistance to risk and reliance on professionalism—the perceptions about formality and appropriateness that students brought with them into the class—Brenda suggested revising the language in the assignment guidelines and/or clarifying in introducing the assignment that the audience for this project does not need to be the instructor. For example, Brenda shared, "I was thinking about maybe just telling them, like, 'Don't write it to me. I'm invisible. Write it to your classmates.'" In this statement, Brenda clearly reflected on how to approach this assignment in the future in ways that may counter risk aversion, and she articulated the need to decrease the presence of the authority figure—the teacher—as the central audience in the project.

As we unpack this suggestion, we see multiple possibilities emerge from shifting the audience in the project toward peers and/or other external, non-authoritative, figures. First, it provides a framework for introducing audience as a rhetorical concept from the initial assignment and could provide a more solid foundation, in our curriculum, for teaching audience, purpose, and genre throughout the semester. While Brenda provided the suggestion to de-center the teacher in this assignment, other teachers in the study similarly noted the possibility of overtly teaching audience, purpose, and so forth within this unit. Second, by focusing on a non-teacher audience in this assignment, we can encourage students to consider their own positionality within the classroom, a space potentially very different from their K–12 experiences. This works to disrupt the sage-on-the-stage model of education and contributes to antiracist pedagogical practices that value and encourage the unique contributions of students. Finally, as Brenda suggested, it has the potential to empower students to take risks in investigating their languaging practices and to do so with specificity, to think about episodes they "might just want to press on." While Brenda observed that students were hesitant to take risks in the pilot spring 2022 semester, her reflection on risk aversion has led to our potential and productive re-envisioning of the assignment for future semesters.

Admittedly, while shifting the audience for the assignment from teachers to students alleviates some concerns around power and may encourage student risk-taking in their writing, this shift does little to address the concerns raised by Matsuda (2014) and Gilyard (2016) that we discussed above. Multilingual students still carry with them representations of language that frame academic writing as formal SWE. And if their classmates are White or speak standard English, multilingual students may see it as necessary or savvy to take fewer risks and use SWE to appear smart and like they belong. Like the student participants in Zhang-Wu's (2023) study, multilingual students in our study were reluctant to use home languages in their academic writing—

a result of powerful discourses and representations of language that stigmatize home languages, not simply the teacher's presence as an authority audience. While encouraging less formal audiences for writing is helpful, teachers need to de-center not only their authority but also the authority of SWE. If the "safe houses" that Canagarajah (2013, p. 8) imagined are possible, teachers need to, as Zhang-Wu (2023) suggested, "reposition themselves as co-learners together with their multilingual students" (p. 170).

Conclusion: Implications for Writing Teachers and Programs

While our study is limited in scope and not generalizable, we believe there are important implications for FYW teachers and programs attempting to integrate a translingual approach into their curriculum, particularly in order to make courses and programs more accessible for multilingual writers. We have argued that students in our study were rhetorically sophisticated in how they drew upon and understood their languaging resources and practices for the language autoethnography. However, representations of norms of academic writing may have discouraged risk-taking in multilingual students' writing. Students want and need access to the privileged norms of academic writing—and our job as writing teachers is to help them gain entry into these discourses. However, we also understand how writing and rhetoric teachers can help students investigate and interrogate these norms and how they are created through power, as they explore how academic writing is always recreated through (re)negotiation of these norms.

Based on how representations of academic writing shapes students' and teachers' understanding of genre and linguistic expectations, we suggest that teachers incorporating a translingual approach engage in the following practices and that these practices be made transparent through program-supported pedagogical training: First, teachers should share a variety of examples with students, in a variety of modes and genres, and translingual practices. Second, teachers should interrogate with students the norms of academic writing, explicitly (re)negotiate the norms of the assignment through explicit genre talk—including "not-talk" (Nowacek, 2011)—with students; the assignment prompt should support this renegotiation by encouraging students to utilize their rhetorical attunement as they consider genre and audience. Third, students need plenty of drafting and brainstorming time for the language autoethnography assignment, or similar assignments. Teachers in our pilot devoted approximately 2–3 weeks to the language autoethnography, with several noting that they could have used

additional time to, as Brenda said, "start getting them to take that risk and think outside of the box."

As we observed in the introduction, teacher preparation and development can make programmatic adoption of translingual approaches a challenge (Horner et al., 2011). Canagarajah (2016) has argued that teacher preparation for translingual approaches can't be a simple matter of giving teachers "predefined norms, materials, and knowledge," and instead needs to prepare them to "construct their pedagogies with sensitivity to student, writing, and course diversity" (p. 266). Given that teachers must negotiate the overlaps and differences between their own "conceptions of literacy" and a writing program's (Brewer, 2020), any teacher preparation and development must reinforce the importance of translingual integration in FYW curriculum while also providing pedagogical support for assignment creation and implementation.

Rather than provide suggestions for *all* writing programs seeking to incorporate translingual approaches (because all writing programs have different contingencies), allow us to share how we're taking what we've learned from this pilot study to scale up a translingual approach in our programmatic context. Instead of implementing the language autoethnography for all ENGL 1301 sections in fall 2022, we are only requiring it with incoming first-year MA and PhD graduate student instructors. We chose our first-year MA and PhD cohort because they take a required practicum in their inaugural year teaching in the FYW program. This provides graduate student teachers with guided support and instruction on languaging practices and teaching strategies alongside their first time teaching the assignment. We take Canagarajah's (2016) point on teacher preparation seriously: With a program of our large scale, if we included the language autoethnography assignment in our standard 1301 curriculum for all teachers, we risk simplifying translingual approaches—reducing this important shift in curriculum to materials that lack context and for teachers who may lack the necessary theoretical and pedagogical grounding. We will start with this cohort and expand our number of teachers teaching the assignment with each subsequent cohort. We also encourage teachers from the pilot in spring 2022 to continue teaching the assignment, as well as our full-time lecturers who attend a workshop on the assignment in advance of the fall semester.

We opened this article by asking, how might a translingual approach, such as the language autoethnography assignment, help to create space in higher education for multilingual speakers to draw on all their linguistic and cultural resources for rhetorical decision-making? As we've shown, translingual assignments like the language autoethnography can make rhetoric and writing classes more accessible for

multilingual writers by providing the space and opportunity to exhibit their own sophisticated rhetorical expertise. However, language ideologies are powerful, and simply providing these opportunities will not necessarily lead to students taking risks and challenging their own conceptions of what "counts" as academic writing. While our program is following Brenda's suggestion and revising the language autoethnography assignment prompt to ask students to write to an audience of their classmates, we also understand that this one revision doesn't fully change the dynamics of power, stigma, and access. Additional steps are needed: Our writing program is incorporating translingual theories into the practicum course for first-year teachers and encouraging teachers to explore with students and learn along with them how language practices become stigmatized or valorized.

We conclude with an encouragement for teachers to embrace the possibilities of translingual approaches in the curriculum, for WPAs to prioritize the creation, implementation, and facilitation of languaging assignments in their programs, and ultimately, for teachers and program administrators to study the assignments and contribute scholarship to this evolving and crucial component of writing studies. Importantly, a translingual approach, implemented reflexively with teacher support and development in translingual approaches, can help to create conditions for accessible writing pedagogy for multilingual students entering academic discourse.

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Appendix: Language Autoethnography Assignment Prompt

Note: This assignment prompt draws heavily from language provided by Corcoran and Wilkinson (2019, pp. 28–29).

Prompt

Construct an essay that 1) identifies two concrete uses or practices of your everyday language and 2) analyzes those uses or practices as contextualized rhetorical situations. Your goal in this essay is to demonstrate your critical awareness of how your language choices are rhetorical: adapted for and shaped by audience, purpose, genre, stance, and medium.

Further Explanation

In your everyday life, you likely use rhetoric (without even thinking about it as rhetoric) to make choices about your language practices and uses, adapting them for different audiences, purposes, genres, stances, and media.

For this essay, select two concrete examples of your everyday language usage or practices and **reflect in detail** about how **audience**, **purpose**, **genre**, **stance**, and **medium** shape your language use and choices in these concrete episodes. While you are welcome to use these rhetorical terms, you are also free not to use them. Whether you use these terms explicitly or not, your essay should still illustrate to your reader how audience, purpose, genre, stance, and medium influence your language use and choices.

This is your language story. So please feel welcome to use any elements of your language repertoire to tell it. This means that you have every right to include languages other than English and "non-standard" varieties of English. This assignment gives a chance to showcase your language talent and your language expertise, even if people don't usually consider this talent and expertise as "school" English, or even if this talent and expertise is in languages other than English. When you include languages other than English or a "non-standard" variety of English, you should ask yourself the following questions:

- How can I incorporate these elements into my writing so that they are rhetorically effective?
- Should I "translate," or will context help my readers understand meanings?
- Should I italicize words from languages other than English or "non-standard" varieties of English?

These questions are yours to answer as a writer. The decisions that you make in response to these questions will show both your creativity and your understanding of the assignment's particular rhetorical situation. Ultimately, you are being asked to tell a story—your language autoethnography should explore your personal experiences with language in a way that connects to your audience's wider cultural, political, and social meanings and understandings.

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Multilingual Epicenters: First-Year Writing and the Writing Center as Critical Sites of Multilingual Sustainability for Language-Minoritized Students in Higher Education

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ABSTRACT

This article examines pedagogical and administrative practices to undo the harm that colonial institutions have caused to racialized and language-minoritized students. We focus our discussion on two sites of learning and potential transformation, the First-Year writing classrooms and the Writing Center in the U.S. multilingual epicenters of Houston, Texas, and Queens, New York. As we share discussions of our own pedagogical practices and reflections, we purposefully contend with the questions of multilingualism *for whom and how*? In *what context, and site of learning*? And *"towards what justice?"* (Lee & Alvarez, 2020; Tuck & Yang, 2018). In grappling with the question of "how to provide access and empower" those categorized as multilingual students, we concretely ask what labor is necessary to sustain multilingualism in ways that centralize the ways of knowing, languaging, and envisioning of racialized and language-minoritized students. We argue that higher education practitioners' attunement to the language and literacy practices of racialized communities must be both conscientious of how writing practices, histories, and positionalities can be (and have been) flattened in sites of education, and how colonial English-only monolingual ideology and other institutional policies pathologize them.

Introduction: First-Year Writing and Writing Centers as "Remediation" Systems in Writing Education

The conceptualization of writing education as a site of skill acquisition and remediation has long been established in the intersecting fields of Rhetoric and Composition (Kynard, 2013; Otte & Mlynarczyk, 2010). As we have discussed elsewhere (Lee & Alvarez, 2020), the idea of writing as a fixed "skill" to obtain, refine, and monitor has resulted from the history of teaching writing, formulated for specific bodies imagined as "in need" of this form of "fixing,"—first, white men attending Harvard University, the population for whom universities were designed for (Brereton, 1995; Wilder, 2013). These formulations of teaching writing have long been tied to nationalistic and racial-stratifying projects, by way of determining who must acquire writing as "a" fixed language. Such racialized metrics of writing have obscured language-minoritized communities' critical and culturally sustaining contributions to (re)*doings* of literacies, with detrimental effects on how we continue to define, research, and practice writing education, as Carmen Kynard (2013, 2018) has forcefully demonstrated (also see Lathan, 2015; Mao, 2006).

And while collectives of BIPOC students and scholars have led institutions of higher education to recognize our right to a richer and more equitable writing education (Kynard, 2013), racialized ideologies about the teaching of writing continue to permeate curricula and practice. As Do and Rowan (2022) highlight, the rise of translingualism—a language theory and disposition meant to cultivate linguistic pluralism in the writing classroom— has ironically decentered different ways that students are racialized and experience multilingual practice. To this extent, even BIPOC-led demands for linguistic justice, such as the 1974 Students' Right to Their Own Language (STROL), have been dismissed or "adapted" in ways that do not fully capture or welcome writers' varied ways of language practice (Smitherman, 1995). More so, as Kinloch (2005) has critically posed, policies such as STROL have often ignored the *doings* of classroom practice. As Kinloch explains, "professional documents that seek to affirm student differences in dialects and language patterns must consider the work that occurs inside and outside of the classrooms as well as the work of literacy education in general" (p. 87). That is, writing education cannot ignore how the teaching of writing—in practice—shapes orientation to and policies of writing.

Therefore, while perhaps the terms of *what writing gets assigned* and *to whom and how* have changed, the dominant culture of writing as that of a system of surveillance remains. Specifically, this system is extended by way of several monolingual-oriented

metrics and assessments systems, generally introduced in the first-year writing course and reinforced through other sites for writing "support," such as the writing center, center for academic support, and, in some cases, still, "developmental and remediation" and other required writing courses. Writing Centers, for instance, "function within a tapestry of social structures, reproducing and generating systems of privilege" (García, 2017, p. 32). The dominant white-centric, monolingual-oriented discourse of "academic" writing helps to shape and foment "the construction of master narratives, narratives that define students' values, goals, and epistemologies, and that perpetuate power relationships and subject positions" (Bawarshi & Pelkoski, 1999, p. 46). In this manner, writing education systemically participates in the ways in which institutions can (and do) reproduce a deficit and exoticizing view of students for whom multilingual practice is an everyday way of knowing and *doing* in our world.

So how might we sustain students' multilingual practices in a system designed to fail them? How might we move toward linguistic justice in ways that do not get co-opted in the service of populations who have already had historical access to these support systems? How might we reaffirm that certain principles of linguistic justice are about rights, not only desired and needed changes? In "Justice is a Lackey," Leigh Patel (2018) warns that the pursuit of justice can be "intertwined [with injustice]" (p. 105) when following the colonial metaphor and temporality of the "narrative of linearity, a knowledge project for maintenance of a stratified settler society" (p. 106). To this extent, Patel calls for a shift away from such colonial onto-epistemologies. First-year writing classrooms and writing centers are the very places where justice and injustice get intertwined for language-minoritized students—sites often conceived within the educational boundaries of "remediation" and "multilingualism" as deficit or exoticism. Yet, their institutionalized status and space has the power to allow us to transform the culture and discourse of writing as well as multilingualism. Sustaining language-minoritized students' rich and critical multilingual practices then necessitates a move beyond valuing their often-overlooked creative labor and must wreak havoc with coloniality and its continued harm in our monolingual-oriented writing sites.

Conscientious of institutional harm on language-minoritized students, we purposefully look to answer the questions of multilingualism *for whom and how*? In *what context, and site of learning*? And "*towards what justice?*" (Lee & Alvarez, 2020; Tuck & Yang, 2018). We concretely ask, what labor is necessary to sustain and centralize language-minoritized and racialized students' multilingual ways of knowing, languaging, and envisioning without following the colonial onto-epistemologies? We argue that higher education practitioners' attention to racialized communities' language and literacy practices must be both conscientious of how writing practices, histories, and

positionalities can be (and have been) flattened in sites of education, and how monolingual ideology—rampant throughout the teaching of writing—and other institutional policies pathologize them. We pose that in centralizing the variedly rich and complex language and literacy practices of language-minoritized and racialized students, we sustain our commitment to our communities, who extraordinarily forward multilingual practice as a livelihood (Alim & Paris, 2017; Baker-Bell, 2020; Love, 2019)—the labor necessary to reimagine educational spaces.

Monolingual Construction of Multilingual Students

The monolingual and colonial constructions of multilingual students, especially language-minoritized students, remain a problem in our multilingual epicenters of Queens and Houston. At Queens College (QC) and University of Houston (UH), both designated as Hispanic-Serving Institutions (HSI) and Asian American and Native American Pacific Islander-Serving Institutions (AANAPISI), student populations reflect the city's racioethnic and linguistic heterogeneity at large. With 133 countries of origin and 96 named languages at QC (QC-OIE), and 145 countries at UH and 145 languages in the Houston metropolitan area (UH Institutional Research; US Census Bureau) represented, our students bring rich histories, experiences, and knowledges of meaning-making that constitute the dynamic sociolinguistic landscapes of our locales.

Students at our institutions are indeed branded and "celebrated" as "diverse," but their language and writing practices continuously face the English-only colonial lens. Our students express that their writing is often evaluated as "unclear" or "confusing," rather than critical, rich, or insightful. Equally common in our classrooms are stories of the societal, educational, and familial pressure on "mastering" English, and ensuing sense of ambivalence, disconnection, or even loss towards named heritage language practices (Tseng, 2021). We too, as experienced bilinguals, still sometimes find ourselves questioning the complexity of our rich language practices, and recall accepting labels that detracted from our experienced bilingualism: "Not fully bilingual; not super fluent; I learned English in school; I thrive in Spanglish" are all too common phrases in our livelihoods.

Our students' experience of multilingualism has yet to be fully recognized in their own terms as the scholarly discussion of the "linguistic" parameters of what constitutes multilingualism has been dominated by colonial ideology. Colonial approaches view language as a separate, homogenous, discrete entity and decontextualized skills, with monolingualism as a communicative norm (García & Solorza, 2020). The Eurocentric monolingual ideal approaches multilingualism

"additively," simply the sum of multiple individual languages, rather than dynamically (Sánchez & García, 2022). This orientation and its language standards then view multilingual students' language practices as monolithically and monolingually conceived, rendering multilingualism and multilingual students as "new" phenomenon and populations always "in need of" (academic) language, or even *languageless* (Dovchin & Lee, 2019; García & Solorza, 2020; Rosa, 2016). Yet, the working of colonial ideology is not "new" as shown by American Indian education's elimination of Native languages, allegiance to the system of schooling, and the destruction of Native practices among Indigenous students (See Spring, 2001). While the discourse of students in multilingual epicenters is markedly different from the Bureau of Indian Affairs' boarding schools, the framework of forced assimilation is eerily similar. This way, *who is* multilingual is imagined and constructed through a colonial, monolingual lens, and multilingual practitioners get assessed, exoticized, and/or excluded through this very lens.

More recently, BIPOC scholars have cautioned on the erasure and homogenization of language-minoritized students' variedly complex ways of being, knowing, and *doing* language, whose language practices get harmfully evaluated in connection to perceived racial categories, and vice versa (Flores & Rosa, 2015). As Alvarez (2018) has critically contended, the term *multilingual students* (and *multilingual writers*, by extension), itself "has become a rather large umbrella term for a body of students contributing a diverse range of writing perspectives, practices, and expectations to the writing classrooms" (p. 343). In fact, the attention to the specific histories, practices, and experiences of each language-minoritized community is at the center of April Baker-Bell's (2020) call for Black linguistic justice. Baker-Bell (2020) emphasizes the need to "interrogate and examine the specific linguistic oppressions experienced by linguistically marginalized communities of color and account for the critical distinctions between their linguistic histories, heritages, experiences, circumstances, and relationships to white supremacy" (p. 18).

Indeed, raciolinguistic assumptions about and evaluations of language practices, as part of its colonial ideology, are not equally imposed on all students *viewed* as multilingual. For example, Black and African American communities are often detracted from the *multilingual imaginary,* dissociated from the multilingual paradigm, and Black students in our anti-Black society continuously face the double-edged sword of experienced multilingual practice (Baker-Bell, 2020; Kynard, 2013; Love, 2019). As Walcott (2018) critiques, the colonial logics and structures as shown by institutional color-blind terms and thoughts such as "diversity" erase unique Black bodies and struggles, and therefore, reinforce anti-Blackness. The higher education institutions'

rhetoric of inclusion, Walcott poses, "does not fundamentally question the foundational arrangements that have produced the institutional and structural conditions of contemporary life," and thus, remains merely as performative gestures towards social justice (p. 92). Patel (2018) too critically warns against ubiquitous yet facile language of justice that does not challenge and disrupt the settler colonial logics, as we have noted earlier. Patel argues that "to intervene on facile uses of justice, it is necessary to begin with a grounding in the foundational logics and structures that stratify, erase, and spectacularize different populations in distinct ways for a common purpose of domination: coloniality" (p. 102).

As this special issue asks "how to provide access and empower" those categorized as multilingual students, we join our fellow critical language and literacy scholar-educators in "reclaiming and reimagining a radically different vision of education" (Paris, 2021, p. 372), and redirect the question: How can we upend the colonial logics that construct and stratify "multilingual" students and their bodies through a monolingual lens, and the institutional structure that perpetuates and maintains such logics (de los Ríos, Martinez, Musser, Canady, Camangian, & Quijada, 2019)? And how can we sustain the variedly rich language and literacy practices of language-minoritized students and communities to work towards equity and justice (Alim & Paris, 2017; Baker-Bell, 2020)? As Paris (2021) critically echoes Ruth Wilson Gilmore's (2020) discussion of racial capitalism, "[T]here is no ultimate vision of racial justice or liberation (education or otherwise) within capitalism or ongoing settler colonialism: As such, increased access to the system as it is cannot continue to be the primary goal of the strength-based pedagogical work" (p. 372). Working to sustain linguistic and rhetorical richness and dynamicity of our students' multilingualism then calls for laboring against the dominant white-gazed, colonial, and monolingual-oriented language that is always present in what we do as literacy educators.

In envisioning equity and justice for language-minoritized students and communities, we propel ourselves into the work where students' language and literacy practices are centered and sustained to generate change beyond the colonial structure and logics, while conscientious of students' own lived experiences and histories as language users. This work must identify how the dominant English-only, monolingual ideology works across the networks of writing ecologies, including how it erases the complexity within our language-minoritized students' lived experiences and literacies. This anti-colonial praxis also means contending with the colonial matrix and cultivating alternative paradigms and spaces of doing language and writing for language-minoritized students, mindful of what potential injustices this work is intertwined with (Patel, 2018). Below, we discuss our own labor in FYC classrooms

and a Writing Center to cultivate and sustain a space that centers our language-minoritized students' multilingualism.

Sustaining Multilingualism in FYC Classrooms

Our labor to sustain language-minoritized students' multilingual practices started from redefining, reorienting, and reimagining language and writing in FYC classrooms and beyond, away from the white-gazed, monolingual perspectives (Wan, Lee, & Alvarez, 2023). Conceptualizations of language and writing are often communicated through policies and structures of writing programs. Language policy statements such as "a Statement on Linguistic Pluralism" (Mihut, 2019) or student learning outcomes often set the writing program's tone and stance towards language and literacies and can guide instructors' pedagogy (Watson & Shapiro, 2018), as they also extend a language and culture about writing and its instruction.

At the same time, having a statement in the official document in and of itself does not guarantee a culture that centers and values students' multilingual practice, as Kinloch (2005) rightly critiques. After all, it is the everyday *doing* of language that shapes and structures our relations, histories, and experiences with language, and vice versa (Kynard, 2013; Sánchez & García, 2022). In our classrooms, we have continuously reformulated the "statement on linguistic pluralism" to begin the conversation with students about their varied experiences and practices of different named languages and literacies. This process then continues into a semester-long reflection, inquiry, and engagement with issues of inequities and inequalities in multilingual lives. Throughout the semester, we (Eunjeong and Sara) revisit the statement multiple times as an anchor point to further reflect on our lived experiences of language and literacies.

Such reflections have been fundamental in our and our students' anti-racist reading and writing praxis. In Eunjeong's class, students collaboratively build on a document called, "Our commitment to anti-racist reading and writing practices" where they formulate what anti-racist reading and writing means to them and how they practice this literacy. Students read, watch, research, and reflect on inequities surrounding their own and their communities' multilingual lived experiences, including the intersection of language, identity, and racialization (Flores & Rosa, 2015). Simultaneously, Eunjeong and her students discuss how we can language beyond harm, and towards justice. These examples range from "love our language and ourselves and each other as we are," to not assuming the person's language proficiency based on the perceived phenotype or last name that the colonial ideology assumes, to reading for the meaning, not for the "correctness" based on their individual

understanding of the standardized or white mainstream English, to not representing their own and their communities' knowledge from a deficit lens. Each of the commitments that the students offer is grounded in their own lived experiences of language and literacies–as a racialized bilingual, a language broker for their families, or the only person of color in the classroom, neighborhood, or at work. But importantly, such reflection also amplified opportunities for students to reckon with how their own language practices and anti-racist endeavors also vary, intersected with their positionalities and experiences. Eunjeong and her students revisit and revise both a "Statement on Linguistic Pluralism" and this document, before or after engaging with the course materials for the day, peer reviews, and writing workshops, making it an interactive and ongoing endeavor. This cyclical praxis has helped Eunjeong and her students to not only understand varied experiences of language and literacies, but also theorize what being anti-racist languagers entails *for whom* and *how*, while reinforcing the conceptualization of language and literacies, including writing, as *doing*.

This reflexivity is possible in part because of the centrality of our language-minoritized students' lived experiences in our class. To sustain students' multilingual practices, we must labor the *centering of* our students' meaning-making, and ways of doing and being in the world. And, of course, this understanding extends to how we place our language-minoritized students and communities' doing of language at the core of our curriculum and assessment practices.

Recently, Sara has focused on centralizing the extraordinary labor of sustaining multilingual language and literacy practices, while also forwarding the full extent of her multimodal and multilingual practices in all capacities. Students in Sara's classes—regardless of the course designated theme—engage texts in multimodal forms, in their majority guided and led by BIPOC researchers, educators, journalists, and media content producers who often examine how *doing* and *acting* as self-identified multilingual and immigrant-generation individuals requires extraordinary labor in a monolingual and anti-Black society. For instance, students will read about how a well-paid job in New York City is that of a certified translator, yet very few BIPOC communities, *for whom* this is an everyday occurrence, become eligible for these positions. This has become a more dire and complicated need amidst COVID-19 (Chung, 2021).

Students often then discuss matters of language access. For example, students share an instance (or many) in their lives in which they, from a young age, translated for a family or community member in a place of crucial concern, say a medical office, hospital, social security office, or immigration attorney for free, at no cost to the city that taxes them and our communities, because of the insufficient number of translators

and translation services—when, by way of rights, the city should provide this service. These critical and mind-boggling conversations highlight how injustice is intertwined with justice in the students' multilingual lives. Students often have (as they should) learned to take pride in having the capacity to support their families and communities with translation, but have also realized the toll it takes on them and their family relationships (Alvarez, 2017; Orellana, 2016), let alone that this labor is often supposed to be remunerated for access and best support possible. Because this navigation often weighs heavy on the minds of students in Sara's classes, and Sara's mind, she also implements a systemic approach that seeks to dismantle monolingualism from the inside while pushing forward the joys and rights granted by way of their bilingual practice.

Bilingual practice also consists of the pieces, parts, and emotions tied to language, and cultural practice, as well as modalities that multilingual practitioners select in their everyday communication. For this reason, Sara works along with students to capture the full extent of her bilingual educator practice by drawing on many emojis, gifs, and embodied multimodalities that animate and best communicate her ideas. Sara constructs syllabi, emails, course memos, and students' messages in ways that capture this multilingual practice. And this openness and critical labor (and the research the class reads about it), is one that students respond to with ease. For example, it is not uncommon for students in Sara's classes to now send Sara emails that have emojis and language expressions they feel comfortable with, and that fully capture the extent of their multilingual practice, including savvy jokes about the strikethrough function in the editing of alphabetic-based writing. What is important to highlight here is that students are joyfully amplifying their multimodal and multilingual practices, as they construct their college-student identities and communicative practice. Students are not *playing* to win or defy the rules of the game, as some colonial logics might seek to explain. Rather, students are fully designing their own multilingual imaginaries and selves as college students.

The capacity to reimagine and reconceptualize language and writing beyond what the institution sets as legitimate" requires creative, critical, and conscientious thinking and understanding of what language is and does, *for whom and how* in our everyday and pedagogical spaces. But "creative" does not mean "anything goes," or this endeavor should not overlook the very labor that is involved in the lived experience of knowledge. Arguments rationalizing logics of now they "want for everything to go" are part of the colonial logic that flattens the very labor and different differences in multilingual practice and multidimensionality. Particularly considering Patel's (2018) point of how a conceptualization of "justice" itself can be problematic

when understood as "linear progression," creative and expansive labor for sustaining multilingualism necessitates keen awareness and praxis that understand the harm that institutions continue to bring upon, yet remain indifferent to (Dumas, 2018). In other words, pursuing and expanding the alternatives must attune to who is doing language, how, under what conditions towards what goal, and how this languaging sustains language-minoritized students and communities' multilingualism, away from the colonial logics and structures.

Writing Centers and Conditions of Labor Against the Colonial Logic

In addition to other writing "support" sites, writing centers operate as yet another "particularized mode of control" (Tuck & Yang, 2012, p. 5) within the colonial structure of institutions. Often formulated as the "fixers" of students and their writing, writing centers reinforce monolingual writing practices and push students, often those with complex linguistic histories, to make a choice of whether or not to adopt so-called standard or academic English. Indeed, the idea that student writing improvement is so easily and linearly attainable with writing center support fits right into the colonial metaphors of "development" and "improvement." Anything is individually attainable, you only need "the effort," so students only need to carve time out of their schedules, at the expense of everything else in their lives—a deeply troubling misconception thoroughly challenged by Villanueva (1993), Gilyard (1991), and Young (2004) among others. This way, writing centers, and institutions in general, continue to communicate to students that seeking help and/or exposing themselves to a tutor will result in better writing. In Spanish, this can be described as something being "al alcance," or, within reach or outside of one's reach. Yet, the responsibility to do "better" often relies on the student, rather than the people and entities who supposedly have a commitment and power to cultivate an equitable educational experience. More so, for many students, is writing that is "acceptable" to the white gaze ever really attainable—especially when "acceptable" often changes from professor to professor?

In writing centers, it often becomes clear that intellectual pursuit is disconnected from the educational project of humanization (Paris, 2021). Marco has often found it shocking how acknowledging students, by welcoming them into the Center, asking them how they are doing, offering them water or a piece of candy (or Oreos, which can be consumed by most people on campus), has been seen as an act so out of the ordinary. Students' expectations are often such that they are greeted and asked what they want to *work* on, the common responses to which include: "I just want to make it better;" "I want to fix my grammar;" "My teacher says I need a lot of help,"

or the common bodily response, to sit back in apparent defeat while a tutor engages with you and your work—the result of a lifetime of not meeting "writerly" expectations. These expectations, which we argue are colonial in nature, necessitate a holistic anticolonial response, to move away from "good writing" al alcance to writing that is en todas nuestras manos. So how do we, in our positions of privilege, facilitate access (and to a certain extent, excellence) for students? How can we position the work, support, help, and love that Writing Centers can provide within reach of our students?

Writing Centers as Multilingual Sites of Rhetorical Sustainability

Centering students' embodied multilingualism in the Writing Center means disrupting the colonial practices of higher education and writing studies by refusing to maintain monoglossic ideology. Lape (2020) writes about holistic tutoring practices, or "a specific kind of 'informed flexibility,' [that] can help writers negotiate the writing process, global writing concerns, and sentence level issues" (p. 37). In this regard, while Writing Centers at HSIs can and must implement multilingual-oriented approaches to writing, such as co-writing practices, anti-racist writing, and/or agency informed writing, much of these approaches are possible when the institution, in addition to the Writing Center, values students' multilingual practices and lived experiences. As Reynolds (2004) describes, identities "take root from particular sociogeographical intersections, reflecting where a person comes from and, to some extent, directing where she is allowed to go" (p. 11). As a writing center director who is Latino, grew up speaking Spanish, and has a history in the college as an undergraduate student, Marco draws on these biographical intersections for the benefit of students seeking tutoring at the college and to make sense of their journeys as writers. His face then becomes crucial to space-making at the center (see Denny, 2010, p. 55).

Entering the directorship position, Marco wreaked havoc with exclusionary practices. Marco stopped the Center's surveillance of students through a strict protocol about what is not allowed in the space. "No eating and No loitering" was the only large display of "policy" in the space. Informally, conversations that were not related to tutoring were not allowed. It was also not uncommon to hear staff formerly trained by the previous Writing Center leadership asking students to "speak or write in English." Students were expected to display a college persona who was fully dissociated from the social and economic demands of a fast cosmopolitan living, where time and opportunities to connect with people are limited, and multilingualism is in high demand. Here, we want to note that our understanding of the limitations

this writing site and culture poses on students comes from but is not limited to our own experiences as students and scholars. Marco and Sara are QC undergraduate alumni, but the three of us as researchers and educators understand the demands on our students: in most cases, they attend school full-time, have part-time and full-time jobs, and family and community responsibilities. A writing site that communicates to students what they cannot do, including grabbing a snack or a meal while they learn, simply ignores the sociomaterial conditions of students and centers the settler colonial logics.

Marco also removed the students' attendance policy. In the past, the QC Writing Center kept a list of students who had missed appointments by the front desk computer. Updated quotidianly, a student's name in bold meant that the student was no longer able to make tutoring appointments and would be automatically denied an appointment. Once a student's name was up on the list, it meant they had less opportunity to request an appointment before being barred from the Center's services. Accessibility was denied purposefully by "foundational logics and structures that stratify" (Patel, 2018, p. 102). Additionally, per the previous directorship, students were expected to offer a "legitimate" rationale for their missed or late appointment. For decades, the Writing Center functioned on this culture of fear, English-Only, and severe penalty for missed appointments.

In addition to trying to codify student-centered practices, Marco designed a mission statement and cultivated a more collective environment in which all Writing Center practitioners could discuss important research findings about writing support, and problem-solve issues they identified in the Center's everyday happenings. For example, during bi-weekly meetings, Marco discussed with staff how error-correction was not the focus of the Center, and that students should be encouraged to speak and write in the languages they felt most comfortable and supported. Accordingly, Marco prioritized hiring staff that can communicate in languages other than English. Marco offered a re-envisioning of the Center's purpose: that staff meets students where they are, that tutoring sessions functioned as collaborative writing opportunities, and that we ask students if they want to read their work to us, but we do not demand they read to us. Marco also established a policy in which the Center had a responsibility to work with students on *reading* as well as writing, that these two literacy practices were synergic, and that reading in writing centers had the tremendous opportunity to support students in their learning practices (see Carillo, 2017). This simple change seemed a revolutionary task since reading had, for decades, been separated from writing center work at QC and had eventually been outsourced to a single ESL tutor with no formal training in language acquisition or reading tutoring.

Marco's approach to open the space to many different student populations depended on his capacity and practice to be present—to welcome students with open arms, to remember names, and to codify cultural and religious practices in students' everyday lives. For example, thanking religious Muslim students with a nod and a hand over his heart to convey mutual respect, one of the many practices Marco had learned growing up in Queens, has made all the difference. He understood that cultivating openness was not about simply supporting the document, text, or idea the student brought to the Center, but instead about those moments of writing. As García (2017) reminds us, writing centers can be sites "of place, meaning, and knowledge-making, the writing center is about interactions and encounters, co-existing histories and trajectories, and is always in the process of being made" (p. 48). Today, this is what the Writing Center is working towards—a multilingual academic, generative, and critical support and anti-racist space.

Similarly, Marco and writing tutors protect, treat, and cultivate their own and students' multilingualism as an everyday practice and lived experience, in culturally grounded and interpersonal ways, not some exploitative phenomenon in the service of literacy. The tutoring session includes communication outside and related to the assignment. In the languages they share beyond Englishes, students speak with tutors, show their writing, or at times, pictures of their pets, to tutors, and take breaks with tutors. Tutors prioritize the students' personal lives, at times waiting for them to take pressing phone calls—all the while both try to make sense of an assignment that an instructor designs and grades. This vibrancy is what makes writing centers in multilingual epicenters so dynamic, so necessary. In this sense, writing centers can serve as a focal point for dynamic languaging on college campuses; critical awareness, learning, being and living can happen in spaces that help to recognize and center students' rights to their own languages.

The tutoring dynamic is often framed as a lower-stakes encounter, as opposed to more high-stakes encounters such as speaking in class or visiting a professor during office hours. But a student visiting a writing center can still experience the interaction as a high-stakes encounter, especially if there are communication challenges between student and tutor (often, a tutor who is themselves a student). Whereas an English as a Second Language framework frames the discourse as students needing to learn a second language that is also the dominant language of the academic discourse, a multilingual framework frames the discourse as students, having full possession of their languages, have, know, and understand how to communicate their own sense-making of assignments. But Writing Center Directors, tutors, and teachers are the ones who have the position, time, and space to lead this way of *doing* and practicing

languages and literacy learning. This is why we need to reframe writing centers as multilingual sites of rhetorical sustainability. Sites that are outside, but also so deeply embedded within, traditional educational discourses. Sites that offer us the potential to disrupt monolingual rhetorics.

Working through rhetorical sustainability necessitates deliberate refusal (Grande, 2018) to participate in monolingual-oriented metrics and assessment systems: to stop, pause, and sabotage racist and exclusionary writing dynamics. At QC, this would seem to almost be a moral right, as faculty and staff members are union members with varied job stabilities, positionalities, and privileges. Perhaps this is not a random characteristic of this site of teaching, but rather a sign that there are multiple agents actively striving for rhetorical sustainability. Rodriguez (2019) argues that deliberate refusal can work to "unmask seemingly benevolent relations and the function of affect in creating institutional buy-in…[creating] space for resistance to incorporation while simultaneously opening space for us to turn toward possibility" (p. 6). More and more, Marco finds himself refusing to engage with extra work that removes him from direct contact with students. What might it mean to respond to a racist educator who did not know their students? To tell them that they were the ones who needed decolonial *remediation*—slow, step-by-step help undoing decades of structural and historical racism? What would it mean to support students in getting to say no to those assignments, to challenge assignments and rubrics that sustain misguided notions and practices about language and literacy learning? To weaponize protocol and use it against the colonial legacy of higher education and writing studies? Maybe rhetorical sustainability in the writing center that truly helps students and faculty, an overwhelming majority of whom are part-time, contingent faculty, works towards bringing in the conversations that are taking place between students and making professors aware of what is linguistically occurring across campus, across disciplines.

Implications

As we reflect on our work of sustaining language-minoritized students' multilingual meaning-making practices, we pause to remember the critical point that Dumas (2018) offers us, scholar-educators and people who can (and do) shape and shift the narrative, namely how the very terms, imaginations, and doing of racial justice work in education yet falls short in challenging the conditions of Black suffering—that is, the world that is built upon anti-Blackness, against Black freedom where Black suffering continues to be met with indifference. Dumas (2018) keenly explains, "There is no social justice

research or remedy to end [Black suffering]," and therefore, urges scholar-educators to "refuse and exceed what can be done, what has always been done, through education reform" (p. 42-43). In this sense, we must reckon with how the labor of sustaining language-minoritized students' multilingual practices may work in ways that erase and contribute to Black suffering. That is, this work must also refuse and reject the colonial logics and metaphors of linear and monolithic trajectories of progress and success that flatten different bodies and their struggles and assume homogeneity (Grande, 2018; Patel, 2018). Concurrently, we should reimagine different possibilities of sustaining multilingualism that adamantly cultivate, amplify, and reimagine the possibilities for our Black, Indigenous, Latinx, Asian, and Pacific Islander communities. Above all, it should centralize the well-being of students at the margins, and yet on the frontlines of racialization and suffering. Our work must not just advance the "outcomes" and "benefits" of multilingualism, but be also answerable to people who contribute extraordinary labor through their multilingual practice and their livelihoods.

And the terms of racial justice work must account for the materialities of this labor. For instance, writing centers should reimagine their hiring practices, rethinking who ideal peer tutors are and the kind of labor and training that they are expected to engage in for sustaining students' multilingual practices. To this extent, our practice in the classroom must also work more collectively with students, with our educator colleagues, with librarians, and with administrators who have direct input on policy, so that multilingualism gets cultivated in the service of students, and not measurability-oriented goals. To sustain our multilingual epicenters, we need to build solidarity across different contexts of colonial logics while conscientious of multilingual practice entangled with different struggles and bodies.

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Multilingual Student Writers in Higher Education: Increasing Support for Multilingual Student Writers in a Writing Center Context

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ABSTRACT
This article focuses on the process of a new Writing Center Director developing support, training, and resources to support multilingual student writers in tutoring sessions. The study includes responses from multilingual student writers sharing their perspective about the Writing Center as a whole, as well as the voices of current undergraduate and graduate tutors. The goal is to provide examples and ideas for directors in tutoring and writing programs in order to increase support of multilingual writers within their own campus communities. Primarily focusing on three key areas, as addressed by Blazer and Fallon (2020): knowledge (understanding students' experiences with language); attitudes (developing an open mind towards difference); and practice (making and applying meaning to tutoring sessions), this article discusses how to support multilingual student writers. By highlighting the gaps in access within our own campus and Writing Center, this article opens questions as to how tutoring services can continue to be more inclusive and supportive to multilingual writers. This paper offers some concrete strategies for understanding how to approach multilingual student tutoring sessions, improve tutor training practices, and plan events geared towards multilingual students.

Introduction and Institutional Context

When considering the access students have to support and resources, it is necessary to first reflect on the gaps in access for certain populations. As a new faculty member and Writing Center Director, the gaps of access for providing multilingual students writing and research support became apparent in my own Writing Center. Our multilingual students would book Writing Center appointments for clarifying

assignment expectations and understanding assignment prompts, preparing for discussion posts and speaking presentations, and making final revisions to their essays, to name a few of the major needs requested. Preparing tutors with knowledge on multilingual writing and tutoring skills was essential, especially in preparing student tutors from a variety of disciplinary backgrounds on best practices for multilingual writers. While tutors could suggest areas of improvement, they could not always best describe the rationale for "Why" behind their suggestions or consider the implications of the U.S. academic writing process that may differ in other cultures. As a Director, I learned the importance of first understanding the needs of multilingual students and then navigating ways to meet those needs while providing adequate support for tutors. While scholarship exists on tutoring strategies for multilingual student writers (Cirillo-McCarthy et al., 2016; Phillips, 2017), this study sought to further those conversations through the perspective of a new Director revamping their current Writing Center and institutional outreach.

One of the challenges of operating academic support services is generating campus awareness that such services exist. When I began in the role, there was in-person closure due to COVID-19. Even after the in-person sessions were made available again, the center still faced challenges with student visitation due to its less visible location in the back of the library. Many students were unfamiliar with our Writing Center. Furthermore, our multilingual students navigated finding support structures with even more challenges.

Our institution is a four-year public, doctoral-level university located less than an hour from Nashville, Tennessee. Nashville's top languages include English, Spanish, Arabic, Kurdish, Somali, and Vietnamese (Metro Language Access Report, 2017). With a growing population of roughly 75,000 English Language Learners in the Tennessee K-12 school system (Tennessee Department of Education, 2021) and a steadily increasing number of international students on campus of around 130 from 30 different countries, a need exists to provide support to our multilingual student population. Furthermore, our campus hosts a large population of first-generation and military-affiliated students, as well as many non-traditional students and those returning to finish their education after spending several years in the workforce. Our institution's mission statement posted online notes, "We welcome and inspire an inclusive community of learners to make a positive impact regionally and globally." While this growth is included in institutional goals, upon my arrival, our Writing Center was not providing enough opportunities to support this inclusivity.

Additionally, our university is focused on improving our student retention rates; institutional data from 2022 shows 43.3% as the current graduation rate (Austin

Peay State University Graduation Rate Report, 2022). Academic support services, such as tutoring in the Writing Center, can be important factors when it comes to students returning semester to semester and successfully completing their degrees. Statistics such as the following highlight this problem especially for multilingual students: According to Barbara Griffin (2018), "ESL students are more likely to drop out within the first two years of college than their English-speaking peers." This statistic exemplifies the challenges multilingual students face in academic settings. Therefore, writing centers should be intentional in providing support for all members of a student body, from undergraduates to graduate students (Phillips, 2017). Only then can writing centers become spaces of accessibility for multilingual student writers to feel empowered in their own writing and research goals.

The purpose of this study is to highlight our Writing Center's initiative in creating more access to support and empower multilingual students. The purpose was accomplished by encouraging our Writing Center team to reflect on strengths and shortcomings of providing access to their multilingual student populations. In this study, we highlight the steps taken to improve multilingual students' access to our Writing Center. Following Sarah Blazer's (2015) call to utilize discussion, reflection, reading scholarship, and development of resources, our Center has spent time reflecting on how to incorporate these methods for our own student population. The most critical step of multilingual student accessibility has occurred within our own community of staff members. Steps include improving our training practices through readings and guest speakers getting involved as well as planning events geared towards our multilingual students specifically (Rafoth, 2015). Furthermore, our Writing Center has developed a partnership with our campus English Language Institute.

We believe that writing center access first begins with our individual tutors in order to create a welcoming, supportive environment for multilingual students. Building off of Sarah Blazer's (2015) call to build inclusive multi/trans-cultural environments that facilitate tutors' development, our goal became focused on equipping tutors in order to foster an accessible environment for all writers. We approached this tutor-focus through three key areas, as addressed by Blazer and Fallon (2020): knowledge (understanding students' experiences with language); attitudes (developing an open mind towards difference); and practice (making and applying meaning to tutoring sessions). These three areas allowed our program to revamp tutor training in order to improve our services, especially for multilingual student writers.

Writing Center Context

First, it is important to note our own Writing Center context. While our institution was established in 1927, our Writing Center opened its doors 80 years later in 2007. It underwent a variety of staffing and campus location changes before being under our Languages and Literature Department. Since 2021, our Writing Center has been under a time of growth and change, with a new Director and staff, new available resources, and ultimately new goals. In August of 2021, the first faculty position dedicated to Writing Center Director was filled. The Director had just completed graduate school, working as a tutor and then Assistant Director in the Writing Center, with many goals and plans to continue building an effective Writing Center recognized across campus. The Director's first semester was also the first time when the Writing Center was not entirely online since the start of the COVID-19 pandemic.

In seeking ways to best support our multilingual students, our Center first addressed current resources across campus as well as what gaps existed, in order to decide how the Writing Center could best fulfill these students' needs. While the Director's previous experiences as a graduate student in larger R1 universities included working with diverse multilingual writing programs, this institutional context appeared differently, without as many resources directed towards multilingual students. In this Writing Center, there were gaps in resources addressing multilingual writing approaches and cultural practices. My goal quickly became focused on providing multilingual students more direct writing support.

To further complicate matters, the Writing Center was severely understaffed, with a total of seven student tutors (many working five hours a week) to meet a 60-hour weekly schedule. Tutors included undergraduate and graduate students representing a variety of majors and tutoring experience levels. I was limited in time as the staff had a one-day training prior to the start of the semester and weekly one-hour meetings to continue training; therefore, very little time was allotted on the original training day for topics such as working with multilingual student writers. Instead, training was mostly spent on practical logistics, such as working on the scheduling software and how to open and conclude tutoring sessions. The information discussed in training inherently shows tutors where the value is placed. By neglecting any of our allotted time for discussions on working with English Language Learners, we as a Center were contributing to the lack of access provided to our multilingual student population. As Sarah Blazer (2015) noted, "Writing center staff education must be a primary focus of efforts to affirm in our practice the reality and value of linguistic diversity in our center" (2015, p. 19). Ultimately, our training material was

contributing to a lack of accessibility in our Writing Center without discussing the values of linguistic diversity. We could not continue to affirm the notion that tutoring can be digested into one cultural lens or one linguistic approach, occurring between two native English speakers.

Something had to change. It became apparent that the issue of lack of access for multilingual students did not stop with the Writing Center but extended across campus. International students at the institution had to submit proof of proficiency in English by submitting test scores from certain exams (Austin Peay State University English Language Proficiency, 2022). However, students came with a variety of language experiences and needed further support to successfully complete their courses. Much of the labor was being placed on the multilingual students themselves, including the tasks of translating material from English to their native languages, informing professors of their language diversity, making requests for additional time, seeking out support, and discovering what offices around campus could help them. It was not clear where they could turn for assistance or what types of support structures were already in place. We saw this as a possible opportunity to highlight the Writing Center's role in increasing multilingual students' access to not only writing resources but also campus support. We began asking: How could our Writing Center promote a culture of linguistic diversity and inclusivity? How can campus partnerships be cultivated to generate more visible support for multilingual students? How could the Writing Center provide more access to multilingual students, who seemed to not have other support structures across campus? To answer these questions, our priority became forming connections and listening to a variety of stakeholders.

Within the first few weeks of our Writing Center being open, it was clear we were limited in the types of students we could best assist. Furthermore, it became apparent there was not a clear direction of where multilingual student writers could receive support on campus. For many multilingual student writers, the Writing Center became the first stopping place to receive guidance and support. The Writing Center was a place where they could voice their concerns in an individual setting. As stated in Multilingual Writers and Writing Centers, "The foundation of writing center pedagogy—one-to-one instruction—is still a critical asset in the writing curriculum, but it is also labor—and intellectually—intensive" (Rafoth, 2015, p. 18). The emotional and intellectual labor fell on the tutoring staff to meet these needs, while the multilingual students who attended were also emotionally overwhelmed and did not receive the highest quality of writing support.

Methodology

This study was IRB-approved by our institution. Participants for this study were recruited through the use of the optional post-tutoring survey sent to each student's email address after the conclusion of their writing center session. The survey is sent to all students, undergraduate and graduate, who participate in a tutoring session in order to discover more about their experience. The survey asks all students questions about how they would rate the session and recommend the center on a Likert scale, rating with options including Excellent, Good, Fair, and Poor; and Highly Likely, Likely, Unlikely, Not At All Likely.

Participants for this study were selected based on their responses to the question "What is your primary language?" If students selected that English is not their first language, their survey results were included in the data analysis. Based on completed surveys, a total of 13 survey results were analyzed.

The survey also asked students if they would like to be contacted for an optional follow-up interview for approximately 60 minutes. The students were then contacted via email, and ultimately three multilingual students decided to participate in the interview: two undergraduate, first-year students and one graduate student. We wanted to include a graduate student voice based on the calls from previous scholarship (Cirillo-McCarthy, 2016). In addition to hearing from multilingual students, I also conducted interviews with two Writing Center tutors who worked with multilingual students. The rationale for interviewing tutors was to understand how tutors perceived the pre-semester and weekly training preparations. The pre-semester training was one day and included guest speakers from across campus and time to practice tutoring strategies in mock sessions. The weekly recurring sessions lasted one hour and included a tutor-related reading followed by discussion.

Cultivating Access by Hearing from Tutors and Multilingual Students

In order to provide that high-quality writing support, our Center looked inward to see how tutors were responding to this need. We primarily focused on three key areas, as addressed by Blazer and Fallon (2020): knowledge (understanding students' experiences with language), attitudes (developing an open mind towards difference), and practice (making and applying meaning to tutoring sessions). Our staff sought feedback from multilingual students utilizing the Writing Center, analyzing post-tutor session survey responses and incorporating interviews.

Knowledge

Students come to the Writing Center for a variety of reasons. Many times, they have been sent by their professor; other times they are overwhelmed and need a supportive environment. For multilingual student writers, the reasons can overlap (Olson, 2013). In addition to the English language barrier, many of our first-generation students also lacked access to academic terminology and procedures. Therefore, our tutors became starting points to assist students in learning about the expectations of each assignment, genres of academic work, and even procedures such as visiting professors' office hours. David Sousa (2010) writes, "Researchers believe that, on average, ELLs may take two years to become fluent in interpersonal communications. Academic language, however, takes far longer-at least five to seven years" (p. 213). In addition to language barriers, the academic jargon was a further barrier to comprehension for many of our students. We needed to address both aspects to empower students to participate successfully at our institution.

Data gathered from the surveys and interviews will now be discussed as it pertains to the theme of knowledge. We have prioritized listening to our multilingual students who had attended writing center sessions. As one multilingual undergraduate student, John, noted, he first visited the Writing Center for assistance with a speaking presentation. John [pseudonym] explained, "My Communications course required a 5-minute speech explaining an issue we see in the world. I wanted to have help in creating my slides and practicing the speaking portion in order to feel more confident." Part of John's reasoning for attending the Writing Center session was to grow in his confidence before completing the assignment. Based on our focus on Blazer and Fallon's (2020) interpretation of knowledge, interviewing John allowed us to better understand his views towards developing and presenting research to his class.

John shared that he was anxious about how students in his course would perceive his use of vocabulary and pronunciation in sharing his research in a presentation style. While he felt capable of locating information on his research topic, he felt less confident in public speaking. He shared that he turned to the Writing Center in order to gain practice in a friendly setting. This information allowed us to equip tutors with the reminder to listen to each client and understand multilingual students want more than simply grammatical review. Based on interviews with our tutors, tutors perceived grammatical explanations as the most important aspect of working with multilingual students. However, John's experience showed this grammatical emphasis perception was not always the case.

Furthermore, Sandy, a multilingual and non-traditional student, first discovered the Writing Center during her introductory English course. This course incorporated literary theory and analysis of literature through various frameworks. The course included five major essays, each weighing a large percentage of the total grade. Sandy felt overwhelmed by the course. While visiting the library, she saw our Writing Center and was hopeful she could find support she was unable to find within the classroom setting.

When Sandy visited the Writing Center, her first session was with tutor Evelyn, a biology major in their second week of working as a tutor. The session mostly focused on interpreting the assignment's details. Evelyn assisted Sandy in learning about the literary theories she could choose from to frame her paper around.

In the session, Sandy showed frustration towards her assignment and understanding what was being asked. While we as a tutoring staff felt a lack of confidence in the service we could provide Sandy, she shared her own perspective about the Writing Center in her interview. She noted:

My professor forgets that I am an English Language Learner. Now I have to interpret these difficult literary assignments, too. I did not feel comfortable asking my professor for further help, so I found out about the Writing Center. I know that when I come here, at least I will have someone who listens and tries to help me do my best.

For Sandy, the Writing Center was a place where she felt heard. Even if the tutor struggled to understand or provide a clear explanation, Sandy did not feel negatively towards the Writing Center. She recognized the tutor was trying to listen, and for Sandy, that was what mattered when it came to returning for tutoring sessions throughout the semester.

As Director, Sandy sharing her experience illuminated a positive aspect of our Writing Center culture at large. We needed improvement in the quality of our multilingual training and knowledge of theoretical approaches; however, many of our standard training approaches discussed in the pre-semester tutoring training and recurring training sessions throughout the semester, such as listening, prioritizing the student's needs, balancing tutor/student talk time, and creating a welcoming environment for all students, were still working. These tutoring approaches were emphasized through readings, discussions, and evaluated in tutor observations conducted twice each semester. The fact that these approaches were working was a positive first step, as "These emotional responses and the underlying values and assumptions that inform them are central to an organization's culture" (Mattingly et al., 2020). We needed to continue cultivating appropriate emotional intelligence for our tutors to ensure access for our multilingual students.

Many of our tutors began seeing multilingual students make recurring appointments to work on their writing goals. It became apparent that their needs included more than grammatical assistance or understanding the concept of an assignment. For many of the students, they needed a place to turn for support with their emotions. Because their courses were directed at native speakers, students felt extra pressure to perfect their work and avoid judgments.

As one of our graduate tutors shared:

With the ELL students, I gained a bigger picture of factors that may be affecting them beyond the classroom. In one case, I had an ELL student who was troubled because he had to give a speech on a politically-charged topic. I could tell that he was feeling a lot of anxiety out of fear of judgment from classmates. He told me he was self-conscious because he was afraid they would pay more attention to things like his accent rather than what he had to say. When I looked over the assignment, it seemed from the syllabus that too much research was required. However, we spent a lot of time in our sessions looking up the most academic, scholarly sources possible; I think this was important to him because of that fear of judgment. The way he described his classroom environment also made me a little nervous, so I think that is why I went along with it.

Our multilingual students carried anxieties about how they would be perceived by the larger campus community. Granting students access to quality Writing Center tutoring sessions was a start. Yet until we could connect with the campus at large to provide support for these students in all avenues, our institution was failing them.

Attitudes

Our tutors came from a variety of backgrounds and disciplines. While we started with seven tutors total, we quickly began to grow after one year, reaching 17 tutors, 10 undergraduates and seven graduate students. Tutors came from a variety of disciplines, with majors including English, Counseling, Communications, Radiography, French, History, Biology, Classics, and Criminal Justice. Tutors' experience levels ranged, with a few returning tutors from the previous semester and the remaining tutors in their first semester of tutoring. With experience levels widely ranging, tutors did not have much experience (if any) working with multilingual writers. As Sousa (2010) notes, "For mainstream content teachers without a background in English as a Second

Language instruction, determining the appropriate teaching methods and goals for these students poses a significant and unique challenge" (p. 204). Our tutors felt overwhelmed and unsure of how to best support this student body.

Tutors were required to attend a one-day training prior to the start of the semester, with recurring weekly training sessions. Because of the diversity of tutors, including experience levels, disciplines of study, and familiarity with campus, the trainings prioritized more pragmatic topics instead of theory-based discussion. Students could book thirty-minute to one-hour-long tutoring sessions, with the option of booking recurring appointments with the same tutor each week.

As students began learning about the Writing Center and booking appointments, issues began to emerge. While our staff numbers had grown, we still had limited tutor availability, with about two tutors available per hour. Furthermore, it became apparent that our tutoring staff was not prepared to work with multilingual writers. This came back to the lack of adequate training on this topic. One student tutor, an undergraduate Biology major, Evelyn, noted:

> When I had my first tutor session with a multilingual student, it was apparent how little guidance the student had prior to finding the Writing Center. The student appeared overwhelmed, frustrated, and confused at the assignment prompt. We spent most of our first session reviewing vocabulary in order to best understand what the assignment was asking, as it was only provided in English. I kept referring to Dictionary definitions and using Google translate to help the student make sense of the assignment details and comprehend its purpose. I felt like I was not connecting with the student and was letting them down. I could sense they needed help, and I was the first place they had turned.

After this session, Evelyn shared with the Director her concerns about the lack of tutor training and lack of experience working with multilingual writers. Evelyn needed the following: the knowledge of learning from multilingual students' language experiences; the attitude of seeing the rich skills these students bring and utilize in their own lives and how they can be applied to successfully complete a writing task; and finally, the practice of applying best tutoring practices of empowering the student while recognizing patterns of improvement in their writing. Evelyn had no experience tutoring multilingual students before and felt disappointed that the student left with no work to show from their session.

The student also wanted to set up recurring sessions in the Writing Center for support in her English class. Evelyn voiced she did not know how to continue working

with this student in order to provide high-quality tutoring. Our Writing Center culture had to shift to being open to differences in multilingual students' needs. We needed to seek out adequate practices to best prepare tutors and allow them to connect with the multilingual students.

Practice

We began observations of multilingual student tutoring sessions. I had the most experience working with multilingual students, so tutors took turns observing these sessions and holding debriefing meetings in order to learn best concepts and practices. In addition to adequately training our tutors, part of our work centered on the campus culture at large. Our tutoring staff began to see patterns with multilingual students coming to the Writing Center. Based on responses to our in-take tutor survey, most students found us for one of two reasons: either they felt overwhelmed and did not know where else to turn for individualized support, or their professor made a request that they visit the Writing Center because of their level of English language skills displayed in their paper writing. In both situations, students who visited the Writing Center held a lot of emotions, including shame, anxiety, overwhelm, confusion, and ultimately hope for assistance. Sometimes these emotions were directed at tutors in different ways, displayed as frustration, sadness, closing off, or other displays. These students were facing extreme challenges and needed someone to listen and care.

Instead of professors sending multilingual students to the Writing Center to "fix" their errors, we wanted to create a culture of embracing "a more multicultural and multilingual worldview" in our work with multilingual writers (Bailey, 2012, p. 1). It was apparent that many professors were overworked and unable to provide student writing individual attention. Somehow multilingual student writers were placed in sections of English courses with no assistance in English language learning. Instead of turning to their professors who were teaching multiple sections, students began seeking out help from the Writing Center.

Another multilingual student, Katherine, shared about her experiences across campus. She needed a place where she could ask questions, receive feedback, and find support. In her interview, she stated:

> For my History exam, I needed more time to translate the questions from English to Spanish in order to fully comprehend what they were asking. When I asked my History professor for more time, they recommended I visit the Office of Disability Studies for translation support. The Office of Disability

Studies was not able to assist me. When a classmate mentioned the Writing Center, I decided to come and see if I could find assistance here.

How could we best support students like Katherine? For us, the answer was empowering students by highlighting the strengths they already carried. If students brought a paper marked by their professor with grammatical errors, we first sought out to find the positives of their writing. Was the storytelling strong? Was the paper following assignment expectations? We then moved into points of confusion and walked through the original assignment prompt together in order to remove any barriers of confusion. Models and examples became critical in our work as well; by referring students to samples of U.S. academic writing within their specific discipline, we could start on a clearer path to work through ideas together. Finally, in-session writing time became important to ensure students felt confident moving forward.

Findings

The goal of this study was to discover if multilingual students indicated less satisfaction in their tutoring sessions than native English-speaking students. Based on the Likert scale rankings in the post-tutor surveys, multilingual students did not feel less satisfied in tutoring sessions than native English speakers. Out of 13 surveys, nine participants indicated they would rate their tutoring session as "Excellent" and four participants indicated they would rate their tutoring session as "Good." However, the interviews revealed ways to improve our services and allow multilingual students more opportunities to connect and practice writing and speaking skills in a low-stakes environment.

Ultimately, this study discovered that multilingual students at our institution felt emotionally supported in the Writing Center. Some of the comments gathered from student responses to the survey included the following:

[Tutor name] helped me a lot with my paper. I am from the Spanish language and I have problems with grammar and structure in English. [Tutor name] was really helpful to me.

Another multilingual student shared:

I think this service is very helpful for students, even more for international students like me. I really appreciate this help. Thanks.

The comments left on the surveys were all positive in nature, discussing more of the beneficial nature of support in the Writing Center. The comments encouraged our Writing Center team to reflect on the current strengths of tutoring sessions through the use of emotional support.

Improvements to Practice

Through interviews conducted with both multilingual students and tutors, we discovered areas of improvement as well as strengths that students appreciated. Areas of improvement based on the interviews included more technical aspects, which can be improved upon in our tutor training. These aspects include more detailed explanations as to grammatical changes and why they were suggested.

We also learned that hosting events such as a Cross-Cultural Conversation hour would be helpful in providing students opportunities to connect and grow in their conversation and public speaking skills. Furthermore, tutors have utilized model texts in sessions; the examples help show students more clear expectations and provide starting places for conversation in tutoring sessions.

In the future, I plan to revamp our post-tutor survey questions to include more room for students to indicate areas of concern. The Likert scale ranking questions do not necessarily give students the opportunity to share improvement practices. We would also like to continue building on this study and recruit more participants, especially multilingual graduate students, to participate in surveys and especially the interview process.

As themed around this journal issue, providing access for multilingual student writers is about empowerment and opportunities for enriching experiences to learn. For our Writing Center, the goal shifted to developing relationships in order to listen to and support multilingual students.

Strategies for Supporting Multilingual Writers

We want to ensure that multilingual students know they are welcomed and will be well supported in our Writing Center. Much of this inclusive nature begins with the language we use to describe and promote our services. While prior to these changes our website did not include any information on multilingual student resources or attending a tutoring session as a multilingual student, we worked on highlighting this student population through our web section, newsletter, and social media accounts.

We also raised our own awareness of multilingual writing as a tutoring staff. We learned about other on-campus programs and resources supporting multilingual students. This knowledge allowed us to refer multilingual students we tutored to more resources, thus improving their access to not only the Writing Center but also support around campus.

As previously mentioned, our tutor-focus shifted to three key areas, as addressed by Blazer and Fallon (2020): knowledge (understanding students' experiences with language); attitudes (developing an open mind towards difference); and practice (making and applying meaning to tutoring sessions). Framing our tutor training around these concepts ensured that tutors were building a foundation of inclusive tutoring and consideration of the student's needs.

Knowledge

While we previously mentioned focusing on various stakeholders, our focus on knowledge shifted to tutor training. Our goal was to make our Writing Center tutors ambassadors of the new knowledge. Because of this gap in training and preparation, our group trainings (weekly one-hour trainings and a one-day pre-semester training) included guest speakers specializing in the area of multilingual student writers in order to improve our tutoring practices to best support these students. This topic took priority since its neglect in our fall training revealed deep-rooted cracks in our overall approach to inclusivity.

Our Center invited a guest speaker to share their experiences on best practices for tutoring multilingual students. The speaker holds a degree in Teaching English as a Second Language, is a virtual ESL instructor for an Adult Education Center, and is a multilingual speaker herself. She agreed to lead a five-week training series to share information, theories, and practices for providing more access to multilingual student writers. These sessions occurred on Zoom with the goal that tutors could ask questions, learn new concepts, and grow as tutors of multilingual student writers. The learning outcomes of the workshops included the following: learning about the learning process of students whose first language is not English, understanding the nature of bilingualism and biliteracy, understanding some structural differences between students' first language and second language, identifying key factors that play a role in students' academic performance in writing, and learning about strategies to help students with their writing skills. Terms such as English Language Learner, second-language acquisition, L1, L2, and language proficiency were defined. One of the most effective ways our tutors gained knowledge came from guiding prompts

provided by our guest speaker that allowed them to learn new concepts to best serve multilingual students in tutoring sessions. For example, prompts asked: "How can your student's first language structure be used as a teaching strategy?" and "How did the information from today's session impact me as a tutor regarding working with ELLs?"

One of our undergraduate tutors, who majored in Radiology, noted:

> If a student has consistent errors in their writing, then as a tutor, I can look at the structure of their first language. This will help tutors understand why the errors are continuously repeated throughout the writing. This also provides an opportunity to focus on rules that are practiced in their second language compared with rules that are not present in their first language.

Our tutors began to expand their understanding of linguistic diversity and learn approaches that could help them grow more confident in their own strategies. As shown with Evelyn, many of our tutors deeply cared for these students, but did not have the tools or resources to provide the highest quality tutoring. Furthermore, access to this information allowed tutors to grow in their own self-confidence and abilities. These trainings and readings became important steps for building our tutor knowledge around linguistic diversity.

Attitudes

Through training tutors, we sought to provide a variety of support, from more practical and individualized tutor strategies, to creating a more supportive culture of empathy and support towards multilingual student writers. From concepts such as being culturally responsive, to more practical shifts such as using collective pronouns during a tutoring session such as: "Let's find out together" or "We might not know…," there are a variety of strategies for tutors to utilize when it comes to ensuring the student feels supported and not alone. Since we had seen from previous experiences that some multilingual students who visited the Writing Center did not feel they had other forms of support across campus, it was crucial that we as a Writing Center staff showed empathy and care in order to ensure these students wanted to return.

Based on our guest speakers, we as a staff also grew in our knowledge of cultural differences and educational experiences. For example, we discussed how the writing process as taught in the United States is not taught globally. Expectations set by professors in writing courses, such as submitting outlines, drafts, and having conferences, may feel uncomfortable to multilingual students. For this reason, our

staff was encouraged to use guiding questions, including: What are the steps involved in your writing process? Why are they important? When can they be used? How can they be used?

Based on interviews, we developed the concept of hosting weekly Culture and Conversation hours, featuring a topic and time for practicing English-speaking and writing skills in a welcoming environment with free food. Our Center also asked for more funding to increase our campus presence in places such as the Latino Community Resource Center, and Adult and Nontraditional Student Center to meet many of our multilingual students in more spaces they were attending.

Practice

Our revised spring training included moments of practical reflection and application. With our increased tutor numbers, we no longer had to worry about understaffing. Tutors were required to complete "shadowing" sessions where new tutors trained under returning tutors to watch tutor sessions with a variety of student needs. Our environment shifted to more collaborative learning, connecting across tutors and sharing ideas together. Instead of, "I do not feel adequate to work with this multilingual student," our mindset became more community-based and replaced with the idea of, "We are promoting an inclusive learning environment for all students together."

Our Center also implemented de-briefing sessions with tutors to understand how things were going after working with multilingual students. In addition to reviewing appointment forms in advance to track patterns of needs for our multilingual students, we analyzed post-tutor session client report forms to see how multilingual students felt about the sessions, if they were likely to return, or had any follow-up feedback. Often time spent with prewriting or drafting in English in the Writing Center allowed for moral support and confidence-building.

The Writing Center cannot best serve students if we fail to connect with other resources across campus and learn what expectations there are for multilingual students. For our spring training day, we invited a guest speaker from our English Language Institute to speak about how to best support this student population in our tutoring sessions. The speaker also spoke about what further campus resources multilingual students do and do not have access to. This collaboration allowed our staff the opportunity to learn more and have more answers when multilingual students asked for further support.

Our Center created a more formal Writing Center Tutor Guide Handbook, with a dedicated section for multilingual student writers. Our webpage grew to incorporate more multilingual-based resources, including handouts featuring certain key areas or topics. Many of these resources were created upon request of our multilingual students, such as understanding the writing process, verb tense, article usage, and more. These allowed students to reference them conveniently on their own time or for tutors to quickly turn to during sessions. Another key area of improving the Writing Center's access to multilingual students includes the hiring of multilingual students to work as tutors within our Center, a goal we are continuing to build on.

Conclusion

This study sought to discover multilingual students' perception of the Writing Center, as well as tutors' confidence in tutoring multilingual students. The survey results from multilingual students showed positive Writing Center experiences. Upon conducting interviews, we learned more about areas we were already doing well, including emotional support, and areas we could improve in, such as more hands-on writing time in sessions and grammatical explanations.

The goal of this article is to provide examples and ideas for increasing support of multilingual writers to those in administrative positions in tutoring and writing programs. The first step is learning from the students. In our case, we first discovered what campus resources currently existed for our multilingual student population, including the English Language Institute and Latino Community Resource Center. We then sought out possible gaps in access for multilingual students, specifically through the lens of writing support. This led us to the questions: How are multilingual students turned away from our Center, inherently or symbolically? How can those barriers be removed? We started with improved tutor training, to raise knowledge for our tutors of the various cultural perspectives and writing styles our students may bring. Through more purposeful activities, we developed more open attitudes and confidence in welcoming multilingual students. Finally, we focused on improved practice by making and applying meaning to tutoring sessions; this raised multilingual students' access through the use of listening, debriefing after sessions, and including more opportunities across campus for further support, such as events tailored to the needs of multilingual students and opportunities to connect and share.

Based on our experiences, we recommend any writing center team seeking to improve multilingual students' access first seek feedback from the students around them, especially tutors and multilingual students themselves. The use of surveys or

focus group interviews can allow better insight into how accessible they find the Writing Center and what improvements could be made. Empowerment comes from not only being heard, but being given opportunities to create or enhance strategies already in place. Because tutors are hyper aware of the gaps of our services, they should be turned to for making decisions by the Director. When our tutor Evelyn admitted concern for the quality of our tutoring services for multilingual writers, it served as a motivation to face the problem and seek solutions.

Final Reflection

Our progress is steadily improving in providing more writing center access to our multilingual student population. Self-reflection on individual tutoring sessions is crucial in becoming more inclusive. In order to develop an inclusive space accessible to all students, we must first consider ways we are preventing access and to what populations. For our Center, this revamp started with a reboot of our tutor training, as well as representation among multilingual writers. Access takes the form of tutor availability across campus in areas such as our Latino Community Resource Center, hosting Cultural Conversation hours where students can practice their English-speaking skills and learn from one another, and providing more resources geared towards multilingual students on our website and in the Center. However, there is much room to grow. Our next goals focus on continuing to increase our training and resources available to multilingual students, developing specific multilingual student writer workshops, and hiring multilingual student writers as Writing Center tutors.

Our goal as an academic support service is to empower students of all backgrounds, including multilingual students. Prior to our work on improving access to multilingual students, our Writing Center was not providing clear access for this population. We had to pause and listen to what members of our multilingual student population were sharing about their experiences as students and writers. Our Writing Center strives to lead the way for continued improvement in access for this student population. At our university, the mission statement notes improving support for cultivating an inclusive campus that extends globally, yet our academic support services needed improvement to meet this goal. In a deeper sense, our role in the Writing Center is not only to prepare tutors and support multilingual student writers, but to be a place of advocating for a larger campus cultural shift altogether

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Appendix A
Interview Questions for Students

Why do you seek out tutoring from the Writing Center?
According to your post-tutoring survey results, you marked _____ for how you would rate your tutoring session. What contributed to your choice?
According to your post-tutoring survey results, you marked you would/would not return to the Writing Center. What contributed to your choice?
According to your post-tutoring survey results, you left the following comment "_____." What contributed to your choice?
How did you discover the Writing Center?
How often do you frequent the Writing Center?
What is a positive aspect of your Writing Center experience?
What is an area that could be improved in your Writing Center experience?
What else would you like to share about your experiences in the Writing Center?

Appendix B
Interview Questions for Tutors

How comfortable are you in tutoring multilingual students during Writing Center sessions?
Can you describe a recent tutoring session where you felt confident in your tutoring abilities?
What knowledge do you feel less familiar with when it comes to English language learning?
How did you feel the tutor training session on working with multilingual students went (featuring our guest speaker)? What did you learn from it?
How could we improve to make you feel more prepared/supported in working with multilingual students?

About the Author

Allie Johnston, Ph.D., is an assistant professor of English in the Languages and Literature Department at Austin Peay State University, where she teaches composition and rhetoric courses. She also serves as the university's first Writing Center Director. Her goal is to expand the Writing Center to better serve all student populations across disciplines while providing tutors with professionalization opportunities. Her research focuses on writing center studies and multimodal curriculum in first-year writing programs.

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