Tongues Tide: Translingual Directions for Technologically-Mediated Composing Platforms

by

Lacey Anne Beer

A thesis
presented to the University of Waterloo
in fulfillment of the
thesis requirement for the degree of
The Doctor of Philosophy
in
English

Waterloo, Ontario, Canada, 2018

Examining Committee Membership

The following served on the Examining Committee for this thesis. The decision of the Examining Committee is by majority vote.

External Examiner   Dr. Jerry Won Lee
                                     Associate Professor, University of California,
                                     Irvine

Supervisor   Dr. Frances Condon
                                     Associate Professor, University of Waterloo

Internal Members   Dr. Jay Dolmage
                                     Associate Professor, University of Waterloo

                                     Dr. Vershawn Young
                                     Associate Professor, University of Waterloo

Internal-external Member   Dr. Barbara Schmenk
                                     Professor, University of Waterloo

AUTHOR'S DECLARATION

I hereby declare that I am the sole author of this thesis. This is a true copy of the thesis, including any required final revisions, as accepted by my examiners.

I understand that my thesis may be made electronically available to the public.

Abstract

This dissertation examines the link between classroom practices, language policies, and writing technologies in a translingual framework. Specifically, in the context of higher education, I explore the ways in which English-only policies dominate the academy and discourage linguistic diversity and inclusivity. This monolingual approach is emulated by composing software like MS Word and Google Docs, which surveil and constrain the languages and discourses available to student writers. These programs take a Current-Traditionalist approach to writing that is characterized by preoccupation with error and the positioning of the teacher as disciplinarian. In doing so, they inhibit translingual teaching and learning. Drawing upon the results of my ethnographic study on the composing processes of students in ENGL 109: Introduction to Academic Writing (a course taught at the University of Waterloo), I offer suggestions for improving the design of these technologically-mediated composing platforms to better accommodate translingual users.

Acknowledgements

I am so grateful for the wealth of support I have received prior to and during my doctorate. It takes a village to raise a PhD holder. I could not have done this without my supervisor and committee, my scholarships, my department, my family, my teachers and professors, my mentors, my friends, and my faith. I am extremely grateful for my advisor, Dr. Frankie Condon, who has loyally supported my dissertation project since her arrival at the University of Waterloo. Without her patience and mentorship during my transition from Canadian Literature to Composition Theory and Pedagogy and throughout the writing of my chapters, I would not have succeeded. I would also like to extend thanks to my committee for their sincere interest and investment in my topic.

In addition to my supervisor and committee, I am incredibly thankful for the external funding I received from SSHRC that allowed me to focus almost exclusively on my graduate studies. Being awarded both Master's and Doctoral Joseph-Armand Bombardier Canada Graduate Scholarships (CGS) enriched my academic and personal life. I am also grateful for the supplementary funding (i.e. President's Graduate Scholarships) provided to external award holders, departmental funding, research funding from the Arts, travel funding, and the Provost Doctoral Entrance Award for Women, all provided by UW.

Moreover, I'd like to recognize the Department of English Language and Literature at UW for seeing promise in my future as a scholar and giving me the opportunity to study independently, professionalize, teach, and travel. I'm particularly grateful to Dr. Randy Harris for believing that the university is my natural habitat. The PhD experience has been enlightening.

With all my heart, I'd like to thank my dad for the precious gift of postsecondary education. Without an Honours BA, I would not have been able to pursue graduate studies. I'd also like to thank my mom for always pushing me to realize my full potential and standing behind my decisions.

Revisiting my high school days, I would like to extend gratitude to Ms. Christine Cavallin-Thomas for inspiring my interest in English. Looking to my undergraduate studies,

I'd like to acknowledge Dr. Miriam Pirbhai and Dr. Tanis MacDonald for cultivating my love of literature and language and supporting both my creative endeavours and academic pursuits. I'd also like to thank my committee member and professor Dr. Jay Dolmage for introducing me to Comp. Theory and Pedagogy through an independent reading course I took as a first-year PhD student.

With regard to other mentors, I am grateful to Dr. Sacha Geer, the Manager of Research Ethics at the University of Waterloo, for guiding me through the various stages of ethics approval. Likewise, I'd like to thank Dr. Grit Liebscher, Kim Garwood and Krista Mathias for sharing their experience with focus groups and offering advice on qualitative research. In addition to my own research, these individuals were instrumental in helping me to become a novice ethnographer.

I would especially like to thank my circle of friends for listening to my dissertation woes and joys. I'm especially grateful to my close friend, Malek Naouach, who has willingly provided personal IT support. He has answered my many technological questions and even helped to design a new language menu user interface based on my study findings. My suggestions for improving composing software like MS Word and Google Docs would be incomplete without his input.

Very special thanks to Benjamin Miller Waterman for suggested edits and extended proofreading. A second set of eyes is always invaluable.

Thanks also to Cassandra Bechard for making the final copyediting stages a success. With her assistance formatting of my dissertation was a seamless learning process.

Last but not least, I am grateful to God for bestowing upon me intellectual curiosity and giving me the strength to pursue a PhD. I would be nothing without His love and guidance.

Here's to the degree that never ends . . .

Table of Contents

List of Figures

List of Tables

"Language and culture are never monolithic, so trying to maintain linguistic purity is futile." (Stanford 138)

"[T]hose of us who speak with forked tongues are not tongue tied: we leap from one language to another sin darnos cuenta." (Vaquera-Vasquez 269)

Preface

Transculturalism, transgenderism, transhumanism, and transnationalism are all –isms[1] of

the twentieth and twenty-first centuries. We can add translingualism to this ever-growing list.

All of the aforementioned terms have shared goals: the blurring or dissolution of boundaries,

whether cultural, gender, national, physical and biological, linguistic, or otherwise. In the

words of linguist[2] Alastair Pennycook, it is necessary "to escape the predefinition of a

language user by geographical location or variety" ("Translingual English" 6). We must

therefore allow tongues to mix and mingle by unleashing them from rigid categorizations.

I must confess that "translingualism" is a term that straddles that shady, grey area of

confusion and the unknown. In fact, the very idea of translingualism probably seems

troublesome or preposterous to many individuals who have yet to witness the transpiration of

such a phenomenon.[3] When I attended a talk with Professor Vershawn Young at the

University of Waterloo in late May of 2014, he asked provocatively, "So, what is

translingualism?" Another acquaintance of mine to whom I gave the quick elevator rundown

of my dissertation simply responded, "Just learn English." Undoubtedly, the role of

translingualism in today's society is rather obscure or misunderstood. On the one hand,

translingualism is a slippery term that eludes definition: it is complex and ever-changing.

Even leading translingual scholar A. Suresh Canagarajah confides that "[t]his area of work is

still relatively underdeveloped" (*Translingual Practice* 75). On the other hand, however,

---

[1] Ideas, practices, and realities.

[2] He also goes by the following preferred academic titles: applied linguist, critical applied linguist, and critical applied sociolinguist.

[3] Like GMOs, life on Mars, or Windows Glasses, for instance, translingualism is perhaps a matter of trial and error. The translingual paradigm has the potential to be made and remade. Inevitably, translingualism requires patience and practice.

1

translingualism, though in its embryonic stages, is immersed in some influential ideologies that are helping to refine current understandings of the term and engage more diverse communicative practices.

Throughout my academic career, I seldom thought about language outside of literary texts. I simply took, or mistook rather, the mythic Standard Academic English (SAE) as a given, even a default. I dutifully fulfilled my second language requirements, though I did not have much practical use for them. For the most part, I wrote all of my essays in what Kathleen Yancey defines as "the most traditional, narrow, and academic sense: white paper, black ink, 12-point font, one-inch margins, an appropriately linear approach to topic and development, writing toward conclusions and claims, etc." (qtd. in Ridolfo and Devoss "composing/teaching the future").[4] I was meticulous in formatting and never really dared to outstep conventional bounds. It was not until graduate school that I began to think differently about course assignments and classroom communication. I created a visual essay in the form of a music video for "Studies in Literary Criticism and Environment," a course on ecocriticism that I completed during my Master's and took great interest in an independent reading course by the name of "Composition Theory and Pedagogy" during the spring and summer of that same academic year. These experiences led me to the realization that something was missing. Linguistic diversity has long been replaced with linguistic conformity. David Dzaka laments the ways in which schools in North America continue to carry out the colonial agenda of acculturation, in terms of both language and culture: "The colonial literacy project, which still informs the present education system, is an exercise in

---

[4] See also p. 298 of Kathleen Yancey's "Made Not Only in Words: Composition in a New Key."

what Paulo Freire calls 'banking education' (*Education*)" (161). Despite Canada's so-called multicultural policies and freedom of speech, the education system remains largely unchanged.

   As I proceeded to sit my area exams and find my niche in the academic world, I reflected upon these and other graduate experiences I had while completing coursework. I recall a Persian colleague asking whether or not it would be acceptable to compose the course essay in his mother tongue. I recall another fearlessly creative colleague whose essay on Homeric literature brilliantly mirrored the content with its circular form. Perhaps these students' non-traditional approaches were a way of challenging the education system; their discursive demands and acts can very well be seen as conscious modes of resistance.

   In retrospect, my undergraduate years were also riddled with the problematics and politics of language in the academy. An encounter that stands out in my memory is that with a French teacher in the sophomore year of my Honours Bachelor of Arts degree. She was a rather enigmatic lady with a widow's bun and thick bifocals who always dressed in black following her husband's death. She spoke many languages, but taught only French. "Quelquefois, toutes les langues se mélangent dans ma tête comme une salade de fruits,"[5] she once told me after class. She said it with a smile, but as if it were some sort of grievance, some sort of mistake, something that was unnatural, and something that was not supposed to happen. She said it with a sense of shame and wry humor. Evidently, she somehow internalized the idea that the mixing of linguistic codes is erroneous, an opinion strongly contested by Young ("Your Average" 97). The negativity she expressed towards code-meshing is not uncommon,

---

[5] "Sometimes, all of the languages mix in my head like a fruit salad."

3

however.[6] Languages are often mistakenly seen as separate entities whose paths should rarely or never cross. Take, for instance, the opinions of literary critic and writing teacher, Stanley Fish, who is a detractor of code-meshing and an advocate of Standard English ("Keep Code-Meshing" 140). Too often, code-meshing is seen as an unacceptable practice in the Western mentality.

Moreover, cultural contexts, social situations and personal preferences mandate linguistic choices accordingly. For instance, a German exchange student I met during my upper undergraduate years once used the phrase 'Es regnet aus Strömen"[7] and explained that no exact English equivalent exists, though a similar expression in English would be "It's raining cats and dogs"[8] or "It's pouring [buckets]." In conversing with a visiting Italian postdoctoral student during my graduate years, I learned that Andreas Bocelli's song "Con te partiro" doesn't really mean "Time to Say Goodbye" (i.e. the "English" translation as it appears on universally published sheet music and CD releases) but in fact means "I will leave with you." Those who speak languages other than English often say that certain words or phrases in so-called monolingual English (ME) do not do justice to what it is they want to express. Something is arguably lost in translation. There often also exists in languages other than English words or phrases that encapsulate ideas that are otherwise inexpressible[9] if not in the

---

[6] Certain policy makers and educators see the blurring of languages as a barrier to standard language and literacy development (Milson-Whyte 116).

[7] This friend and exchange student also explained to me that although there is no proper translation, the phrase means something along the lines of "It is raining in floods."

[8] The expression "It's raining cats and dogs" is most frequently used by people for whom English isn't a first language. That's because it's a very popular idiom, one of the first that English language learners are introduced to. Of course, it's a great hit when it comes with illustrations. We use the expression to be amusing rather than descriptive. (It we wanted to be descriptive, we'd simply say "it's pouring [buckets].") (Jewinski).

[9] My use of "inexpressible" here is twofold: 1) denoting words or phrases that literally have no equivalent translation and 2) denoting words and phrases that are socially unacceptable to express in the home language.

language of origin. This is a matter of vocabulary and access. As Steven G. Kellman points out, Americans wear t-shirts that say "Voulez-vous coucher avec moi?" but wouldn't dare to wear the same t-shirt in English (*The Translingual Imagination* 27). We may interpret this preference in multiple ways: 1) French is the language of love, 2) a possible linguistic barrier defeats vulgarity and ensuing offence, or 3) the popular phrase risks losing meaning or potency if translated. What we can extract from these untranslatable phrases and expressions is the inadequacy of English(es) to replace or represent all languages. In a conversation between Kellman and Ilan Stavans, Kellman problematizes direct translation: "Many words (*duende, mensch, sprezzatura*) are thought of as untranslatable because they embody the unique *weltanschauung* (!) of another culture. A language can either import them (*déjà vu, trek*, and *algebra* have become standard English) or else regard them, if at all, as quaint exoticisms" ("The Translingual Sensibility" 7). While the exoticisms have less use value outside of their home cultures, the imported words and phrases ameliorate the vocabularies of host cultures. Think, for example, of umami – a Japanese loan word for "[a] category of taste corresponding to the 'savoury' flavour of free glutamates in various foods" ("umami"). Without this word, people would simply rely on a limited range of four basic tastes. As is discussed later in Chapter 2, translingualism aims not only to integrate existing words from various 'languages' and varieties but also to invent new words for the purposes of adaptation and appropriation.

Furthermore, reminiscing about my early university experiences, I find yet another example of why a translingual orientation is necessary. As a Composition student pursuing a minor in music, I had a renowned Composition teacher who identified music as her first

language: "I'm always translating what I mean." I understand her precisely because I too am a composer who finds writing music cathartic. From the tender age of five I began taking piano lessons and just over a decade and a half later I earned my A.R.C.T. (Royal Conservatory of Music) Performer's diploma. Some years after I began learning piano I also took violin lessons and became a member of both the Kitchener Waterloo Symphony Youth Orchestra (KWSYO) and the Cambridge Community Orchestra (CCO). During my preteen years until present, I created my own repertoire of classical and pop-folk pieces. Perhaps music is my mother tongue also. Recently, translingual practice has been aligned with music, especially hiphop, such as in the work of Adam J. Banks. In his article on Kenyan hiphop and its musical origins and influences, Esther Milu cites from Kellman to argue against language as merely alphabetic: "'translinguals move beyond their native languages . . . theirs is an aspiration to transcend language in general, to be pandictic, to utter everything" (p. 16)" (108). Suresh A. Canagarajah shares this departure from the alphabetic in "encourag[ing] us to treat acts of communication as involving more than words" (*Literacy as Translingual Practice* 1).[10] Personally, Canagarajah's vision resonates with my academic experiences as I have so often found myself forced to negate, rather than negotiate, the part of myself that is musically inclined and involved. For instance, in the same ways that students have reserved their home languages for the communal and domestic spheres, I have reserved my singing and songwriting for the home, the car, the hallways, and the public restrooms. These are the only private, semi-private, and communal spaces that allow me to acknowledge that part of

---

[10] See also *Translingual Practice* where Canagarajah states that "communication transcends words" (7).

my otherwise silenced identity. However, translingualism holds a more promising and inclusive vision:

> In the future, other languages will come into our classrooms. They will not stay outside, at 'home,' in the 'street,' not even outside in the hallways or our universities. Nor will students turn off their languages the way they are supposed to turn off their cell phones when class begins. No: the languages will be part of the class. In fact, they already are. (Hall 43)

Code-switching will be obsolete. Code-meshing will be en vogue.[11] And the very idea of language will be redefined. Music is one amongst many other devalued or underprivileged language varieties struggling for recognition as a legitimate form of cultural expression.

My experiences at the University of Waterloo, an academic institution of higher learning renowned for its high volume of international students, have enriched my thinking about translingualism. As a fourth-year doctoral student, I now possess limited competence in Nepali and Persian in addition to fluency in French and some basic words and phrases in Mandarin and Cantonese. Having met an Italian visiting postdoctoral student in chemistry from Cosenza, I also realized just how much Italian I knew because of my musical training. Not all of the Italian terms were widely applicable outside of the musical realm (e.g. *con moto*, meaning "with motion" though *moto* is used for "motorcycle"); however, many were in current usage (e.g. *dolce, doloroso, graziouso, sempre, piano, forte, sotto voce, coda,*

---

[11] I should note here that Young does conflate code-meshing and code-switching on a conceptual scale, arguing that "The difference is that teachers have misapplied code-switching to minority students in saying that it is used in one context or the other when it fact it involves the operation of two or more dialects simultaneously" ("Group Discussion").

lento, largo, animato, scherzo, allegro)[12] within Italian society as a whole. This realization was moving; I had uncovered a hidden vocabulary.

Additionally, I often find myself looking for physical examples of "codeswitching" and "code-meshing" in our university and community environments. Surrounding university strip plazas provide abstract models of code-switching in their joining of Asian cuisine, bubble tea shops, Persian style food, Italian-inspired cuisine, Indian food, Greek dishes, and "Canadian" food. Somehow, these restaurants that represent different cultural tastes are in the same vicinity. Like code-switching, they are kept "separate, yet together," so to speak. Similarly, the Dana Porter Library at UW boasts a new glass wall by Browsers Café that contains a number of quotations in various tongues. However, again, the quotations share the same space but are separated as opposed to integrated. Evidently, this wall is one such attempt to represent cultural diversity and linguistic plurality in the UW community. However, indirectly it works to reinforce boundaries between languages. Linguistic landscapes evidently signify our linguistic realities and the need for progressive change. Shohamy and Gorter (2009) define linguistic landscape (LL) as an area that pays special "attention to language in the environment, words and images displayed and exposed in public spaces" (1). In their view, LL "contextualizes the public space within issues of identity and language policy of nations, political, and social conflicts" (4). They also claim "that LL has a major role to take in activism in the domains of education and critical thinking" (4). In my opinion, the campus community and our neighborhoods say a lot about who we are, which languages

---

[12] Translations of the above Italian (musical) terms are as follows: sweetly, woefully, gracefully, always, soft, loud, in a low voice, the end, slowly, rather slowly/stately, animated, joke, lively.

and cultural traditions we value, where we think linguistic diversity is acceptable, what forms of linguistic expression we permit and for what purpose.

In short, I have made this introduction a braided narrative[13] to increase accessibility by highlighting the relevancy translingualism holds to the academic world. I have detailed select experiences in postsecondary institutions to bring to light translingualism in praxis as opposed to translingualism as an abstract, theoretical concept. I would argue that the only individuals on the margins of translingualism are its detractors. Knowing that we are all translingually disposed (Canagarajah, *Translingual Practice* 7),[14] translingualism thrives on inclusion and characterizes the majority, if not the whole. Translingualism is therefore something we do (Lu and Horner, "Translingual Literacy and Matters of Agency" 27) *and* something we are. For its advocates, translingualsim promises greater cultural unity, respect, and appreciation, unique modes of expression, and new ways of being.

---

[13] I discuss the braided narrative genre in more detail in Chapter 3. However, to provide a brief description, a braided narrative moves between story and theory as a way of deepening and extending theoretical engagement.
[14] On a related note, "As Min-Zhan Lu avers, even students who think they are monolingual in English really are not, because they are immersed in the plurilingual world ("Metaphors" 291)" (cited in Bizzell 133).

Introduction

This project will build on existing scholarship on translingualism by examining the ways technologically-mediated composing spaces such as Microsoft Word, Google Docs, and social networking sites effectively constrain and discipline the composing processes and products of student-writers. Translingual theory and practice in the teaching of writing is a pressing and timely concern for scholars in the field of Composition. Citing British linguists and scholars David Crystal (2004) and David Graddol (1999), leading translingual studies scholar A. Suresh Canagarajah reminds us that multi-language speakers outnumber those who speak English only (*Translingual Practice* 61).[15] However, Canagarajah also asks teachers of writing to acknowledge "the proliferation of varieties of English, an unending compendium of regional, national, subnational, ethnic, and pidgin and creole varieties" (56). As largely corporate products, existing composing platforms have hidden designs that yield skewed results: the design of most widely used composing platforms force writers to compose in and revise toward Standard Written Academic English (SWAE). The designs of these platforms are profoundly monolingual; informed by normative conceptions of SWAE, Word, Google Docs, and other composing platforms are designed to promote and enforce writers' conformity to what scholars have variously termed "Standardized English," or—noting the imperial dimensions of the practice of privileging particular forms of English—"the Queen's English." Contributing to and extending what is known in the field of the

---

[15] See also A. Suresh Canagarajah's "The Place of World Englishes in Composition: Pluralization Continued" (2006) wherein he cites from David Graddol: "According to the British applied linguist David Graddol, the 'native' speakers 'lost their majority in the 1970s' (58)" (588). On this same page, he also references similar statistics from David Crystal.

relationships between computers and composition, between technologically-mediated

composing processes and access and opportunity in higher education, this study will a)

examine the challenges and opportunities growing numbers of translingual and code-meshing

speakers pose to traditional modes of composition or technologically-mediated composing

practices, b) conduct an ethnographic study that explores the composing processes of

translingual, code-meshing authors in well-used platforms, and c) critique existing

composing interfaces.

At present, the study of translingualism within the field of Composition Studies is still

divorced from the study of computers and writing or technologically-mediated composing

processes. While substantial scholarship has been published on translingualism over the past

decade, few scholars have addressed the role technology might play in helping writers realize

the full potential of translingual practice. Notably, Canagarajah identifies digital literacy as a

means of enabling code-meshed composition, writing, "the Internet presents a forum where

varieties of English mingle freely" ("The Place of World Englishes in Composition" 590). In

contrast to the co-mingling of Englishes theoretically possible online, Canagarajah identifies

the traditional Monolingual English (ME) classroom as an oppressive learning environment.

"[A] classroom based on 'standard' English and formal instruction," he suggests, "limits the

linguistic acquisition, creativity, and production among students" (592). In his newest book,

Translingual Practice: Global Englishes and Cosmopolitan Relations (2013), Canagarajah

refashions the term World Englishes (WE). Here, he identifies a "translingual English" as

one that "attends to the local contexts and practices of negotiation with the fullest ecological

resources" (*Translingual Practice* 75). Moreover, in the introduction to his edited

compilation *Literacy As Translingual Practice* (2013), Canagarajah defines the term's prefix as one that both "moves us beyond a consideration of individual or monolithic languages to life between and across languages" and "encourages us to treat acts of communication as involving more than words" (1). Thus, he challenges us to think beyond constrictive notions of languages as compartmentalized and alphabetic. Furthermore, Canagarajah reminds us of the ways in which we all innately, even unknowingly, engage in translingual practice (*Translingual Practice* 8). Translingualism is therefore not a new phenomenon, but rather a long-standing communicative tradition. Canagarajah's phrase "translingual practice" moves away from translingualism as an approach to texts to translingualism as text. Nevertheless, Canagarajah does not explore in detail the ways in which computer-mediated composing platforms, if reimagined and redesigned, might facilitate translingual composition. In other words, although Canagarajah identifies how fruitful code-meshing practices might be enabled using technology, he does not imagine specifically how digital literacies might empower translingual writers.

With regard to research method, my project will begin with an ethnographic study of the composing processes of student writers in ENGL 109: Introduction to Academic Writing as they compose using word processing programs and collaboratively in technologically-mediated spaces like Google Docs. Six students will be selected for lab observations and focus groups. My emphasis in this chapter is on learning how students navigate constraints imposed on culture and languages by these various composing platforms. My orientation

toward the research is qualitative and descriptive, with an emphasis on thick description.[16] Of

the subjects participating in my study, two will be speakers of a language other than English

at home, two will be students who are multilingual at home, and one will be a student who is

a native English speaker. These writers will be observed throughout various stages of

composition and will be interrogated in a group setting. I expect that these students will

develop a greater awareness of the politics of language and, in technophiles Cynthia L. and

Richard J. Selfe's words, "an increasingly critical awareness of technology issues" ("The

Politics of the Interface" 498-99). Findings from my study will be situated within a review

and critique of current literature in the field, braiding strands of conversations in the field that

previously have been treated as relatively distinct from one another, namely translingual and

code-meshing theory and practice and computers and composition.

Grounded in current and developing theory in the field as well as on the findings of

original research, my study will culminate in suggestions for the design of a technologically

mediated platform that exceeds colonial habits of mind. Instead, this platform will be

designed to accommodate the growing numbers of translingual and code-meshing speakers

worldwide. My study will demonstrate how technologies formerly deployed to police

linguistic conformity in student writing might be turned toward linguistic diversity. This

platform takes as its inspiration Cynthia and Richard Selfe's belief that designs of new

interfaces by compositionists can be realized by computer specialists, scientists and engineers

(500). Although, I do not wish to offer any premature conclusions, I am certain that this

---

[16] "The point for now is only that ethnography is thick description. . . . Doing ethnography is like trying to read (in the sense of 'construct a reading of') a manuscript – foreign, faded, full of ellipses, incoherencies, suspicious emendations, and tendentious commentaries, but written not in conventionalized graphs of sound but in transient examples of shaped behavior" (Geertz 217).

translingual-friendly platform will be multidirectional and multimodal with extensive
translation, editing, linguistic, and code-meshing capabilities.

Chapter 1

Canagarajah's conception of translingualism is informed by the work of Vershawn
Ashanti Young, a specialist in rhetoric and African American world studies. In his book *Your
Average Nigga: Performing Race, Literacy, and Masculinity* (2007), Young discusses at
length the differences between code-switching and code-meshing. He identifies code-
switching as the (forced) separation of linguistic codes. Code-switching pedagogies mandate
the appropriateness of particular Englishes for particular spaces, especially home and
community (7). Young identifies the segregation of Englishes characteristic of communities
of color from Standard Written Academic English (i.e. code-switching) with advocacy for
"race-switching" (99). He advocates, instead, for pedagogies associated with code-meshing:
a technique "that combine[s] dialects, styles, and registers" and "meshes versions of English
together in a way that's more in line with how people actually speak and write" (7). Code-
meshing thus avoids the "separate yet together" approach or clearly demarcated boundaries
characteristic of code-switching. These are the very boundaries that composing programs like
MS Word enforce.

Critical scholars of translingualism, Bruce Horner, Min-Zhan Lu, Jacqueline Jones
Royster, and John Trimbur deconstruct both the possibility and the importance of language
mastery and standardization. In their collaboratively written article "Language Difference in
Writing: Toward a Translingual Approach" (2011), these academics identify a translingual
approach as one that displaces respect for mastery with the recognition that everyone, writers

14

and readers alike, are responsible for interpretation and translation. They write, "we recognize that we are all language learners, and that learning language is necessarily continuous precisely because language is subject to variation and change" (307). Translingualism engages students in textual shapeshifting and prioritizes creative and intellectual engagement with linguistic diversity over linguistic conformity. Horner et al. argue that a "translingual" approach to the teaching of writing deconstructs the ideas of "Standard English" and linguistic competence, instead embracing "the variety, fluidity, intermingling, and changeability of languages as statistically demonstrable norms around the globe" ("Toward a Translingual Approach" 305). Lu, Horner, Trimbur, and Smitherman identify a translingual approach as one that "encourages reading with patience, respect for perceived differences within and across languages, and an attitude of deliberate inquiry" while advocating SRTOL (304). For these scholars, translingual pedagogy may be somewhat more time-consuming than traditional monolingual writing pedagogy but will also empower writers by accommodating and meshing different learning modes, various cultures, and languages. Like Canagarajah, however, Lu, Horner, Trimbur, and Smitherman do not explore technologically-mediated composing platforms that enable composition in translingual modes.

Chapter 2

Chapter 2 will examine existing and potential challenges and opportunities growing numbers of translingual and code-meshing speakers pose to traditional modes of composition or technologically-mediated composing practices. In "Translanguaging in the Classroom" (2011) Canagarajah writes, "Even the so-called 'monolinguals' shuttle between codes,

15

registers, and discourses" (4). "Translingual" is neither a title that is reserved for a special group of students and nor is it a title for those who noticeably engage separate tongues or compartmentalized languages. Translingualism is an inclusive philosophy of language. In the words of Canagarajah, "all of us have translingual competence, with differences in degree and not kind" (*Translingual Practice* 8). The integration of translingualism in the classroom "will incrementally build a different norm" (288), as Bruce Horner, Samantha NeCamp, and Christiane Donahue observe. It will take time, in other words, for translingual composing practices and texts to be accepted in the English-speaking academy. After all, certain individuals may perceive translingual English as a threat to the formerly privileged monolingual English in which they are accustomed to speaking and writing. Teachers who believe in the conservation of Standard Written Academic English (SWAE) will continue to resist the emergence and acceptance of translingual English in academic environments. In their article "Toward a Multilingual Composition Scholarship: From English Only to a Translingual Norm" (2011), Horner, NeCamp, and Donahue offer several propositions for practicing translingual pedagogy in academic spaces. For example, they propose "the acquisition of languages other than English as well as collaboration with those who have greater facility in languages other than English" (289). Moreover, they advocate a revision of the second-language requirement for graduate students so that it encompasses the "reading [of] non-anglophone scholarship in rhetoric and language education" and "the production of translations of non-anglophone journal articles into English and the production of abstracts into other languages of English-medium articles" (290-91).[17] Translingualism, as I see it, will

---

[17] See also page 309 of Horner, Lu, Royster, and Trimbur's "Language Difference in Writing: Toward a

eventually compel all citizens to partake in slow acculturation; however, this acculturation will be multi-directional, thus destabilizing the power of hegemonic languages such as SE.

Translingual practice in the academy creates a vast number of opportunities for students and teachers alike. Most obviously, it allows for ultimate linguistic freedom. Translingual modes of composition therefore facilitate Students' Right To Their Own Language (SRTOL), a 1972 policy established by the Committee of the Conference on College Composition and Communication (CCCC) which "affirm[s] 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* 710). According to Lu and Horner, translingualism is a liberal practice that empowers its enthusiasts: "By foregrounding the mutual interdependence of structure and language practices, a translingual approach shifts attention to matters of agency – the ways in which individual language users fashion and re-fashion standardized norms, identify the world, and their relation to others and the world" ("Translingual Literacy and Matters of Agency" 28). Rather than language holding power over its users, then, a translingual approach facilitates users' power over language, regardless of race, class, or gender. Moreover, a translingual approach to teaching creates the possibility of higher levels of educational and professional success for all. Therefore, translingual proficiency will work to transform many employers' "narrowly conceived notions of the relationship between linguistic performance and job competence" (*CCCC* 722). In the broadest sense of the term, translingualism will equalize opportunity through the marriage, as opposed to the disintegration or division, of languages and language systems.

Translingual Approach."

Chapter 3

This chapter will provide readers with a synopsis and analysis of my ethnographic study. In the words of Beverly J. Moss, "ethnography in composition studies is . . . concerned more narrowly with communicative behavior or the interrelationship of language and culture" (156). According to Wendy Bishop, "ethnographic writing researchers look to study how individuals write (or don't write, or resist writing, or combine reading and writing, or are asked to write and perceive those jobs or academic assignments and carry them out)" (1). Furthermore, Bishop notes that ethnographic writing researchers draw on naturalistic, participant-observation inquiry (12). My project will also venture into critical ethnography, a branch of ethnography which "shifts the goal of praxis away from the acquisition of knowledge about the Other (either for its own sake or in the service of the ethnographer's career) to the formation of a dialogic relationship with the Other whose destination is the social transformation of material conditions that immediately oppress, marginalize, or otherwise subjugate the ethnographic participant" (Brown and Dobrin 5). Put differently, my project seeks to enact social change by putting forth critiques of existing composing platforms based on the results of my ethnographic study that might implement changes in the design of future composing platforms (see chapter 4).

As Bishop notes, "Ethnographic writing research uses one or more ethnographic data-gathering techniques (Bishop 35). This process of using more than one kind of data in order to verify observations through confirmation is known as *triangulation* (Bishop 19). In summary, I will therefore use such methods as field notes from participant observations, lab observations, and a focus group. I have already completed TCPS 2 Training and the

corresponding "Application for Ethics Review of Research Involving Human Participants," which received ethics clearance from the Office of Research Ethics at the University of Waterloo on April 2, 2015. One should note that ethnographic research, as V.J. Janesick posits, is less preoccupied with numbers (i.e. sampling, etc.) and is more centered on lived experience (qtd. in Bishop 48). During the Fall 2015 semester, my study will commence with a verbal script and an email script (as necessary) to recruit ENGL 109 (Introduction to Academic Writing) students at the University of Waterloo for the purposes of my study. Based on the diversity of respondees, I will randomly select a group of six ENGL 109 students for observation who fit one of the following target populations: 1) non-English speaker in the home, 2) multilingual speaker at home, or 3) native English speaker. Participants will then attend lab sessions for one-hour observations on two separate occasions (i.e. the beginning and end of the semester) where they will be observed as they respond to short writing prompts such as a personal narrative assignment. Students will be stationed in a lab where they will have screen capture, internet, Microsoft Word and database access. I will use audio-recording and video-recording as permitted. These students will be carefully observed during prewriting, researching, drafting, writing, editing and revising to learn how they interact with composing platforms like Microsoft Word and Google Docs. Likewise, with student permission, I will collect student ENGL 109 portfolios. Following each of the two lab observations, I will moderate a one-hour focus group wherein students can share their experiences composing in applicable technologically-mediated spaces. Here, I will use audio-recording and note-taking as permitted. Students will ultimately develop an understanding of the ways in which technology constrains their composing processes and

intersects with the politics of language. They will also have the opportunity to further explore

their writing and research skills and critically analyze their interaction with two major

writing platforms: Google Docs and Microsoft Word.

Chapter 4

Informed by theoretical analysis and the results of my ethnographic study, this chapter

will offer a critique of the composing platforms utilized by the writers in my study: platforms

that are widely used within and outside of the university. As technophile Stuart A. Selber

makes clear with his use of the simile "Computers as Cultural Artifacts," computers are not

neutral spaces by any means (86).[18] Despite the global village utopia myth, computers are

also complicit in "monoculturalism, capitalism, and phallologic thinking" (Selfe, "If You

Don't Believe"; Selfe and Selfe, "The Politics of the Interface" 486). With regard to

monoculturalism as it relates to and is implicated in monolingualism, apparently

linguistically neutral interfaces constrain *what* kinds of languages and Englishes are used and

how they are used. Moreover, as largely corporate products, the design of the most common

composing platforms enforce particular, monolingual (and monocultural) ways of

composing, communicating, and participating in public, professional, and academic dialogue.

Both Cynthia and Richard Selfe link the history of computer design to the United States.

Consequently, they argue that "[t]he language of computers has thus become English by

default" ("The Politics of Interface" 490). Computer composing platforms work to eradicate

linguistic diversity and relegate languages other than SE to the margins.

---

[18] See also Janet M. Eldred's "Pedagogy in the Computer-Networked Classroom," Selfe and Selfe's "The
Politics of the Interface," p. 495 and Cynthia Selfe's "If You Don't Believe."

In the final call to action section of their article "The Politics of the Interface," Cynthia and Richard Selfe endorse praxis. Here, they encourage students and teachers alike to become both technology critics and users (496-497). Their appeal inspires the work of this chapter to both experiment with and evaluate commonly used composing tools, programs and platforms. Here, I wish to critique at length Microsoft Word and Google Docs and the ways in which each tacitly disenables the practices of code-meshing and translingual composition, and appropriates users' diction and grammar. For instance, Microsoft Word, does not allow two languages to be turned on simultaneously for the purposes of writing and editing. Likewise, the rhetoric of the program's Help menu generally assumes that users are composing in a single tongue. Moreover, MS Word ensures that languages are kept "separate yet together" and its spellcheck features are designed in such a way that fragments, neologisms, and 'foreign' words and phrases, for example, are underlined in red or green if a user dares to outstep the program's boundaries. In a way, the spellcheck features resemble the English-speaking teacher in the classroom: the symbol of correction. After all, the program adheres to the traditional approach to composition, which "has sought to eradicate difference in the name of achieving correctness, defined as writers' conformity with a putatively uniform, universal set of notational and syntactic conventions that we name Standard Written English (or alternatively, Edited American English)" (Horner et al., "Toward a Translingual Approach" 306). Since MS Word is the choice word processing program as English is the choice language in the Western academy and in the workplace, the majority of students in North America are forced to either strive and thrive or defy and disappear. With special focus on MS Word (of which Google Docs is derivative), I would

21

like to carry out a detailed analysis of the ways in which these platforms oversee and regulate student composing processes and products.

Overall, this project seeks to expand current understandings of translingual practice in and outside of the academy. Following a literature review on translingualism, my project will undergo three central stages: 1) an examination of the ways in which existing composing platforms are ill-suited to the needs of an increasingly translingual population, 2) an ethnographic study that observes student composing practices, and 3) a comprehensive appraisal of current composing platforms replete with design suggestions.

Chapter 1
Demystifying Translingualism

Sweeping definitions of translingualism in the twenty-first century identify leading scholars in the field of writing studies and their contributions to this metamorphic discourse. L2 teacher and scholar Paul Kei Matsuda, for example, sums up translingualism as follows:

> A relatively new term, translingual writing is still in search of its own meaning. In general, it refers to loosely related sets of ideas and practices that have been articulated by scholars such as A. Suresh Canagarajah; Bruce Horner, Min- Zhan Lu, Jackie Jones Royster, and John Trimbur; and Vershawn Ashanti Young. I have also been implicated in this movement through my work related to language differences and their negotiation. (478-79)

Evidently, translingualism is still in the midst of establishing itself as a legitimate area of academic exploration and expertise. Matsuda, however, does not hesitate to call translingual writing "an intellectual movement" and also claims that, once divorced from the language question, the field of writing studies has revisited linguistics (478). Put differently, a translingual approach "centers attention on languaging: how we do language and why" (Lu and Horner, "Translingual Literacy and Matters of Agency" 27). Translingualism and related keywords and concepts emerge out of "the last decade's burgeoning conversations about multilingualism, World Englishes, English-Only, or politics and issues of 'language difference' more generally" (Kopelson 208). There exists a void in the field of Composition research and for many emerging and established compositionists it is quickly becoming a

niche: "teacherscholars are opting for a different framework altogether, one that takes as the norm not a linguistically homogenous situation but rather, linguistic difference – an emerging perspective variously identified as 'plurilingual,' 'translingual,' 'transcultural' – and that heralds ideals of creolité, interculturalité, diversalité (in contrast to, for example, multiculturalism and diversité)" (Horner, "Reworking English" 3).The politics and psychology of speech and writing are therefore research topics for twenty-first-century writing scholars and linguists.

Further synopses of translingual theory and practice appear throughout leading translingual scholarship. Horner et al., for example, offer the following succinct definition of a translingual approach:

> In short, a translingual approach argues for (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 by researching and teaching how writers can work with and against, not simply within, those expectations. ("Toward a Translingual Approach" 305)

In other words, the translingual approach promotes the SRTOL philosophy, values differences across and between languages, and rejects the monolingual English (ME) paradigm. Citing from the work of her fellow compositionists, Lee offers the following definition of the translingual approach: 1) a reverence for language fluency and 2) a deviation from traditional understandings of language mastery (316). What is perhaps most difficult about the translingual paradigm is its intangibility, which can frustrate and confuse followers.

24

Although translingual theory and practice has governing principles, it lacks any "hard and fast" rules or models (Lu and Horner, "Translingual Literacy and Matters of Agency" 29). Those who engage translingual writing therefore participate in a liberal practice and language policy.

1.1 The Translingual Train: Why Hop on It?

From a scholastic perspective, intellectuals may pursue translingualism insofar as it serves an ethical imperative. Put differently, many writing studies scholars working in the area of translingual theory and practice are motivated by a high degree of social responsibility: they believe that translingualism is necessary in order to establish a better educational system in North America and abroad. Lee, for instance, describes classroom environments "where linguistic hybridity is the norm and a sociocultural perspective infused with the World Englishes ethos is necessary as we seek to meet 21st century students' needs and expectations" (326). She therefore critiques the ME paradigm, which promotes linguistic conformity. Likewise, Matsuda speaks of the "moral imperative [whereby] people are drawn to translingual writing because it is the right thing to do" (480). However, he fears that while this imperative may characterize select teachers and scholars, for others, research on translingualism may simply mimic the historical establishment of new research areas in the field of writing studies (480). Matsuda thus exhibits anxiety over whether or not exploration of the translingual paradigm is rooted in discursive constructs that validate novel areas of inquiry; he worries that compositionists may take up the translingual approach for all of the wrong reasons. The implication is, for example, that those who merely emulate the field's historical movements can say they have become pioneers of translingual scholarship without

25

possessing any vested interest in that particular subject area. While some scholars do appreciate translingualism for its intellectual curiosity (480), others identify as "translingual" only insofar as it brings their research power and prestige (479). For these researchers, translingual scholarship is merely an outlet for honourable mention and recognition as opposed to genuine passion. It is an excuse for them to jump on the "what's new" train. In these cases, the "translingual" label is misused and manipulated for personal academic gain. Ultimately, then, scholars may pursue translingualism for any number of reasons, but preferably out of sincere desire to advance the field.

1.2 Early and Emerging Definitions of Translingualism

Since Stephen Kellman coined "translingualism" in the new millennium, the term has been imbued with evolving and sometimes competing definitions. In his book *The Translingual Imagination* (2000), he divides those who practice translingualism into two camps: 1) the *ambilinguals*, or "authors who have written important works in more than one language" and 2) the *monolingual translinguals*, or "those who have written in a single language but one other than their native one" (12). Kellman also describes "internally translingual texts" as the product of code-switching, which is characteristic of bilingual speakers and authors who reproduce spoken language in their written texts (15). Absent from Kellman's writing, however, is a discussion of language varieties; instead, he focuses on 'pure' or compartmentalized languages. Kellman's book predates code-meshing, a term coined by Vershawn Ashanti Young in his doctoral thesis titled "Your Average Nigga:

Language, Literacy, and the Rhetoric of Blackness" (2004).[19] Contrary to Kellman who

advocates code-switching, Young discourages code-switching in favour of what he calls

code-meshing: a technique "that combine dialects, styles, and registers" and "meshes

versions of English together in a way that's more in line with how people actually speak and

write" (*Your Average* 7). Code-meshing thus avoids the "separate yet together" approach or

clearly demarcated boundaries characteristic of code-switching. Additionally, this practice

emulates natural speech patterns. Code-meshing also provides an alternative to code-

switching, which Young argues "promotes a segregationist rather than an integrationist

model of literacy instruction" (*Other People's English* 3). Young communicates the ways in

which code-switching relegates languages other than Standardized English (SE) to home and

community, or non-academic spaces (*Your Average* 7). In a similar spirit, A. Suresh

Canagarajah points out that World Englishes (WE) are reserved for what have been socially

constructed as "lesser," if you will, venues, including literary texts, informal classroom

interactions, speech, home, and local communication ("The Place of World Englishes" 594).

WE have therefore not been valued enough in the North American classroom to be used for

non-literary texts, grammar, formal production, writing, school, and international

communication. Instead, languages other than ME (monolingual English) or SE are assigned

subjugated positions. Furthermore, in his early article "The Place of World Englishes in

Composition: Pluralization Continued" (2006), Canagarajah makes a case for code-meshing

in the twenty-first century: he argues that "code meshing [is] a strategy for merging local

---

[19] Note that Young gives credit to Jerry Graff to whom he provided the term as a means of naming Graff's discussion of the "blending of discourses, a disglossic, if not heteroglossic (multi-voiced) approach to speaking and writing" (*Other People's English* xiii). See also footnote #8 of Young's essay "Your Average Nigga" in CCC June 2004.

varieties with Standard Written English in a move toward gradually pluralizing academic writing and developing multilingual competence for transnational relationships" (586). While he later improves upon these ideologies, he makes a good preliminary point: plurality or linguistic freedom is preferred to paralysis or linguistic conformity. Although *The Translingual Imagination* can be arguably termed the foundational work on translingualism, it lacks a nuanced examination of the coming together and fusion or seamless integration of several languages and language varieties in the same physical, textual, or technologically-mediated space. Instead, it seems to advocate an advanced form of multilingualism that lingers in the shadows of its rival sibling: translingualism. Moreover, Kellman's definition of translingualism is limited to the literary realm.

1.3 Multilingualism and Translingualism

Speaking of multilingualism as it relates to translingualism, translingualism must be seen as evolving out of multilingualism and not simply "an additive notion of multilingualism" (Horner et al., "Toward a Translingual Approach" 307). In the same way that postmodernism cannot be entirely divorced from modernism, translingualism cannot be entirely divorced from multilingualism. As Matsuda rightly points out, "multilingual versus translingual" is a false binary since "negotiating language differences is not possible without having some proficiency in multiple languages or multiple varieties of a language . . . and whenever there are multiple languages in an individual or in a communicative situation, negotiation and change are inevitable" ("The Lure of Translingual Writing" 480). Binaries are always problematic as they establish predetermined core values and fixed borders. Translingualism therefore intersects with multilingualism insofar as the latter predates, dictates, and inspires

the translingual paradigm. Lee regards the translingual approach to writing as exceeding both the monolingual and multilingual models:

> The multilingual model . . . considers language static and discrete because it holds that multilinguals can achieve multiple fluencies in pre-set targets; the multilingual model also promotes the same image of the fractured linguistic personality of the bilingual and multilingual individual (Horner, NeCamp, et al., 2011, pp. 286–287). The 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 in writing, speaking, reading, and listening" (Horner, Lu, et al., 2011, p. 303). (315-316)

While the multilingual model maintains the "separate yet together" mantra characteristic of code-switching, the translingual approach values language negotiation over language mastery. Translingualism is therefore indebted to multilingualism in that it borrows and builds upon some of its fundamental principles.

1.4 Code-Meshing as Translingual Practice

Vershawn Young has developed the ongoing dialogue around translingualism through his concept of code-meshing. In the words of Paul Kei Matsuda, code-meshing is "an emblematic example of translingual writing" (481). Nevertheless, as Lu and Horner caution, one should avoid the conflation of translingualism and code-meshing ("Translingual Literacy and Matters of Agency" 29). Similarly, Canagarajah writes that "translingual practice might find expression in codemeshing for multilinguals in certain contexts" (*Translingual Practice* 8). Despite its name, however, code-meshing is not a random mishmash of language codes and language varieties. Instead, it is a complex and sophisticated mode of communication

29

that draws on a vast array of knowledge and experience. In several of his works, Young

defines and elaborates on code-meshing, as in his performative piece "Should Writers Use

They Own English" where he states that "Code meshing blend dialects, international

languages, local idioms, chat-room lingo, and the rhetorical styles of various ethnic and

cultural groups in both formal *and* informal speech acts" (114). Essentially, Young constructs

code-meshing as *en vogue*: "As you can see, code-meshing is everywhere. All types of

people in academic, professional and informal settings use it. Code-meshing allows writers

and speakers to bridge multiple codes and modes of expression that were previously

considered disparate and unmixable" (*Other People's English* 81). Put differently, code-

meshing is a universal phenomenon that lessens the language divide in merging linguistic

codes that were once separated and assigning them use value in the public and professional

spheres. As Brian Ray puts it, code-meshing involves "the use of two codes in the same

sentence or speech act, in high-stakes writing" (192). Though a neologism, code-meshing is

not a new practice (77). One of the ways translingualism has thus materialized is through the

practice of code-meshing. However, as Melissa Lee reminds us, "it seems best to introduce

and welcome code-meshing as an option and not the rule" (326). Code-meshing, therefore, is

one facet of translingual writing amongst many; while every piece of code-meshed writing

may be translingual, not every translingual piece of writing is code-meshed.

1.5 Code-Switching and Code-Meshing

Although code-switching and code-meshing are interrelated concepts, they have their

differences. In *Other People's English*, Rusty Barrett outlines four kinds of code-switching:

1) intersentential, 2) intrasential, 3) situational, and 4) metaphorical (29-31).[20] All of these

subdivisions share a strict separation of linguistic codes; they do not mingle freely.

Moreover, Young identifies code-meshing as evolving out of code-switching: "code meshing

is closely related to forms of code-switching that blend dialects" (77). He also refers to code-

meshing as an updated version of code-switching: "Code meshing is the new code switching;

it's multidialectalism and pluralinguralism in one speech act, in one paper" ("Should Writers

Use" 114). Code-meshing therefore allows for the blending and meshing of Englishes and

other languages, alphabetic or non-alphabetic, in the same textual, physical, or

technologically-mediated space. Moreover, code-meshing eludes clearly demarcated

boundaries between languages and races. With specific reference to African Americans in

academia, Young insists "that code-switching is a racialized teaching method that

manufactures linguistic segregation in classrooms and unwittingly supports it in society"

(*Other People's English* 58). On a similar note, Young and Martinez state that code-meshing

is valued as a "way to promote the linguistic democracy of English and to increase the

acquisition and egalitarian effective use of English in school, in government, in public, and at

home."" (xix). In his work, Young offers scathing critiques of code-switching. In fact, Young

has gone so far as to conflate code-switching and race-switching (*Your Average* 99).

---

[20] Linguists distinguish between *intersentential code-switching* in which the alternation occurs between two sentences or utterances and *intrasential code-switching* in which the alternation occurs within a sentence. . . . . One early proposal for addressing the social aspects of code-switching introduced the distinction between metaphorical *code-switching* and *situation code-switching* (Blom & Gumperz, 1972). Situational code-switching refers to alternations associated with a change in context (situation), such as using one language in church and another language at home. Metaphorical code-switching refers to using two languages in the same context to exploit the context-meaning associated with each language. In metaphorical code-switching, one might switch into a new language to express specific emotions or to draw links between the topic of the conversation and the language typically associated with that topic" (Barrett 29).

Likewise, Nichole E. Stanford nicknames code-switching "code-censoring" (127). It is clear that code-switching emulates apartheid on a linguistic level in filing languages into binary categories. Generally speaking, code-switching mandates a silencing of nonstandard codes and advances the political agenda of English-only policies (xiii Young and Martinez). In metaphorical terms, code-switching (especially situational code-switching) mechanizes individuals in insisting they shut down core parts of their identity in specific contexts. In a way, code-switching forces an individual to be one-dimensional. Code-meshing, on the other hand, transcends such boundaries in enabling a fluid shuttling between linguistic codes and varieties. Figuratively speaking, code-meshing resembles a knitted, multi-colour blanket (as opposed to a quilt) and a mixed drink or blended cocktail (as opposed to a layered cocktail). In short, code-meshing advocates the inseparability or the interconnectivity of languages.

1.6 Beyond Standard Written Academic English

At the heart of code-meshing ideology is a rejection of the prevailing, but misleading belief that Standard English is the language of the academy and business communication. In fact, Laura Violeta Columbo, a specialist on academic writing in 'foreign'[21] languages, defines SWAE as "the main means through which academic discourse is spread, not only nationally, but also internationally" (125).[22] However, she also problematizes SWAE, specifically in the context of scientific writing, as it relates to and promotes "the hegemony of the written mode, the structure of domination associated with a cultural arbitrary, and the fictitious universal of a monolithic view of language" (125). Lee confirms these assumptions

---

[21] I have taken this information from http://lauracolombo.cgpublisher.com. I use the phrase "foreign language" with caution.
[22] Likewise, Canagarajah speaks of "the power of the monolingual orientation in social and educational institutions today" (1).

32

in her advocacy of translingual practice: "There is no such thing as 'standard' English, and it is time that 'English' instructors in the United States begin actively and explicitly to shift into a conceptual framework that not only acknowledges but celebrates this transformed and transformative language ideology" (326). SE is not merely an ideal, then, but a fantasy that has never existed and will never exist. As Horner et al. claim, "For in fact, notions of the 'standard English speaker' and 'Standard Written English' are bankrupt concepts. All speakers of English speak many variations of English, every one of them accented, and all of them subject to change as they intermingle with other varieties of English and other languages" ("Toward a Translingual Approach" 305). In her introduction to "A Place Where There Isn't Any Trouble," Writing Studies and critical race theory scholar Dr. Frances (Frankie) Condon unveils "Standard English":

> For those who argue that there is, in fact, only one English attended by innumerable (and insufferable) bastardized forms, all of which need to be eradicated, the language-as-standard represents an idealization of both past and future, a nostalgia for that which never was and a yearning for that which never can or ever will be. English-only is a place where there isn't any trouble, where all visible and audible signs of differences have been effaced, where we all understand one another because we are all exactly the same. As a result, any privileges possessed by individuals or groups are, as myth has long held, earned; the stories we tell and the stories we hear confirm and affirm a triumphalist national narrative. (3)

The sooner we break free of these narrow-minded linguistic doctrines, the sooner we can reach a kind of linguistic nirvana.

33

1.7 SE: Standard English or Superficial English?

SE is undoubtedly a mythic tongue used to maintain the power of dominant practices.

Notably, cultural critic Stanley Fish classifies SE as "a device for protecting the status quo"

("What Should Colleges Teach? Part 3"). Young, however, critiques Fish for advocating

"linguistic prejudice" ("Should Writers Use They Own English" 110). The idea of SE is a

superficial construct that fails to reflect linguistic realities. As previously mentioned,

languages other than so-called SE have long been relegated to the home and communal

spheres as well as low-stakes writing, informal settings, and spoken communication. In

Young's code-meshed words, "Students be told that vernacular language should be reserved

for the playground with friends or at a picnic with neighbors, and that standard English be

used by professionals at work, in academic writing, and when communicating with important

officials" (115).[23] Canagarajah and Young agree that students need SE, but the pedagogical

implications remain vague (*Other People's English* 34). In other words, one central

pedagogical challenge at present is how instructors can negotiate the teaching of SE in a way

that does justice to previously undervalued or underprivileged Englishes. Nevertheless,

contrary to popular belief, SE is not completely divorced from code-meshing practices; in

fact, such a separation is hardly possible. Young's sister, Y'Shanda Young-Rivera, came

across an interesting revelation in her quest to find a definition of SE: according to the

American Heritage Online Dictionary, Standardized English is implicated in code-meshing

(91-92). Likewise, Canagarajah emphasizes that texts we assume are monolingual or written

---

[23] See also p. 79 of *Other People's English*: "Students are often told that their native Englishes or their informal and vernacular dialects should be reserved for the playground, used at home, or at a picnic, and that Standard English is to be used at all other times, certainly by professionals at work, in academic writing, and when communicating with important officials and individuals outside of the intimate scope of family, friends, and neighbours."

in strictly SE are often hybrid texts (*Literacy as Translingual Practice* 3). Code-meshed

varieties are therefore embedded in so-called standard language practices. In the same way

that we are all inherently translingual (7),[24] most of us are natural code-meshers. However, as

Lu and Horner posit, a translingual approach is not a simple decision to code-mesh or code-

switch, but rather a strategic deployment of languages ("Translingual Literacy and Matters of

Agency" 27).

1.8 Benefits of Code-Meshing

That being said, code-meshing must be commended for its transformative power as it is

implicated in translingualism. The goals of the translingual paradigm cohere in code-meshing

ideology and praxis. Young equates code-meshing with linguistic democracy: "The benefits

of code meshing extend beyond producing better papers. I believe it will help teachers avoid

imposing the harmful effects of American racialization on students, which happens when we

view their linguistic habits as subliterate, fundamentally incompatible with what's considered

standard." (*Your Average* 106). Inevitably, the linguistic divide translates into a racial divide.

Code-meshing thus promotes equality and freedom of expression. As Vivette Milson-Whyte

succinctly summarizes, the benefits of code-meshing are far-reaching:

> Based on the proposals from Young and Canagarajah, code-meshing promises
>
> intertwined political, psychological, and pedagogical benefits of valuing minoritized
>
> languages and subverting the hegemonic role of English; reducing tensions in

---

[24] In *Translingual Practice*, Canagarajah counters the belief that only multilingual speakers have translingual competence: "Communities and communication have always been heterogenous. Those who are considered monolingual are typically proficient in multiple registers, dialects, and discourses of a given language. Even when they speak or write in a single 'language,' they still have to communicate in relation to diverse other codes in the environment" (8).

language communities; improving student engagement with learning and yielding

better papers arising from development of cognitive fluency; and broadening

students' interest in and exploration of language issues. (105)

Similarly, Rosina Lippi Green claims that "the arguments and experiences of Martinez,

Young, and Canagarajah demonstrate . . . that code-meshing has positive implications for

both national and international users of English" (xxv). Code-meshing, then, does not simply

benefit non-native English speakers or speakers of underprivileged or nonstandard varieties

of English; it also benefits native English speakers or those classified as "monolinguals."

Code-meshing is not merely a linguistic tool but a way of being. It has the potential to

reorient all language users inside and outside of the academy.

1.9 Leading Perspectives: Canagarajah on Translingualism

Canagarajah, a leading translingual scholar, has authored one book and edited another

compilation on the subject in recent years. He names translingualism as an umbrella term for

such hybrid communicative modes as code-meshing, crossing, and polyglot dialog

(*Translingual Practice* 6; 8). He also identifies the translingual paradigm as characterized by

two core features: 1) transcendence of individual languages and 2) transcendence of words

(6; *Literacy as Translingual Practice* 1). As previously mentioned, then, translingualism

exceeds the compartmentalized and the alphabetic. Furthermore, translingualism demands

"sensitivity to similarity-in-difference (i.e. appreciating the common practices that generate

diverse textual products) and difference-in-similarity (i.e. appreciating the mediated and

hybrid composition of seemingly homogenous and standardized products)" (9). Put

differently, Canagarajah asks us to recognize when writers employ common or similar ways

of thinking and approaches to composing to produce very different sorts of texts and, conversely, to recognize when and how writers employ very different ways of thinking and approaches to composing to produce quite similar texts.

Canagarajah also makes the case that translingual practice is aligned with a global community: "Translingual practice results from and enables global citizenship" (*Translingual Practice* 15). He argues that modern society transcends the traditional cosmopolitan figure in that given widespread "translocal influences," it is no longer necessary to equate travel and mobility with cosmopolitanism (193). We have a tendency to regard language learning as a monolithic endeavor. In the words of Horner et al, the ideology of monolingualism takes as part of its premise "the universal applicability of a single language" ("Toward a Translingual Approach" 307). Although our identities are always in the making, we mistakenly consider our languages a constant variable. In other words, we view our languages as the one still rock amidst the ever-flowing river of life. However, as Canagarajah reminds us, "Languages don't determine or limit our identities, but provide creative resources to construct new and revised identities through reconstructed forms and meaning of new indexicalities" (*Translingual Practice* 199). In the same way that our experiences influence our lives, they also influence our languages. Lu and Horner describe writers as always in a state of becoming: "This [translingual] framework sees writing, writer identity, language forms used, and writer competence as always emergent and hence writer agency as both always in operation and always in development as writers shape themselves and language forms through recontextualization" ("Translingual Literacy and Matters of Agency" 26-27). We cannot predict the ways in which our encounters with other

37

languages and linguistic varieties will alter our ways of being and communicating. Consequently, we must beware of cultural essentialism. Moreover, as various foods and cultural practices such as sushi and yoga become normalized in Western culture, translingual practice will become even more commonplace and accepted. The university is a microcosm of this globalization process. According to the updated (i.e. 2009) version of the original 2001 CCCC (Conference on College Composition and Communication) "Statement on Second Language Writing and Writers," this organization "recognizes the presence of a growing number of second language writers in institutions of higher education across North America." Additionally, in America, where the field of writing studies is based, the 2011–2012 academic year witnessed the highest enrollment of international students at colleges and universities (Lee 313). Evidently, universities in Canada and the United States have an increasingly high volume of both international and domestic second language undergraduates and graduates. Moreover, as Horner et al. remind us, "Language use in our classrooms, our communities, the nation, and the world has always been multilingual rather than monolingual" ("Toward a Translingual Approach" 303). Contrary to popular belief, linguistic diversity rules.

1.10 The Myth of Monolingual English

We have a tendency to assume that there exists only one English. Crystal (2004) and Graddol (1999), however, "show that the number of people who speak English as an additional language far exceeds those who use it as their sole or first language, that is, the traditional native speakers" (cited in Canagarajah, *Translingual Practice* 61). The Englishes spoken by these non-native speakers are often categorized in some important way according

to their country of origin (e.g. Singaporean English/Singlish and Pakistani English/Paklish).

Canagarajah finds these English varieties useful at times while acknowledging their

problematic nature: "The most glaring challenge in [*Translingual Practice*] is the need to use

labeled languages (such as Tamil or English) or English varieties (such as Sri Lankan English

or Nigerian English when the translingual approach holds that we are dealing with language

resources that are mobile, fluid, and hybrid" (15). Evidently, such labels establish an

imaginary hierarchy and maintain the linguistic divide. These labels also participate in a kind

of "othering" of specific varieties that may be regarded as non-standard or non-traditional.

However, they also serve an important purpose: they are part of the social reality and identity

for these groups (15-16). A translingual orientation seeks to establish English as a diverse

and volatile communicative mode as opposed to a language cemented on rigid grammatical

similarities (14). English, then, already implies global use and ownership as opposed to

exclusive identification with specific realms such as the "academic" or "British." In most

places, heterogeneity is the norm: "It's only in the United States and in some other countries

where English is the local language that multilinguality is regarded as at all odd or

problematic" (Hall 31). In North America in particular, English is constructed as a pure entity

without history. As a matter of fact, however, English is by no stretch of the imagination a

self-made or 'pure' language: "English itself is a mixed language and draws from the diverse

communities it has come into contact with. Some would argue that hybridity exists in the

very formation of English, arising from the dialects of the Germanic, Saxon, and Frisian

tribes" (Canagarajah, "Afterword: World Englishes as Code-Meshing" 279). Knowing that

English has such rich ethnic roots, attempts at its purification appear ironic (Canagarajah,

"Code-Meshing as World English" 279). Similarly, Weiguo Qu, a scholar of English with expertise in sociolinguistics, asks the rhetorical question: "Without Latin, French, Norse, and many other languages, could English have developed into its present shape?" (68). Myths that languages exist in a vacuum are indeed problematic. After all, "we need to recognize that language practices are emergent" (Cooper 29). In other words, languages are not stable, fixed, and pure; they are unstable, fluid, and messy.[25] We need to discontinue this irrational fear of language miscegenation. Languages are living but not without history: "Language and culture are never monolithic, so trying to maintain purity is futile" (Stanford 138).

Additionally, language has always been associated with hegemony. Worldwide, English partakes in a gigantic power struggle between "native" and resistant users: "English is best defined as an unstable process kept alive by the intense intra-and international struggle between and across English and diverse languages and across diverse standardized englishes" (Lu, "An Essay on the Work of Composition" 24). Bruce Horner seconds this perspective: "'English' is still a place populated by natives and nonnatives alike whose borders are, admittedly, subject to disputation and whose internal characteristics are admittedly diverse" ("Reworking English" 2). The fictitious SE thus constantly tries to defeat its rivals, maintaining, though rather unsuccessfully, the illusion that it is at the top of the linguistic hierarchy. In fact, numerous individuals are under the impression that SE is real: "Many people believe Standard English exists somewhere (in books on 'correct' speaking or writing, or in English teachers' heads, or in their own uses or the uses of people they admire), and they may choose to use this belief to authorize their behavior. . . ." (Cooper 17). Yet, even as

---

[25] Credit to Deborah Carmichael for her description of translingualism as "messy." See below.

English continues to be the official language in schools across North America, Canagarajah, citing from David Graddol, reiterates that native English speakers "'lost their majority in the 1970s'" ("The Place of World Englishes" 588). Likewise, Margaret Gearon, Jennifer Miller, and Alex Kostogriz cite from Claire Kramsch to problematize English-medium (and French-medium) universities in North America: "'We are still teaching standard national languages according to a 19th century modern view of language as a structural system with rules of grammatical and lexical usage and rules of pragmatics reified to fit the image of a stereotyped Other'" (4). Such observations make us question how to make room for those non-English languages and underprivileged varieties in our education system. After all, the pedagogy described above strictly prohibits code-meshing or translingual modes of composition. Once again, languages are compartmentalized and sanitized. National borders preside. But Horner makes an important point: "'English' can no longer be taken for granted as the assumed linguistic and institutional home territory of its course, programs, and scholarship, within whose conceptual horizons its work naturally takes place" ("Reworking English" 1). Heterogeneity is not a deficit; instead, our tendency to default on so-called Standard English is the deficit.

1.11 English as Translingual

Canagarajah initially proposed the establishment of English as a plural language in "The Place of World Englishes in Composition" (589). Here he argues that "English should be treated as a multinational language, one that belongs to diverse communities and not owned only by metropolitan communities" (589). He later develops this idea into English as Translingual, an inclusive model that involves native and non-native speaker communities

(*Translingual Practice* 57). English as Translingual is based on practices, not form, and "treats diversity as the norm" (75). English as Translingual therefore has no fixed vocabulary or grammatical systems; it is defined by its diverse users. Moreover, this relatively new model "challenges the assumptions of other models of global Englishes that sharedness and uniformity of norms at different levels of generality are required for communicative success" (75). Seeing English as a mobile, plural, and diverse language is different than associating it only with the "Queen's English" (British English) or American English. The latter represents a reductionist model of English. As a translingual model, 'English' undoubtedly has much greater potential to engage all students on an equal playing field. In short, English as translingual should not be devalued in favour of Standardized English(es) and instead we should strive towards linguistic pluralism. I believe English as Translingual is a stepping stone to more advanced translingual practice that will abolish reference to any one language and hence the ideal sort of universal communication that now lingers only in the best of our imaginations. After all, translingualism requires collective efforts and global cooperation.

This view of English as already translingual problematizes expectations in the job market. As outlined by Horner et al. students can excel in the working world without "attaining native-like spoken fluency in a particular variety of a particular language" ("Toward a Translingual Approach" 312). Moreover, Horner et al. posit that language diversity is more valuable and marketable than linguistic conformity in the twenty-first-century career market and commerce: "Instead, what is increasingly needed, and even demanded, is the ability to work across differences, not just of language but of disciplines and cultures" (312). Facility

with languages and linguistic varieties is both a soft and hard skill[26] that sets select job

applicants apart from others. However, English varieties seemingly govern businesses and

institutions despite the fact that multilingual competence has proliferated through the

diffusion of students and employees (Canagarajah, *Translingual Practice* 15). After all, the

dissemination of English in its many forms has only intensified its powers:

> English is the dominant global language and becomes more important as one moves
>
> into elite or leading professions, though elite British and US dialects no longer set
>
> absolute standards. English has escaped the English-speaking nations so that now
>
> there are about twice as many people who speak English as an additional language
>
> than do so as a first language. (Bazerman 20)

Therefore, English varieties or World Englishes take precedence over other languages and

linguistic varieties. Employers continue to reward potential employees who exhibit

competence in their so-called "dialects" or "Standardized English." Similarly, instructors

continue to reward students who conform to the conventions of the illusory Standard

Academic English. However, while popular belief holds that SE is indeed the key to upwards

mobility, research prove otherwise. Lu and Horner call this phenomenon "the literacy myth":

the belief that "students' language is the primary reason for their subordinate social,

academic, and economic status, despite the plethora of evidence demonstrating that language

difference serves primarily as a proxy to justify racial and ethnic prejudice" ("Translingual

Literacy, Language Difference, and Matters of Agency" 598). They claim that this "bargain,"

---

[26] Arguably, language proficiency/competence would fall into the category of communication skills. See p.49 of
Bernd Schulz's "The Importance of Soft Skills: Education Beyond Academic Knowledge."

or exchange of language difference for academic and professional success,[27] amounts to an abandonment of agency on behalf of the students (598). Such practices are detrimental to the student population as they develop false consciousness that their careers are contingent on their competence in SE. Neglect of linguistic diversity thus propagates failure: students' "academic success and subsequent career success are jeopardized when schooling does not draw on the linguistic and cultural knowledge they bring to school" (Fang He, Chan, and Phillion 125). Moreover, citing from Rickford et al. (2013), Young acknowledges that equating increased competence in SE with better employment and other personal advantages perpetuates racism (*Other People's English* 5). After all, submission to SE compels students to leave behind their linguistic markers and cultural identities. Young rightly refutes the belief that teachers should force students to master the rules of Standard English usage for standardized tests, professional jobs, and academics in general (Young, *Literacy as Translingual Practice* 144). Alternatively, academia should privilege negotiation strategies for effective and representative discourse. The second chapter will deal more thoroughly with these issues.

1.12 From Translingual Theory to Translingual Practice

In her afterword to Canagarajah's *Literacy as Translingual Practice*, Dorothy Worden arrives at two central limits: 1) the need for exploration of the ways in which translingual communication is realized and 2) the need for justification of translingual writing as an *instructional approach* (237). Evidently, there exists ample theorization and identification of

---

[27] Canagarajah phrases this tension as "the need to master dominant codes for social and educational success" ("The Place of World Englishes in Composition" 597).

translingual practice; however, implementation is lacking. Lee also arrives at such a conclusion: "The translingual approach to writing pedagogy has been suggested as a theoretical means by which contemporary students may be served more effectively in university composition classes (Horner, Lu, Royster, & Trimbur, 2011; Horner, NeCamp, & Donahue, 2011). The negotiation model for writing promoted by Canagarajah (2002, 2006b, 2007, 2012) and its successor, the code-meshing strategy of writing promoted by Young (2004, 2007, 2011) and Canagarajah (2006a, 2011, 2012), have been put forth as practical suggestions" (313). For this reason, many individuals do not understand what exactly it means to be translingual, even though we all already are. In fact, some teachers are guilty of integrating translingual writing into their coursework without full comprehension or development of the framework's implications (Matsuda 479-80). We therefore need to establish representative translingual teachers, teaching materials, and composing platforms. It is not enough to point out examples of translingual practice in other cultures or outline its abstract features; we require concrete modes of execution.

1.12.1 Young's Class Dictionary

An epitome of translingual practice is Vershawn Young's class dictionary or "Lexicon Building" activity as it is context-specific and therefore bases its communication on the classroom community. Young describes the activity in a personal email as one that begins with the identification and definition of unfamiliar words in course readings and proceeds to include words, phrases, and idioms specific to students' own cultural or linguistic backgrounds (Young, "RE: Dissertation"). This dictionary takes the form of poster paper that is laminated when filled and also electronic files, should students wish to keep their own

personal digitized copies ("RE: Dissertation"). Inevitably, this dictionary would expand over the course of the term as students networked with other translingual speakers outside of the classroom and brought that experience into their vocabularies. Canagarajah regards social interaction as one of the most valuable tools in facilitating translingual practice:

> Socialization is emerging as an important means for people to learn these new literacies and develop the necessary dispositions and strategies for their negotiation in the global contact zones. Product-oriented, monolingual, and norm-based teaching can often stifle these complex dispositions and strategies students bring from outside the classroom. However, classroom and educational ethnography shows that behind the backs of their teachers, students are turning pedagogical sites as spaces for socialization, tapping into the rich communicative ecologies found therein (see Creese & Blackledge, 2010). Learners are collaborating with their peers and mentors, and shuttling between different languages, literacies, and communities, as they develop translingual competence. (*Literacy as Translingual Practice* 7)

Evidently, many individuals have a zest for learning about other cultures and languages. Nevertheless, Matsuda cautions against what he labels "linguistic tourism" (483), a superficial sampling of languages. Perhaps "linguistic tourism" takes after exoticism with its fascination with the distant and unfamiliar. More specifically, Matsuda argues that "writing teachers need to know a lot more about the use of multiple languages than what can be learned from tour guides" (483). His solution to this problem of linguistic tourism revolves around a deeper understanding of the deployment of languages and language uses: "The most important first step would be for the field to learn more about language—its nature, structure,

46

and function as well as users and uses—as it pertains to the study and teaching of writing, especially translingual writing" (483). Young's dictionary activity definitely complies with translingual practice as students are responsible for translation and interpretation. In Young's words, the purpose of this exercise is to have students discover modes of expression that deviate from standard practices, which aids in lexicon building ("RE: Dissertation"). After all, translingual competence is based on the meshing of resources for creative new forms and meanings (Canagarajah, *Literacy as Translingual Practice* 2).

1.12.2 Additional Classroom Activities that Engage Translingual Practice

Turning now to *Other People's English Code-Meshing, Code-Switching, and African American Literacy*, we find many other examples of translingual practice in the classroom. In fact, at the end of most chapters there is a section entitled "Teaching Tip," which provides instructors with an activity to adapt to their own course material. One activity created by Young to encourage students to value their own Englishes and those of others around them requires "students to list at least 10 examples of colorful language, local idioms, or techno-lingo from their own heritages and 10 examples from at least one other cultural group of which they are not a part" (77). Such an activity again aids with lexicon building, cultural sensitivity and critical awareness. Similarly, Y'Shanda Young-Rivera proposes another activity that asks students to identify undervalued Englishes in various media (92). This exercise sheds light on the multiplicity of language and like the list activity above, it increases exposure to other languages and cultures. Moreover, this exercise reminds students that language is politically charged and remains both a need and a right.

47

1.12.3 Multimedia Assignments as an Exercise in Code-Meshing

Drawing on her experience as a first-year composition instructor, Lee details various activities designed for her students. Broadly speaking, Lee regards multimedia assignments as a method by which instructors can create environments wherein students can practice and perform code-meshing, which is implicated in the translingual approach (321). Here she offers up the specific examples of digital literacy narratives (321), interview activities whereby interviewers (students) carry out a transcription to analyze linguistic codes as well as inflection and syllable emphasis (322), and a written assignment that asks students to blend African American African American Language (AAL) and SAE (323). Finally, Lee give students code-meshed texts published by scholars in the field of Composition such as Chapter 5 in Young's *Your Average Nigga* (2007) (324). These activities appeal to different modalities of communication (i.e. aural, visual, oral, and tactile) and enable students to identify and rehearse translingual modes.

1.12.4 Code-Meshing in the Classroom

Other Compositionists are undoubtedly embracing translingual practice through code-meshing in their own classrooms. Writer and professor, Theresa Welford, for example, testifies: "I encourage my students to blend informal and formal language in all their assignments" (22).[28] Additionally, Welford also provides her students with opportunities for what she calls "genre blending" (41) in assignments that require students to oscillate between traditional and creative writing (21). Stylistic and linguistic decisions are thus broadened in

---

[28] See chapter 2 for the dissolution of informal and informal boundaries as outlined in Young's "Should Writers Use They Own English" (see p.115).

Welford's class, enabling students to further explore and express, rather than negate, their unique identities. Broadly speaking, Asao B. Inoue, a scholar of writing assessment and racism, proposes two unconfirmed claims that could lead to future policy changes regarding how educators can better include non-standard Englishes through code-meshing: "1) First agents in control of education and the assessment of learning need to adapt different listening practices. 2) And, second, educators should expect and accept code-meshing language practices that bend the rules but do not get folks kicked out of the game" (97)." These changes will respect non-standard Englishes and further their learning objectives without hindering their education or job prospects. However, prior to implementation, it is necessary to further existing scholarship on code-meshing and related translingual practices. We cannot code-mesh blindly or encourage code-meshing with only a superficial understanding. Until teachers are fully informed about and implicated in code-meshing, they cannot "practic[e] what [they] preach" (Stanford 129). [29]

1.12.5 Code-Meshing in the Academic Community

Outside of the classroom but still within the bounds of academia, code-meshing is gaining credibility. Growing recognition and respect for code-meshed scholarly publications in the field of Composition can be attributed to the efforts of scholars like Vershawn Young, Geneva Smitherman, Gloria Anzaldúa, Victor Villaneuva, Adam Banks and A. Suresh Canagarajah. These scholars engage with code-meshing through performative pieces that

---

[29] "Those of us with certain institutional power, and professors of English in particular, ultimately have to do more than simply sanction (especially non-traditional) students' increasing awareness of and experimentation in code-meshing and alternative academic conventions: we have to lead by example" (Nettell 180).

defend and negotiate their positionalities. Geneva Smitherman, for example, uses African American English and rhetoric in a number of her professional publications such as "The historical struggle for language rights in CCCC" (2003).[30] Likewise, in *Digital Griots: African American Rhetoric in a Multimedia Age*, Adam Banks becomes a DJ and digital griot: "I hope this book models the mix and remix and becomes a kind of mixtape of its own" (7). Even Anzaldúa's so-called "scholarly" work blurs the line between academic and creative writing and meshes Spanish and English. Her most famous work and perhaps her most extraordinary example of code-meshing is *Borderlands/La Frontera: The New Mestiza*. Moreover, Canagarajah engages with code-meshing in his academic writing. For instance, in his book *Translingual Practice,* he draws on Tamil writing practices, "cit[es] from [his] multilingual research subjects" who "contribute to a polyphonous text," and "adopt[s] certain uses of Sri Lankan English in some places" (123). Following his example, he encourages the pluralizing of scholarly discourse in academic journals: "It appears to me that codemeshing may provide a way for multilingual scholars to show their competence in academic norms while also appropriating them for their purposes" (*Translingual Practice* 122). Code-meshing enables users to both participate in and depart from the dominant discourse(s). However, Canagarajah suggests that authors may want to carefully examine their entextualization and envoicing strategies in order to be sensitive to the context of the field, the journal, the subject of the article, and the sections of the article (124). Having served as

---

[30] Smitherman, Geneva. "The historical struggle for language rights in CCCC." *From intention to practice: Considerations of Language Diversity in the Classroom*, edited by Geneva Smitherman and Victor Villaneuava, Southern Illinois University Press, 2003, pp. 7-39.

50

editor for *TQ* from 2005-2009, Canagarajah has established personal guidelines for peer review:

> My position has always been that I will accept code-meshed essays if they were
>
> rhetorically justified, strategic, and displayed a critical and creative design. What will
>
> help me decide if these choices can be permitted in a published article is whether they
>
> are appropriate in the text and context. Did the author think through the use of his or
>
> her choice? Did the usage enhance communication and voice? Was the choice
>
> rhetorically well motivated? Did the author take into consideration the dominant
>
> discourses and readership of the journal to choose the extent to which he/she can
>
> introduce variant language and discourse? Whether and how much to codemesh is a
>
> rhetorical decision. (125)

Canagarajah proceeds to offer up the example of his 2006 code-meshed article "The Place of

World Englishes in Composition" wherein he analyzes Smitherman's writing strategies and

promotes code-meshing (122). If the purpose of this article was to condemn code-meshing,

for instance, or if Canagarajah was not of Sri Lankan origin or had no affinity to the

language, his use of Sri Lankan English would most definitely appear misplaced. However,

his due attention to context and entextualization (122) demonstrates his command of code-

meshing; his use of different codes is thoughtful and deliberate. Code-meshing should never

be careless or arbitrary. One common critique in translingual and Composition scholarship

more generally is the discrepancy between content and form. Jeff Zorn, for instance,

sarcastically criticizes the SRTOL for its linguistic hypocrisy: "Defending street talk, the

authors write the English furthest from street talk, because street talk never suffices for

intellectual complexity and careful policy argumentation" (155). A certain irony, then, infiltrates the SRTOL because it is apparently saying one thing and doing another. As the cliché goes, "Actions speak louder than words." And words, as in the case of the SRTOL National Language Policy, sometimes double as actions. Once again, there is a need for teachers *and* scholars to lead by example.

1.13 Code-Meshing as Commonplace

Revisiting Canagarajah's advocacy of code-meshed scholarly articles, it is important to note that a lot of what already exists in both print and online journals across the disciplines is in fact code-meshed. Though this kind of code-meshing may be a product of the discipline from which it arises, it is there and deserves recognition in order to do justice to the already translingual nature of academic writing. Lu and Horner argue that teachers need to impress upon their students a greater awareness of existing translingual literacy: "We need to learn to recognize, and help students learn to recognize, the kinds of difference they are already making in their writing, and that they might wish to make, and how" ("Translingual Literacy, Language Difference, and Matters of Agency" 603). What Canagarajah does not explicitly state is that we have accepted and justified some kinds of code-meshing and denied or insulted other varieties. We have censored what kinds of code-meshing are acceptable or unacceptable, who can participate in these more radical discourses, and where these code-meshed writings can appear. Lu and Horner phrase this oversight in terms of "Pierre Bourdieu's sense of recognition/misrecognition" otherwise explained as the regard for certain types of language difference and disregard for others ("Translingual Literacy, Language Difference, and Matters of Agency" 584). Evidently, Canagarajah, a voice of the Sri Lankan

diaspora, discredits what he sees as less audacious[31] forms of code-meshing, or scholarly

works that are code-meshed to a lesser degree than the writings of other marginalized

scholars. Put differently, Canagarajah is referring to code-meshed works that are less

experimental and more conventional. Disciplinary code-meshing is one example of code-

meshing that has become so commonplace that we neglect to call it "code-meshing." For

example, math writing using programs like LaTeX involves inputting and integrating

notations, formulae, proofs, examples, pseudo-code, and algorithms into written alphabetic

text. Because this discipline-specific writing has become normalized or standardized, the

code-meshed element is ignored. However, skill and craft in published math writing are

exceptional. While we consider code-meshing that is unremarked upon, such as that in the

disciplines, as apolitical, we must recognize that it qualifies as profoundly political.

Collectively, we have not taken notice of legitimatized forms of code-meshing across the

disciplines.

1.14 Beyond Code-Meshing

While code-meshing or language blending is undoubtedly a popular tool for translingual

advocacy, translingual practice can take other directions. Literary scholar and compositionist

Jonathan Hall invites educators and to consider four viable suggestions: 1) Cultivate a

multilingual workforce in composition instruction, 2) Educate faculty in pedagogy based on

interdisciplinary research, 3) Engage multiple Englishes –local and global – in the classroom,

and 4) Customize curriculum and individualize writing instruction using language profiles

---

[31] In his article "Negotiating Translingual Literacy: An Enactment," Canagarajah separates students who "code-mesh prominently" from those who do not (46). He also speaks about "more experimental writers [who] expect[] readers to adopt imaginative strategies to interpret the code-meshing without too much dependence on the writer" (56).

and technology (44-46). The first of these suggestions has to do with creating more linguistically diverse faculty to accommodate diverse student needs. The second suggestion has to do with a departure from tradition in the humanities and thus a turn away from the production of "primarily literature specialists" in English departments (45). The third suggestion details a reconceptualization of "English."[32] Finally, the fourth and final suggestion invites educators to familiarize themselves with and tailor their lessons to their unique student demographic. Hall's suggestions should be praised for their pinning of translingual practice on teachers *and* students. Too often, the onus of translingual practice is placed on the student body alone. Nevertheless, educators too must engage the translingual approach and lead by example.

1.15 Practicing What We Preach

Speaking of classroom leadership, it is necessary to redefine instructional roles. As leaders of tomorrow, teachers must well represent language difference. Nettell seconds this opinion:

> Those of us with certain institutional power, and professors of English in particular, ultimately have to do more than simply sanction (especially non-traditional) students' increasing awareness of and experimentation in code-meshing and alternative academic conventions: we have to lead by example. (180)

Otherwise, it is on fair grounds that teachers can be labeled hypocrites or exclusionists. It would appear a double standard for teachers to speak in a mythic Standard Academic English and simultaneously, using that speech, encourage students to explore their linguistic

---

[32] I did just this when I redesigned "ENGL 140R: The Use of English" course at Renison University College.

54

difference. Instructors, then, must actively partake in linguistic behavior that does not conform to a single code. Only then can an open, non-judgmental environment define the writing classroom. Using the example Stanford provides, for instance, teachers "should be writing any assignment [they] give [their] students" (129). Such an approach aligns with Canagarajah's "dialogical pedagogy" wherein the student-teacher roles become interchangeable. Compositionists must also consider the impact code-meshing practices have on classroom delivery, lesson plans, course texts, social media (esp. twitter), and scholarly publications to name a few. Code-meshing classroom practices are definitely not a one-way street and extend to other areas of the instructor's life, both personal and professional.

1.16 Detractors of Translingualism

Detractors of translingual practice are likely to critique the vastness, instability and non-linearity with which translingualism is associated. More specifically, some detractors of translingualism may put forth the argument that translingualism is not a legitimate knowledge-producing language. One of the central challenges that the advocacy of translingualism poses for academia, then, has to with the academy's focus on language and/or form to the detriment to content, part of its failure to adopt a holistic view of composition: "Another possible way of putting this is to consider how we keep the focus on work across boundaries of language and modality rather than seeing our task as one of selecting from a menu of languages and modalities?" (Horner and Selfe "Negotiating Differences in Language and Literacy" 6). In other words, such a concern necessitates a skillful negotiation of structure and language practices by those who practice translingualism. Others may reject translingualism on the grounds that it displaces the traditional authority of

the teacher. The instructor and pupil roles are much less hierarchical, particularly with regard to evaluation. Take, for example, Canagarajah's "dialogical pedagogy" which invites and values discussion and student feedback. Furthermore, a translingual approach makes different demands of instructors, including taking up and keeping current in their code-meshing practices. Teachers, then, have additional work responsibilities, both evaluative and discursive, which can be off-putting. New educational mandates and hiring procedures may also make for a more competitive job market, especially if Hall's suggestion to "insist upon serious 'foreign' language requirements" for "the next generation of faculty" (44) is actively pursued. Additionally, some teachers may predicate their rejection of translingualism on the belief that it will unnecessarily complicate evaluation. After all, a translingual approach "means that teachers (and students) need to be more humble about what constitutes a mistake (and about what constitutes correctness) in writing, rather than assume that whatever fails to meet their expectations, even in matters of spelling, punctuation, and syntax, must be an error" (Horner et al. "Toward a Translingual Approach" 310). One might ask: what exactly does a translingual rubric look like? Of course, translingual practice exceeds grammatical concerns and also propagates fears of language barriers. Consequently, some faculty and instructors may withdraw from the teaching field because of their discomfort with translingual pedagogy. Building on this idea, other forms of resistance might arise from what rhetorician and compositionist Karen Kopelson "call[s] a fetishizing of difference or deviations and concomitant demonizing, or at least radical devaluing, of the 'conventional,' the 'norm,' or 'the dominant,' whether those refer to SWE, SAD or even English itself"

(216). We must be careful, then, not to trivialize translingual practice or marginalize the (imagined) mainstream.

Kopelson also points out that resistance to the translingual approach may be rooted in attachment to existing and established views about errors and standards (216). Translingualism is "messy," as writing scholar Deborah Carmichael described it in my panel at the 2015 CCCC convention, and we have a tendency to negate the real and elevate the ideal. Related to this concern, certain teachers may not see a need for a translingual approach in a classroom that appears to be comprised of largely "English monolinguals" (Horner et al. 311, "Toward a Translingual Approach"). From a student perspective, some individuals may feel compelled to defend English as their native or first language. Students for whom the current education system is advantageous are likely to resist any significant changes in administrative policy. In their presumed defense, educators may also adapt such a stance.

Perhaps most obviously, some individuals will reject translingualism on the grounds of fear. In the words of Kellman, "[T]he term *tongue depressor* could also describe those who feel so threatened by the ambient Babel that they elevate monolingualism into a religious principle" ("¿Qué es Literatura Translingual?" 6). Put differently and in colloquial language, "we don't like what we don't know." Most of us have a tendency to worship habit and stay within our linguistic comfort zones. The very idea of plurilithic Englishes is menacing to most people. Jeffrey Zorn, a leading detractor of translingual practice, sees translingualism as disadvantaging "*good* students" who profit from the teaching of a Formal Standard English in the writing classroom (175). However, these "good students" are most likely so-called

57

English monolinguals whose English proficiency translates to privilege. Pennycook counters Zorn's narrow, archaic vision with a broader, updated one:

> So an emerging goal of education may be less towards proficient native-speaker-like speakers (which has always been a confused and misguided goal), and to think instead of resourceful speakers who can draw on multiple linguistic and semiotic resources, and accommodate, negotiate and be light on their feet, who might have been able to get by in the port cities of old and can also get by in the cities of today. ("What Might Tranglinual Education Look Like?" Pennycook 13)

The translingual paradigm privileges language negotiation over language preservation. And linguistic conformity, especially as manifested through linguistic imperialism, is considered obsolete.

Another concern I anticipate with the onset of translingual practice, particularly in academia, has to do with the power politics of language. Whose languages are being honoured by school leaders? Where do these languages originate? How do students negotiate languages affected by colonialism? Young's classroom dictionary (as described above) would probably answer the first of these questions. Pennycook attempts to remedy the latter:

> We need to move, I think, away from the idea of languages and multilingualism as they have been defined under coloniality and modernity, and to move towards ideas such as practices, styles, repertoires, discourses, genres, and so on, rather than languages. We also need to bring in the idea of multimodality, so broad multimodal semiotics includes more than language as narrowly understood. ("What Might Translingual Education Look Like?" 9)

He reinforces this idea in a more recent article: "As long as we still operate with the same epistemological framework of languages that emerged from the colonial/modernist context (Errington, 2008; Nakata, 2007), we will not be able to think our way out of the dilemmas posed by language and globalisation (Makoni and Pennycook, 2007)" ("Translingual English" 1). What is emphasized in a lot of Pennycook's well-intentioned work is the need to divorce language from geographic location and reject the colonial mentality that wrongly compartmentalizes already translingual languages. However, one obvious obstacle that arises from Pennycook's rapid movement away from talking about languages and multilingualism is that we are not finished with linguistic imperialism and domination so change is complicated to pursue. Additionally, we need to be conscientious of the ways in which the movement away from conversation about languages can cause historical and material consequences to increase for minority and marginalized populations.

Yet another concern that crosses my mind with regard to translingualism is the fear that English as we know it will eventually be enveloped or swallowed up by other languages. Such a concern regarding English extermination is unsettling as many Native English speakers might feel as though they are experiencing a kind of colonization in the helpless relinquishing and powerful overwriting of their home languages. To counter these kinds of concerns, Rhetorician and Compositionist Patricia Bizzell proposes a "Common English": "a living language, adapting as it encounters other languages and other forms of English and changing what counts as 'correct' Common English over time" (134). As implied in its name, Common English takes as its basis the English language. The other languages and forms that are adapted into Common English, then, are not mere embellishment or embezzlement;

59

rather, they signify strategic embeddedness and equilibrium. However, Bizzell's "Common English" also continues to privilege English speakers around the globe. In this way, "Common English" implicitly feeds into an unequal power dynamic wherein English continues to have the upper hand. My critique of Bizzell's proposition and similar calls for action is two-fold: 1) failure to destabilize English in the imagined linguistic hegemony and 2) failure to exceed the alphabetic. Power politics are always a concern when it comes to language practice and policies.

Turning now to other related proposals, there exists what Canagarajah calls "Lingua Franca English (LFE)" (2007) and "English as an International Language" (EIL) (2013) and Pennycook's "Translingual Franca English" (2011). Canagarajah defines "LFE" as a "shared resource" by speakers who are not bound by one geographical region ("The Ecology of Global English" 91). In his view, LFE is created each and every time speakers of English converse with each other: "In this sense, LFE does not exist as a system out there. It is constantly brought into being in each context of communication" (91).   As Pennycook further develops this model, my critique can be found in the following paragraph. Likewise, the EIL "model also makes a significant departure from WE by accommodating all varieties of English into the same non-hierarchical plane" (*Translingual Practice* 61). They still treat varieties of English as discrete but attempt to treat them all equally without privileging any one variety. I agree with Canagarjah's critique which states that this model maintains "grammatical norms" and supposed standards of various Englishes (62). This model fails to examine English as it is actually spoken, which Pennycook attempts to address.

Following Canagarajah's lead, Pennycook advocates a "translingual franca English" (2008), which includes all uses of English and "incorporates the local, agency, and context in [its] complex interactions" (7). He sees this language ideology as grounded in praxis and social relations. ("Translingual English" 7). He focuses on what social resources and processes speakers of English use when they communicate with one another, whether or not they are native speakers. Furthermore, he encourages all language users to move away from monocentric and pluricentric models such as World Englishes and select non-polymodel approaches to the teaching of English (e.g. certain models of English as a Lingua Franca (ELF) and English as an International Language (EIL)) (3). Canagarajah too ostensibly rejects these models in favour of "English as a form of translingual practice" or "English as translingual" (*Translingual Practice* 14). Traditionally, English as a lingua franca, for instance, denotes an attitude whereby "since everyone else is learning English and since a traveler anywhere in the world is likely to be able to find English speakers, why should we make the effort to learn anybody else's language?" (Hall 47). Put differently, English as a Lingua Franca (mis)takes English as a universal language and makes communication possible between two people who do not share home languages. In an effort to stabilize translingual practice, Pennycook suggests "mov[ing] away from nation-based models of English and . . . tak[ing] on board current understandings of translingual practices across communities other than those defined along national criteria" ("Translingual English" 4). He therefore regards languages as exceeding locality and varieties. The process of promulgating translingual practice by disassociating languages from nations and regions or any sort of geographic specificity is therefore a method of deterritorialization. Translingual franca

61

English inherently treats English as a neutral mode of communication. Although speakers may add their own cultural, linguistic and personal touches, this model is still exclusive. Like technology, no language is neutral. The use of English will bring with it the history and baggage of its colonial past. Despite its well-meaning character, "translingual franca English" like other parallel models is entangled in linguistic imperialism and domination.

While these approaches (i.e. "Common English, "translingual franca English," LFE, and EIL) are progressive, they still testify to English pluricentricity. As their titles suggest, the core focus is still on the English language in its many forms. Even revisiting Canagarajah's discussions of code-meshing, he proposes taking English as the base language. Look to, for example, "The Place of World Englishes in Composition" (2007) where he first endorses code-meshing. Here, he describes this model as follows: "My proposal demands more, not less, from minority students. They have to not only master the dominant varieties of English, but also know how to bring in their preferred varieties in rhetorically strategic ways" (598). He later defines code-meshing under similar conditions: "Code-meshing is a form of writing in which multilinguals merge their diverse language resources with the dominant genre conventions to construct hybrid texts for voice" ("Negotiating Translingual Literacy" 40). Once again, then, linguistic domination appears to be an issue. Code-meshing ideologies and 'pluricentric' models of English still deviate from the goals of translingual practice because linguistic favoritism and chauvinism[33] are present. These controversial models may incorporate translingualism but they are not translingualism itself.

---

[33] Linguistic anthropologist Shirley Brice Heath describes linguistic chauvinism as "the belief in the superiority of one's language" (qtd. in Milson-Whyte, "Dialogism in Gina Valdé's 'English con Salsa'" 145; qtd in Milson-

1.16.1 Translingualism in Society

Furthermore, detractors of translingualism are likely to attack its function outside of the academic sphere. Zorn, for example, problematizes translingual communication in legal and medical environments: "there isn't a single example in the translingualist literature of how a classroom or a jury panel or a medical emergency service will function if I speak English, you Cantonese, he Farsi, and she Russian—all of us insisting on our 'human right to use the language of [our] nurture.'" (177). As I too I have pondered the issue of translingual practice in emergency settings, I acknowledge the validity of this specific concern. I think, however, that Zorn is confusing multilingualism, which keeps languages separate but together, with translingualism, which comprises the movement across and between languages. While I, like Matsuda, deny the "multilingual versus translingual" binary (Matusda 480), I see translingualism as evolving out of multilingualism. Lee regards the translingual approach to writing as exceeding both the monolingual and multilingual models:

> The multilingual model . . . considers language static and discrete because it holds that multilinguals can achieve multiple fluencies in pre-set targets; the multilingual model also promotes the same image of the fractured linguistic personality of the bilingual and multilingual individual (Horner, NeCamp, et al., 2011, pp. 286–287). The 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 in writing, speaking, reading, and listening" (Horner, Lu, et al., 2011, p. 191). (315)

Whyte, "Working English through Code-Meshing" 105; qtd. in Milson-Whyte, "Pedagogical and Sociopolitical Implications of Code-Meshing in Classrooms" 115).

Language difference is not a deficit, but a resource. Zorn has a tendency to view languages as monolithic entities. But Canagarajah warns that translingualism transcends the compartmentalization of individual languages (*Translingual Practice* 7). Put differently, he claims that "the term translingual enables a consideration of communicative competence as not restricted to predefined meanings of individual languages, but the ability to merge different language resources in situated interactions for new meaning construction (*Literacy as Translingual Practice* 2-3). Using figurative language, Pennycook argues that "Languages are more like curries than sacks of spice" (8). Languages are alive and in motion and they mix and mingle in unexpected ways.

1.16.2 Translingualism and Emerging Technology

Even assuming that languages remain somewhat compartmentalized by ethnic enclaves, visitors, or immigrants and newcomers, modern technology affords sophisticated ways of mediating diverse communication. The future of medicine is computer-generated: "Many areas of medical and psychological practice have gone or are going virtual" (Davis 5). We might, for instance, implement a smart interface for speech recognition as a translation service between caller and receiver in emergency medical services. This system would be implemented as a cloud service. It is important to note that cloud services are optimized to be resilient against technology failure and cyberattacks and for backup. Prefabricated questions like "Where are you?" and "What is going on now?" would be integrated into the service for ease of access and quicker processing time. In the event of a technical glitch or as additional support, off-site interpreters could be called upon to oversee and facilitate communication. These improvements in the computerized dispatch system in ER

departments could revolutionize medical care. After all, language barriers can be life-threatening. In an interview with Melanie Ng, a news anchor and reporter for CityNews, Toronto, politician and 2014 mayoral candidate Olivia Chow highlights the need to provide people of linguistically diverse backgrounds with better access to emergency medical care: "9-1-1 needs to speak 140 languages" ("Olivia Chow on new book, possible mayoral run"). She prefaces this appeal with a story about an elderly lady who spoke only Cantonese and took care of her ailing husband. This senior confided in Chow her concerns about access to emergency medical services in Canada. While hiring ER staff with a high degree of translingual competence is a good starting point, I suggest we also explore technological advances such as the service described above.

With regard to classrooms and life more generally, the advent of Windows Glasses would radically transform human interaction. While currently in research labs and not on the market, Windows Glasses promise the blending of the digital and real worlds with, for example, "new ways to learn" and "new ways to collaborate and explore the places we've never been" ("Windows Glasses - Microsoft HoloLens with Holographic Technology"). We can safely assume that the translation service will be offered in real time. Nevertheless, this futuristic technology is still in the early phases of experimentation and implementation. I think Zorn is a bit ahead of himself given that translingualism is still relatively new. I understand Zorn is a forward-thinker; however, the integration of translingualism in the classroom "will incrementally build a different norm" (Horner et al., "Toward a Translingual Approach" 288). These changes will not occur overnight in or outside of academia. There is "no red juice" (Mullin, Haviland and Zenger 161) for translingual practice. And this brings

me to the conclusion that translingualism, like Windows Glasses, is in its embryonic stages. Translingual advocates are thus working on small-scale projects that endorse praxis. Think again of Vershawn Young's class dictionary or "Lexicon Building" activity as it is context-specific and therefore bases its communication on the classroom community.

1.17 Conclusion

From Kellman, the father of translingualism, until present, translingualism has progressed significantly. Translingualism ensures that languages will never be the same. Therefore, translingual practice eludes the shadows of coloniality. While perhaps somewhat enshrouded in mystery and complexity, translingualism is proceeding towards demystification. One of the greatest misconceptions about translingualism revolves around language mastery. Translingualism is misconstrued as the transition from monolingual to polyglot. When I speak about my field and research to my colleagues, neighbours, strangers, UW faculty and employees, the most common question I receive is: "Oh! How many languages do you speak?" Translingualism is not about polyglot abilities, however. Instead of focusing on the quantity of languages spoken by any one person, translingualism is concerned with the quality of translation and (re)negotiation.

Horner, Lu, Royster and Trimbur reiterate this movement away from the simple equation of translingualism with polyglot: "a translingual approach is best understood as a disposition of openness and inquiry toward language and language differences, not as a matter of the number and variety of languages and language varieties one can claim to know" ("Toward a Translingual Approach" 311). Other scholars like Canagarajah articulate precisely this point: "[Translingual] [c]ompetence is not an arithmetical addition of the resources of different

languages, but the transformative capacity to mesh their resources for creative new forms and meanings" (*Literacy as Translingual Practice* 2). Another idea I would like to emphasize as a precursor to the following chapter is that translingualism does not appeal only to writers of difference; it appeals equally to those writers traditionally defined as "Standard English speakers" or "English monolinguals." Therefore, it is necessary to "see translinguality as relevant to and operating in the learning and writing of all writers, whether marked by the dominant as mainstream or nonmainstream" (Lu and Horner, "Translingual Literacy, Language Difference, and Matters of Agency" 586; Lu and Horner "Translingual Literacy and Matters of Agency" 29). And, finally, according to Canagarajah's definition of translingualism, which I fully support, translingualism involves the transcendence of not only compartmentalized languages, but also words (*Translingual Practice* 6). Put differently, translingualism moves beyond language proper. Translingual practice enlightens us with new ways of understanding and communicating. I firmly believe translingual scholars and advocates mark the future of language.

Chapter 2

Classroom and Digital Assessment: Error or "Creative and Productive Difference"?

In the field, however unintentionally, the assigning of error to difference has presented an obstacle to discerning how to make code-meshing and translingual ideologies actionable. At present translingualism occupies primarily theoretical territory. As discussed in the previous chapter, theorization and identification of translingual practice is far more widespread than implementation. Translingualism has summoned a return to linguistics within the field of writing studies (Matsuda, "The Lure of Translingual Writing" 478). Inevitably, the language debate is still active and educators continue to grapple with the question of how to assess language difference in student writing. Writers of difference have been represented as problems in the field of prior scholarship both implicated in and surrounding Composition Studies, especially in the late-nineteenth to late-twentieth century. Notably, the Harvard entrance exam marked the Current-Traditionalist approach to error, which held that Standard English is the epitome of 'correct' speaking and writing. From a popular perspective, literary theorist and columnist, Stanley Fish, argues that writers who neglect Standard English bring racism upon themselves. In his performative piece titled "Should Writers Use They Own English?" Vershawn Ashanti Young paraphrases Fish: "He say don't no student have a right to they own language if that language make them 'vulnerable to prejudice'; that 'it may be true that the standard language is a device for protecting the status quo, but that very truth is a reason for teaching it to students'" (61). Other scholars have also endorsed or rejected Fish's fallacious line of thinking. Laura Greenfield, for example, critiques the commonly

held misconception "that by changing the way people of color speak (diminishing the racially identified markings in their language), others' racist preconceptions will disappear and the communicative act will be successful" (49; 51). "In their article, "Why Revitalize Grammar?" Dunn and Lindblom argue that contrary to popular belief SE denies access and opportunity (49; 54; Dunn and Lindblom 45). The framing of the translingual speaker as a problem is a problem in and of itself. We must turn the tables on this sort of (mis)representation.

2.1 The Original Language Debate

Composition studies critically engaged with the language debate in the years following the Civil Rights Movement and the assassination of Dr. Martin Luher King, Jr. (Smitherman 63). The first draft of the SRTOL (Students' Right to Their Own Language) appeared in 1971. A revision was released in 1974. The purpose of the SRTOL was to effect a National Language Policy: "The CCCC *Students' Right* policy opened up a national dialogue about language diversity and professional responsibility" (Smitherman 71). However, the efficacy and objectives of this policy are questionable. "[T]he most consistently reached conclusion among compositionists, Scott Wible writes, "is that the students' right to their own language is a theory that rarely, if ever, has materialized in the writing classroom" (354). Again, there exists that gap between theory and praxis. Other scholars have offered more sustained critiques of the SRTOL position statement. For example, Jeffrey Zorn regards the SRTOL with disdain:

> My critique develops six points, all with the wide-ranging important for English
>
> education, and more generally for U.S. education, today SRTOL, (1) never begins to

69

examine a 'right' to one's own language; (2) offers no consistent view on the importance of dialect; (3) wildly overrates its 'sophisticated' knowledge in sophisticated knowledge in sociology and linguistics; (4) both draws on and feeds into a reactionary politics of ethnic-cultural chauvinism; (5) clumps people into homogenous, internally undifferentiated groups, missing individuals (in particular, individual student writers) entirely; and (6) tries to shame English teachers for professional work of which they should be proud. (151)

According to Zorn, the SRTOL served neither its membership nor the students to whose defense it claimed to rise. Zorn concludes with a statement about the ways in which the SRTOL aids us only insofar as it encourages us never to repeat the same mistakes as those of its creators and followers (160). Conversely, despite these criticisms, Composition and Rhetoric scholar, Valerie Kinloch, sees the SRTOL position statement as crucial "in terms of the acceptance and affirmation of students' language varieties both inside and outside schools" (95). Certainly, the SRTOL should be praised for its efforts towards linguistic integration and diversity. Though praxis is somewhat lacking, the work of translingualism is helping to mitigate linguisitic divides, meaning any barriers to communication posed by monolingual ideologies and assumptions.

2.2 English-Only as Error-Free

For over a century the academy has been preoccupied with error: any deviation from "Standard English" which can be identified as defect, impediment, or intrinsic flaw. Linguistic imperialism positions dialects and nonstandardized Englishes and languages as a medical condition: "Tongue surgery thus represents an extreme strategy to prevent the

possibility of English language being subjected to unauthorized, untidy meshing with other language practices: accents, idioms, lexicons, syntactic constructions, and meaning somehow deemed at odds with what is recognized (by those whose recognition matters) as (true) English" (Lu and Horner, "The Logic of Listening to Global Englishes" 99-100). Lu attributes this surgery to the economic disparity between world nations: "the 'popularity' of tongue surgery in 'developing' countries [is] intricately informed by what we in 'developed countries do and do not do when addressing our own and our student's ambivalence toward English Only rulings" ("Living-English Work" 43). Such extreme measures towards a sanitized "Standard English" maintain an unstable economic, racial, national status quo. Likewise, from the 1950s onwards, many North American teachers were ill-prepared for non-native English speaking students and thus (mis)placed them in basic writing classes while others even sent them "to 'speech clinics where speech therapists treated them as suffering from speech defects' (Allen, "English" 307)" (Matsuda, "Composition Studies and ESL Writing: A Disciplinary Division of Labor" 708). Shaughnessy notes that the field of Composition is replete with "medical metaphors" such as "remedial, clinic, lab, [and] diagnosis" (291). Generally speaking, writers of difference are therefore seen as patients of professed SE specialists. This desire for erasure of difference is highly problematic: not only does it hinder students' self-esteem and academic performance, but it also harms their identity formation, both linguistic and otherwise. These students, or, more accurately, victims of SE, are thrust into hostile academic environments where they can either integrate or disintegrate. The academy does not tolerate linguistic diversity and instead embraces linguistic conformity. Sadly, many educators are reluctant to challenge educational policy.

71

2.3 (Re)defining Error

Historically speaking, "error" has played a salient role in education since the birth of Composition Studies in the late nineteenth-century. In his historical and critical reading of error, Tracy Santa details a shift in the location of error in student writing: "From the 1870s into the 1960s, error was largely perceived as an author-generated phenomenon and a teaching issue" (Santa xi). He argues that error has been traditionally constructed as a barrier to understanding and there has been overemphasis on surface-level error (5). For about a century, then, students and student writing were taught *as if* they were the loci of error. Teachers during this time "read student writing in the light of his or her role as institutional and (in a broad sense) societal gatekeeper" (33). Put differently, instructors during this historical period saw their duties as primarily evaluative; teachers were responsible for keeping student writing tidy and orderly, which is why some Composition scholars and educators at present do not feel they have any 'real' purpose outside of correction of surface error (Dunn and Lindblom 47). Many Composition instructors' values are thus cemented on historical practice. However, Santa later contrasts this trend with the contemporary study of error as reader-centric (4). He elaborates as follows: "Re-visioning error moves us toward acknowledging that error is primarily constructed by readers rather than those inscribing a written text, and that error has been the specific result of the clinical, disciplined, and disciplining gaze of composition practitioners and theorists" (10). Student writing, then, is not at fault, but the readers of student writing. On a related note, theorization of error is lacking: "our conflicted sense of just how error comes to pass, and just what error means to us has not been readily explicable, let alone resolvable, through theory" (131). Redefinition

72

of error is therefore necessary to account for the dynamism of English as what Min-Zhan Lu calls "living-English" in her article "Living-English Work" (2006). English is thus mutable and ever evolving as opposed to fixed and unchanging. Further, these scholars argue that the focus of pedagogical endeavours should shift from the definition of error to meta-linguistic and meta-rhetorical understanding that might aid student writers in making informed choices about language use, generally, and language use as rhetorical strategy, in particular.

2.4 Theorizing Error

With regard to the theorization of error, critical writing scholar Sarah Stanley, inspired by the work of Canagarajah, "insist[s] on a theory of error which differs from mistakes and failed negotiations . . . to imagine how we might teach translanguaging" ("Translanguaging" 56). At several points in her article she distinguishes errors from mistakes: errors are constructed as more nuanced and negotiable whereas mistakes are constructed as more simplistic and fixable (40; 42). Canagarajah phrases this distinction as follows: "*mistakes* appear to be unintentional and unsystematic choices . . . However, when choices that are intentional fail to gain uptake, we can consider them *errors*. They can fail for many reasons" (22). Stanley illuminates "mistakes" using Canagarajah's example of confused word pairs or misspellings, specifically "verses as versus" (Canagarajah, "Translanguaging" 22) throughout a student paper (Stanley 41). I might add to this example a more affirmative category of mistakes: "typos." Mistakes, in Stanley's opinion, seem to constitute carelessness or obliviousness. Conversely, Stanley dedicates the greater part of the article to two prominent examples of error in her students' writing: 1) "tradition rule" versus "family tradition" and 2) the pluralization of "English." One problem I foresee with Canagarajah's

and Stanley's binary opposition rests with their definitions of "mistakes." To some degree, both scholars define "mistakes" according to handbook models. This reliance on rules posits prescriptive grammar as non-negotiable and, hence, all variation as mistakes. However, at what point might mistakes, or "miss-takes" as Stanley calls them (40), venture into the territory of "error"? Could the divide between these two opposing categories ever be blurred? Could mistakes be viewed as somehow supporting or lending insight into the writer's positionality? And on what exactly are these so-called "mistakes" based . . . handbooks, instructional manuals, websites, conventions . . .? Some of Stanley's final words contradict her definition of mistakes: "And, we must continue to reclaim the sentence from notions of 'rules' and 'violations,' emphasizing its translingual potential in much the same way we approach the teaching of writing" (56). While Canagarajah's and Stanley's distinction between errors and mistakes appear well-grounded, the reality discerning between that distinction might be more complex and nuanced than both scholars account for. In some cases, errors can be synonymous with mistakes, depending on the writer's intention and the reader's interpretation. The error-mistake binary is therefore subjective and sometimes ambiguous.

Santa offers further contextualization of the historical nature of error. He identifies the specific treatment of error in given periods of time and a continuity amongst them:

> Error has been excoriated (by Hill, the Harvard Committee on Composition and Rhetoric, and others in the late 19th century), cautioned against (in Fowler, Wooley, and virtually every handbook published in the first sixty years of the 20th century), studied (during the 1970s and 1980s by Shaughnessy, Hairston, Bartholomae, Hull,

74

and others), and framed in social context (from the 1980s on by Bartholomae and

Horner and Lu). But in each case, error has largely been viewed as a textual

aberration produced by a writer. (9-10)

For the most part, the reader has not, theoretically speaking, been implicated in error; the

burden of error has been placed entirely on students and student writing.

2.5 Historicizing Error

One of the best-known books on error in Composition Studies is Mina P. Shaughnessy's

Errors and Expectations: A Guide for the Teacher of Basic Writing (1977). A product of its

time, *Error and Expectations* works to mitigate error correction in the Basic Writing

classroom of the 1970s. The purpose of this book is to approach error as part of a student's

developmental process and move Basic Writing teachers beyond the role of 'grammar

checkers.' In this work, Shaughnessy defines error as something that both distracts the reader

and detracts from the text: "Errors . . . are unintentional and unprofitable intrusions upon the

consciousness of the reader. They introduce in accidental ways alternative forms in spots

where usage has been stabilized . . . . They demand energy without giving any return of

meaning." (12). She encourages writing instructors to focus first and primarily on content:

what writers are trying to say, to whom they are speaking, and how they are conveying their

message (12). Only then, Shaughnessy believes, can writing teachers address errors (12).

Shaughnessy proceeds to associate grammatical and stylistic errors, such as punctuation,

syntax, and sentence transitions, in student writing with lack of skill and experience.

2.6 Critiquing Historical Approaches to Error

Santa critiques Shaughnessy for her ambivalent approach to error: "Shaughnessy's reading of error has proved both balm and poison, describing the origins of error in such a manner as to de-stigmatize its malignancy while maintaining a vision of error as something which . . . is produced by a student writer in need of composition's disciplining gaze" (49). Shaughnessy's reading thus positions readers as exempt from error. Error remains static and non-negotiable.

Furthermore, Santa critiques *Errors and Expectations* for endorsing a relationship between error and pathology that Foucault's theory problematizes: "while focusing on diagnosis and interpretation, [*Errors and Expectations*] has failed to transcend earlier notions of error as pathology, fostering what Foucault terms medical perception or 'the medical bipolarity of the normal and the pathological' (*Birth* 35)" (11). In pages prior he prefaces this later claim: "In Foucault's view, modern medicine and clinical practice are modeled on the autopsy, on diagnostic judgment of an inert and unresponsive corpus. Neither patients nor students truly respond to a clinical reading of their body or their work" (3). Santa therefore sees Shaughnessy's diagnostic reading of "error" as problematic. Not only does Shaughnessy's work suggest that error is not expressive of, for example, style and voice, but it also implies that there exists a monolithic approach to or universal "cure" for error. Finally, Santa argues that Shaughnessy's work leaves Composition workers with a distorted vision of error: "The problem for Composition practitioners, post-Shaughnessy, is that we have been trained to *criticize* error as a developmental issue, or one incumbent on second-language interference, or the result of social conditions and inequities beyond the control of parties

76

interested in their immediate work at hand . . ." (127). Often times, then, error is conflated

with inexperienced or "ESL" (and L2, L3, L4, etc.) students or external circumstances.

However, Native English speakers (NES) students are also implicated in error. Canagarajah

illuminates the relationship English monolinguals have with error: "Although these students

might only speak and write in one language and be classified as monolingual, they all use

varieties of English, particularly nondominant and less privileged versions. . . . In the case of

these students, it is their language differences which offer rich insight into the ways we might

rethink error." (*Literacy as Translingual Practice* 229). While many Native English speakers

might locate themselves outside the domain of error, they too are at the centre.

2.7 (De)privileging SE

Although the critique of the privileging of SE has emerged primarily in America, its

precepts are applicable to Canada and most of the English-speaking west. In the United

States where the field of Composition was born, SE takes precedence: "Most people in the

United States generally believe that 'Standard English' is the most proper, sophisticated, and

clear way to speak English" (Greenfield 35). In fact, North American citizens have a

tendency to equate SE with "'educated' English" (Lu 471). This notion of superior languages

and varieties is detrimental to writers who are forced to negate their mother tongues and

other marginal(ized) markers. Ironically, Peter Elbow declares his pedagogical mission as

involving the creation of space for "wrong language, errors, carelessness, or nonmainstream

language" (643); however, he insists that his students produce their final drafts in SE (648;

651; 706). Elbow's long-term goal thus depletes, even contradicts, his primary purpose.

Ultimately, Elbow's classroom privileges SE over any nonmainstream or stigmatized

"dialects." However, as Canagarjah cautions in "The Place of World Englishes," "The editing of the other Englishes in the final product may also lump these varieties into the category of 'errors' to be avoided in the eyes of students, and lead to the gradual loss of their home language" (288). In many academic contexts, SE remains privileged as do related grammar and style guides (e.g. *The Little Brown Handbook*, The Purdue University Online Writing Lab, and the *MLA Handbook for Writers of Research Papers*) and dictionaries (especially the *Oxford English Dictionary* (OED))).

However, the discrepancy between these instructive and authoritative guides and language practice is vast: "students need to recognize the difference between handbook rules and actual performance" (Conference on College Composition and Communication Committee on Language Policy 30). Such rules merely maintain the status quo and reinforce SE policies. In fact, educators who rely on grammar handbooks as their "Bibles" do themselves and their students a great disservice as they "are teaching in cooperation with a discriminatory power system, one that arbitrarily advocates some language-use conventions as inherently better than others" (Dunn and Lindblom 44). Anis Bawarshi's philosophy of "linguistic elitism" (qtd. in Stanley 38) is largely implicated in these handbooks. Likewise, many textbooks on writing are often served a similar guilty verdict because they propagate the myth that there exists a "standard, 'unaccented' English in speech and 'standard' (aka 'correct' or 'Edited American English') writing" (Horner et al. "Language Difference in Writing" 305). These textbooks thus read as directive and prescriptive. Conversely, a translingual approach to composition sees all languages, codes, grammars, rhetorics, and

styles as equal and abolishes any existing linguistic hierarchies. There are few, but flexible "models" and certainly no masters.[34]

2.8 Error as Nonstandard and Substandard

Rhetoric and writing studies scholar Karen Kopelson further describes academia's positioning of "error" as the antithesis of "standard." She describes at length the ways in which error recognition has been institutionalized:

> I will again start with the obvious, the "e-word": error. Despite four decades now of scholarship within composition studies and without proving the logic and potential intentionality of (what is commonly conceived as) "error," translingualism's mandate that "the possibility of writer error [be] reserved as an [instructor's/reader's] interpretation of last resort" (Horner et al., "Language Difference" 304) will always remain provocative and hard to hear (and harder to implement) for those instructors Bizzell identifies in this volume as "most passionately attached to the defense of rigid standards" (of at least we will likely always have the recourse of claiming to fear – that the recasting of "error" as either systematic and legitimated deviations from or as agentic "multilingual appropriations" of "the standard" (Canagarajah, "Multilingual Strategies" 43) risks disempowering students. In other words, we will likely continue to make "the common argument that students must learn 'the standards' to meet the demands of the dominant," to which the students must understand how such demands

---

[34] Canagarajah recommends as translingual models his textbook titled *Critical Academic Writing and Multilingual Students* (2002), his own literacy autobiography "The Fortunate Traveler: Shuttling Between Communities and Literacies by Economy Class" (2001), and a code-meshed article by Geneva Smitherman titled "CCCC's Role in the Struggle for Language Rights" (1999) (Translingual Practice 185).

are contingent and negotiable" (Horner et al., "Language Difference" 305). And we

will continue to make that common argument, which also dates back four decades,

because of our certainty that there are too many contexts in which the "standards"

remain immutable in practice. (215)

Put differently, any marker of heterogeneity or deviation from the so-called "dominant" is

marked as "error." This obsession with presumed "error" is an excuse to maintain the status

quo. Alignment with "standards" and dominant practices also write out of existence the

agency of those who produce these texts whose "errors" are in fact "legitimated and

productive difference" (216). Instead, the students whose texts are abounding with errors are

marginalized and suppressed. They are given an ultimatum: Standard English or error and

expulsion.

2.9 Translingual and L2 Writing

Currently, some translingual scholars and L2 scholars are looking at how their disciplines,

concepts and activities[35] converge. In their collaboratively authored open letter "Clarifying

the Relationship between L2 Writing and Translingual Writing," L2 scholars Dwight

Atkinson et al. recognize "a problematic trend developing among writing studies scholars

based in North America: a growing misunderstanding that L2 writing and translingual

writing are somehow competing with each other or, worse yet, that one is replacing the

other" (383). Canagarajah endorses the latter in his article "The End of Second Language

Writing" where he encourages SLW scholars, groups, and journals to renounce the title

"second language" and embrace translingualism (441). Canagarajah defends his positioning

---

[35] (Canagarajah, "The End of Second Language Writing" 440).

as follows: "If the activity of writing is now being understood differently and new concepts define this activity beyond separate languages, we have to ask if there is any benefit in keeping alive the discipline 'second language writing'" (441). Since language competence has shifted and so too have language categories, Canagarajah sees no point in carrying on an empty tradition. Previously termed disparate, however, L2 and translingual writing possess shared goals. Although second language writing (SLW) specialists are negatively portrayed as language conservationists by some Composition Studies (CS) scholars, SLW in fact propagates linguistic diversity as opposed to linguistic conformity. While respecting the integrity of languages, SLW discourages linguistic homogenization. Contrary to popular belief, translingual writing does not efface or substitute L2 writing (384). There exists, then, a false dichotomy between translingual writing and L2 writing that translates into an exaggerated division of labor between translingual scholars and L2 specialists. L2 and Writing Studies scholar Julia Williams states that "The teaching of form and genre are particularly contentious as CS theorists believe that these elements are taught in second language classrooms with rigidity and without tolerance of linguistic variation." L2 scholars and educators are thus seen as intolerant of error; in other words, they are mistakenly viewed as the principle gatekeepers of Standard English. Clearly, L2 instructors and specialists are not language purists, language preservationists, or grammar Nazis and instead their agenda aligns with the translingual paradigm. Therefore, translingual scholars must caution against trivializing, ostracizing, demonizing, or annihilating L2 writing and research.

Translingual and L2 writing are not as divorced as select CS scholars would like to think. In fact, Atkinson et al. point out that the translingual repertoire emerged out of L2

scholarship (384). While translingual and L2 writing have a shared history, they arguably

diverge:

> Although translingual writing and L2 writing overlap in their critique of the
>
> historically monolingual, English Only focus of composition studies, translingual
>
> writing has not widely taken up the task of helping L2 writers increase their
>
> proficiency in what might still be emerging L2s and develop and use their multiple
>
> language resources to serve their own purposes. As a field, L2 writing has also been
>
> addressing the ideological concerns highlighted in translingual writing as well as the
>
> task of helping L2 writers develop and use their multiple language resources to serve
>
> their own purposes. (384)

Translingualism, again still in its embryonic stages, largely lacks praxis. As mentioned in

Chapter 1, translingual researchers such as Vershawn Young, Y'Shanda Young-Rivera,

Melissa Lee, and Theresa Welford are embracing translingual pedagogies and practice in

ways that can be emulated and adapted by other educators. It is therefore not entirely

accurate to say that translingualism exists only in theory. According to critical writing

scholar Melissa Lee, translingualism evolved because of the need to marry language praxis

with theory: "Horner's (2001) argument that "dominant approaches to language and 'error'

have failed to understand language as material social practice . . . provided the foundation

upon which Horner and colleagues (Horner, Lu, et al., 2011; Horner, NeCamp, et al., 2011)

presented the translingual Approach." (Lee 315). Nevertheless, since L2 educators and

scholars are often "frontline" workers who engage firsthand with issues of implementation,

they are responsible for "training writing teachers and developing writing curricula

82

supportive of emerging L2 writers in ways that are both practical and critical" (Atkinson et al. 385). Translingualism is moving in the direction of praxis but is still largely defined by theory. While L2 and translingual writing and scholarship intersect, they must not be conflated.

2.10 Adapting New Approaches to Error

The translingual paradigm aspires to accommodate, as opposed to negate, difference. Immersion in translingual pedagogies is a challenging task for all educators. Lu's classroom approach may prove useful in realizing translingual principles. In her influential article titled "Professing Multiculturalism: The Politics of Style in the Contact Zone,"[36] she proposes that Composition teachers treat their students' writing as works of literature: "I align my teaching with a tradition in 'error' analysis which views 'error-ridden' student writings as texts relevant to critical approaches available to English Studies" (472).[37] Such a proposition coincides with the translingual approach in its realignment of the teacher-student dichotomy. Referencing the work of Mina Shaughnessy, Horner reiterates Shaughnessy's ascription of "errors and expectations" in her book of the same title to "teachers, not students" (12). As translingualism eludes mastery and both readers and writers are responsible for interpretation and translation (Horner et al, "Language Difference in Writing" 307), teachers find themselves displaced from traditional authoritative roles into pupil-like humility. In the same way that English scholars analyze the politics of language and form in, for example,

---

[36] In his abstract for "Relocating Basic Writing" Bruce Horner aligns Basic Writing scholarship and BW scholars like Mina Shaughnessy with emerging approaches to language such as translingualism (5).
[37] See also Lu's "An Essay on the Work of Composition" where she suggests we treat the "Money Collecting Toilet" sign "as requiring the same close analysis we lavish on texts by Master Designers (Shakespeare, Gertrude Stein, or Gloria Anzaldúa) and with the same relish" (27).

postcolonial literature, so too are instructors encouraged by Lu to read for "'resistance' and 'change'" in student writing (472). Teachers, then, must disassociate their evaluative roles from that of expert and editor and instead adapt the roles of interpreter and intermediary. After all, the purpose of a translingual approach "is about negotiating language difference and creating shared resource, not editing student writing" (Krall-Lanoue 231).

In their article titled "Opinion: Language Difference in Writing: Toward a Translingual Approach," Horner et al. see "error" as ranking low in the translingual taxonomy of concerns: "The possibility of writer error is reserved as an interpretation of last resort" (304). The open-mindedness of the translingual approach requires that followers "reconceptualiz[e] what we have thought of as error as creative and productive difference" (Condon, *Tongues Tide: Translingual Directions for a Better Future*). Error is no longer cut and dry, black and white; instead, error is multi-dimensional, challenging our standards and initial interpretations. In the words of Patricia A. Dunn and Kenneth Lindblom, "error and its perception is a confusing crossroads of expectation, genre, and the perceived roles of reader and writer" (45). Similarly, Horner recognizes that error must be divorced from that which is labeled unconventional in discourse: "[T]he translingual approach acknowledges that deviations from dominant expectations need not be errors; that conformity need not be automatically advisable; and that writers' purposes and readers' conventional expectations are neither fixed nor unified" (304). That being said, however, the translingual paradigm does not annihilate error. Rather, it mandates "that teachers (and students) need to be more humble about what constitutes a mistake (and about what constitutes correctness) in writing, rather than assume that whatever fails to meet their expectations, even in matters of spelling,

punctuation, and syntax, must be an error" (310). "Error," then, is defined very liberally

under the translingual framework. In fact, Horner argues that "when seen as evidence of a

kind of interlanguage, errors represent writers' intelligence, rather than their deficiencies"

("Relocating Basic Writing" 11). Errors are not necessarily indicative of ignorance or

inexperience. In a course paper, one of Min-Zhan Lu's Malaysian students came up with the

unconventional phrase "can able to." Initial impressions would classify this phrase as

"ungrammatical" or "nonsensical." However, further examination of this "error" and the

writer's identity reveal ample justification. Lu speaks of this student writer's translation

process: "When using the expression 'be able to,' she would be thinking in Chinese. As a

result, she often ended up writing 'can able to' (476). Moreover, citing from her students, Lu

foregrounds the Malaysian student's potential approach to context and critical thinking: "a

common treatment of 'can' and 'to be able to' as interchangeable in meaning might be seen

as contributing to a popular American attitude towards the transcendental power of the

individual" (479). In his analysis of this unconventional grammar lesson or "grammar

instruction" ("The Place of World Englishes" 298), Canagarjah attributes this nonstandard

usage to the Malaysian student's identity (cultural norms discourage Malaysian women in

their pursuit of higher education) and her subsequent desire "to convey a different orientation

to ability" (297), as is also suggested by one of Lu's students (479). Canagarajah praises Lu's

classroom exercise for its departure from traditional error analysis: "An important lesson here

for teachers is that not every instance of non-standard usage by a student is an unwitting

error, sometimes it is an active choice motivated by important cultural and ideological

considerations" (297). Educators should think twice, then, before taking any action during

evaluation. Nonstandard usage can also bear witness to creativity and wit. For example, when I experienced a falling out with a close francophone friend that lead to a silent spell, we finally arranged to meet up through a series of code-meshed and seemingly 'misspelled' text messages that proved playful and redemptive:

> Me: "Why don't we take a walk?"

> Ami[38]: "Bien sure!"

> Me: "Mercy :P"

Seeing as my friend code-meshed the French and English, respectively, "Bien sure!" (as opposed to the French "bien sur"), I chose to write "mercy" instead of merci" to reciprocate his efforts and immerse myself in his "Franglais"[39] style. The very form of our conversation demonstrates empathy and surrender on behalf of the offender (myself). Evidently, words can sometimes speak just as loudly as actions and we have the power to shape discourse to our strategic advantage.

Sometimes, however, nonstandard usage is without overt justification. It may be a matter of instinct or habit. On the subject of code-meshing and error, Canagarajah issues the following warning: "we have to be cautious in undertaking correction, as multilingual students can use creative choices through intuition and social practice without explicit awareness" (*Code-Meshing as World English* 277). Whereas in the case of the Malaysian student, the choice to employ "can able to" was obviously deliberate, there are instances where students might employ nonstandard usages without knowing. This is where teachers

---

[38] Friend.

[39] While "Franglais" has been labeled an example of code-switching by, for example, the linguist Penelope Gardner-Chloros in her book *Code-Switching* (2009), in a UW Graduate House gathering Young conflates code-meshing and code-switching (see end of chapter).

make their entrance. Educators must help students to uncover reasons why they have

employed a specific grammatical usage in order to become more conscientious writers.

Canagarajah sheds light on the ways in which the translingual orientation enables students

and teachers to join forces:

> "[W]e may have to reorient to traditional constructs such as *error* in our teaching.
>
> Error is what fails to gain uptake in situated interactions, not those which deviate
>
> from an abstract predefined norm. This orientation encourages a pedagogy that values
>
> students' choices and helps teachers think along with the rhetorical intentions of the
>
> students to find their meanings. There is responsibility on both sides of the
>
> production/reception divide here." (*Literacy as Translingual Practice* 8)

Evaluation, then, becomes a collaborative and conversational effort as opposed to an isolated,

monologic endeavor. In a way, students become their own best critics and teachers are part

and parcel of this process.

2.10.1 Adjusting Reading Practices to Reconceive of Error

Different reading practices are key to execution of translingual practice. In her piece titled

"'And Yea I'm Venting, But Hey I'm Writing Isn't I': A Translingual Approach to Error in a

Multilingual Context," Krall-Lanoue describes instructors' tendency to read student writing

with an eye for error (228). Often their concerns are grammatical or stylistic, meaning

superficial, sentence-level or surface level errors, such as "tense, incorrect word choice, and

sentence boundary issues" (228). Higher level concerns[40] often lose priority. However,

Krall-Lanoue emphasizes the need for Composition instructors to find a middle or common

ground: "Instead of questioning students about what they meant to write and how to conform

to written conventions, we might 'negotiate intelligibility' through difference" (228).

Instructors must therefore put any preconceptions aside and read student writing with an

open mind. Turning to the realm of professionals, a Lebanese dietician defended her

classification of the nutrition industry as "meadow" as opposed to "field":

> She wrote, "In our meadow, we need to think about clients' backgrounds when we
>
> help them construct diets, considering religious taboos and cultural norms." It would
>
> have been easy to dismiss the use of the word "meadow" as an "error," but when, as
>
> authors, we followed this new metaphor and thought of composition studies as a
>
> meadow – rather than as a discipline or field – we saw that it makes us burrow into
>
> the meaning of discipline, field, and meadow. Both fields and meadows mark out
>
> space, but they are different kinds of spaces. Fields suggest a more disciplined space,
>
> a space in which crops are sowed in rows or circles and harvested according to
>
> recurring seasons. Meadows are less organized or constrained; if they have owners,
>
> their use is not as fully determined as is the use of a field. (Mullin, Haviland and
>
> Zenger 161)

What many instructors would discount as an error in diction is in fact strategic negotiation.

Correct or common usage becomes questionable and negotiable. This dietician represents

---

[40] Tracey Santa offers two examples of higher order concerns in writing: "the process of writing or critical thinking itself" (127). Frankie Condon attributes higher order concerns to "conceptualization and rhetorical framing" ("Re: Dissertation Questions").

writers' liberties with language in an act of improvisation or amelioration. Her renovation of

the English language as most of us know it also extends to her role as educator. When

instructing a Lebanese nutrition student on how to balance her English language learning

with nutrition advice, she offered up a phrase from her own vocabulary: "no red juice" (161).

While initially used in the context of weight loss, "the students began to use the phrase 'no

red juice' when they talked with others – both mono- and multilingual – about situating

themselves in different languages and disciplinary discourses" (161). Evidently, her

adaptation or assimilation of existing words and phrases removes them from their standard

usage and assigns them new meaning in a context-specific environment like a classroom.

"No red juice" is a unique equivalent for such phrases as "no overnight miracle" or "no quick

fix." Here in the Lebanese dietician's teaching space, and much like in Young's class

dictionary, "students discovered their own terms that provided a marker for them throughout

the course, a mutually negotiated term for their use and a lesson about language making and

culture" (161). This classroom "code" word demonstrates at a micro-level the ways in which

"certain cases of peculiar usage become standardized – once their meanings and purpose are

socially shared" (Canagarjah, "The Place of World Englishes" 298). This renovation of our

existing vocabularies is precisely the work of translingualism.

2.11 Language Innovation in Popular Culture: Neologisms and Portmanteaus

Looking to popular culture we find many examples of translingual practice, especially in

the form of neologisms. For instance, the word "selfie" was officially published as an entry

in the OED online dictionary in August 2013 and was published in the OED as of June 2014.

Named "International Word of the Year 2013," the word "selfie" "gained momentum

throughout the English-speaking world in 2013 as it evolved from a social media buzzword

to mainstream shorthand for a self-portrait photograph" ("Oxford Dictionaries Word of the

Year 2013"). Recently, its exploding popularity has inspired songs and revolution in the cult

of celebrity and common people.[41] "Selfie" definitely holds universal significance. Other

neologisms, on the other hand, have more localized significance. For instance, "bazinga," a

word coined in the American sitcom *The Big Bang Theory* by the television producer and

writer Stephen Engel,[42] implies that preceding dialogue should not be taken seriously. In

other words, it is a popular catchphrase in North America which substitutes for perhaps

"older" or "overused" phrases like "Kidding." In fact, an entry has been made for "bazinga"

in *Urban Dictionary*, an online dictionary that houses contemporary and sometimes offensive

words, expressions and acronyms created by the online community. While primarily

"English" and alphabetic, *Urban Dictionary* is a site that showcases the move towards

translingualism in the twenty-first century. Despite resistance to accept the positioning of all

native English speakers as multilingual and translingual, "it's worth recalling that what we

think of as English is itself linguistically heterogeneous in its origins and ongoing formations,

as demonstrated by neologisms, the development of world Englishes, and shifting

conventions" (Horner et al. "Language Difference in Writing" 311). That being said, I am

neither assuming nor implying that all contributors to *Urban Dictionary* are native English

speakers. Again, languages are not static entities and these examples demonstrate that

languages are emergent (Cooper 29). As opposed to lamenting the instability and inadequacy

---

[41] Take, for example, The Chainsmokers' song "Lemme Take a #Selfie" and Nina Nesbitt's "Selfies." With regard to selfies in the cult of celebrity and common people, there has been an astronomic increase in Oscar selfies and gym, bathroom (also termed "welfies" or "workout selfies") and funeral selfies to name a few.
[42] See the finale of Season 2 titled "The Monopolar Expedition."

of language, however, we should realize our power to transform speech acts into unique and representative discourse. Languages are no longer premade varieties but flexible systems of communication that yield to our needs and desires.

An offshoot of neologisms are portmanteaus, which fuse together existing words and make words for things that have not yet been officially named. A few examples come to mind, all of which merge existing words in the English vocabulary. The first is "kidult," a fusion of "kid" and "adult," which I saw in a Kellogg's Frosted Mini Wheats cereal commercial in the winter of 2015. The commercial's advertising slogan "Feed your inner kidult" appeals to mature viewers' desire for eternal youth. The portmanteau "kidult" in this particular commercial emerges from a song by Supergrass that shares the commercial's marketing slogan. Another portmaneau I've seen as of late is Facebook's "friendversary." This new phrase combines the words "friend" and "anniversary." It is the social networking site's way of celebrating friendship on an annual basis through a personalized and automatically generated video and post that can be shared. Anniversaries are no longer reserved for romantic relationships. The third and final example is "wintermission," which I came across in *blogTO*.[43] This portmanteau unites the words "winter" and "intermission" to denote a brief respite from extreme cold. While "intermission" is usually reserved for breaks during plays or live performances where the audience uses the washroom or patronizes the snack bar, "intermission" here acquires new dimensions by being prefaced with a "w." Winter is dramatized as if snowfalls are a kind of special effect. Portmanteaus as neologisms are our way of making language work for us; they are part of the translingual repertoire.

---

[43] https://www.blogto.com/city/2018/01/february-brutal-winter-weather-toronto-2018/

2.12 Language Innovation in the Music Industry

This reworking or renovation of language is particularly striking in the work of hiphop artists and rappers. Pennycook chronicles the French language hip-hop scene:

> Hip-hop in France developed in the *banlieues*-the suburban housing projects where many poor, and first and second generation immigrant populations live. Here, in multiethnic mixes of people of Maghreb (Algeria, Tunisia, Morocco), French African (Mali, Senegal, Gabon), French Antilles (La Martinique, Guadeloupe) and other European (Portugal, Romania, Italy) backgrounds, hip-hop emerged as a potent force of new French expression. Rap in France, 'uses a streetspeak version of French that includes African, Arab, gypsy and American roots and is viewed with disapproval by traditionalists for its disregard for traditional rules of grammar and liberal use of neologisms' (Huq, 2001, p.74). (Pennycook 10)

A translingual French is definitely in operation in the underground world of music in France. Here, Pennycook decenters France as the headquarters of the French language. Put differently he demonstrates the role of rap in destabilizing the presumed superiority of "French French" as opposed to any one of the number of varieties listed above that have proliferated through hip-hop and rap music. However, it is not simply in France that French is shifting as it acquires these mixed identities: "Libreville's 'relexified French' uses borrowings from Gabonese languages, languages of migration, and English (standard and non-standard, but especially slang)' as well as non-standard French lexicon, including various created forms, neologisms and *verlan*" (10). Citing from Auzanneau, Pennycook writes that "'By using relexified French 'speakers mark their attachment to Gabonese culture at the

92

same time as they make their break with the values of both their own traditional society and the dominant Western society'" (11). This "relexified French" in Libreville, Gabon in west central Africa, is thus an act of both submission and subversion. Notions of languages as compartmentalized are evidently becoming obsolete. Through Pennycook's examples, we witness a shift in the very meaning of 'francophone.'

In their hit duo "Houmani," renowned Tunisian rap artists, Hamzaoui Med Amine and Kafon use the title and neologism "houmani" to incite political protest and revolution. In fact, Hamzaoui coined the term "houmani" to denote a kind of neighborly brotherhood in the poorer quarters and communities of Tunisia: "Le mot, inventé pour l'occasion par Hamzaoui, est dérivé de l'arabe tunisien 'houma,' qui désigne ces cités. *Houmani*, c'est le gars qui n'a pas les moyens d'en sortir, qui est coincé au quartier,' résume Hamzaoui Med Amine"[44] (Auffray). Freelance journalist Elodie Auffray contends that the song, though colored by dull and depressing images, is *not* a lament: while "houmani" refers to youth who were systematically oppressed into cycles of poverty and ennui by the Ben Ali government, it also denotes a kind of fraternity amongst these individuals. "Houmani" details the conditions that led to the Tunisian Revolution and the democratization of Tunisia. Using Tunisian dialect, meaning a combination of Arabic and nonstandard French as well other languages framed in Tunisian context, these rap artists attack the national divide at work in the minds of Tunisian politicians whose agenda caused the poor to become poorer and many youth to face further unemployment, poverty, hopelessness, and substance abuse. The very uptake of this

---

[44] "The word, invented for the occasion by Hamzaoui, is derived from the Tunisian Arabic " houma, " which refers to these neighborhoods, 'Houmani, this is the guy who has no means of escape, who is stuck in his neighborhood,' summarizes Hamzaoui Med Amine."

neologism in Tunisia demonstrates people's power over language. In fact, "houmani" was even termed "Le mot de l'année 2013 en Tunisie"[45] in a recent article in the Al Huffington Post (Chaouch).

Looking even to more local rap artists such as the iconic Canadian rapper Drake (nicknamed "Drizzy"), we find plenty more examples of the ways in which neologisms permeate the music industry, particularly the rap scene. Drake coined the term "the 6" as another name or nickname for Toronto. In an interview with Jimmy Fallon on The Tonight Show, Drake justifies his choice of words: "Yes, our area code is 416," Drake said, laughing. "We were debating on The Four, but I went tail-end on them and went 6. And at one point Toronto was broken up into six areas (Old Toronto, Scarborough, East York, North York, Etobicoke and York), so it's all clicking man" (Daniell). Since the release of "Know Yourself" in 2015, "the 6" has been used to refer to the city of Toronto. I think Drake's nickname for Toronto also popularizes the city as a place of birth and burgeoning success for rap artists, something he talks about in his documentary *Obey Your Thirst*:

> Toronto is the reason I do this. All I did was find a way to make people proud of our city. Artists from our city – their whole objective was to get out. So, I just had to flip that way of thinking. All these guys, man, that are like: You need to go to New York and make it happen. No you don't. That's dead now. Do it the way the Weeknd did it, do it the way PartyNextDoor did it, do it the way I did it, you know? Do it from where you're at.

Here, Drake expresses attachment to place and an affinity with one's roots. He challenges

---

[45] Word of the year 2014 in Tunisia.

popular belief and, figuratively speaking, makes Toronto the new New York or "Big Apple," giving hope to aspiring local rappers and artists. He 'owns' his hometown and assigns new value to the city in which he struggled as a youth and prospered as a young adult. Drake is known for his wordplay, which he says he inherited from his mother who was a "Scrabble champion" and elementary school teacher (Daniell). The line of lyrics or "hook" from which the now popular phrase "the 6" originates are as follows: "I was runnin' through the 6 with my woes." The wordplay here is on the word "woes," which traditionally refers to "grief, pity, regret, disappointment, or concern" ("woe"). However, Drake perhaps reassigns meaning to the word "woes" or reinvents the singular term "woe" based on the work of fellow Toronto rapper Devontée. In an interview with Noisey, Devontée redefines "woe" as follows:

> Woe is my crew. It stands for "working on excellence." It's just my whole brand and my whole movement and my way of life for everyone. I want everyone to work on excellence. So, all my friends are my Woes and I feel anybody working on excellence in life is a Woe in life as well. (Cormier-Grubb)

Just listening to Drake's "Know Yourself" unaware of the context, one might thing that Drake is indeed singing about his sorrows. However, a closer look reveals that "woes" might in fact have another meaning. Such redefinition is commonplace in popular culture, especially on the web. According to *People* magazine, for instance, pop, r&b, and electronic dance music icon Rhianna has visually redefined the acronym VMA, meaning "Video Music Awards," as "Very Minimal Attire" (Talarico). The author is playing with the idea that Rhianna likes to bare skin and wears revealing outfits for public appearances. What we can

learn from these two examples (i.e. "woe" and "VMA") is that words are malleable as are their definitions; this is the nature of language, especially in the age we live in.

2.13 Language Innovation in the Community

Instances of deviation from standardized usage outside of popular culture, particularly the music industry, can also be politicized. Here, I turn again to linguistic landscapes. In "An Essay on the Work of Composition: Composing English against the Order of Fast Capitalism" Lu becomes preoccupied with a Chinese sign for public toilets by the name of "Collecting Money Toilet." She supposes that that the designer of this sign might be "a potentially resistant user of English" (26). Lu therefore suggests looking beyond readings of the designer as providing a "poor" or direct (word for word) English translation. She shifts the focus from the sign itself to the interpretation of this sign and the history of its creator: "Instead of presenting our confusion as resulting from Others' linguistic imperfection, we might treat it as resulting from our lack of know-how or effort to make sense of how and why individual users of English might have come up with specific redesigning of standardized designs" (26-27). Again, Lu reinforces the inversion of the teacher-student and reader-writer dichotomies and power dynamics. Our presumptions about the designer's ignorance and inexperience become a reflection of our own critical gap. Lu also shares Canagarajah's vision of nonstandard usage as a conscious choice (609). Such a reading goes against mainstream readings of the sign, which would label its creator as possessing native fluency in Chinese, but non-native proficiency in English because she does not elect "the standardized english design 'Public Toilet'" (28). As opposed to being dismissed as grammatically incorrect or error-ridden, Lu reads the sign as rhetorically sophisticated and deliberate. A simplistic

96

"error" becomes laden with meaning and interpretation. Lu proposes an investigation into "the designer's actual linguistic resources" (28), which comprises deliberation on the following: 1) the designer's actual language expertise (28), 2) the designer's language affiliation and language inheritance (30), 3) the designer's "'order' between and across the languages, englishes, and discourses among [his/her linguistic] resources," 4) the designer's sense of self (31), and 5) the designer's "view of the kinds of world and success she and others have had, could have, and should have" (33). Analysis of the sign, then, is both complex and nuanced.

2.14 Language Innovation in the Commercial World

Not surprisingly, even major corporations are changing their linguistic practices to reach a wider audience and expand their market. Elon Musk, the CEO of Tesla Motors, for example, recently released his "Master Plan, Part Deux" on July 20, 2016 in which he proposes a solar-powered, money-making, self-driving car. Although the body of the plan is written entirely in English, the unique and unexpected title draws in more readers and potential patrons. Why, you probably ask, didn't he just write "Master Plan, Part Two"? Why did he opt for "Master Plan, Part Deux"? We might explain this code-meshed title in a few different ways. Firstly, Musk might have wanted to show off his knowledge of French. It is a common literary practice for many authors to boast of their cultured or erudite character. Secondly, Musk was likely trying to draw attention to his work and his product. He wanted his forthcoming model to stand out and, in order to do that, he thought of coming up with an innovative, memorable, or even unusual name for his idea. Thirdly, and more practically speaking, especially in terms of a business-minded individual, Musk was probably looking to appeal to a bilingual

population in Canada and gain popularity with Francophones here and abroad. In other words, he is looking to expand his market at home and overseas. Of course, it is disappointing that Musk's master plan was not code-meshed to a greater degree; however, his audacity in naming his new master plan proves that corporations are likely to utilize linguistic power to increase sales.

2.15 Code-Meshing in Social Media

Browsing social media, one is likely to encounter examples of code-meshing and the ways in which some celebrities and common people alike are promoting greater linguistic awareness and diversity. On my friends' Facebook walls, I have often seen posts written in home languages and second languages; however, these posts are mainly code-switched and languages are still visibly separated. Facebook offers a "See Translation" option, which makes foreign language posts accessible to almost anyone. The "Rate this translation" option also enables users to comment on the quality of the translation, opt out of translation in any given language, and submit comments and suggestions for future improvements. However, Facebook users, like MS Word and Google Docs users, can only select one language for their profile and news feed stories. Again, these restrictions are in line with code-switching, not code-meshing. It is the responsibility of social media (and composing platform) users, then, to transgress site-imposed language settings and make their own rules. I was impressed by a recent Facebook post I saw on the wall of pop singer-songwriter Sara Bareilles. In response to the earthquake in central Italy on August 24th, 2016, she shared an *International Business Times* article with multiple ways to participate in disaster relief. She also posted a personal message on the natural disaster offering moral support:

Figure 1: Bareilles' Sympathetic Facebook Post for Italian Community following 2016 Earthquake

Bareilles' audience in this particular post is definitely those with Italian roots or ties. She reaches out to victims, family and friends of victims, patriots as well as altruists. I appreciate the careful craft of this particular post. English and Italian are seamlessly blended though some might argue her post would be more an example of "*intrasential code-switching* in which the alternation occurs within a sentence" (Barrett 29). I would say this post is a good example of the ways in which language habits are changing on social networking sites. Musicians like Bareilles are normalizing such discourses and setting examples for fans, followers, and fellow artists.

2.16 Code-Meshing in Personal Life and Projects

In my own academic work, I have come to play with language and push traditional boundaries. Though typically reserved for my creative work, word play, neologisms, and non-alphabetic communicative modes have bolstered my vocabulary. Translingual

scholarship has opened a world before my eyes. Notably, I have started thinking about the ways in which music and words mesh, and not simply in song. For a Three-Minute Thesis presentation, I commissioned UW Retail Services Graphic Design co-op student and Fine Arts student Christie Kwan to animate and ameliorate one of my notebook sketches. She came up with the following image:
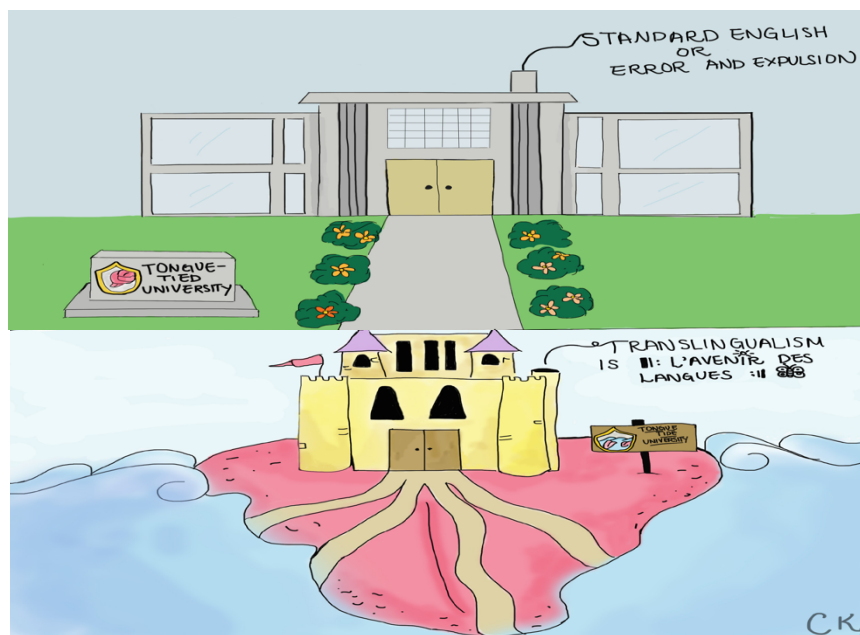
Figure 2: Tongues Tide 3MT Poster Presentation Slide, 2015

There exists no alphabetic punctuation for such musical symbols as "repeat" or "fermata" (i.e. exaggerated sustenance of a note). While I could have asked Christie to endlessly write out "L'avenir des langues"[46] *ad nauseam*, the phrase would lose its musicality and appear rather cumbersome on an image where every word counts and space is of the essence. Arguably, too much text is tasteless on any work of art, especially a static presentation slide.

---

[46] The future of languages.

Borrowed from musical scores, the repeat signs around "L'avenir des langues" thus lend both expressivity and efficacy. I use French to signify how enamored I am with the idea of translingualism. Moreover, the butterfly symbol at the sentence's end replaces the conventional period or full stop and signifies a sort of freedom and open-endedness.

Revisiting the title of my dissertation, "tongues tide" is evocative of "tongue-tied." Here, I am engaging word play and part of the project of translingual practice is the undoing of established linguistic codes. And I am doing just that: I am appropriating language. And this is where translingualism aligns with poetics. Additionally, "tongues tide," while alluding to the expression "tongue-tied," challenges the very definition of this idiom and also displaces myths surrounding translingualism as they relate to the tower of Babel. Reflecting further on the absence of an apostrophe in my dissertation title, I arrive at the conclusion that translingualism is a universal philosophy of language that defies possession. Of course, translingualism escapes, even denies, geography. The apostrophe, on the other hand, would suggest that translingual speakers own the language or, conversely, that translingualism owns them when in fact the ebb and flow of translingual discourse, enveloped by the word "tide," reiterates "the variety, fluidity, intermingling, and changeability of languages as statistically demonstrable norms around the globe" (Horner et al. 305).

In terms of my extracurricular activities, I have noticed the ways in which communicative acts sometimes turn away from the alphabetic. For instance, when I was a member of the UW Concert Choir, our conductor/choirmaster and choir often rapidly clapped in call and response style the following rhythm to focus our attention and silence the crowd:

101

Figure 3: Rhymthic Clapping Exercise for UW Concert Choir, 2015

For the members, this exercise was a way of saying "Listen up" or "Stop what you're doing and take note." Likewise, for many current graduate students in the Language Department at UW, specifically those in French and Germanic Studies, to whom I voluntarily delivered an interactive presentation titled "Translingualism: The Future of Language" in fulfillment of my Certificate in University Teaching (CUT) presentation, snapping often replaced clapping or applause. Put differently, snapping was their way of showing acknowledgment and appreciation. These non-verbal acts demonstrate that every context has its own insiders and outsiders and that apparently homogenous, alphabetic languages themselves do not necessarily define these boundaries.

2.17 Adapting New Evaluation Practices

Accompanying these different reading practices should be different evaluation practices. Conventional rubrics are far too rigid, especially as far as the grammatical register is concerned. When I was a Teaching Assistant for "ENGL 210F: The Genres of Business Communication" over the course of three consecutive years, we were asked to abide by a generic rubric for all major assessments on which "Grammar and Punctuation" was typically weighted at 10% of the assignment grade. These rubrics were in place to ensure marking consistency amongst the TAs and their respective sections. I recall that each stage of this area of the rubric deducted one mark for every grammatical error found. Contrary to proper

business etiquette, however, grammatical correctness has no actual bearing on upwards mobility: "Prioritizing 'the rules' of grammar is not the path to success in the world" (Dunn and Lindblom 45). Mostly, all students were disadvantaged in some way by these guidelines. Without a second thought, I, like many other TAs, circled and underlined grammatical errors and made the appropriate deductions. There were no discussions or negotiations. However, grammar, like languages, is emergent. The translingual orientation "involves perceiving English not as a language held together by a commonly shared or systematized grammar, but perceiving communication as involving heterogeneous and changing norms" (Canagarajah, *Translingual Practice* 14). Therefore, the question of "Whose grammar?" is irrelevant. "English," after all, "must be understood differently when it comes into contact with other languages and develops hybrid grammars" (*Translingual Practice* 56).

Adapting the work of David Martin (2008), Writing Centre Graduate Assistant and PhD Candidate at Indiana University of Pennsylvania Kathleen Hynes proposed a translingual rubric in her presentation titled "Rethinking the Rubric: Assessment in the Translingual Composition Classroom" at the CCCC 2015 convention in Tampa, Florida. There, she insisted that rubrics should be more liberal and humble and should frame their structure around the command "Teach me about your writing." Hynes also suggested more effective categorization or different negotiation strategies for every section of a rubric, including: "strategies need work," "strategies effective," "strategies highly effective." Hynes' revisionary evaluation strategies are aligned with efforts, on behalf of scholars like Lu and Canagarjah, to overturn the teacher-student dichotomy and to, in Dunn and Lindblom's words, "revitalize writers" (49). Notably, Canagarajah views grammar negotiation as a

powerful learning tool: "Students must be trained to make grammatical choices based on many discursive concerns: their intentions, the context, and the assumptions of readers and writers. Students must understand that in certain special cases they may have to try out a peculiar structure for unique purposes . . ." (298). Arguably, negotiating grammar enables more effective communication as the writer's positionality and that of his/her interlocutors is better understood.

2.17.1 Canagarajah's Dialogical Pedagogy

In the translingual paradigm, teachers are humbled into the roles of learner and negotiator. They are obligated to open up evaluation as conversation. Hence, Canagarajah's "*dialogical pedagogy*[47] . . . which develops learning through collaborative interactions between the instructor and the student" (*Translingual Practice* 133).[48] Canagarajah further elaborates on his evaluative role as it is implicated in dialogical pedagogy:

> I adopted the approach of a sympathetic but curious listener or respondent. I
>
> negotiated meanings with the student writers to co-construct meanings as in a contact
>
> zone of diverse conventions and codes. We had multiple occasions for meaning
>
> negotiation through serial drafts. They also gave me ample opportunities to clarify
>
> meaning and to understand the intentions and goals of the writers before having to
>
> assign a grade and judge them. In addition to this enactment of dialogical engagement
>
> in classroom communication, the fact that I was open to codemeshing (which students

---

[47] "A dialogical pedagogy encourages the development of strategies for meaning negotiation, in addition to critical reflection and language awareness" (Canagarajah, *Translingual Practice* 185).
[48] See also "Negotiating Translingual Literacy: An Enactment" (Canagarajah, 2013).

gradually discovered in my scholarship and writing practice) also helped to

accommodate their language resources into their writing. (185)

Evidently, Canagarajah's open-minded approach to grading accommodates linguistic and

cultural difference. Negotiated literacies, as opposed to mastery of SE grammars and norms,

make way for greater academic and professional success.

2.18 Code-Meshing and Error

Another important topic of discussion relates to code-meshing and error. Code-meshing is

undoubtedly an art that involves painstaking decisions regarding the use of particular

grammar, genres, languages, language varieties, discourses, and rhetorical styles. Code-

meshing requires a reinvention of our existing vocabularies. Audience, history, ethnicity,

identity, and socialization all influence code-meshed decisions. Code-meshing brings with it

a lot of baggage that "Standard English" has stowed away. Evidently, code-meshing is both

challenging and complex. In its initial stages and even in maturity, I imagine that many

individuals will engage in what I call "*code-mehing*" wherein half-hearted attempts are made

at the creation of meaningful, blended constructions. In other words, these pretentious code-

meshers or "fakes," analogous to the practitioners of "Engfish" coined by Ken Macrorie (1),

will throw together styles, languages, grammar, and genres without paying any heed to

justification, particularly as it relates to the rhetorical situation. Literary scholar and

compositionist Jonathan Hall describes an episode wherein a student tried to pass off a

primarily monolingual written piece lobbed together with some non-English words as code-

meshing in a Carrothers College placement essay that involved a basic code-meshing

element: "John scattered a few words of Spanish here and there throughout his essay but he

never really got beyond the level of superficial lexical borrowing" (33). I repeat: code-meshing *is* an art. Unlike "Standard English," code-meshing is not a preconceived or premade variety. Code-meshing requires time, patience, practice, and conscious efforts towards innovative expression and meaning-making. Code-meshing is, by definition, self-aware, varied and creative. Much like poetry or any art form for that matter, competence with code-meshing is developed over time. In Young's own words, code-meshing is a journey from pronounced failure to fleeting success: "When students understand that writing begins with 'shitty first drafts,' to use Anne Lamont's apt code-meshed description, and that producing a final copy often involves multiple drafts even for seasoned professional writers, they will likely find code-meshing challenging but interesting and inviting" (*Other People's English* 149). Each piece of code-meshed writing inevitably presents its own difficulties. Even though one may write a successfully code-meshed piece, he or she is not necessarily a 'master' code-mesher, especially because each code-meshed work is contingent on context.

Returning to this idea of code-meshing and error, code-meshing is liberally governed by select principles. Canagarajah identifies ways in which effective code-meshing can be differentiated from ineffective code-meshing. Essentially, he provides educators with some guidelines on what to look for in code-meshed student writing: "Teachers have to help their students explore the implications of their choices for style, voice, aesthetics, and effect, and teachers must be open to learning and accepting styles, voices, aesthetics that they are unaccustomed to" (*Code-Meshing as World English* 279). Effective code-meshing, then, establishes a hospitable environment for all languages and language structures; however, these deviations from SWE are not randomly construed and instead they are strategically

106

crafted, and sometimes with the intent of disrupting established norms. Canagarajah sees code-meshing as a way to successfully acknowledge and subvert dominant codes with the interjection of alternative discourses (*Translingual Practice* 113). The efficacy of code-meshing, or any translingual text, according to Canagarajah, depends on four negotiation strategies: "*envoicing*, *recontextualization*, *interactional*, and *entextualization*" (*Translingual Practice* 79). Likewise, Young claims that effective code-meshing is a matter of trial and error: "That's not to say that all students who code-mesh are going to succeed right away or every time. Although students may learn to be more aware of their linguistic choices, they may not have fully explored their choices or may think they're following traditional conventions when in fact they may not be." (Lovejoy, *Other People's English* 143). Effective code-meshing, then, takes time. It cannot be easily or hastily come by. Although all of us are natural code-meshers, we must remember that many of us have so long negated those "other" languages that code-meshing may initially seem unnatural and arduous.

Of course, some educators will be quick to identify code-meshing itself as an error. Looking to the example of Belize: "Many educators are concerned that allowing students to speak Kriol will inhibit their ability to speak Standard English when situations require it" (Jolliffe, Hayde, and Waller 73). Put bluntly, Belizean instructors fear that students might "loose their tongues" and engage the linguistic diversity so feared by academe. They worry that enabling Kriol will somehow compromise or even disable Standard English. Jeffrey Zorn, one of the foremost detractors of translingualism, holds a similar disillusioned vision of the translingual orientation: "Sadly, this theory-cabal has an iron grip on English compositionism. Should things keep going the way they are, Standard English will soon be

107

damned throughout the profession responsible for teaching it" ("Translingualism" 176).

English contamination and extermination are predominant concerns amongst many anti-

translingualists.

2.19 Code-Meshing Exercise and Experiment: 2015 CCCC Conference Presentation

In a workshop-style seminar I delivered at the annual 2015 CCCC convention on the

theme of "Risk and Reward" in Tampa, Florida, I presented panelists and participants with a

brief code-meshing exercise. I gave the following directions: "Compose a sentence in

'Standard English' (i.e. your finest academic prose) and then attempt to write the same

sentence in code-meshed language. You will have six minutes to complete this exercise.

Please ensure that you are able to justify your writing choices" (Beer, "Trying Out

Translingualism"). The responses I received were as follows:

Table 1: Code-Meshing Exercise

Author/Participant	"Standard English" Sentence	Code-meshed Rewrite
Dr. Frankie Condon	"I am not certain that any language is commodious enough to communicate 'authentic' identity."	"I talk good but you'ns can't know me by my talk."
Deborah Carmichael	"The conference experience provided multiple pedagogical transactions within a broad learning	"I learned a lot and it really got me thinking."

	community."	
Thomas Lavelle	"Canagarajah and Young, both experienced code switchers, miss or misconstruct the point with their invention, perhaps because they project from their own (subaltern) experience onto a global linguistic phenomena."	"Those guys just don't get it – the differences between code-switching and code-meshing – I'm just not feeling it."

The first of these code-meshed responses includes the second-person-plural pronoun and contraction "you'uns." The breakdown of this contraction is as follows: "*You'uns* (usually pronounced as two syllables) is a contraction of *you + ones*" (Montgomery 446). While characteristic of Western Pennsylvania working-class dialect, the fused form "you'uns" is also "found in the South Midlands . . . and in AppE [Appalachian English]" (Schneider 773). Evidently, "you'uns" has significant regional currency in parts of the Southern States. With regards to etymology, "You'uns" is also one of five plural forms second-person pronouns in Appalachian English (446). It is another way of saying, for example, "you people," "you, folks," "you guys," "y'all", or "you all," and therefore addresses the collective. To elaborate further, "you'ns" is an Appalachian contraction with Scotch-Irish roots (Hickey 340).[49] In Condon's "revision," this pronoun, foreign to most of our vocabularies, is meshed with

---

[49] This pronoun is derivative of "Scotland and northern England through the Irish province of Ulster" (Montgomery 429).

seemingly "informal" discourse and "bad" grammar: other contractions and the use of an adjective (i.e. "good") in an adverb position. To elaborate on the latter, many individuals use "good" adverbially, but its use is considered improper. As per the former, however, formal and informal distinctions break down when analyzing a dialect like this in Pennsylvania because it is used everywhere regardless of context. As Young cautions, the division between formal and informal discourse is a tenuous one: "The BIG divide between vernacular and standard, formal and informal be eroding, if it ain't already faded. And for many, it's a good thing. I know it sho be for me" (Young, "Should Writers Use They Own English" 115). Essentially, Young is arguing that the line between formal and informal discourse is blurred, even fictitious; the formal-informal binary has long since dissolved. Young supports his claim in referring to the unconsciously code-meshed speech of renowned politicians and professionals in the U.S. (115). In summary, Condon shifts her writing from that of an educated elite using "big" words like "commodious" to prose that better represents her pluralingual identity: her socio-economic background and American roots.

Carmichael's code-meshed attempt feeds into traditional grammatical concerns in academic writing: a vague pronoun (i.e. "it") and one which lacks a referent. However, as Canagarjah reminds us, "grammar [is] ideological" (298). He elaborates as follows: "Students must be trained to make grammatical choices based on many discursive concerns: their intentions, the context, and the assumptions of readers and writers. . . . Negotiating grammar means being sensitive to the relativity of style and usage in different communicative situations" ("The Place of World Englishes" 299). Grammar, then, is not simply a given or scientific structure of language but a set of rules that are diverse and

negotiable. Young and Martinez advise English speaking code-meshers to experiment, amongst other things, with different grammatical systems:

> It [i.e. English speakers' right to code-mesh] further includes freedom to explore and to be taught in school how to exploit and combine the best rhetorical strategies, syntactical possibilities, and forms of usage from the various grammars, including standardized English that they have learned, are learning, have used, or are using in their various familial, social, technological, professional, or academic networks" (xv).

Here, we witness an invasion of the previously segregated "communal" and "domestic" languages into the so-called "academic." Discourses previously considered disparate and disconnected are united. Upon interrogation, Carmichael defended her statement as "code-meshed" because of the blending of what she interpreted as formal and informal discourse. Again, however, these distinctions are superficial. Perhaps Carmichael's code-meshed attempt demonstrates a growing need for language experimentation and increased socialization. Based on the work of Richard Westbury Nettell and Nichole E. Stanford, I suggested that Carmichael further engage her large Asian student population and explore her "culturally inclusive pedagogy" in "lead[ing] by example" (Nettell180; Stanford 122 & 129). In other words, code-meshing should not be a one-sided exercise that students carry out in isolation; the teacher too must attempt context-specific code-meshing in order to make for a successful translingual environment. Otherwise, students are likely to misconceive of code-meshing as scholarly activity as opposed to our living and lived reality.[50] The instructor

---

[50] As Horner claims, "a translingual approach directly addresses the gap between actual language practices and myths about language spread through that industry's political work in order to combat the political realities those myths perpetrate" ("Language Difference in Writing" 305).

111

therefore must acculturate him or herself into the world of his or her students so as to socialize and re-socialize. This (re)socialization process in turn allows for the reinvention or renovation of existing vocabularies. Likewise, a revamping of Carmichael's existing syllabi might work to her advantage. Too often, teaching materials and evaluations are devoid of 'error' negotiation strategies: "Even when teachers agree that error possesses a socially constructed nature and when they agree that translingual practices such as code-meshing do not always constitute error many of us still hesitate to fully incorporate this ideology into lesson plans and assignments" (Ray 192). Reorienting teaching and classroom delivery skills can make for a more inclusive academic environment.

Finally, in his code-meshed statement Lavelle also uses a vague pronoun reference and a second hyphen where "Standard Academic English" would mandate the use of a period or semi-colon. Moreover, Lavelle borrows the phrase "I'm just not feeling it" from American teenage slang or the pun "jah feel": "jah" is a reference in Rastafarian and Trinidadian creole to "God" and phonetically mimics "do you?" or "do ya?" Put differently, "jah" is a check-in or kind of "are you with me?" question. Furthermore, "jah" is a way of expressing a spiritual understanding and deep comprehension. The expression exhibits a sardonic tone. Lavelle's revision showcases a transition from discipline-specific language like "subaltern" and a very specialized audience to more accessible language and a more general audience. His original "SE" sentence and code-meshed statement embody the shift from scathing academic critique to a simple statement of disagreement. Put differently, we witness in Lavelle's response, as we do in Condon's, the move from scholarly "objectivity" to personal subjectivity.

Speaking of content and subjectivity, Lavelle's statements are highly contentious. Returning to detractors of code-meshing, Lavelle repeats the "party line" critique or common disagreement to code-meshing. Young vehemently opposes Lavelle's statements with the following rebuttal: "Youse a lie" (Group Discussion). Young stays his ground: he is not a code-switcher; rather, he is a code-mesher. However, Young does conflate code-meshing and code-switching on a conceptual scale, arguing that "The difference is that teachers have misapplied code switching to minority students in saying that it is used in one context or the other when it fact it involves the operation of two or more dialects simultaneously" (Group Discussion). While Lavelle says that Young can function in two separate discourses or dual situations according to context, Young disagrees. Instead, Young contends that he code-meshes in different environments in a different register but he never not code-meshes.[51] For example, if we compare two of Young's works on the same subject – "Should Writers Use They Own English" and "Coda: The Power of Language" (the final part of *Other People's English*) –a surface-level reading may lead one to the false conclusion that these two chapters are essentially the same chapter: the former written in Black English and the latter written in SE. However, this interpretation would be a mistake because both of these chapters are code-meshed, but to a different degree.

2.20 Error in Digital Composing Platforms

Finally, error is also constructed through composing platforms like Microsoft Word. This topic segues into the next two chapters where it will be more fully developed. In fact,

---

[51] We should recall that "all of us have translingual competence, with differences in degree and not kind" (Canagarajah, *Translingual Practice* 8).

113

Microsoft Word itself has many systematic flaws that prohibit optimal user satisfaction. As evident from the menu of languages, the program erroneously sees languages as fixed categories. Languages, then, are compartmentalized. Additionally, spellcheck features ostracize fragments, neologisms, and 'foreign' words and phrases with a red or green underline should users refuse to comply with the program's design. However, as Paul B. Diederich points out, "Red ink is an inefficient pesticide" (234). Pesticide is a one-way street. You spray it on weeds or crops and you walk away. The job is done. However, if errors are treated as pests, educators are approaching error from a directive angle. In other words, these instructors are hoping to exterminate error in the name of correctness. Their red ink or pesticide of choice is expected to fix the problem areas, whether grammatical and/or stylistic. They expect never again to see the same errors and even if they do, they will treat them the same way. There is no dialogue. There is no interpretation. There is no negotiation. Red squiggles or imaginary "STOP" signs pervade the green grass of clean text educators long for.

The spellcheck features emulate the evaluative roles adapted by many Composition instructors from the late nineteenth to the late twentieth centuries. Young problematizes the lobbing together of nonstandard languages with error:

> Before the 1970s, the traditional approach to teaching Standard English was the interruption method. In this approach (if one can call it such), students are interrupted whenever they use undervalued English and given the 'correct' (Standard English) form of whatever they have said. In written work, undervalued forms are marked in red ink (typically with no explanation). Although it is clear that this method fails both

114

in teaching Standard English and in addressing language attitudes, it is still

commonly used. (*Other People's English* 38)

Students are likely to receive useless feedback at some point in their academic careers. Part

of this futile criticism is directive and grammar-based. Part of this criticism is also exclusive,

relegating writers of difference to the margins. Even style guides participate in an othering of

'foreign' or 'undervalued' language varieties and discourses in their use of, for instance,

italics (see the *MLA Handbook* for Writers *of Research Papers,* 7th edition). Grammatical

coding functions thus segregate nonstandard languages from SE to keep writing sanitized.

Speaking now to neologisms, fragments and misspellings, intentional or otherwise,

Microsoft Word acts as a kind of panopticon as it oversees student writing. Stanley brings to

our attention the false impressions Microsoft Word's grammar checker leaves on students.

One of her male pupils was duped by the spellchecker's promise of perfect prose: he was

guided "by a simplistic notion of correctness and trust in spell-check as a determiner of

correctness" (49-50). He was not aware of the program's limitations or objectives. However,

through Canagarajah's "dialogical pedagogy," he was able to realize "that Microsoft Word

[does not] understand[] the radical nature of making Standard English plural" (51). The

program has this effect on a number of students who belief that their work is finished and

flawless when the spellcheck is complete. The autocorrect feature proves riskier than MS

spellcheck as meaning can be quickly misconstrued, as is the case with some mobile texting

services. Original thought is overwritten by these technologies. What many students neglect

to realize is "that MS Word is based on standardized English" (51). Cynthia and Richard

Selfe argue that "[t]he language of computers has . . . become English by default" due to its

115

place of origin: the United States ("The Politics of Interface" 490). Nonstandard usages and other deviations from prescriptive SE are therefore under the spell (✔)

2.21 Conclusion

Overall, this chapter insists that we divorce error from non-standardized Englishes and language varieties. In a three-minute SSHRC Storytellers' video I created in January 2015 with UW English professors, including my supervisor and select committee members, I asked the question: "Translingual scholars observe that translingual pedagogy is lacking. How do you accommodate translingual speakers and linguistic diversity as professors?" The first of my interviewees was my supervisor and fellow compositionist Frankie Condon who offered a two-part response: "The first has to do with reconceptualizing what we have thought of as error as creative and productive difference. And the other has to do with ethically and responsibly teaching students to employ multiple discourses and rhetorics and languages in the same text in order to produce new meaning" (*Tongues Tide: Translingual Directions for a Better Life*). Condon's response is consistent with other leading scholars in Composition Theory and Pedagogy, notably Min-Zhan Lu, whose work continues to eradicate efforts towards linguistic conformity. Lu suggests that we move away from enforcement of standardized uses of Englishes in the classroom to an exploration of "ways of listening that . . . . allow for the possibility of cooperation by showing honor and respect to all those speaking" (109). Similarly, "Canagarajah passionately argues that instead of marking any nonidiomatic expressions as errors, writing teachers should foster rhetorical listening in their classroom, a practice which demands writers to participate actively in the meaning-making process" (Yam 9). Other translingualists have their own listening practices.

Rhetoric and Composition scholar Vanessa Kraemer Sohan introduces the term "relocalized listening" and aligns this approach with translingual practice (193). She defines "relocalized listening" as engaging a new educational perspective on reading, writing, and revision "as alinear, dynamic, interconnected processes that attend to the movement of meanings with and beyond texts and contexts" (193). Sohan identifies the principle objective of "relocalized listening" as follows: "to highlight the need of language users to relocalize established conventions in light of their spatiotemporal contexts and positions" (203). In order for writers to be fully understood and freed from prescriptive linguistic conventions, the individual background from which their work emerges must be acknowledged, respected, and explored. We must stop this selective hearing which prohibits difference in the name of correctness.

Chapter 3
Agency and Composing Platforms: An Ethnographic Study

In the fall 2015 semester, I conducted a study on the composing processes of student writers in ENGL 109: Introduction to Academic Writing at the University of Waterloo. The purpose of this study was to build on existing scholarship on translingualism by examining the ways in which technologically-mediated composing spaces such as Microsoft Word and Google Docs effectively constrain and discipline the composing processes and products of student writers. The study comprised a set of two-hour sessions, each with the following agenda: a one-hour lab observation followed by a one-hour focus group discussion. The first session took place on Wednesday, October 14th, 2015 while the second session took place on Friday, November 27th, 2015. During each of the lab observations participants were asked to respond to a short writing prompt, including a personal narrative and reflective piece, respectively. Students were stationed in a lab setting with Microsoft Word, internet, and database access. Video recording and screen capture were used as permitted. In the focus groups that followed, participants gathered to share their own experiences with responding to the writing tasks and composing in applicable technologically-mediated spaces. Audio-recording and note-taking were used as permitted. Participants were all undergraduate students who fit one of the following groups: 1) Native English Speaker in the Home, 2) Speaker of a Language Other than English in the home, 3) Multilingual Speaker in the Home (may include English). Participants were remunerated for their time and efforts in the form of Famoso and Chapters vouchers ($10 denominations) for each hour in which they participated.

This chapter differs from previous chapters as I venture into ethnographic writing. Only after much preparation and prewriting did this chapter begin to take shape. In a preliminary list, Seth Kahn, a specialist in ethnography, composition studies, and action research, aptly observes the extensive writing that comprises the bulk of ethnographic research: prewriting, introductions/consent forms, field notes/interview notes/transcripts, journals, drafts and revisions of ethnographies (177). I would add to this list the following: ethics proposals for permission to conduct ethnographic research with human participants, verbal scripts for in-class participant recruitment, email scripts for targeted and consenting participants, focus group questions, feedback letters, and instructions and exercises for participants in ethnographic research sessions. Also, part and parcel of ethnographic research is finding appropriate mentors and relevant sources. That said, note-taking on telephone conversations and meetings with mentors as well as scholarly works of ethnography are also necessary for the birth of a dedicated ethnographer. Therefore, ethnography does not simply engage writing in its practical and final stages; writing is imperative to ethnographic research from conception to completion.

3.1 Ethnographic Writing: Challenges and Complexity

Turning now to my own writing for ethnographic research purposes, I can testify to Kahn's above claims regarding the prevalence of writing in ethnography as well as my own contributions. I received ethics clearance for my project through the Office of Research Ethics at the University of Waterloo on Thursday, April 2, 2015. Prior to said approval, I submitted several ethics proposals that were returned for a series of required revisions. Initial feedback was extensive as I did not have any previous ethnographic experience. Since the

majority of my postsecondary education was in literary studies and the work I had done in

composition studies was primarily theoretical, I did not have a solid foundation in the field of

ethnography. I was advised, for instance, to comment on any experience or training I

received in ethnographic research methods. I ended up reading a large body of focus group

scholarship[52] and consulting with three experienced focus group moderators: Dr. Grit

Liebscher, Kim Garwood and Krista Mathias. All the while, I was note-taking, a form of

prewriting. From these books, conversations and consultations, I was able to draw many

useful conclusions about focus groups in particular. For example, I learned that focus group

questions should be "open [and] neutral" (Hennink 32) as opposed to closed and partial.

Open questions enable participants to engage freely with the subject matter and thus take the

topic in directions of their own choosing. In pursuit of ethics approval, I partook in necessary

rewriting of sample focus group questions. This revisioning process also allowed me to better

adapt myself to the role of a moderator, and not simply a researcher. General feedback on my

ethics application required that I clarify courses of action to facilitate fieldwork and simplify

the technical and specialist language to ensure accessibility. As a whole, revising my ethics

application and appendices compelled me to refine my role as a researcher, enhance my role

as an ethnographer, and mobilize my role as a moderator.

---

[52] Below is a mini bibliography:

Beach, Richard and Lillian S. Bridwell, editors. *New Directions in Composition Research*. Guilford Press, 1984.

Bishop, Wendy. *Ethnographic Writing Research: Writing It Down, Writing It Up, and Reading It*. Heinemann, 1999.

Fern, Edward. *Advanced Focus Group Research*. SAGE, 2001.

Hennink, Monique M. *Focus Group Discussions: Understanding Qualitative Research*. Oxford University Press, 2014.

Puchta, Claudia and Jonathan Potter. *Focus Group Practice*. SAGE Publications, 2004.

My completed and approved ethics package consists of an "Application for Ethics Review of Research Involving Human Participants" as well as exhaustive appendices. I describe this package at length because it comprises the core of my ethnographic project. In summary, the ethics review process obliged me to engage various kinds and stages of writing that I may have otherwise hurried, neglected, or overlooked. My revisions also allowed me to carefully organize content and better reflect upon my writing, practices and methods. The appendices for my ethics application comprised standard, study-related recruitment materials, information consent letters and forms, as well as feedback and appreciation letters. Other standard appendix materials consisted of a project overview or proposal and an accompanying bibliography. In my case, additional supporting materials included the aforementioned sample focus group questions as well as the instructions for the short writing exercises that were distributed to participants during my two lab observation sessions, which I will detail in coming paragraphs. Two comprehensive surveys and individual interviews were among the omissions from my original ethics proposal. In order to comply with the scope of my dissertation and remain within the parameters of my project budget, however, I ended up using only lab observations and focus groups. To say the least, the process of acquiring ethics approval was laborious, but rewarding, nevertheless.

Beyond my ethics application package, my ethnographic project involved considerable planning. Notably, I was required to make time for class visits to various sections of ENGL 109: Introduction to Academic Writing at the University of Waterloo in the fall of 2015. Thanks to the generosity of ENGL 109 instructors, I was able to recruit a substantial pool of participants. Follow-up emails were another essential part of optimizing session turnout.

121

Additionally, I was required to book computer labs for my observations and office spaces for our focus group discussions. Most of these bookings took place in the summer of 2015, well in advance of both study sessions. Furthermore, I was obliged to investigate suitable screen capture software. Ultimately, I decided on SnagIt 12.4.1: a sophisticated image and video screen capture program that was available for purchase through Information Systems and Technology at the University of Waterloo. More specifically, I was required to purchase SnagIt licenses for ten individual university computers in PAS 1237. Fortunately, I later received research funding from the Arts to cover the costs of these licenses and participant remuneration. Clearly, my ethnographic project entailed many unseen preparations.

With regard to writing, one of the struggles I faced as I considered how to draft this chapter was how exactly to organize the content, which is essentially a question of form. Is there a particular structure to follow? What exactly does the genre of ethnographic writing entail? Should I present my findings only in words? Should I use subtitles? Before I explain my own approach to ethnographic writing, I will recount a brief history of ethnography in Composition Studies. I will then enter into a discussion of historical and contemporary approaches to content and form in ethnographic writing research to situate my own discursive approach to ethnography in this particular chapter.

3.2 A Brief History of Ethnography in Writing Studies

Historically speaking, ethnography is relatively new to the field of Writing Studies. It was not until the late twentieth century that the field of Composition formally adopted this qualitative dimension:

Especially since the late 1980s, increasing numbers of writing studies scholars have

conducted ethnographies or used ethnographically informed methods to examine the

connections between everyday language practices – whether in homes, workplaces,

civic spaces, communities, and/or classrooms – and larger cultural issues, such as

those dealing with education or activism. (Sheridan 73)

While ethnography has become more prevalent in composition studies, ethnographic research

remains undefined (73). There is collective indecision amongst compositionists about what

exactly constitutes ethnographic research.

Since its inception, ethnographic writing research has been a topic of debate. Many

academic genres are both fixed and formulaic; ethnographic texts appear to be no exception.

In his 1993 article titled "Wearing a Pith Helmet at a Sly Angle," Ralph Cintron describes

some entrenched models of ethnographic writing characteristic of the period. He begins by

stating that aspiring ethnographers in Writing Studies are still deciphering how to wear their

new "pith helmets" and that "[f]or writing researchers, [ ] ethnography seems both puzzling

and enchanting – puzzling because its methodology is difficult to standardize and enchanting

because the profession has sensed ethnography's potential for delivering new kinds of data

and for providing answers that are otherwise elusive" (372). He draws extensively on three

sources in particular, one of which is Doheny-Farina's 1986 article. In his piece titled

"Writing in an Emerging Organization: An Ethnographic Study," Doheny-Farina repeatedly

uses the word "research," which echoes a problematic phrase then circulating in the world of

qualitative and quantitative research: "*research says*" (Cintron 387). Cintron critiques this

phrase and aligns it with a "traditional worldview" (387) for the following five reasons: 1) "it

obscures the original tentativeness of prior research," 2) "it obscure[s] the virus of change" by insisting on "freezing particular moments during organic change," 3), it fails "to represent a myriad of voices," 4) "it obscures the possibility that teaching improvements are also cultural artifacts embedded in historical moments," and 5) it assumes an academic audience (388-90). Put differently, according to Cintron, many entrenched models of ethnography discount the provisionality of works out of which they emerge, embrace fixity, deny multivocality, identify as historically contingent, and appeal only to academics. Cintron then proposes some recommendations for experimental modes of ethnography, including expansion of topics beyond "writing practices and writing instruction" to encompass such approaches as critical ethnography (404) and further consideration of parallels between content and form in ethnographic accounts (405). Cintron proceeds to advocate experimental modes of ethnography: "one of the tenets of this article has been not that traditional ethnography needs to be displaced but rather that it be arrayed alongside other possible ways of doing and writing ethnographies" (403; see also 406).

3.3 Historical Approaches to Form in Ethnographic Writing

The question of form in ethnographic writing seems an impermeable one at best. Ethnographic works involve some degree of literary skills; writing is, of course, an art. However, this alignment of ethnography with literature has been perceived as a weakness, or a reason to discredit ethnographic accounts: "Some postmodern anthropologists have compared ethnographic writing to a number of literary genres and linguistic terms, and each comparison is meant to untether ethnography from scientific discourse, which is imagined as a transparent window onto reality, and any claim to objective truth" (381). Cintron does not

necessarily discourage ethnographers from adapting their written accounts to existing literary

forms; rather, he cautions against exalting the ethnographer, aspiring to narrative closure,

masking researcher limitations, and the filling of inevitable gaps. In other words, authorial

dominance is displaced. Cintron proceeds to praise the work of S. Tyler (1986) who

advocates poetics, or "the 'evocation' [as opposed to representation] of a culture" (382),

meaning "a de-emphasis on ethnographers telling readers what they have come to know and

emphasis on 'evoking' inside readers a different way of knowing as if ethnography were a

'meditative vehicle'" (381). Thus, writerly skill and readerly interpretation merge; the reader

appears to adopt the place and perhaps perspective of the ethnographer, or as Tyler puts it

"the ethnographer's version of the culture" (382). This secondary witnessing enables

proximity between the observer and observed, as well as the reader and writer/ethnographer.

Moreover, Cintron applauds the notion of intersubjectivity as it appears in "Ridington's *Trail

to Heaven: Knowledge and Narrative in a Northern Native Community* [1988] [,which] tries

to imitate within the text itself the communicative conventions and teaching style of the

Athapaskan people" (386). On the other hand, he expresses reservations about texts such as

Shirley Brice Heath's *Way With Words* (1983) because of its "bounded consistency" or tidy

narrative structure that borrows from the craft of a poet and unfolds through metaphor (396-

97). While Cintron believes that *Way With Words* in some ways "embodies the classic norms

of ethnographic realism" (393), he believes it exudes story-like qualities that somehow

inhibit intersubjectivity. Inevitably, the form question poses concerns for many writing

studies scholars who are working ethnographically, even at present. Order and closure seem

to be antonyms for ethnography.

125

3.4 Contemporary Approaches to Form in Ethnographic Writing

Turning to Kahn's 2011 article "Putting Ethnographic Writing in Context" we find a similar approach to the theoretical underpinnings of ethnographic writing. Kahn believes that ethnographic writing should follow a free form: "Nobody can provide you with a precise formula for the writing. You have to work that out by drafting, working with feedback and revising" (190). In Kahn's opinion, then, the researcher's individual experience with ethnography will determine the course of her writing; there are no ideal models for emulation. Elizabeth Chiseri-Strater and Bonnie Stone Sunstein, Professors of English and Education, concur: "The form should be an extension of the content. There is no fixed form for an ethnographic essay" (39). Therefore, pursuing the form question in ethnographic writing research is futile.

3.5 From Fieldwork to Paper: Ethnographic Writing

Undoubtedly, the most difficult part of ethnographic research is, as Mary P. Sheridan posits, "the writing-it-up stage" (76). Knowing where to start is key. In addition to the aforementioned question of form, some anxieties that inhibit the researcher during this final stage of ethnography include fears of misrepresentation such as overrepresentation and underrepresentation, or other distortion of data. Writing about live participants carries with it immense responsibilities: "Ethnographic reports have consequences for people's lives: for the 'natives' described, for the researchers doing the describing, and for the social institutions surrounding both" (Brooke 12). Unwriting a published ethnography or retracting an approved ethnographic dissertation is impossible in a sense; once the information is public, it begins to shape the readers' views and opinions towards the study population. Therefore, the

ethnographic researcher must take painstaking efforts to produce fair and reliable written accounts. After all, "Living research participants and communities deserve careful, thoughtful, and ethical representations" (Kirsch xii). While the same can be said for historical subjects, the responsibilities carry over differently. However, there are ways to mitigate these concerns as a critical ethnographer, including multivocality, which is characterized as follows: "The 'other' can now speak in the text rather than being 'spoken about' by the ethnographer. Thus perspectives other than the ethnographers', and the contributions of these others – in short, the collaborative role of participants in ethnographic work—can be made manifest" (Horner, "Critical Ethnography, Ethics, and Work" 23). Kirsch and Ritchie believe that multivocal texts "disrupt the smooth research narratives we have come to know and expect, highlight rather than suppress the problems of representation in our writing, and expose the multiple, shifting and contradictory subject positions of researchers and participants" (25). Where possible, multivocality charges study participants with the responsibility of both writing and reading the ethnographic research project (Horner 24). Nevertheless, under "ethical strictures of respecting participants' wishes," students have the right to decline such involved participation and can be as detached as they wish (24). Multivocality is thus a collaborative endeavour that involves participants in study design and dissemination; however, as Horner points out, it is not always feasible since "calls for multivocal writing can gloss over the facticity of writing and reading as material social practice" (24). That point aside, collaboration *is* one of "five analytic strategies for inquiry and knowledge making in the study of writing" advocated by Christina Haas, Pamela Takayoshi, and Brandon Carr (51). In their innovative approach to ethnographic research,

specifically in their study of the language and discourse of instant messaging, "students were involved every aspect of the project" (57). It is noted that students in this study performed such roles as "draft[ing] consent forms" and "coauthor[ing] . . . conference papers" (57). Participant autonomy is therefore amplified and the researcher's authority is diminished. Undoubtedly, the "lone ethnographer," or the ethnographic researcher who exudes "pretensions to innocence, neutrality, and objectivity" (Horner, "Critical Ethnography" 31) is no longer in fashion.

In my ethnographic research, I engaged collaboration and self-reflexivity as much as possible. Horner lists the many kinds of collaborative relationships: "between researcher and informant, fellow researchers, researchers and communities, researchers and institutions, or some of all of these" ("Critical Ethnography, Ethics, and Work" 16). As mentioned previously, for example, I consulted with several experienced focus group moderators prior to commencing my ethnographic research. As well, I had extended direct (face-to-face) and email correspondence with Dr. Sacha Geer, the Manager of Research Ethics at the University of Waterloo, who has ample experience with qualitative research and served as an ongoing mentor. Additionally, in order to encourage fair representation, students were invited to provide brief character sketches by email. With regard to self-reflexivity, I follow Horner who writes that the self-reflexive "Critical Ethnographer is expected to constantly question her motives, practices, and interpretations to avoid the colonizing discourse of traditional ethnography" (26). One limitation I do not mention elsewhere is my failure to take more notice of body language in both focus group sessions. In terms of questioning my motives, I recall asking myself why I quoted extensively from some student-participants and not others

in my ethnographic account of the second lab observations. I reasoned that the two repeat male student-participants that I was quoting and/or describing at length had written short reflective essays that were at least twice as long as the essays of the other four student-participants. Moreover, some of what they said was striking or problematic in ways that I could not gloss or omit. As I later reveal, I also reconsidered and revised my initial, overall interpretation of my ethnographic study findings. Without question, I consider myself an emerging critical ethnographer.

3.6 Ethnographic Data and Analysis: Resource Management

In terms of complexity, ethnographic writing is incredibly challenging. After all, ethnographers end up with a wealth of materials from which they must derive meaning: "Audio- and videocassettes, piles of documents, and field notes accumulate and beckon for elusive interpretation" (Casey et al. 117). As Chiseri-Strater and Stone Sunstein duly note, "The mounds of data a fieldworker confronts may seem overwhelming, like a bad dream that began with a good experience" (289). Fieldworking is fun; there is no question about it. However, once that practical dimension passes, the researcher is left with a vast research portfolio. I cannot recall how many times I have reviewed the numerous DVDs, field notes, and USBs containing data acquired from my study. Additionally, I found more and more resources related to ethnographic writing research while revisiting earlier resources and notes. Reading and writing are inextricably linked: "As you wend your way through your fieldwork, you will shuttle often between research and writing, and each process will enable the other" (Chiseri-Strater and Stone Sunstein 314). What is most difficult about ethnography is the fact that experience ultimately takes the form of text: "The process of making sense in

writing of rich but overwhelming data is also one of the least discussed aspects of qualitative research" (Casey et al. 122). The high volume of information and raw materials can inundate a researcher, especially a first-time ethnographer. Kahn notes that ethnographic writing "pushes you to generate, collect, analyze, and synthesize more material than you've probably had to work with in one paper before" (175). Kahn proceeds to distinguish ethnographic writing from essay writing: "It requires you to experiment with style, voice, structure, and purpose in ways you probably haven't before" (176). Here, Kahn speaks of striking a balance between narrative and analysis (176). According to Kahn, descriptions and evaluations of fieldwork must cohere in ethnographic accounts. Indeed, ethnographic writing engages superior critical faculties and takes new and unexpected forms.

3.7 Ethnographic Roots

Generally speaking, ethnography is a slippery research methodology. Historically, ethnography is a product of anthropology (Sheridan 74). The earliest ethnographic studies were quite extensive and involved relocation to study cultures abroad: "Traditionally, the anthropologist would 'enter the field' of another (almost always distant) culture, identify a 'key informant,' and begin to try to 'learn that culture, in hopes of making manifest that which normally isn't manifest" (Bishop 12). Evidently, ethnographic research requires some degree of integration. Due to the discursive element of ethnographic research, "An ethnography becomes a representation of the lived experience of a convened culture" (Bishop 3). Ethnography involves observation, and in some cases immersion, as well as textualization: Sheridan rightly notes "an important distinction between doing ethnography and being an ethnographer" (76). Observing and writing about a specific group of people or

culture are therefore two separate activities involving two distinct skill sets. Within Composition Studies, Wendy Bishop is the self-proclaimed mother of ethnography: she "reported that she felt she was almost 'inventing ethnography' within our field in the sense that her main resources in the mid-1980s were documents 'written for social scientists and anthropologists' (quoted in Mortensen and Kirsch, xix)" (Sheridan 75). Following her lead, other scholars in the field took up the challenge to provide emerging "models (Chiseri-Strater; Doheny-Farina) and practical guides (Bleich; Brodkey; Chin; Herndl; Moss)" (Sheridan 75).

3.8 Ethnographic Influences

I framed my study using Wendy Bishop's definition of ethnographic writing research as put forth in her practical guidebook *Ethnographic Writing Research: Writing It Down, Writing It Up, and Reading It* (1999). While I acknowledge the obscure lines surrounding ethnographic enterprises at present, I sought out specific parameters during study preparation to better contextualize my research. According to Bishop, "ethnographic writing researchers look to study how individuals write (or don't write, or resist writing, or combine reading and writing, or are asked to write and perceive those jobs or academic assignments and carry them out)" (1). As I'll detail later, my study took place in an educational setting – the university – where students were assigned one academic writing prompt on two separate occasions: a personal narrative and a short, reflective essay. My project also ventures into critical ethnography, a branch of ethnography which "shifts the goal of praxis away from the acquisition of knowledge about the Other (either for its own sake or in the service of the ethnographer's career) to the formation of a dialogic relationship with the Other whose

destination is the social transformation of material conditions that immediately oppress, marginalize, or otherwise subjugate the ethnographic participant" (Brown and Dobrin 5). Critical ethnography thus addresses issues of representation and mitigates researcher-participant hierarchies. As well, critical ethnography "insist[s] on collaboration, multivocality, and self-reflexiveness" and "recognizes the contributions of others to the work produced; it calls for their voices and interests to be included in the definition of the project" (Horner 564). The writing I do in this chapter, then, is based on both ethnographic writing research and critical ethnography.

According to Mary P. Sheridan who specializes in digital media scholarship, feminist methodologies, and community engaged work, ethnography involves three distinct stages: 1) preresearch, or acquisition of knowledge on the area of inquiry; 2) data collection and triangulation (cross-checking) of information gathered through fieldwork; and 3) presentation of the study and findings (writing) (76). Despite this neat structure, Sheridan makes clear that "ethnography is highly recursive and very messy" (76). Researchers must constantly reread and rework their ethnographic essays and revisit ethnographic sources. Bob Broad, a scholar and teacher in rhetoric and composition with a special interest in writing assessment, holds a similar view: he contrasts "the comfortable, familiar, and relatively tidy world of textual humanities research" with the "complicated, messy world of empirical qualitative research" (206). Unlike textual research, ethnographic research involves a practical dimension: fieldwork. And accompanying that dimension are many unforeseen obstacles. In my case, for example, participant recruitment was more difficult than I originally imagined. I had a number of students commit to the first session, but many no-shows. I adjusted

recruitment numbers and strategies accordingly for the second session. Similarly, I counted on having the same participants in both sessions. As much as I tried to make this happen, however, my plans fell through. Undoubtedly, ethnography is "messy" for a number of reasons; ethnographers must be prepared for unexpected turns and some inevitable loss of control. In addition to its "sheer messiness," Sheridan identifies "the extended time [and] personal entanglements" that accompany ethnographic endeavours (82). Not only is ethnography complicated, but it is time-consuming and occasionally trying. As a matter of fact, those PhD candidates who choose to write ethnographic dissertations "generally spend at least one year longer than their cohorts who elect other research methodologies" (Casey et al. 116). Data review and analysis demand hours upon hours. I should note too that the absence of division of labor creates enormous demands upon the researcher. An out-of-funding PhD student and ethnographer like myself is her own secretary (e.g. responsible for room and technology bookings, software testing, etc.), sponsor, and transcriptionist, to name a few salient roles that could be outsourced without compromising the researcher's integrity. Moreover, ethnography sometimes contrasts sharply with the researcher's formal education. Coming from a humanities background, I was daunted by the thought of and mere utterance of the word "ethnography." As I've learned, ethnography is transformative: "Ethnography changes the ethnographer. Conducting a first ethnography changes our relationship to the field, to research methods, to our own authority, and, often, to our research subject(s). We're no longer the complete novice . . ." (Bishop 154). Ethnographic fieldwork reorients and redefines the researcher.

3.9 From Textual Research to Qualitative Research: Working with Human Participants

There are instances in Composition Studies where textual research fails to suffice given the practical nature of the field. Ethnography brings research to life and enables new insights and interpretations. Many scholars in the field cite the advantages of engaging ethnography. Sheridan holds ethnographic research in high regard: "[T]he rewards are great, most notably gaining emic perspectives that support, challenge, or most likely complicate public pedagogies about language and culture in telling ways. Few other methodologies provide such benefits, benefits that can help our field learn about the people and literacy practices we hope to engage" (82). Ethnography, then, can redefine standardized practices and shift conventional approaches to languaging and linguistic groups. Ethnography also enables researchers to transcend the limitations imposed on them by textual research: "Fieldwork allows students to be more engaged and involved in the research process. Instead of working only in a library, students who work in field sites and archives learn to observe, listen, interpret, and analyze the behaviors and language of the 'others' around them -- through more than written text" (vii). The hands-on aspect of fieldwork gives researchers a more personal role in the work they are doing while also enabling them to generate new data and analysis. Cintron declares ethnography "to be less positivistic and more humane than many other kinds of research" (373). While ethnographic writing researchers must be well read, they must also be worldly. Furthermore, Kahn speaks to the benefits of ethnographic writing: "it can improve your understanding of people and their ways of thinking/talking; it can improve the lives of the people you write about; it can help you reflect on your own positions

134

within cultures" (Kahn 176). Therefore, ethnographic work can transform the positionalities of the researcher and help enact social change. Fieldwork, especially research with human participants, can be enlightening and empowering for all those involved.

3.10 Ethnographic Research: Lab Observations and Focus Groups

I chose to conduct lab observations because I was interested in learning more about how students write as opposed to what they write. In order to do that, I needed to observe students composing at computers in real time. I needed to recreate an informal setting where students typically write. Of course, the content of the prompts was relevant to my study; however, my primary focus was on learning how exactly students interact with these composing platforms (i.e. Microsoft Word and Google Docs). I chose complementary focus groups, on the other hand, because they are flexible and fluid. They enable students to contribute thoughts, ideas, and experiences with few or no restrictions. Focus groups afford participants with more freedom: "One of the reasons why researchers have turned away from questionnaires and increasingly started to use focus groups is a strong sense that questionnaires constrain people's responses while focus groups allow people to give their views in their own ways and in their own words." (Puchta and Potter 47). Focus groups thus enable student-participants greater autonomy and agency.

3.11 My Ethnographic Journey

At this point I will begin my ethnographic account, which takes the form of a braided narrative – one that intertwines the story with theory and explication, or, as Kahn would have it, narrative and analysis. This kind of writing may be referred to as rhetorical code-meshing

135

in which two or more rhetorical traditions are woven together within the same textual space. This very nuanced way of enacting code-meshing is fascinating for its readership. Arguably, my dissertation as a whole exhibits this kind of code-meshing, thus testifying to translingual practice.

   The first part of my ethnographic study took place on October 14th, 2015 from 10:00 a.m. to 12:00 p.m. I had been looking forward to this day for months. The PAS computer lab (PAS 1237) where the study participants and I met for the lab observations was the same place where I had sat my two written comprehensive exams in Composition Theory and Pedagogy and Canadian Literature, respectively. It is a spacious lab with 42 student computers and blue fabric, armless desk chairs located in the beige, tunnel-like basement of the Psychology, Anthropology, Sociology (PAS) building on the main University of Waterloo campus. My office was just across the hall. The windowless room was well lit with comfortable seating and muted, multi-color, carpeted floors that stifled any footsteps. At the front of the room was a projector screen and three whiteboards. A square-faced, 12-hour dial clock hung to the left of the three whiteboards. To the front right was a large grey marble desk with a computer, presumably for the lab monitor or instructor. Around the lab were a few signs regarding the ACO Help Desk and instructions for saving one's work. The lab was located in a level, low-traffic area and contained two smoky blue wire glass doors. As I conversed with the camera/tech crew, students filed in eagerly in casual dress. I greeted the student-participants warmly and asked them politely to take a seat in one of the computers in the second column. Upon receiving the signed information-consent letters, I distributed the writing prompts and helped students set up their accounts and start the SnagIt recording.

Student-participants were provided with the following typed prompt on individual pieces of blank paper:

Exercise #1 – Personal Narrative

'Stories are our way of coping, of creating shape out of mess' states Sarah Polley in her latest documentary Stories We Tell.

Sarah Polley argues that stories give shape to our otherwise chaotic lives. Please write a story of your own that focuses on an important moment that has made a difference in your life. Your personal narrative is a story that can show readers something essential about you, that recounts a story that has shaped who you are, and that reveals where you stand in a community and culture as a result. Your purpose is to explore and reflect on one specific moment in your life.

This paper should have a rather narrow focus. Explore one moment in depth using only two to four pages. Use detail in telling your story, and analyze, explore, and reflect on how this story shapes who you are. You will use your personal story to communicate something important about you to your general audience. You are welcome to use either Microsoft Word or Google Docs.

Students were also instructed on how to manage their time during the lab observation. Here is a detailed outline of the suggested sequence of events in the observation session:

1. 10 minutes of pre-writing/brainstorming/outlining
2. 10 minutes researching (if necessary)
3. 30 minutes writing
4. 10 minutes revising

After introducing the prompt and delivering the instructions orally, I proceeded to pace the lab, taking notes in my green floral "Decomposition Book." I was somewhat concerned with how comfortable students would feel completing the task, but they seemed to be right at home. The student-participants utilized the time provided and asked no questions. I interrupted once to request that they change the font size to Times New Roman, size 18, so that their writing was visible on video camera. I found that our Speaker of a Language Other than English in the home spent a reasonable amount of time brainstorming and had many ideas or stories in mind. He then focused his outline on his transition from high school to university and the ways in which his superiority complex eventually transformed into an inferiority complex. During this time he consulted the (academically) infamous, yet informative site: Wikipedia. Comparatively, in his outline, the English Speaker in the Home detailed with ease his mobile life as the son of a father in the military. His narrative was centered on his family's relocation from Kingston, Ontario to Halifax, Nova Scotia in the summer of 2005 when he was six years old. His writing seemed somewhat rehearsed and I later learned in our focus group that he found this prompt very similar to the literacy narrative he wrote in ENGL 109 and, so, "was able to luckily think of a moment relatively quickly." The Multilingual Speaker in the Home, on the other hand, engaged in very little brainstorming and ultimately erased these preliminary thoughts entirely. He wrote about a gripping, even traumatic, event in his childhood that enabled empathy and later evolved into educational advocacy as a student volunteer with an organization known as Teach For India. Most of the final revisions student-participants made were not significant and mainly

138

involved changing the font size of all text and/or rereading their narrative. What was most important about this exercise was not necessarily what students wrote, but how they wrote.

Following completion of the personal narrative writing prompt, we relocated to a carpeted conference room (PAS 2438) in the new wing of the same (PAS) building.[53] The room is located between the Dean of Arts Office and the Arts Undergraduate Office and is often used for departmental meetings, orientation training for arts ambassadors, PhD defenses, and administrative meetings for the surrounding offices. As a matter of fact, our department held a couple of meetings here prior. The room was comprised of a large rectangular wooden table surrounded by about twenty grey fabric chairs with armrests and wheels. Around the room's perimeter was a single row of the same grey fabric chairs. The room was bright and fresh because of its newness and its handful of windows. The natural light definitely enhanced the room's aura as did the Fine Arts student artwork on the walls. At the front of the room was a round, 12-hour dial clock framed by two rather large windows that overlooked Hagey Hall, home of the UW English Department. The left side of the room had three narrow windows that overlooked the Environment 1 (EV1) building while the right side of the room boasted a large, rectangular whiteboard and projector screen. Near the entrance was another door that led to the kitchenette for UW faculty and staff. The camera crew followed the student-participants and myself loyally and departed seamlessly upon setting up the audio recording in the middle of the desk where it could successfully capture all voices in the circle of chairs I had created at the back of the room. The student-participants were not shy and appeared to enjoy sharing their opinions. At times, there was hesitation or uncertainty, but mostly the

---

[53] The new wing was added to the PAS in the summer of 2008.

students talked constantly. I was impressed with the high levels of engagement, but also inundated with information, all of which I could not yet fully process. As a whole, the focus group session was quite informative and we had an engaged and nuanced discussion.

I remember feeling a wave of disappointment because of the low turnout. I was definitely counting on more student-participants and I wasn't sure whether or not I'd need to redo the first session or the study as a whole. After all, I knew "Focus groups typically consist of 6 to 8 participants but can be anywhere from 5 to 10 depending on the purpose of the study" (Hennink 1). Of the seven participants who had committed, only three showed up, all of whom were male and two of whom were in the math faculty.[54] Nevertheless, I made the best of it and had hopes that one student from each language category[55] would suffice. After recognizing and addressing this limitation in terms of my participant pool or small participant sampling, panic subsided and I went forward enthusiastically. I was glad that I had not called off the first session or let the absences interfere with my study. What I did learn was the importance of sending out multiple email confirmations in advance of the second session while practicing good email etiquette. I also tried to over-recruit for the second session in case of any no-shows.

3.11.1 Student-Participant Descriptions: Part 1 of Ethnographic Study

In order to increase the autonomy of the student-participants in my ethnographic study, I invited them to provide short descriptions of themselves through email. Those who did not

---

[54] The third student said he was majoring in "economics and politics."
[55] Fortunately there was a student in each of the original categories of speakers: 1) Native English speaker in the Home, 2) Speaker of a Language Other than English in the home, and 3) Multilingual Speaker in the Home.

respond will be described based on details provided during our focus group discussion. I will also supplement their character sketches and give an account of their demeanors below.

Speaker of a Language Other than English in the Home: "6'3" white male, Russian heritage, short brown hair, no glasses." He speaks Russian in the home, "but it's predominantly orally." However, he has written in English his entire life, "so English is [his] most dominant writing language." He had less than a year's worth of education in Russia because he shuttled back and forth between his homeland and Canada a few times. He is pursuing a Bachelor of Computer Science. This student exhibited strong leadership skills and had what I would describe as a dominant or strong personality. He spoke quite a bit and sometimes monopolized the conversation. Nevertheless, he aspired to contribute as much as he could to the discussion and engaged a high level of critical thinking. He said "Right?" a lot, which sometimes coerced other student-participants into agreement. His mocking tone and cynical comments at times invoked laughter in the other participants.

English Speaker in the Home: He portrays his appearance at the time of the study as follows: **"**I was about 5'9", male, and around 170 pounds. I had shortish brown hair and a thick but trimmed beard. I wore glasses." This student-participant is a math major. "[He] grew up in English, but [he] did French immersion through school." He describes himself as "a new student who was very eager and curious. . . . I was generally optimistic." He was open-minded and expressive. He moved across Canada several times throughout his lifetime because of his father's position in the military. He describes himself as acquiring most of his knowledge and wisdom from his mother since "[his] dad was usually away at sea or whatever and [his] mom was a stay-at-home mom for a long time." Despite his many

141

relocations, he did not feel that his language use was much affected.

Multilingual Speaker in the Home: At home, this student speaks English, Hindi, and Telugu, his mother tongue, which he terms "an Indian dialect." Like the Speaker of Another Language than English in the home in our first ethnographic study session, this student-participant also writes "predominantly [in] English." After all, he "never learned how to write in [his] mother tongue." This student participant has a culturally diverse profile: "I'm from India, but I've lived in Dubai." At the time of the study, he had also "moved to Canada like a few . . . weeks back." He is an international student majoring in economics and politics. Of the three participants, he was the least vocal, but his contributions were valuable nevertheless. He was somewhat reserved and developed his opinions while others spoke.

Overall, the group had good chemistry and strong oral and written communication skills.

3.11.2 First Impressions

In a way, I felt the students in my first session had belittled the idea of translingual practice without even realizing it. Of course, they were not formally aware of what it meant to be "translingual" in the first place, and my role as observer-participant and moderator was not to enlighten them on the subject nor even mention the concept. In fact, sometimes my neutral responses were mistaken as encouraging or affirming. I wanted so badly to take on the role of an instructor but had to constantly remind myself that I was there to understand and challenge their perspectives on language use in and outside of academia and observe the ways in which they interact with Microsoft Word and Google Docs. Put differently, I was not there to teach them. It was a difficult role to navigate for the first time given that I was

accustomed to facilitating classroom discussions much differently. That semester I was also

teaching ENGL 140R: The Use of English, a course I had reformulated in light of

translingual theories and practice and, in particular, Min-Zhan Lu's concept of "Living

English." Mind you, focus group facilitators are allowed to be somewhat provocative in that

they can play devil's advocate, especially when the group dynamic is challenged by the

"pressure to agree with one another" (Puchta and Potter 148). I would say that all of the

students in the group had strong personalities; however, there were times were the group

cohesion suffered due to lack of group diversity. As previously mentioned, one of the

student-participants, a Speaker of a Language Other than English the home, in my first

session was particularly vocal. His dominant personality sometimes swayed the others into

agreement. Of course, moderators are expected to "discourage[ ] people from expressing

strong or extreme views" (146). At times, this was a challenge given the newness of anti-

English-only, anti-monolingual, or translingual ideologies. In summary, the focus group

questions were sometimes interpreted as possessing self-evident or straightforward answers.

3.11.3 Reflections: Pondering Consciousness and Agency

As I left the lab and walked in the crisp October air, I could not help thinking that the

students seemed conditioned into a certain complacency with existing composing platforms,

which I could not wrap my head around. A closer look revealed that it was more an issue of

consciousness and agency. As I mentioned previously, I felt the students had almost made a

mockery of anything except for English-only, linear, and alphabetic academic texts. One of

the limitations I learned about myself as a researcher and scholar was my inability to describe

how exactly the students' languages are intervolving in their writing. This issue was shared

by two of the students themselves. One of these students was the student who spoke Russian (a language other than English) in the home while the other student was of Indian descent and identified as a multilingual speaker[56] in the home. The focus group questions increased in complexity as the session progressed. I began by inquiring about students' experience with the writing prompt as well as their home languages.

3.11.4 First Focus Group Session

Our first critical discussion is as follows:

Me: I'm also wondering how you feel your cultural and ethnic identity emerges in your writing, if at all. How about other aspects of your identity?

Speaker of a Language Other than English in the Home: I don't think it comes up particularly consciously. Like I can't say consciously: "Oh, because of this Russian thing, I'm going to have this little quirk in my writing." But I feel like there's definitely certain aspects of writing that I would subconsciously do, like it's some kind of internalized culture that probably comes up from time to time. And I can't think of some concrete examples right now, but it's just . . . I don't know. . . . it's little things that you write without realizing them, because that's what you believe is normal. And then maybe you go to someone to edit, or talk to someone, and then realize: no, that's not normal. Right, so, it's, I guess, little differences.

Me: So, do you usually brainstorm in Russian and then translate to English?

---

[56] This student-participant speaks Telugu, English, and Hindi at home.

144

Speaker of a Language Other than English in the Home: *No . . . I just ah . . . No, 'cause I predominantly think in English. I could think in both, but at this point I think in English. So, yeah, I think in English and I write in English.*

Me: *Okay.*

Multilingual Speaker in the Home: *I moved to Canada like a few . . . weeks back, so it's like my fourth week in Canada. So, I've lived my whole life in Dubai and Dubai is like a very multicultural city, so ummm you tend like to meet so many cultures, so I don't exactly know if my Indian influence actually comes out into my writing. I'm not actually focused on that. Maybe it's more of a globalized way of thought and writing cause we have learned things . . . Maybe if I was living in India my Indian influence would have come up in my writing. My accent is definitely different, but when you're writing, it's really hard to like encapsulate okay whether or not your Indian influence comes in cause I've never actually lived in India, so, I don't know how far of an influence it has on my writing.*

Clearly, the Russian student-participant was aware that there were ways his academic language and home language interacted as he composed. In other words, he was conscious of that interaction, but not of what it might be. He could not identify specific conventions or rhetorical moves and styles in his writing; nevertheless, he was quite conscious of their underlying presence. This observation lends valuable insights into pedagogical theory and practice in light of translingualism. At some level, both student-participants pointed to the idea of blending languages, discourses, grammars, and styles (aka code-meshing) and

145

demonstrated an awareness of the ways in which language blending is frowned upon in the academy. These two students also admitted to being unaware of how exactly blended languages surface in the text they compose. Students are often aware of that school imperative to erase that blendedness. On the other hand, students are generally not aware of how or why they are doing this. Likewise, teachers are often aware of this blending in student writing but are neither sure how to name or identify it for their students nor how to help their students do the same in order to grasp the ways in which their writing is agentful. It is evident that both students and teachers are schooled to think of languages in a rigid and reductive manner. Composition classes must teach students not only to analyze the writing of others, but also to analyze their own writing in order to foster an individual awareness of code-meshing and hence the agency that accompanies it.

3.12 Theories of Agency in Composition Studies

With regard to the treatment of agency in this dissertation, I have elected to discuss four theories of agency for reasons of currency, relevancy, viability, and contestability. All of the articles I address were published in the last decade (middle to end) and one is forthcoming (as of Monday, April 10, 2017). The scholars whose works I attend to are as follows: Lu and Horner (2011; 2013); Bawarshi (2016); Condon and Young (forthcoming); and Cooper (2011). Of these definitions, that offered by Condon in her forthcoming collaboratively authored article seems most fluid and comprehensive, and thus most aligned with translingual theory and practice. On the contrary, Cooper's theory of agency is interesting, but idealistic. Furthermore, Lu and Horner and Bawarshi's approach to agency ignores

146

degrees of agentfulness. I begin by addressing the theory of agency conceived of by Lu and Horner, established critical scholars of translingualism.

3.12.1 Lu and Horner's Work on Agency

In this paragraph and those to follow, I discuss three of Lu and Horner's interrelated works on agency: "Translingual Literacy and Matters of Agency" (2011), their Plenary Address delivered at Penn State Conference on Rhetoric and Composition; "Translingual Literacy and Matters of Agency" (2013), their chapter in the compilation *Literacy as Translingual Practice: Between Communities and Classroom*s; and "Translingual Literacy, Language Differences, and Matters of Agency" (2013), their article in the July 2013 issue of *College English*. Lu and Horner redefine agency in light of the translingual approach:

> A translingual approach thus defines agency operating in terms of the need and ability of individual writers to map and order, remap and reorder conditions and relations surrounding their practices, as they address the potential discrepancies between the official and practical, rather than focusing merely on what the dominant has defined as the exigent, feasible, appropriate, and stable "context." In defining agency in this way, a translingual approach marks reading and writing and their teaching as what Pennycook terms mesopolitical action: action that mediates the "micro" and the "macro" in light of the specificity of relations, concerns, motives, and purposes demanding meaningful response in individual writers' past, present, and future lives (29). (Lu and Horner, "Translingual Literacy, Language Difference, and Matters of

147

Agency" 591)[57]

Agency as it appears in a translingual framework therefore has to do with assertion, action, and awareness. An important point that Lu and Horner raise is the fact that agency manifests itself in all writing, and not "only in recognized deviations from the norm" (584-585; "Translingual Literacy and Matters of Agency" 28). They make clear that it is wrong to assign agency only to code-meshed writing (28). However, as is developed substantially in subsequent paragraphs, I passionately contend their refusal to address the degrees of agentfulness exercised by student writers.

3.12.2 Why Degrees of Agentfulness Matter

Lu and Horner argue against determining the degree to which students exercise agency in their compositions and argue instead for what they see as more productive questions. Put differently, they void the questions of whether or not and, to what extent student writers wield agency. They refocus our attention on foregrounding acts of agency as sites of academic interrogation and language negotiation. Lu and Horner articulate this refocus as follows:

> Thus, rather than putting students in the unenviable position of seeming to have to
> choose between being either submissive victims to demands of the dominant for
> conformity or tragic heroes resisting those demands against all odds, and at personal
> academic and economic risk; and rather than treating language difference as a

---

[57] Lu and Horner simplify or summarize this idea at the end of their chapter "Translingual Literacy and Matters of Agency" in *Literacy as Translingual Practice Between Communities and Classrooms* (2013): "In short, a translingual approach to agency brings to the fore the ways in which all writing involves re-writing language, with all the possibilities and responsibilities that such writing entails" (35).

characteristic distinguishing some students as deviations from the norm, teachers can

pose more productive and, we argue, valid questions to students about what kind of

difference to attempt to make through their work with and on conventions in their

writing, how, and why: questions that should resonate with students' own sense of

writing, and with the choices all writers face. (Lu and Horner, "Translingual Literacy,

Language Difference and Matters of Agency" 596-97)

As we know, the monolingual/multilingual and mainstream/marginalized binaries no longer

pertain since all individuals exercise translingual abilities, though to varying degrees. Self-

assessment and peer evaluation are necessary for students to fully comprehend the critical

underpinnings of their academic work. In order to achieve said comprehension, students need

to be aware of the fact that writing is an act of power. The decisions they make are not

without consequence. Lu and Horner propose a composition course involving analyses of

student and peer writing that takes a translingual approach to iterational agency (592-93).

This proposed course would examine, for example, how students intentionally or

unintentionally engage "the processes of recontextualization involved in iterations of

conventional ways of doing language" and why this might be problematic and how it might

be resolved (593). Instructors' responsibilities, then, would extend to bringing students to an

awareness of how agency is at work in their writing. It is not these points with which I

disagree, but instead Lu and Horner's disregard for degrees of agentfulness, which I discuss

at length in paragraphs to follow. To reiterate, Lu and Horner dismiss the questions of

whether or not agency is active in student writing and to which degree, the latter which I find

problematic. How and why students attempt certain kinds of differences and not others are

important questions, but so too is the question of agentfulness. After all, outside of the freshman composition classroom, the dialogic relationship between writer and evaluator that Lu and Horner describe above is largely inaccessible. Students need to be aware of rhetorical situations and contexts where they exercise more or less agency in order to harness the full potential of their authentic voices. For example, a student who writes a musical composition in sonata form infused with rap because of her Classical training and immersion in rap culture likely exercises more agency than if he/she/them were to perfectly replicate sonata form. Likewise, a creative writing student who writes an essay in a form that more closely resembles concrete poetry likely exercises more agency than if she were to write standard prose that adheres to the five-paragraph model. Having conversations with students that compare their work across a larger spectrum is invaluable; degrees of agency matter. Therefore, how and why students can exercise greater agency are also important questions.

3.12.3 Cooper's Theory of Agency

Prior to further discussing why approximating agentfulness matters and why I strongly disagree with Lu and Horner's approach to agency as implicated in their interpretation of the "White Shoes" placement essay, I introduce another theory of agency that eventually leads back to my critique of their position. In her article "Rhetorical Agency as Emergent and Enacted" (2011), Marilyn M. Cooper, a scholar in composition and rhetoric, draws upon neurophenomenology to situate her understanding of agency (421). In particular, she proposes a view of agency that "enables writers to recognize their rhetorical acts, whether conscious or nonconscious, as acts that make them who they are, that affect others, and that can contribute to the common good" (420). She advocates responsible rhetorical agency,

150

which entails rhetor's and audience's openness to other possibilities for action, even those that conflict with or contradict their beliefs (420; 442). Cooper reminds the audience of their power to engage in decision-making and any sort of "affirm[ation] of one's own meanings as absolute truth" is rejected by the rhetor insofar as it denies the audience's agency (442). Responsible rhetorical agency thus encompasses the exchange between rhetor and audience and identifies that exchange as a space of "real persuasion" (442). Cooper elects Obama as the epitome of the "neurophenomenological account of the emergence of rhetorical agency" and "conclude[s] by arguing that responsible rhetorical agency is a matter of acknowledging and honoring the responsive nature of agency and that this is the kind of agency that supports deliberative democracy" (422). Put differently, Cooper's interpretation of agency is neither unidirectional nor dictatorial; instead, it is mutual and bidirectional in the same way that Canagarajah's "dialogical pedagogy" functions (see Chapter 2). Cooper centers her discussion on Obama's notorious "A More Perfect Union" 2008 speech wherein he encourages racial union as opposed to further racial polarization. She praises this speech for its powerful rhetoric, specifically its establishment of "Obama **and** [my emphasis] members of his audience [as] agents in the activity of persuasion in the sense that they actively respond to each other's acts of meaning" (438). In her conclusion, Cooper calls for "a pedagogy of responsibility" and insists that students be made more aware of the effect of their rhetorical actions:

> We need to help students understand that writing and speaking (rhetoric) are always
> serious actions. The meanings they create in their rhetoric arise from and feed back
> into the construction of their own dispositions, their own ethos. What they write or

151

argue, as with all action they perform, makes them who they are. . . . They need to understand that thus their rhetoric can contribute to the effort to construct a good common world only to the extent that they recognize their audience as concrete others with their own spaces of meaning. (443)

I am convinced that not all students understand their rhetorical responsibilities and repercussions of their rhetoric. I agree with Cooper's approach that students must be taught responsible rhetorical agency. Audience awareness is an acquired skill that not all undergraduate students easily develop or already possess. While Cooper focuses on positive use of rhetorical agency, history and contemporary politics boast many examples of how rhetoric can be used irresponsibly or negatively. In a dark mirror of Cooper's analysis of Obama's speech, inviting people to positively reflect on race and togetherness, one can look at speeches of Adolf Hitler, or, more recently, Donald Trump and see the opposite effect. Cooper encourages people to use their agency to use rhetoric that works towards Bruno Latour's "good common world."

Furthermore, while I agree with the importance and necessity of teaching students responsible rhetorical agency, I have serious doubts that this can be accomplished in the current academic setting. Students are incentivized by grades and from a student perspective, academic and career success is often equated solely with what appears on their official transcript. For instance, a prospective law student may feel that focusing on anything other than the highest possible marks threatens her financial and professional future; most law schools in Canada base their admissions primarily on LSAT scores and GPA. Speaking from experience, maintaining good academic standing has always been a primary concern, but

152

fortunately has not supplanted learning itself. Good grades were the key to unlocking graduate opportunities. Instilling responsibility of any kind is a lifelong endeavor and not something that can be addressed in a single assignment. Even simply commenting on students' rhetorical agency in their writing will not be sufficient as "Research does suggest students will be more interested in their grade than in the feedback" (Brookhart 36). Unless rhetorical responsibility can be incorporated into course assessments, many students will be preoccupied with marks.

3.12.4 Why Degrees of Agentfulness Matter: A Continuing Discussion

Understandably, then, there is a part of the student populace who, in their grade-oriented outlook, trivialize the tasks of writing and speaking and, again, may not be fully aware of their rhetorical implications. I believe there is also a part of the student body whose work and mindset simply serves to reinforce the status quo. Returning to Lu and Horner's article on agency, I find it troublesome for translingual theory and practice that they do not differentiate the degree to which writers can deploy agency in their article "Translingual Literacy, Language Difference, and Matters of Agency" (2013). According to David Bartholomae, whose work[58] Lu and Horner draw upon and counter in the aforementioned article, the "White Shoes" essay adapts many conventions of SWE and feeds into the discourse of the "'Great Man' theory, where history is rolling along – the English novel is dominated by a central, intrusive narrative presence" (15). Bartholomae claims that Henry James, the author of "White Shoes," is another "Billy White-Shoes Johnson" (15). In other words, Henry James has reinvented himself as a famous historical person – an American football player in the

---

[58] "Inventing the University" (1986).

153

NFL in the late twentieth century known for wearing white shoes in high school football, thus undermining the creative component of his essay "White Shoes." Of course, such a text is not without agency entirely; however, it is problematic to assert that writers of said compositions exercise the same agency as those who adhere to no such models. Lu and Horner argue that the translingual approach involves "the need for all of us to deliberate over how and why to do what with language in light of emergent and mutually constitutive relations of language, practices, conventions, and contexts" (601). Likewise, in "Beyond the Genre Fixation: A Translingual Perspective on Genre" (2016), Anis Bawarshi encourages students to contemplate "how and why genre users take up various conventions in various circumstances" (248). He discourages teachers and scholars from evaluating the agentfulness of a given text based on genre uptake: "Instead of thinking about how some uptakes involve more or less agency, a translingual perspective invites us instead to think about the agency that is always already part of all genre uptakes, from the seemingly most creative to the most conventional" (247). If translingualism does away with models, than Lu and Horner's "White Shoes" argument does not really hold up and nor does Bawarshi's argument regarding genre uptake. After all, Lu and Horner's refusal to appraise the agentfulness of the "White Shoes" essay and similar compositions participates in normalizing a particular discourse as opposed to challenging it. Put differently, Lu and Horner's perspective reaffirms the potency of certain models that insist upon conventions of mythic SE. Similarly, Bawarshi's perspective downplays degrees of agentfulness in genre uptake and also evades the question of genre bending and blending. Overall, "Beyond the Genre Fixation" and "Translingual Literacy,

154

Language Difference, and Matters of Agency" propose "translingual" approaches to writing that are in fact counterproductive to the goals of translingual theory and practice.

We need not romanticize student writing nor overestimate the degree to which students exercise agency in writing and speaking in the academy. What can be said for the "White Shoes" essay is that the writing is mechanical in that it reproduces an existing story using existing conventions and language The adjective "mechanical," then, conjures up the work of Walter Benjamin, specifically his essay titled "The Work of Art in the Age of Mechanical Reproduction" where he explores the question of whether or not art that is reproduced is still art, or the original essence is somehow lost with each copy. We might contemplate the following: is art that is mass reproduced devalued? In the same way, we might ask ourselves, is writing that is imitative indicative of less individual agency? Of course, writing that adheres to standardized textbook examples and conventional forms like the "White Shoes" placement essay exhibits some agency; however, might we make the argument that such compositions also exercise less agency than works that deviate from conventional modes and discourses? Can students indeed be highly agentful while seemingly working through and with conventional modes and discourses?

3.12.5 How Instructors Can Approximate Agency in Student Writing

Lu and Horner's work on agency has made me ponder the relationship between exploring how and why students attempt certain kinds of differences in their writing and approximating agency in student writing. I have come to the conclusion that they are interrelated ideas. I see how and why students attempt certain kinds of differences in their writing as questions that are implicated in agency. Yet, I believe that an awareness of these kinds of differences in

155

their writing may or may not produce writing that exercises higher levels of agency. I have considered the possible correlation between greater awareness of these kinds of differences and greater agency. However, I am not convinced that this correlation holds, which brings me to my next point: Is it necessary to show students works that exhibit more or less agency and also approximate agency in their own writing? How do teachers approximate agency? Is approximating agency indeed counterproductive and impossible? What end goals might approximating agency serve? These are all very nuanced questions, which I can only begin to answer here. I would argue that approximating agency using a Likert-type scale (e.g. high, moderate, low, none) is useful so that students can get a sense of which pieces of their writing are stronger and more agentful. I also believe that students would benefit from self-evaluation and Canagarajah's dialogical pedagogy, which I discussed at length in Chapter 2.

With regard to models, of which translingual theorists like Canagarajah disapprove, I think that it is helpful to consider the analogy of the fashion world. We see that designers and celebrities alike are rewarded for keeping up with the trends, but also for coming into their own and pushing fashion boundaries. Even the modeling industry itself has changing fashion icons and styles. For instance, haute couture fashion label Marc Jacobs "featured plus-size indie rock singer Beth Ditto" on the runway in 2015 (Schlossberg). Once considered faux pas, wearing pink and red together and mixing prints and patterns are now considered fashion-forward. Likewise, intimate garments such as corsets are now worn as accessories and fabrics like satin are exiting the bedroom and ballroom. Although worn only once years ago, everyone still remembers Lady Gaga's infamous meat dress. The academic writing

world needs to become as revolutionary as the fashion world. Like new ways of dressing and modeling, new ways of languaging need to be embraced and explored.

3.12.6 Introducing New Classroom Models to Facilitate Greater Agency

The writing textbook models we have to date are mostly singular and static. Essentially, the education system continues to reward antiquated ways of composing alongside explicitly experimental and code-meshed writing. Students are indoctrinated in this school ideology that maintains conventional literate practices. It is necessary to examine the ways in which these traditional models do not suffice. We must acknowledge the reality that student writing mandated by school ideology is not devoid of but rather lacking agency. It does not make sense to do away with writing models, but rather to multiply and diversify these models for student learning. In addition to teachers practicing code-meshing freely in their classroom speech and academic output (see Chapter 2), providing students with more progressive writing models will facilitate higher degrees of agency.

3.12.7 Analogies for Agency

Another way to think about agency in composition studies employs an analogy involving a hypothetical educational institution that requires uniforms and permits students to embellish or accessorize. Essentially all students are still wearing the same thing but they have added some markers of their individuality. Affirming a base sameness or mainstream SE composition that replicates certain ideals and models in fact denies or inhibits a higher degree of agency. Now I recollect a particular instance in one of my first or second year composition courses in Music at Wilfrid Laurier University (WLU). Students in my class

157

were always encouraged to develop their personal style, though I remember there was less an appreciation for popular music at the time and the preferred genre was "new music," which had acquired certain contexts and connotations at WLU. Nevertheless, I remember a time when my female composition teacher expressed disappointment in the work of a fellow student composer. This student was a music major (BMus) whose primary responsibilities were practicing and performing. She was very much influenced by the work of the Classical artists that she routinely memorized and performed. Of course, no man's an island. As T.S. Eliot writes in "Tradition and the Individual Talent" (1920), "No poet, no artist of any art has his complete meaning alone. His significance, his appreciation is the appreciation of his relation to the dead poets and artists. You cannot value him alone; you must set him, for contrast and comparison, among the dead" (15). However, the composition teacher did not want this female student's music to be so formulaic and unoriginal. Arguably, this student's agency was lacking as she was so enveloped by the music she was routinely exposed to. It is important to note too that a lot of musicians are Classically trained and therefore learn to master works from the Classical period, specifically Beethoven and Mozart amongst other renowned composers. These musicians are also usually proficient in music from the Renaissance, Baroque, Romantic, and Contemporary periods as well. Nonetheless, the point I am trying to make here is that imitation of higher art forms trumped individual musical expression in this example. Finding one's musical style at any given point in time, like finding one's voice in written compositions, requires experimentation and openness to evolution. If linguistic diversity defines translingualism, and there is, of course, "similarity-in-difference . . . and difference-in-similarity" (Canagarajah, *Translingual Practice* 9), then

158

how can we ignore the fact that conventional modes and discourses feed into reductive norms that diminish or even destroy one's agentfulness?

3.12.8 Condon and Young's Theory of Agency

The power and weight assigned to acts of writing and speaking that we might identify as mainstream undercuts a more nuanced definition of agency such as that provided by Frankie Condon. Her definition of agency most resonates with my own beliefs and is found in a co-authored article in epistolary and dialogic form titled "Letters on Language Plurality and Racial Justice: Antiracism as a Framework for Writing Work." Here, Condon defines agency as something internal rather than externally granted:

> Agency –this is something I tell my students that they all must continue to develop on a daily basis in order to be successful at anything. It is something that no one can give them and that no one can take away. They must put faith on it and frequently breath deep and slowly to sound it down in their soul. Agency I tell them is their capacity to behave, yes, write, in the ways that emanate from the combination of their attitudes, beliefs, inclinations, philosophies, and motivations. I urge them to recognize and accept their own agency, which means despite any and all advice and instruction they may be given, they must always ask: Now that I've heard this and seen that, what does my mind and soul tell me to do? Then they should push that. Advisors must also learn to get out of the way of students' agency and learn to allow, support, and help steer it. (Condon and Young 16)

Agency thus occurs internally but manifests itself externally. Agency cannot be learned or taught; it can only be nurtured. Agency is at the core of each individual but can only be

brought to the fore with careful cultivation, acceptance, and encouragement. Axes of identity are multiple and complex. If no two signatures or snowflakes are alike, then why should compositions be any different?

3.12.9 Revisiting Why Degrees of Agentfulness Matter

Now I would like to elaborate on my critique of "Translingual Literacy, Language Difference, and Matters of Agency." I do believe that students experience dissolution of their writerly identity as they reinvent themselves, particularly in academic settings where individual markers are erased and their languages of nurture and of choice are inhibited. This point is something I address at length in my ethnographic write-up as slow scholarship has enabled me to conclude that the degree to which writers are agentful matters. Students are forced into speaking and writing in SE and are then released from those confines after years of being entrenched in specific academic discourses and ideologies. Towards the end of their article, Lu and Horner express their desire to encourage the reproduction of models insofar as they can only ever serve as iterations of difference, not sameness: "In other words, we can argue for teaching students from subordinated groups to produce standardized forms of English not in terms of their need to submit to dominant expectations, but instead in terms of the fertile mimesis and critical agency these students' (re)production and recontextualization of that English might constitute" (598). This proposition is plausible in current academic settings or as an initial revolt against SE; however, I think that ultimately students need to be more experimental in their writing in order to situate their style, and, of course, being "always emergent, and necessarily subject to recontextualization with every utterance" (600), their style and its reception will be dynamic. However promising in its iteration of difference,

160

every act of writing that adheres to specific models risks loss of individuality. While these models for composition can minimize confusion and universalize writing, they fail to recognize the subtle gradient that agency can be expressed upon. We see, then, that students are still composing within a set of real discursive confines.

I do agree, nevertheless, with Lu and Horner's argument that writing that serves the mainstream has agency, but I would argue that such forms of writing exercises less agency than other works that deviate from the norm, whether or not composed by speakers of so-called "ME." Academia makes for very controlled writing environments with specific and enforced rules and norms. We need to understand that for centuries the literacy myth has been used as a kind of fear tactic. In his renowned history of literacy entitled *The Literacy Myth: Literacy and Social Structure in the Nineteenth-Century City* (1979), Harvey J. Graff, a comparative social historian, aligns proficiency in reading and writing with various kinds of progress: "Literacy, thus granted its valuable role in the process of individual and societal progress, itself became identified with that process and its success, acquiring a cultural endorsement that it easily maintains" (xv). As Lu and Horner put it, the literacy myth is "a strategy that offers students the comfortable chimera of stability in return for abandoning their agency" (598). Overall, while Lu and Horner rightly attribute agency and difference to all acts of writing (584; 592), I think they still need to acknowledge the degree to which writers exercise their agentfulness.

To further expand upon my critique of Lu and Horner's position on the "White Shoes" essay, I turn to W.K. Wimsatt and Monroe Beardley's fallacy of authorial intent. While it applies to literature, I think it could also prove valuable when considered alongside non-

161

fiction such as personal essays. Basically, this fallacy maintains that the author's intent cannot be known: "We argued that the design or intention of the author is neither available nor desirable as a standard for judging the success of a work of literary art . . ." (468). Wimsatt and Beardsley define authorial intention as follows: "Intention is a design or plan in the author's mind. Intention has obvious affinities for the author's attitude towards his work, the way he felt, what made him write" (469). I think that Wimsatt and Beardsley's "intentional fallacy" is germane to Lu and Horner's reading of the "White Shoes" essay. Access to authors is another valid point of consideration, though less of a concern in freshman composition. When teachers and scholars write about or evaluate texts, they must contemplate both intent and effect/impact. Put differently, writers will infer intent in their work and evaluators will infer intent in student writing or else discuss the impact it has upon them as readers. In my advocacy of code-meshing as part of a translingual agenda in the previous chapter, I engage with scholars who work to aid student writers in making informed choices about language use, generally, and language use as rhetorical strategy. A significant part of translingual practice, then, is teaching students to make agentful choices purposefully. This awareness of rhetorical moves and linguistic choices improves student writing and communication. Canagarajah's "dialogical pedagogy" is also useful in helping to differentiate errors from mistakes and put writers in conversation, especially with evaluators (see Chapter 2). New methods of evaluation allow for greater diversity of meanings and heightened sensitivity to writers' skills and needs. It seems as if Lu and Horner wish to give the author of the "White Shoes" essay the benefit of the doubt or participate in a negotiation or rereading of the SWE conventions the student supposedly adapts. However, their reading

does not account for the reverse. What if the student really was trying his best to adhere to the placement essay genre and conventions of SE? What if the student was not thinking about undermining "the great man theory of history" (Lu and Horner, "Translingual Literacy, Language Difference, and Matters of Agency" 595)? What if he was not purposely trying to invert evaluated-evaluator hierarchies in an unoriginal story responding to a placement essay "asking for a description of 'creativity'" (595)? What if the student's thinking was not that sophisticated? What if he was engaging in theft of ideas? Because these critical questions are not addressed at all by Lu and Horner, they appear to be projecting their own theories on James' work. However, to be fair, given that readers infer intent, hence impact, regardless of whether or not James was thinking of this essay in the way Lu and Horner are interpreting, he could still be exercising agency in the way Lu and Horner are attributing to him. Their assertions do not necessarily depend on his rhetorical awareness.

3.12.10 Calling for More Theories of Agency in Composition Studies

More scholarly conversations on agency in light of translingualism are needed. In my above discussion of existing definitions of agency, I evaluate different approaches and found them lacking. To further this discussion, many students do not realize they can develop a voice of their own and instead write for grades. Students may wish to write in a more authentic way but find themselves writing in what they believe is Standard Academic English as that is the way of the academy. For this reason, composing can become a dreaded, mundane task characterized by writing that is unnatural and unfamiliar. Academic writing, then, can be said to distance writers from their work and inhibit agency. Agency, in its simplest form, has to do with the ability to act or exercise choice. Agency is implicated in the

163

rhetorical triangle: writer, audience, purpose, and context. In academic writing, agency involves, for instance, diction, style, tone, convention, and rhetorical tradition. As my study demonstrates, digital composing programs, academic language policies, traditional methods of teaching and evaluation, typing abilities, keyboard layouts, and genre conventions also significantly affect writerly agency. Every person has agency regardless of permissions; however, students' ability to exercise agency may be determined by academic setting. To expand on this idea, composition instructors often tell students to compose in certain ways that constrain agency. The teaching of and participation in such diverse and inclusive writing practices as code-meshing enables higher degrees of agency. Writing teachers need to interrogate the codes and conventions they have been told they have responsibility to pass onto their students. Their goal should be to teach purposeful engagement in and among languages and codes. Translingual theory and practice calls us to attend to social inequalities and the ways they connect with the teaching of writing and with the kinds of composing experiences students are offered and supported in having. Therefore, it is again necessary to be cognizant of the degrees to which students can be agentful; failure to do so works contrary to what Pennycook terms "translingual activism" ("English as a Language Always in Translation" 44; "Language Education as Translingual Activism" 113).[59]

---

[59] Note that Pennycook uses the term "translingual activism" in the specific context of translation work. He argues for "increasing the possible meanings available to those we teach" English ("English as a Language Always in Translation" 44).

3.13 Agency and My Ethnographic Research

As I narrate and analyze my two ethnographic study sessions, I reflect upon the multiple ways in which writers exert agency. My approach centers on language and technology use. I also reflect on students' level of awareness or consciousness of decisions they make as they compose. I was most concerned with how students interact with Microsoft Word and Google Docs as opposed to what they write using such programs. The writing that follows is equal part story and theory.

3.13.1 Program Limitations: Student-Participant Perspectives

Over the course of our first focus group discussion, student-participants commented on various shortcomings in Microsoft Word and Google Docs, all of which inhibit writerly agency. With regard to MS Word, the English Speaker in the Home mentioned that he sometimes becomes overly preoccupied with form as opposed to content: "So, I want, you know, when I start [writing], I want to center the title right away even though really I should be thinking about, you know, how I'm going to introduce the topic and what is going to come next. But, I can waste a lot of time trying to nitpick on the formatting and I've worked on not focusing on that as much." He admits that his attention was occasionally diverted from higher order concerns and that his writing sometimes suffered as a result. In a similar vein, the Speaker of a Language Other than English in the home commented that MS Word "forces you into that [linear] structure right away." However, he normalizes this structure: "I mean once you're writing, obviously you have to put it in a linear format for the user to read, but . . .." Here he signifies the ways in which the program is prescriptive, emulating the rigidity of thinking about genres in academia, which I will discuss more in-depth as it relates to the

second focus group. Clearly, the page becomes the limit and MS Word users are compelled to use the program as intended. This composing program does not support, for example, non-linear, non-alphabetic, interactive, and multimodal texts. Similarly, assignment guidelines in the Arts typically insist upon the very same formatting MS Word enables. "The texts [Kathleen] Yancey notes we typically ask students to produce are defined in the most traditional, narrow, and academic sense: white paper, black ink, 12-point font, one-inch margins, an appropriately linear approach to topic and development, writing toward conclusions and claims, etc. (qtd. in Ridolfo and Devoss. "Composing for Recomposition: Rhetorical Velocity and Delivery").[60] Students are likely confounded by this subscription to "conventional print, monomodal genres" (Gonzales) in the digital age.

3.13.2 Digital Composing: Student-Participant Perspectives

All three participants also discussed the advantages and disadvantages of writing on a computer as opposed to on paper. Their responses focused mainly on disadvantages, which makes perfect sense in light of technology studies: "Seeing only the benefits of computers for writers assumes that technology is straightforward, nonproblematic, and transparent" (Haas 52). They were particularly critical of the brainstorming webs, which they saw as being less rigid if drawn manually as opposed to digitally constructed using MS Word SmartArt. On a more general note, the speaker of a language other than English in the home commented that "when you're [writing] by hand, the fact that you have . . . absolutely no limitations on what you do makes it a lot more personal and hands on. . . . While in Word, it sometimes feels like you're practically . . . you're talking to another person, which is the computer, and the

---

[60] See also p. 298 of Kathleen Yancey's "Made Not Only in Words: Composition in a New Key."

computer's writing it down for you." He found that composing on MS Word made his writing impersonal and mechanical. Typing on computers, as compared with handwriting and typewriting, has been proven to produce "impersonalized and disembodied writing" (Mangen and Velay 391). Interestingly, the English Speaker in the Home did later mention that Word capabilities on a tablet with a stylus allow for greater flexibility and a blending of typed and print or cursive. However, access might then be more of a concern than program availability. The English Speaker in the Home also mentioned the loss of first and subsequent drafts that occurs when using MS Word. As I commented at the time, "it's like you're constantly overwriting, then, in a way." Of course, writing is recursive and while Track Changes can keep a record of all edits or revisions, often times these additions, omissions, and rearrangements go undocumented.

3.13.3 Code-Meshing and Composing Platforms: Student-Participant Perspectives

One of the most constructive conversations we had with regard to critiquing composing platforms took place towards the end of the first focus group. It was at this point that we discussed language blending in academia and the aforementioned composing platforms (i.e. Microsoft Word and Google Docs). Perhaps surprisingly, the multilingual student in the home was clearly against or unsupportive of such blending. A snippet of our dialogue appears below:

> Me: What if you could kind of borrow from both languages? Or actually draw upon
> all three of your languages, so Russian, French, English. Do you think that would
> create a more coherent narrative for you? One that was more expressive?

167

Speaker of a Language Other than English in the Home: Ummm . . . [hesitant] I don't

think so. I have never ever thought about it, so it's not a question I think that I can . . .

Multilingual Speaker in the Home: But I don't think so.

Me: No. Not for you.

Multilingual Speaker in the Home: I'm going to make it even more messier

[laughter] trying to incorporate three languages into one narrative.

Speaker of a Language Other than English in the Home: Though I feel like attempting

to do it would actually make you think a lot better through it because if you're

thinking: how could I incorporate it in three different languages? . . . To do that, you

have to think it through in three different languages.

Multilingual Speaker in the Home**:** E-x-x-xactly.

Speaker of a Language Other than English in the Home: So, you have to think the

same idea three different times in your head in different ways, and that would, I

guess, allow you to get a clearer picture of it. Because maybe I'll be like: Oh, I can't

translate this word into this or I can't translate this concept into this. So, what's

another way I can say that? Oh hey, that might actually be the better way of like . . .

That exposes a flaw in my original argument or something like that.

Multilingual Speaker in the Home: I mean even if your writing becomes even more expressive if your writing in more languages, I think your audience becomes very limited.

Speaker of a Language Other than English in the Home: Yeah.

Multilingual Speaker in the Home: Your audience [becomes very limited]. Because if I'm writing a narrative in my mother tongue – English and Hindi, my audience goes through a very, very narrow scope of people. But if I was to write only in English, everyone around me – like everyone who speaks English, either fluently or rather fluently, they can understand what I'm trying to say. But if I'm trying to incorporate three languages, I mean . . . ah, I think it's going to be harder for someone, or even you, to actually get your idea through.

Me: And how do you think you could negotiate that maybe if you want to address a specific audience, say predominantly English speakers or whatever, but you also want to draw a little bit on your own home languages, so Hindi and Telugu? How might you navigate those?

Multilingual Speaker in the Home: It would be quite hard. I mean . . . cause I need to navigate the thoughts of the other two languages and then translate them into English, so that the English speaking ones can . . .

Me: But why do you feel obligated to translate them necessarily? Do you think the context . . . ?

Multilingual Speaker in the Home: It does . . . . It does! I mean the context differs widely, so if I'm struggling to incorporate a few of my traditional languages into English, definitely the audience is going to have a hard time to understand what I'm trying to say. It's always easier to stick to one main language and then express your ideas in that language.

Here, the Multilingual Speaker in the Home insists on the inflexibility of language blending for academic purposes. To summarize some of his main points: code-meshing makes one's writing "messier," one's audience "very limited," and one's ideas "harder for someone, or even [the writer]" to communicate and comprehend. Like his earlier comments, the student-participant's final statement in this snippet feeds into ideologies about monolingualism or SAE. The student is not to blame for his thinking and instead he is one of many students who have been indoctrinated in the monolithic teachings of the North American academy, or as Horner and Trimbur put it, "a tacit language policy of unidirectional English monolingualism" ("English Only and U.S. College Composition" 594). To perform their

function in promoting mythical SAE, teachers enter into the agentic state (an agentless state) where "[t]hey do what they do – and what they do is disarticulated from any moral conviction or ethical principal – by virtue of their commitment to the "university" and the "integrity" of the intellectual enterprise" (Condon and Young 10). They may see value in authentic expression but abandon their own views in the name of obedience to the scholastic order. Building on this argument, Matsuda argues that "the dominant discourse of U.S. college composition not only has accepted English Only as an ideal but it already assumes the state of English-only, in which students are native English speakers by default" ("The Myth of Linguistic Homogeneity in U.S. College Composition," 637). It is the same in Canada. Of course, linguistic diversity in the university is much greater than such a reductive ideology accounts for. In fact, the University of Waterloo (UW), for example, has over 6, 600 international students from over 120 countries.[61] More specifically, UW has a graduate student populace of at least one-third international students[62] However, it is critical to note that translingualism does not merely implicate international and/or non-native English speakers and instead accounts for each and every one of us. As well, translingualism transcends languages proper. Even if students are under the impression that they are monolingual, they have not to look far to see that math, music, emojis, and internet slang are few of many languages they use regularly. The translingual label, then, is not intended to isolate students from one another and instead seeks to unify them.

Evidently, this student-participant's beliefs are contrary to the translingual approach, which maintains that translation and interpretation are the responsibilities of readers and

---

[61] https://uwaterloo.ca/international-students (Note: Website has changed.)
[62] https://uwaterloo.ca/graduate-studies/international-students (Note: Website has changed.)

writers alike. This student-participant exhibits what I call internalized linguistic anti-miscegenation, which is the felt and expressed imperative to keep languages separate and pure. This neologism aligns ideologically with anti-miscegenation law or the ideology that informs thinking about miscegenation, which attends to fears of interracial mixing. With regard to language blending, we already are translingual and knowingly or unknowingly mesh grammars, genres, languages, language varieties, discourses, and rhetorical styles on a regular basis. Pennycook states that "Languages are more like curries than sacks of spice" ("What Might Translingual Education Look Like?" 7).[63] Not only are languages themselves diverse; however, languaging too is implicated in diversity.[64] Therefore, trying to compartmentalize languages is a futile task as is insisting on maintaining the "purity" of languages proper. I think John Trimbur, a specialist in composition and writing studies, nicely sums up the movement away from imaginary monolingual norms:

> To see writing as always taking place translingually, as Horner and Lu do, is to remove the conceptual grounds that once ostensibly separated a clearly knowable linguistic mainstream from the margins as the inevitable target of writing instruction, replacing unidirectionality of monolingualism with the recognition that we are all – students, teachers, literary writers – constantly negotiating multiple languages, conventions of writing, and lingusistic loyalties. (Trimbur, "Translingualism and Close Reading" 226)

---

[63] He further clarifies this statement: "The point is that languages are not really definable or enumerable in any easy way, and linguists that have claimed to do so with too much assurity have not helped understand how languages are used. Curries, not spices" (8).
[64] See Chapters 1 and 2.

Given the newness of translingual theory and practice, many individuals are still unaware of the numerous ways in which they engage language b(l)ending on a daily basis and adapt their writing for different audiences and purposes. Once again, foregrounding matters of agency would help students better recognize and navigate the choices they make in writing.

The Speaker of a Language Other than English in the Home in this first session, on the other hand, displays a more open-minded attitude towards language blending or code-meshing for academic purposes. He embraces the exploration of a single idea in a multitude of languages to ameliorate expression and minimize ambiguity or incongruity. He also believes that leaving certain words untranslated is sometimes a good thing as no equivalents or suitable alternatives exist. Nevertheless, he too agrees with the Multilingual Speaker in the Home that writing that engages such explicit language blending is bound to reach a more narrow audience. The latter belief is detrimental to the advancement of language policies and praxis.

3.13.4 Language Templates and Spellcheckers: Student-Participant Perspectives

Other interrelated aspects of these two composing programs that we discussed in the two focus groups at length were spellcheck and language settings, both of which censor and constrain writerly agency. I noticed that all three students elected "English US" by default in their personal narratives. Cynthia and Richard Selfe identify and problematize electronic borders: "Primary interfaces, for example, also generally serve to reproduce the privileged position of standard English as the language of choice or default, and, in this way, contribute to the tendency to ignore, or even erase, the cultures of non-English language background

173

speakers in this country (i.e. the U.S.)" (488). Composing programs, library research databases, and traditional methods of teaching and evaluation are all complicit in maintaining these borders. Two of the three student-participants in this first session consulted online resources such as Wikipedia and Merriam-Webster to aid their writing, all of which were in English. In this particular session and upon review of the screen capture videos, I did not notice any overt struggles with the spelling and grammar tool. I did observe some resilience to this policing of one's writing in the narrative belonging to the native English speaker in the home. However, it is important to note that the students did little to aggravate spellcheck, meaning, for instance, minimal language blending and complete sentences. When the bothersome red squiggly line appeared under the word "blankie,"[65] the Native English Speaker in the home did not replace it with "blanket" and instead carried on writing. Here, his diction borrows from childhood speech. A little later on he ignored the underlining of "colour," or the "English (CAN)" spelling. In other words, he did not accept the American spelling to appease the program's spellcheck. In our focus group, he claimed that he dislikes MS Word spellcheck because "It makes mistakes." Clearly, he assumes some degree of authority over the disciplinary action of the built-in spellchecker. The Speaker of Another Language Other than English in the home identified MS Word spellcheck as confrontational, using an analogy evocative of war and struggle. His description with an interjection from the native English Speaker in the Home can be found below:

> Speaker of a Language Other than English in the Home: Well, yeah. And then, I
>
> guess, I mean in some cases if you're not very confident in you're writing and I'm

---

[65] Context: "I was in my own bed, with my own blankie, but I didn't feel at home."

more so now, but I have at times, it's if you get into an argument with the spellcheck, you will sometimes like at some point give in and agree to its writing because then like it's not saying it's wrong, right

English Speaker in the Home: It gets rid of the little squiggly.

Speaker of a Language Other than English in the Home: Yeah, you're not going to have that squiggly. It's not like you're wrong.

The removal of the red underline clearly creates false security or peace of mind and brings the writer some degree of assurance and satisfaction, however distorted. These examples show that some students have grown accustomed to disregarding or dictating to MS Word's spelling and grammar check while others have grown accustomed to succumbing to its suggestions, or deferring to the program's power.

Furthermore, none of the text was underlined in the narrative belonging to the Speaker of Another Language Other than English in the home. Finally, in the text of the Multilingual Speaker in the Home, the spellcheck caught some of his spelling mistakes such as "inspite" instead of "in spite," which he gladly accepted. He also used spellcheck to correctly spell out "immediately," which appeared to be a typo. However, the all-knowing and all-seeing, perhaps omnipotent spellcheck failed on other levels such as diction. The student, for instance originally said "podium" instead of "stage" and "graduation" instead of "certificate" or "diploma," but he was able to realize both of these mistakes on his own. Based on his

175

contributions to our focus group, he very much appreciated the program's spellcheck. He praised the program for "hon[ing] [his] writing skills" by correcting any "spelling errors." He argued that MS Word is particularly useful for second language writers: "I mean if you're not really a great speaker in the English language, so you tend to go wrong in your spelling or something, so it does the job for you." Here, we see that this student-participant has already bought into the program's monolingual design. Cynthia and Richard Selfe identify the target audience for early word processing programs as Native English speakers (488). Even at present, the target audience has not changed. English remains "the privileged language of computer interfaces—and the effects of the design decisions that support this system—are certainly not limited to the United States" (490). Unfortunately, this student-participant does not question the program limitations and instead willingly submits. Perhaps his appreciation for MS Word spellcheck is rooted in his anxieties as a newcomer to and non-citizen of Canada. It is likely he is under the spell of spellcheck because of the literacy myth, which I discuss in greater detail in my account of the second ethnographic session. This student allowed the spellchecker to undermine his thinking and overwrite his text as if it knew better; as a result, he surrendered his agency to the spellchecker. The students' overall conformity to MS Word features and functions shows that the program succeeds in surveilling and constraining the discourses and languages available to its users. Regardless of its widespread acclamation as aid, the MS Word editing tool not only substitutes for the necessity to learn but actively agitates against learning. While students can add to the dictionary and manually switch between languages or opt out of the speller and other proofing tools entirely, the

176

difficulty (inconvenience) or inaccessibility makes student writing relatively uniform and user experience mostly unidirectional.

3.13.5 Final Thoughts on First Focus Group

What I found most disturbing about the first focus group discussion with its concentration on the technical aspects of Microsoft Word and Google Docs was the sheer compliance of many student-participants with dominant program features. While I have discussed the limitations imposed on student writers by spellcheck in both sessions above, I would now like to turn to student suggestions for improving said programs, or, more accurately, the lack thereof. In her foreword to James A. Inman's *Computers and Writing: The Cyborg Era*, Anne Ruggles Gere summarizes Inman's view of agency in light of the human-technology relationship in the cyborg era as follows: (a) remembering individuals in any technology and/or technology-adoption decision, (b) actively seeking and promoting diversity, (c) articulating and modeling resistance, and (d) participating in the design of technologies" (viii). Students in my second session certainly thought more critically about composing program designs. As they emerge out of this chapter, my own suggestions for improvements in both MS Word and Google Docs will be the focal point of Chapter 4. One of my central critiques of Microsoft Word and Google Docs is that they prohibit two languages from being turned on simultaneously for the purposes of writing and editing. Student-participants in my first focus group discussion, however, found no fault with this feature whatsoever. In fact, all three participants dismissed the validity and possibility of revamping language features in both programs. Technology studies scholars would not find this surprising. Writing Studies researcher and scholar Christina Haas observes, "As users and consumers, people prefer their

177

technology transparent: They do not like to have to think about the features of their word processors any more than they like to think about shifting gears in an automobile, and they prefer to look through a given technology to the task at hand" (25). Digital composing tools thus become invisible in the mind's eye. As the first focus group discussion demonstrates, it is easier to accept than assess program design. A snippet of our discussion on this topic follows:

> Me: And why do you think they don't allow, you know, users to enable multiple languages for spellcheck?

> Speaker of a Language Other than English in the Home: I feel like it's just a computationally difficult thing for them to do. [Laughter] Because then they would have to . . . for every single phrase decide, they'd have to decide is it English or is it French. Is it English or is it like . . .

> English Speaker in the Home: Like even for the grammar it would be super difficult to do that. . . .

These student-participants take a scientific approach: problem-focused and solution-oriented. Their technical backgrounds speak to the technical challenges of altering an existing feature. They view such changes as an inconvenience since the spellcheck serves their needs, and presumably those of others, satisfactorily. A bit further on in this same discussion, the Speaker of Another Language other than English in the home responded flippantly: "I've never tried writing in two different languages, so . . ." He uses inapplicability as an excuse.

Although I am a humanist and aspiring techie, I have conversed with friends and graduate students in the CS Department at UW and I insist: the ability to turn on two or more languages for writing and editing is not technologically impossible, but technologically difficult. In the following chapter, I detail a working model of a more inclusive spellchecker that can be implemented by "software and hardware design specialists" (Selfe, Cynthia L., and Richard J. Selfe "The Politics of the Interface" 500). However, perhaps the bigger question is whether editing tools that police language are desirable at all, and, if so, in what context and with what dictionary. Should both programs have a dictionary, perhaps Young's classroom dictionary could be adapted from a technological perspective.[66] Perhaps the community collaborative model used by Wikipedia and other wikis, for instance, could be adopted in order to allow for greater flexibility in spelling and grammar in changing contexts. This model would also minimize the investment technology companies would have to make, leaving it in the hands of users. Ultimately, then, acceptance of dominant program features should be supplanted by action.

3.13.6 Student-Participant Descriptions: Part 2 of Ethnographic Study

The student-participants in my second focus group, of which there were six, were also invited to provide descriptions of themselves by email for fair representation in my dissertation. I add to these descriptions based on information provided and observed in our second session. One individual opted out of this self-description. Two of the students (i.e. the Speaker of Another Language Other than English in the Home and the Native English

---

[66] See Chapter 1.

Speaker from the first ethnographic study session) were repeat participants. Below are the student-participant descriptions:

Multilingual Speaker in the Home: This student-participant describes herself as at length:

> I am 5'5", I have black wavy hair, and I am from Chilean descent. My ancestry is Spanish, Mapuche (natives of Chile) and I believe Irish or Scottish.
>
> I am not exactly sure how to describe my skin colour. My skin is white but not pale. I would maybe call it beige. I wear glasses and I generally don't wear much makeup or jewelry.
>
> My personality during the study varied as the study progressed. I would say at first I was a little reserved as I wasn't exactly sure what I was getting myself into, but after completing the writing I was much more open when we had the discussion period. I don't mind having conversations with strangers or sharing my opinions on things that I can provide relevant feedback on. I would say I am pretty outgoing.
>
> Regarding my major, I am double majoring in Legal Studies and Peace and Conflict studies.

I would note too that this student-participant was especially descriptive and diplomatic in her responses. In terms of her ethnicity, she was born in Chile and her first language is Spanish although she "started writing essays in English." With regard to gender, she "identif[ies] as a cisgender female."

Native English Speaker in the Home (Repeat Participant -- Male)

Native English Speaker in the Home (New -- Female): She paints the following brief self-portrait: I'm a 5'5 African female with black hair and light brown skin. . . . I weigh 150 pounds." This student was quite soft-spoken and not as vocal as some of the other participants. Most of her contributions were made in the first half of our discussion. She was born in Nigeria but acquired what she calls "Pidgin English" after coming to Canada. She claims to speak English at home although her parents speak Igbo. She is pursuing an Arts and Business degree and has decided upon Economics as her major.

Native English Speaker in the Home (New – Male): He offers the following character sketch:

> I'm a white guy, around 5 8", and I had dark hair a few inches in length.
>
> . . .
>
> At the time I was in a regular honors math degree. I've since changed to BMath (CS) and BMath (Combinatorics & Optimization). It's just a double major, but since I'm not taking them as joint majors so the university lists them separately.

This student-participant was vibrant and vocal. He consistently contributed to the group discussion and was not shy about expressing his opinions.

Speaker of Another Language Other than English in the Home (Repeat Participant – Male)

Speaker of Another Language Other Than English in the Home (New – Female): This student chose not to provide a description of herself. In the focus group, she identifies as female and Black. She uses patois, "a Jamaican language," with her family and reserves patois for home use. Further on in the focus group, she describes patois in greater depth: "Ah, it's like a form of Creole. Basically, it's just . . . in the past, like during slavery times, they decided to make up their own language umm using English. So, it's just . . . it takes an absence of some English words and using different words to mean the same thing and with an accent. That's basically what it is." She is majoring in Psychology. Her contributions to our group discussion were ongoing. She was very resolute in her opinions.

3.13.7 Reflections

My second ethnographic study ran much smoother than the first. The turnout was greater and the process more familiar. The location for the lab observations was identical to the first session and we remained there for the focus group discussion for convenience sake. While students were seated at the computers in the same row identified earlier for the lab observations, they eventually moved to chairs in a circle at the front of the room for our discussion. The voice recorder was placed in the centre of the circle by the tech crew so that it would capture everyone's contributions. Students seemed relatively relaxed and were dressed casually, some in sweatshirts and hats, and one wearing her hood the entire duration of the session, presumably for anonymity. It should be noted the video recordings focused exclusively on the computer screens and only the backs of students' heads or side profiles were occasionally captured on camera. Only audio recording was used during our focus group discussion.

3.13.8 Second Lab Observation

I delivered the writing prompt to the students orally and textually. The instructions were written as follows:

Writing Exercise #2 – Short Reflective Essay

In a short reflective essay, reflect on your own language use in and outside of the academy. Feel free to provide any details you feel are pertinent.

Please ensure that the writing platform you are using for this exercise differs from that of the first exercise (e.g. If you composed your first exercise using Microsoft Word, please make sure that the second exercise is composed using Google Docs.).

Student-participants were advised to manage their time as noted in our first session. Although many students expressed some perceived ambiguity with the writing prompt, they responded as they saw fit and only expressed these uncertainties after the lab session was complete. During the focus group I reassured students that their interpretation of the word "language" in the writing prompt could vary. Students also understood the phrase "in or outside of the academy" differently, with most conflating "academy" with the university, and some referring to their high school experiences. Student-participants interpreted language use "outside of the academy" as non-academic settings such as home and public spaces where speech, texting, and non-verbal modes of communication prevail. Collectively, the students focused on a perceived distinction between formal and informal communication.

In her reflective essay composed using Microsoft Word, our new Multilingual Speaker in the Home (Female) wrote about her way of writing for academic purposes versus home and public use. She stalled in the early brainstorming stage but wrote steadily thereafter. She claims that she is quite liberal in her language use outside of the university. She identifies as trilingual and states she knows the following languages: Spanish, English, and "body language." Her body paragraphs utilized three settings as organizing principles: home, academia, and community. She engaged in very few revisions at the end of the lab observation and had about ten minutes to spare.

Our new Native English Speaker in the Home (Female) also hesitated a bit in the brainstorming phase. Using MS Word, she wrote about being exposed to Igbo, her parents' language, only after mastering English, which is "Nigeria's primary language." She states that her knowledge of Pidgin English, Igbo, and English provides access to certain communities that she would otherwise be excluded from. She also talks about her immersion in Nigerian movies and shows and the ways in which her Pidgin English was self-taught and earned her full membership in her circle of Nigerian friends. This student-participant wrote steadily throughout and continued composing during the suggested revision phase. Her narrative was well developed and structured.

Our new Native English Speaker (Male) originally choose Google Docs to write his reflective piece before selecting Microsoft Word. Like the others, his essay centered on the differences between his writing for and outside of the university. He spent an impressive twenty minutes or so brainstorming. Both this student-participant and the female Native English Speaker in the Home conflate good grades with clarity. Like others, he also adds that

formality earns him higher grades. Note the short form for "university" that he uses when describing his writing in non-academic or non-evaluative zones: "When I don't write for uni, correctness doesn't matter so much." I find it interesting that student-participants in our first session also expressed the misapprehension that there are not short cuts and codes in academic writing, yet in a so-called "reflective essay" outside of class (i.e. in our second session), this particular student was very comfortable using internet slang or a well-known abbreviation that otherwise serves as a prefix. He also claims that his informal writing "doesn't usually have consequences" and he "can take more risks." He associates informal writing with lower expectations and lesser restrictions. He revised according to the suggested outline.

In her writing, our new Speaker of a Language Other than English in the Home (Female) addressed the exclusion of her home language in the academy. As was the case with all of the new participants, she used Microsoft Word. Rather than denounce the English-speaking academy in North America, she defends English-only policies although she uses patois with close friends and family. She admits to adjusting her English based on audience and setting. She describes academia as "one of the only places [where she] use[s] proper English." Accordingly, she code switches as she sees fit: "I don't speak Patois in school though, I use regular English. This is because patois is not considered a formal language and is generally looked down upon." Her narrative also reveals competence in French, as illustrated by her trip to Quebec and French classes. In her concluding paragraph, she again identifies age as a central barrier to communication. She believes younger generations have access to a broader array of linguistic codes. Presumably, she holds these beliefs as a child of the digital age

where knowledge of these codes is practiced regularly on social media platforms. As recommended, she spent ten minutes revising.

One of the repeat participants, a Speaker of Another Language Other than English in the Home, began his drafting stage with a typing exercise before using Google Docs to create his response. From the very beginning he opened the same document in two different parallel screens. He identifies as trilingual and organized his body paragraphs around his three languages: English, Russian, and French. English, as he makes clear in our focus group discussion, is his "dominant language." He crafted the following complex thesis statement: "Despite the various multicultural activities present at the University of Waterloo, the educational format creates a monoculture which is incredibly difficult to maintain multiple languages." While UW fosters diversity, he writes, he "found it incredibly difficult to maintain [his] non-English language skills." He laments the fact that his Russian and French are in decline because they are not used regularly. At one point he left Google Docs to visit www.thesaurus.com for synonyms for "better." He believes the segregation of students by discipline also cultivates a monoculture, thus contradicting the plight of an institution like UW. His essay took a turn or tangent in its unexpected discussion about the general lack of cross-disciplinary communication. He made no revisions and seemed confident in what he wrote.

The other repeat participant, a Native English Speaker in the Home (Male), also used Google Docs to respond to the prompt. He started his brainstorming phase almost immediately, which took no more than five minutes. His text opens with a description of writing in the disciplines, specifically a comparison between math writing and freshman

186

composition. In both fields, he emphasizes the importance instructors place on "quality," which he defines as correctness and propriety. Expanding upon this definition, he writes: "I must neither be sloppy nor use slang (especially considering my instructors and I may not share the same vernacular). As I result, I generally use a more sophisticated vocabulary in an attempt to impress my instructors, as well as more complex sentences. I also leave out contractions because 'they do not belong in formal writing.'" Evidently, he subscribes to dominant codes and fears mixing codes in academia. Subsequently, he admits that this preoccupation with quality does not necessarily follow him outside of UW: "On the other hand, outside of the academy I am not writing for a grade. The quality of my work is totally up to me. I sometimes send text messages as short as one letter and when I present mathematical ideas to colleagues I do not give them the complete rigorous proof, I only give them an outline of my argument." Writing is, of course, rhetorically situated; however, this student-participant tends to associate larger quantities of text, completeness, and academic contexts with writing of value. Finally, he compares post-secondary writing to high school writing. Once again, he prioritizes grammar: "Grammatical errors are no longer left untouched, and more importantly, all of my classmates are also competing to impress the instructor." He uses the word "perfect" recurrently to describe perceived expectations for student writing in first-year composition and English courses more generally. In the last five minutes or so, he revisited his previous paragraphs when constructing his conclusion. He continued writing until the hour expired. Of all the student-participants, this student and the other repeat male participant wrote the most (i.e. four single-spaced pages and nine single-

187

spaced pages, respectively). Of the four remaining student-participants, three wrote two

single-spaced pages while one wrote one single-spaced page.

Second Focus Group Session

In my second focus group session, I observed that the student-participants were more

defiant or disapproving of the constrains imposed on them by Microsoft Word and Google

Docs. I was impressed by their awareness of these constrains and yearned to know more. One

of the student-participants, our Multilingual Speaker in the Home, expressed dissatisfaction

with the language function in Microsoft Word:

> And even from Canadian English to U.S. English, it's like . . . it's annoying. . . .
>
> Because it tells you that you spelled it wrong and it underlines it, and that just like
>
> bothers you that it's underlined because you know you've spelled it right, or it will
>
> change it automatically for you to a different word because it thinks you're trying to
>
> type a different word and umm I wish that I could have English and Spanish on at the
>
> same time if I'm like quoting a book or something and it's in Spanish. And I think it
>
> would be easier if you could have two at once.

While gendered representations of writing such as those of Peter Elbow[67] have been

critiqued,[68] here I engage a gendered metaphor of digital composing spaces and programs as

opposed to gendered metaphors for language and composition itself. I cannot help but think

of the blank page in MS Word (and other word processors) as an empty womb. As the words

---

[67] See *Writing without Teachers* (1973) and *Writing with Power* (1981). In *Writing Without Teachers* Elbow develops two metaphors for writing: growing and cooking. In a section subtitled "Chaos and Disorientation" he encourages loss of control and compares this early stage of writing to maternity: "Things have actually got to *change*, and you will experience this as chaos even if your material, while going through changes, happens at every moment to be completely coherent – like a fetus in a mother's belly. The words are not going through stages *you* planned or that *you* control" (30).
[68] See *Manly Writing: Gender, Rhetoric, and the Rise of Composition* (1993).

begin to fill the page, the fruitfulness of the writer's creation is brought to light. The writer is

fertile and the page becomes a place of possibilities. The potential for a dual language

function that the student-participant above mentions reminds me of twins. Why is it that MS

Word should impose a one-language policy (akin to the one-child policy) on its users? Why

can there not be the possibility for simultaneous multiple language use in this word

processing program? Why can the program not accommodate multiple subjectivities and

identities simultaneously? While there are ways to manipulate the program's language

function manually, MS Word discourages such code-meshing.

3.13.9 Student Critiques of Composing Platforms

During the middle of our second ethnographic study session, our Multilingual Speaker in

the Home reiterated her displeasure with the language function/feature in MS Word. She

persistently attacked the rigidity of the language function and repeatedly expressed

frustration over her inability to code-mesh. Our dialogue follows:

> Me: So, what kinds of improvements do you think would be beneficial for both
>
> Google Docs and/or Microsoft Word? How would you recommend improving these
>
> platforms?
>
> Multilingual Speaker in the Home: Umm having the ability to have more than one
>
> language on at a time.
>
> Me: For editing or . . .?

Multilingual Speaker in the Home: For editing, yeah. If you're typing out something that's clearly in Spanish, if it would just like let you do it, that would be great.

Me: Or even just for writing, right?

Over the course of this discussion, other students were mostly silent. Our multilingual student in the home proposed MS Word adopt automatic language detection so that users could shuttle between languages with ease. Afterwards, she pointed out how exhausting it can be for users to input code after code (e.g. "Alt + 1264" for a given Spanish character/symbol) for certain characters or symbols in languages other than English. It distracts writers and detracts from their train of thought. With encouragement, other student-participants in my second focus group chimed in. However, they took our discussion in a different direction. For example, our new student-participant, a male Native English speaker in the Home pursuing a double major in math, came at my follow-up question about how to improve MS Word from a very technical perspective. He suggested a customized tab bar, which is comparable to the customized touch bar now available on Macbooks. He, like the other male Native English Speaker in the Home (a repeat participant), focused less on adding on new program features and instead focused more on rearranging existing program features for accessibility purposes. More specifically, one of the male native English speakers in the home (repeat participant) proposed the additions of saved searches and a favorites tab.

This part of our discussion came full circle when I introduced a question asking students about their experience with the spelling and grammar tool and autocorrect in MS Word. Our Multilingual Student in the Home found the MS Word spelling and grammar tool frustrating

on a number of occasions, such as in lectures, and talked about how the program rejects unfamiliar words. The spelling and grammar check undermines writers' authority by using a red squiggly underline for presumably misspelled words that can be added to MS Word's customizable dictionary and a green squiggly line for phrases that are presumably ungrammatical. Likewise, Google Docs uses a similar spellcheck feature; however, it seems only to pick up on presumable spelling mistakes and neglects grammar. Google Docs also uses a red squiggly underline to draw (negative?) attention to unfamiliar or misspelled words. What I found interesting in this particular student's contribution was her conflation of, or perhaps confusion about, autocorrect across various media and applications. She mentioned two words used by one of her professors that MS Word failed to recognize: "normalization" and "problematize." While notetaking in class, she also claimed that the she had to make adjustments to revert to original diction since the program physically overwrote her text. While MS Word does underline "foreign" or unfamiliar words as part of its spelling and grammar check, for the most part, it does not automatically change them. Perhaps by mistake or association,[69] she seemed to equate her experience with autocorrect in MS Word with autocorrect on mobile phones. Like the spelling and grammar tool in MS Word, autocorrect on mobile devices (esp. text messaging on cell phones) assumes authority over users and displaces[70] their vocabulary and phrasing. Microsoft Word has autocorrect settings that differ vastly from those in text messaging services on mobile phones. In fact MS Word's autocorrect involves only the following:

✓ Correct TWo INitial CApitals

---

[69] Also, perhaps unconsciously or by chance.
[70] Figuratively and literally, respectively.

- ✓ Capitalize first letter of sentences

- ✓ Capitalize names of days

- ✓ Capitalize first letter of table cells

- ✓ Replace text as you type (Microsoft Word for Mac 2018, Version 16.13.1)

The last bulleted point, like "automatic substitution" in Google Docs, describes a function

that merely reformats symbols such as arrows and emoticons to make them more compact

and legible. As is the case with autocorrect in Google Docs, MS Word also automatically

detects links and converts them into hyperlinks. One of the native English speakers in the

home (repeat participant) identified another autocorrect feature in MS Word that is not listed

above: "if you put . . . two letters backwards or something, it will switch them back around."

He declared this typographical error a result of "finger dyslexia." Google Docs also has

autocorrect settings. These settings slightly differ from MS Word and execute only the

following changes (as listed verbatim in the online "Docs editors Help"):

- Automatically capitalize words (English only)
- Use smart quotes (turns vertical quotes into curly ones)
- Automatically detect links
- Automatically detect lists
- Automatic substitution (https://support.google.com; 2017)

Autocorrect in MS Word and Google Docs is much different and less aggressive than that

found in text messaging. It is worth noting too that the "automatic substitution" setting in

Google Docs is quite limited and only reformats select symbols such as fractions, the

copyright symbol, and ellipses. As discussed in Chapter 2, MS Word enforces a power

differential and the spellcheck emulates the evaluative roles adapted by many Composition

instructors from the late nineteenth to the late twentieth centuries. Google Docs maintains

some of the same power struggles present in MS Word. While autocorrect and the spelling and grammar tools in both composing programs are related, they have different functions. It is important to differentiate between autocorrect in Google Docs and Microsoft Word and autocorrect on mobile phones.

3.13.10 Classroom Confines and Student Agency

The second focus group discussion also revealed the extent to which classroom confines can be detrimental to students' writing process. Student-participants who prefer to write in other languages or consult works in other languages find themselves having no choice in the classroom. Here, dominant conventions of writing and researching preside. English language resources and Standard Written English monopolize coursework in the North American academy. The degree to which students can be agentful in their work is thus limited. In response to my question about whether or not student-participants typically consult secondary sources in English or other languages, the Multilingual Speaker in the Home responded promptly that she "usually consult[s] works that are in English because if [she's] trying to quote them [i.e. works in other languages such as Spanish, one of her home languages], [she] ha[s] to either find the Spanish source in English or translate it, which can be dangerous because she can misinterpret what they're trying to say." Her concerns, then, are not so much about neglecting Spanish resources due to inaccessibility or incomprehensibility, but simply an issue, or fear rather, of translation. If the student were not responsible for translation, as would be the case in an openly translingual academic environment, she would likely be able to cite or reference these sources with ease.

3.13.11 Bawarshi's Theory of Agency

Now I turn to the rigidity of genre in my evaluation of the ways in which students'

authentic voice is constrained by disciplinary traditions and dominant conventions. In his

article "Beyond the Genre Fixation: A Translingual Perspective on Genre," Bawarshi asks,

"What does a translingual orientation . . . offer to the study and teaching of genre, and how

does such a perspective map onto current genre scholarship? (243-244). In this piece, he

brings together genre studies and translingualism. His two objectives in the article are to

move beyond the following: 1) a fixation on genre as an action, site, or object that, in [his]

view, continues to preoccupy thinking about genre and 2) the fixing or stabilizing of genre

that results from such a preoccupation" (244). Whereas translingual scholars argue for the

fluidity of language, Bawarshi here argues for the fluidity of genre. I appreciate his definition

of genre agency as "involv[ing] more than knowing the 'grammar' of a genre" and

"extend[ing] . . . to include knowledge of strategic genre performances in space and time

within asymmetrical relations of power" (246). At the very end of this article, he contends

that all genres exhibit agency regardless of how traditionally or imaginatively iterated:

> Instead of thinking about how some uptakes involve more or less agency, a
>
> translingual perspective invites us instead to think about the agency that is always
>
> already part of genre uptakes, from the seemingly most creative to the most
>
> conventional. This is because every genre uptake is taking place within certain
>
> asymmetrical relations of power and material, economic, and historical conditions,
>
> within and across linguistic as well as spatial and temporal locations, to achieve
>
> specific goals (which may not necessarily be the ones conditioned by the genre in

194

use), and subject to memory, emotion, an individual's sense of self, available

discursive and linguistic resources, embodied dispositions, histories of engagement,

and other *agentive* factors that genre pedagogies tend to overlook in their focus on

genres as objects, artifacts, sites, and mediational tools. (247)

As discussed in greater detail in the paragraph to follow, I find fault with Bawarshi (and Lu

and Horner's) failure to differentiate the degree to which individuals are agentful in their

writing. Regardless of circumstances, I believe some students do test the limits of language

and genre for various reasons and that some instructors are quite impressed by this fusion of

content and form and/or innovative language use. Such boundary pushing and risk taking

should be commonplace; it is administrators', policy makers', instructors' and students'

shared responsibility to change and challenge academic policies that inhibit writers' agency.

Certainly, genre fixity impairs students' expression and perhaps downgrades their work

insofar as personalization and improvisation are often abandoned. Bawarshi writes that

"dominant pedagogical approaches still fixate on genres as relatively stable objects to be

taught and acquired as part of disciplinary and professional enculturation" (244). In other

words, part of academic repertoire, whether, for instance, a course in academic writing or

business writing,[71] is to maintain clearly demarcated and fixed boundaries between genres.

Bawarshi identifies this upkeep in freshman composition courses, as opposed to uptakes, as

"dominated by monolingualist ideologies" (246). Furthermore, Bawarshi problematizes

---

[71] I offer these examples as I have witnessed genre rigidity and fixity while teaching ENGL 109: Introduction to Academic Writing and TAing ENGL 210F: The Genres of Business Communication. In ENGL 109, I taught students the following genres based on textbook models: literacy narratives, reports, literary analyses, and rhetorical analyses. In ENGL 210F, I familiarized students with the following genres: bad news letters, informal and formal reports, emails, and other types of organizational communication.

scholarship that situates "genres as sites of access" as this approach enables scholars to "privilege[] genres as things that can be made explicit through explication and . . . fixate[] on trying out which genres are best taught when and where" (244). Looking to the example of a student-participant in my final ethnographic study session, we see that content that could otherwise add depth and character to her writing was omitted out of fear of failure, or the possibility of receiving a lower grade. To provide fuller context, I pressed students in my second focus group session as to whether or not they dare include visuals, an example of non-alphabetic composition, in their written academic work: "And do you typically include [ ] visuals in your writing?" The first respondent (referenced above), a Speaker of a Language Other than English in the Home and new female participant, stated that she does include visuals where "[she] can" excepting essays, which she equates only with words. I soon asked this student-participant a follow-up question: "And have you ever thought to include it in, say, an essay where you . . . ?" She interrupted with a resolute response: "No. Because I would definitely get marks off if I tried." Her response reflects the unfortunate reality of academia, but a reality that should be continually and collectively challenged in order to progress towards what I deem a more openly translingual or translingual-friendly world. Certainly, this student was conditioned to think that essays are word-centered. I too, like many students in the North American academy, grew up thinking that essays were always written. Again, as I mention in my preface, I first became acquainted with visual essays in an ecocriticism course I took during my Master's. Previously, any departure from written form in essay writing was to my knowledge unheard of and unacceptable. Clearly, this student-participant was under the same impression. Here, I revisit the literacy myth. Lu and Horner

draw attention to a competing binary or unfortunate ultimatum that students feel they must observe and accept for the sake of survival:

> All students are thereby put in the unenviable position of seeming to have to choose between either submitting to demands for conformity to dominant conventions in order to survive academically and economically, but at the cost of having their writing devalued for its apparent lack of originality and creativity, on the one hand, or, on the other, resisting such demands in order to achieve originality and creativity and maintain their integrity, but at personal risk of academic and economic failure.
>
> ("Translingual Literacy, Language Difference, and Matters of Agency" 584)

While students compose differently in personal and communal spaces like diaries and social media, scholastic spaces restrict their authenticity. As this student makes clear, writers who exhibit originality in the academy are routinely punished (and rarely rewarded). Therefore, it is confusing why Lu, Horner, and Bawarshi believe "Translingualism challenges monolingual ideology's between norm and difference, convention and creativity, which want us to imagine a vertical, hierarchical understanding of agency in which difference, transgression, and creativity are associated with more agency, cognitive ability, and language fluency, while norm and convention are associated with less agency, cognitive ability, and language fluency" (Bawarshi 245). I think that it is fair to say that if "all of us have translingual competence, with difference in degree and not kind" (Canagarajah, *Translingual Practice* 8), we can also agree that all writers, especially in a translingual framework, exercise agency with difference in degree and not kind. I believe that arguing against a

197

hierarchical view of agency is problematic as it detracts from the impetus for translingual pedagogy.

3.13.12 Typing Abilities and Agency in Student Writing: A Hypothesis

Finally, I turn to a hypothesis I had about a possible correlation between typing abilities and agency in student writing. A couple of research questions that came to mind as I reviewed my ethnographic data are as follows: Does the QWERTY keyboard layout inhibit non-Native English speakers and international students from non-English speaking countries (meaning those countries where English is neither an official language nor the designated school language)? Are multilingual speakers in the home and speakers of languages other than English in the home able to type as fast on QWERTY keyboards as compared with other keyboard layouts? Unfortunately, these questions did not occur to me during the actual collection of ethnographic data. Therefore, while I did inquire about student-participants' typing skills, I did not explore the above research questions in depth. My hypothesis, which was later partially disproven, suspected that the QWERTY keyboard layout accounts for slower speed and increased mistakes in the compositions of non-Native English speakers in the home and possibly multilingual speakers in the home as well. It is true that other keyboards such as the Dvorak outperform the QWERTY keyboard in terms of speed and accuracy. Both of these keyboard layouts are designed for English-speaking users. As well, ease of use of the QWERTY keyboard is contingent upon user adaptation. More specifically, some users will adapt faster than others, even if they are more familiar or comfortable with another keyboard layout. All keyboard layouts are designed to minimize collision between keys and enhance speed, as was the case with the QWERTY keyboard.

I arrived at the aforementioned hypothesis while pondering the idea of non-Native English

and multilingual students' potential unfamiliarity and discomfort with the QWERTY

keyboard. As the QWERTY keyboard is the product of an American inventor, I thought it

quite logical that it would best accommodate native English speakers. However, personal

research and collaboration with international colleagues and Computer Science graduate

students at UW proved otherwise; I was somewhat mistaken. Again, user adaptation is a

factor as is exposure. I learned that keyboard layouts in various languages can be purchased

on the cheap and that the QWERTY keyboard layout is standardized. There are other

keyboard layouts that are superimposed on the QWERTY model. However, that is not to say

that keyboard layouts for all other languages are based on the QWERTY keyboard.

Nevertheless, it is highly probable that Latin-derived languages like English can support the

same keyboard (i.e. QWERTY) layout. However, some languages that are not Latin-derived

closely conform to the QWERTY structure. Greek, for instance, despite its smaller alphabet,

uses a keyboard layout based on the QWERTY model. What I did learn that supports my

hypothesis is that a personal computer "has layers on layers of theory and use built into it"

(Haas 229). Cultural assumptions are embedded in computers. More specifically, manual

keyboards reflect Western society's equation of acts of literacy with written compositions:

"Whole sets of Western cultural assumptions about literacy are built into this tool – from a

keyboard that allows alphabetic writing but precludes (or makes extremely difficult) other

writing, to the actual physical setup, with one keyboard connected to one CPU and monitor

in front of one chair" (228). Oral cultures, for instance, are largely absent from

considerations for manual keyboard design. A more thorough investigation of the ways in which keyboard layouts and manual keyboards can obstruct students' agency is needed.

3.13.13 From Manual to Virtual Keyboards: Accommodating Linguistic Diversity

Again, although I was unable to fully explore the above research questions, I do believe that manual or physical keyboards, which are attached to the computer's hardware, can be replaced with a universal, translingual-friendly, virtual keyboard, which is attached to the computer's software. To be more precise, I propose a speech recognition-based keyboard. With the new advances in speech recognition, we can interface with the computer using voice recognition as opposed to manual/physical keyboards. Comparatively speaking, there are numerous voice assistants already available to technology users including Google Now, Siri, and Alexa. Accommodating speakers of languages other than English in the home and even some multilingual speakers in the home is difficult when only manual keyboards are available. Access to keyboard layouts in languages other than English are not typically available in university computer labs, libraries, and work spaces in North America. In fact, I have only ever seen the QWERTY keyboard at the two universities I have attended in Ontario (i.e. Wilfrid Laurier University and the University of Waterloo) and other Canadian universities I have visited (the University of Guelph, the University of Victoria, the University of Ottawa, and the University of Western Ontario). The reality of the physical keyboard itself is exclusionary. Academic institutions for higher learning often promote diversity and support international students; however, keyboard layouts, composing

programs, classroom expectations, assignment guidelines, marking schemes, rigid genre

conventions, and teachers themselves ironically work against these objectives.

3.14 Conclusion

Overall, student agency is constrained by many factors including dominant writing

technologies, academic language policies, traditional methods of teaching and evaluation,

rigid genre conventions, typing abilities, and keyboard layouts. In the next chapter I focus

specifically on how to improve the design of Microsoft Word and Google Docs to better

serve students and users and allow for greater agency. These suggestions are based on the

results of my ethnographic study. I focus on practical solutions that can be implemented in

both platforms by computer scientists and engineers. I begin by introducing a preliminary

model that will enable writing and editing in multiple languages simultaneously. I then

proceed to address other program-related concerns, some of which I cannot envision

solutions for and some of which build on suggestions already put forth in this chapter.

Chapter 4

Composing Program Constraints and Design Suggestions

In this final chapter I will explore suggestions for improving user experience with text editors, namely Microsoft Word and Google Docs, based on and looking beyond my ethnographic study findings. These suggestions arise out of student feedback and personal reflection on program limitations. They can be implemented by the development teams responsible for maintaining, updating, and releasing the next version of these text editors. Prior to these propositions, I will discuss the salience of helping students and scholars alike become critical users of technology (Selfe and Selfe, "The Politics of the Interface" 489-99).

4.1 Technology as Non-Neutral

As my study findings confirm, composing programs like Microsoft Word and Google Docs constrain and surveil the writing processes of student writers. Technophiles like Cynthia Selfe and Richard Selfe, Jr. have pointed out that technology is not neutral:

> [W]e have to learn to recognize-and teach students to recognize-the interface as an interested and partial map of our culture and as a linguistic contact zone that reveals power differentials. We need to teach students and ourselves to recognize computer interfaces as non-innocent physical borders (between the regular world and the virtual world), cultural borders (between the haves and the have- nots), and linguistic borders. ("The Politics of the Interface," 495)

Put differently, computers evoke issues of privilege, access, and exclusion. Yancey also takes note of the ways in which technology, and not simply text editors, controls the composing process and final product: "Technology isn't the villain; but as a tool, technology is not

innocent. It is both shaping and assessing the writers whose work we want to assess -- and not only in word-processing software . . ." ("Looking for sources of coherence in a fragmented world" 93). The keywords in Yancey's statement are "shaping" and "assessing." As my findings reveal, composing programs like Microsoft Word and Google Docs skew a particular outcome by electing the spellchecker as a substitute teacher (more or less editor) and limiting language tools, input devices, non-alphabetic modes, and dictionary customization. What can empower technology users/writers, then, is an awareness of the ways in which these composing programs surveil and constrain them: "Adopt[ing] a more critical and reflective approach to their use of computers" (Selfe and Selfe, "The Politics of the Interface" 482) allows users to reject blind acceptance of the digital tools and programs they use on a regular basis. For this reason, I asked student-participants in my ethnographic study to reflect on ways in which these composing programs could be improved upon or redesigned.

Implicated in this discussion of technology as non-neutral are two cultural myths in the field of technology studies that my research undermines. The first of these myths is "the 'technology as transparent' myth [which] sees writing as writing as writing, its essential nature unaffected by the modes of production and presentation" (Haas 22). In other words, this myth holds that medium has no bearing on discourse. Such a myth oversimplifies the composing process: "As users and consumers people prefer their technologies transparent: They do not like to have to think about the features of their word processors any more than they like to think about shifting gears in an automobile, and they prefer to look through a given technology to the task at hand" (Haas 25). In other words, knowledge of these writing

programs becomes part of users' implicit memory. Their ability to use an arbitrary digital interface such as Microsoft Word becomes second nature - much the same way the physical QWERTY keyboard layout imprints itself on the subconscious of an experienced typist. The other myth holds "that technology is all-powerful and self-determining" (22). Technology is viewed through a progressive, utopian, and even fatalistic lens. In this myth technology is a positive, controlling force that can do no wrong; technology makes everything better. It strips people of agency and they become bystanders in this techno-progressive narrative. Both of these myths "compel[ ] us to remain noncritical and nonparticipatory" (35). Users adopt a passive role in the face of technology.

4.2 Becoming Critical Technology Users

Often student writers neglect critical thinking about technology design. As we witnessed in the first focus group, the math students refused to entertain the idea of a more inclusive spellchecker because of technical complexity. Whereas new student-participants in the second focus group were more radical in their thinking about composing programs, still others were more removed. Certain comments gave off the impression that MS Word and Google Docs simply get the job done; they serve and surpass their purpose. A common theme in my second focus group was how these composing programs are "convenient." For example, one student in our second focus group, our Native English Speaker in the Home (New -- Female), expressed her satisfaction with MS Word: "I don't really use Google Docs; I normally use Microsoft. But I think it just makes doing work easier if you want to add a picture or a graph. Anything really . . . Microsoft works. It's convenient." Additionally, our Native English speaker in the Home (New – Male) spoke to the ways in which both

Microsoft Word and Google Docs simplify and expedite editing. Contrary to writing by hand, the copy and paste feature makes repositioning text straightforward; there is no need to rewrite existing sections that are misplaced or would fit better elsewhere in the document. As well, removing unnecessary or undesired text is as simple as using the backspace key or "delete" function. Moreover, student-participants collectively agreed that Microsoft Word is convenient for independent work while Google Docs is more convenient for group work. Google Docs enables selective sharing of files and also makes real-time and asynchronous writing and editing possible. However, task completion is one thing but self-expression is another. Digital spaces, like physical academic spaces, should foster engagement with translingual theory and practice: "a classroom based on 'standard' English and formal instruction limits the linguistic acquisition, creativity, and production among students" (Canagarajah, "The Place of World Englishes" 592). Code-meshing is one such avenue for creative expression and should therefore be supported by Microsoft Word and Google Docs. When prompted to think more critically about these composing programs, the student-participants in my second focus group spoke to some of the concerns I address and resolve throughout this chapter (e.g. an improved auto-detect language function, an inclusive spellchecker, a more cooperative and customizable autocorrect, and add-ons for Microsoft Word that draw from other software). For both repeat male participants, cynicism towards code-meshing practices was in fact countered by their critical perspectives on these composing programs.

4.3 Composing Programs and the Current-Traditionalist Agenda: The MS Word Spellchecker as Disciplinarian

The spelling and grammar checker in Microsoft Word (and, by extension, Google Docs) has negative connotations because of its exclusive nature. The spellchecker gives users a very distorted idea of teacher feedback because of its implicit alignment with the CT agenda. Here, I wish to clarify that I do not by any means "posit[ ] the role of teacher as mere editor, or mistakenly presuppose[ ] the absence of the instructor in the learning process" as do many "[p]rocess-based arguments against grammar checkers" (Vernon 335). Instead, I liken the spellchecker to a traditional English teacher in its directive approach to and preoccupation with grammar. Furthermore, program limitations extend the evaluative role of MS Word only to that of editor, thus highlighting the computer's inability to provide more nuanced critique with the exception of Track Changes, which is writer-initiated or reactive unlike the spellchecker, which is system-initiated and proactive. "Techno-rhetoricians"[72]Tim McGee and Patricia Ericsson share my perspective: "MSGC is primarily a current traditional machine" that "is concerned primarily with prescriptive issues of usage and concerns of style. Even in its screen appearance, it harkens back to the red pencil of the obsessive English teacher who bled over 'mistakes' and paid little or no attention to the quality of thinking" (464). As a result, students tend to prioritize grammar, a low-order concern, in place of more pressing concerns such as thesis, paragraph structure, and citations among other things. Referring to the Grammar Checker in Microsoft Word, McGee and Ericsson also speak to the program's ranking of grammar as a high-order concern: "Its default status ("Check grammar

---

[72] (McGee and Ericsson, "The Politics of the Program" 453).

206

as you type") makes grammar a primary concern by foregrounding correctness even while writers are in the drafting stage. It gives grammar and style (both narrowly defined by the digital program), a precedence, at least temporally, over content, mode of discourse, or other rhetorical concerns" (454). Put differently, MS Word has its priorities mixed up because of its focus on and reductive definition of less significant aspects of composition such as grammar. An appreciation of the poetic, playful, and postmodern aspects of composition are neglected. Mike Sharples, a scholar of educational technology, coined the phrase "displacement activities" to describe modern word processing features such as spell checking, grammar checking, word counting, and formatting (222). All of these features "draw attention away from the difficult processes of invention and large-scale revision" (qtd. In Bray 202). In other words, "displacement activities" detract from deep revisions. The writing process as supported by Microsoft Word and Google Docs is scaled down to the superficial: spelling and grammar. Writing is compartmentalized and higher order concerns are neglected by most writing programs: "While there are many computer technologies dedicated to writing, most of these address processes in isolation, not the web of critical thinking and goal-setting that defines sophisticated writing" (Greer et al.).

4.3.1 The Student and the Spellchecker: Constant Critique

Programs like MS Word and Google Docs are incapable of offering praise and supporting writers' growth and instead focus entirely on negative critique. Students develop an approach to writing characterized by avoiding what these programs identify as mistakes. Again, the spellchecker in MS Word in particular models itself on current-traditional approaches to writing. The spellchecker begins to resemble the proverbial British schoolmarm with a ruler,

a blackboard, and endless grammar lessons. Asmaa Al-Ghamdi, a scholar in pedagogic theory, teaching methods, and teacher education, speaks to the downside of teacher feedback that is replete with correctives:

> [S]ome argue that instructors' feedback about their learners' accomplishments may lead to undesirable effects such as anxiety and disturbance in classrooms' atmosphere. First, teachers' feedback can hinder students' sense of pride and hope. Learners' feelings of self-importance and great expectation might be hindered due to the emergence of negative emotions like nervousness and sadness (Pekrun, Cusack, Murayama, Elliot, &Thomas, 2014). This might occur if teachers do not diversify the type of commentaries they give to students. According to McMillan (2012), there are a number of teachers who do not clarify the aims of their feedback and the way to interpret them. Thus, students cannot improve as they are [not] aware of their points of strength and weaknesses. In brief, these types of commentaries on learners' work can lead to negative outcomes that teachers need to be aware of. (39)

Clearly, some students take the feedback personally, which is detrimental to their growth as writers. In a similar way, the spellchecker replicates many of the worst traits referred to above. Feedback from the spellchecker is black and white; it leads students to believe in a clear division between right and wrong. The user is not enlightened as to the reasoning behind the spellchecker's suggestions; they are left only to defer to the authority of the program. Users are left on a final note of failure and likely submission.

4.3.2 Microsoft Spelling and Grammar Checker (MSGC): The Know-It-All?

The MSGC's antiquated, handbook-based approach to spelling and grammar discourages more expansive approaches to and thinking about writing as a whole. As "a machine that looks dangerously smart, especially to users insecure about grammar and usage" (McGee and Ericsson 464), the MSGC offers some users a false sense of security. Reflecting on my first focus group, our Speaker of a Language Other than English in the Home, a Russian speaker in the home, praised the spellchecker, summoning collective agreement from the other two student-participants. He exhibits dependence or reliance on this particular feature of MS Word and thus exemplifies why it is imperative to reinforce the responsibility students have as critical technology users: "Students who understandably allow confusing grammar checker feedback to reinforce feelings of intellectual inadequacy for grammatical knowledge could very well need the reassurance of a classroom critique of these programs" (Vernon 331). Some users trust the software more than they should, which is alarming. In fact, many students dispel professional grammar instruction in favour of electronic writing support: "They trust the authority of that grammar checker more than they trust the authority of their teachers" (Whithaus 11). Due to its tendency to create in users a false sense of accomplishment and completion, the MSGC must be reassessed. We need to help students recognize that a complete grammar check does not mean a perfect paper.

4.4 Language Menu Limitations

At present there is the possibility for users to blend codes and modes in writing using MS Word and Google Docs; however, the editing tools in both programs discourage, or do not actively support, code-meshing. For instance, if you write "I love ma université," MS Word

209

will highlight "université." It is not consistent; it is confusing. The spellchecker interprets

"ma" as an English word, not a French word. The spellchecker can neither read nor resolve

the ambiguity. "Ma" is part of both the English and French languages; in French, "ma" is a

possessive pronoun while in English "ma" is a short form for mother. A language by itself

can be ambiguous. However, if we mix two or more languages, it will be even more

ambiguous. Today's text editors are not programmed to support translingual text editing,

meaning that users have to exclusively write and edit in one language of choice at a time. To

address the translingual editing problems, it is possible to keep switching between two

language templates. For instance, within the same document, users cannot overload the

language template. Users can only pick one language of choice at a time. Supporting code-

meshing and translingualism is not possible using the current text editors. These current

editing practices do not help to make the editing workflow agile: both focus and meaning can

be lost as a result. The software cannot distinguish between different languages in

compositions that use more than one. Users cannot seamlessly switch between languages for

writing and editing purposes; instead, any attempts to code-mesh are denaturalized.

4.5 Towards a Limitless Language Menu

Although the language templates[73] used by the speller and other proofing tools in both

Microsoft Word and Google Docs are exclusive, I have developed a model that encourages

linguistic integration.[74] Currently, students cannot have more than one language selected for

---

[73] Language templates are listed under the language menu.
[74] Here, I wish to distinguish between my use of "linguistic integration" and the integrationist and segregationist models proposed by Vershawn Young/Dr. Vay in his book *Other People's English* (see p. 3). I use "linguistic integration" as a synonym for inclusivity. However, my use of "linguistic integration" does not carry the same

writing and editing purposes although they can inconveniently switch back and forth between

two or more languages. As one student-participant (a multilingual speaker in the home) in

my second focus group duly noted, being able to seamlessly shuttle between languages in

Microsoft Word would be an asset. Various commenters on the Community section of

Microsoft's website make clear that the "Detect language automatically" feature in MS Word

2010, 2013, and 2016 supposedly boast is in fact neither visible nor functional.[75] Design

teams need to engineer an approximation function that will relate each word, whether

correctly or incorrectly spelled, to its language of origin. Essentially, the spellchecker needs

to identify which dictionaries are most relevant for looking up words (e.g. "aim" to both

English and French dictionaries). Below is a model for more inclusive speller and proofing

language tools that I developed with the help of a friend and graduate student in UW's

Computer Science program:

---

valence as Young's integrationist model; both share linguistic implications but Young's model is steeped in racial implications.

[75] See https://answers.microsoft.com/e-us/office/forum/office_2010-word/detect-language-automatically-doesnt-work/0f30b952-7238-4269-bd63-2728a4647f70, https://answers.microsoft.com/en-us/msoffice/forum/msoffice_word-mso_windows8/office-2013-language/67da4150-2ac8-4f61-a30b-ac83f49a9569 , and https://answers.microsoft.com/en-us/msoffice/forum/msoffice_word-mso_win10/on-the-automatic-recognition-of-languages-in-word/da856160-eb80-4384-a12a-acac5147041c .
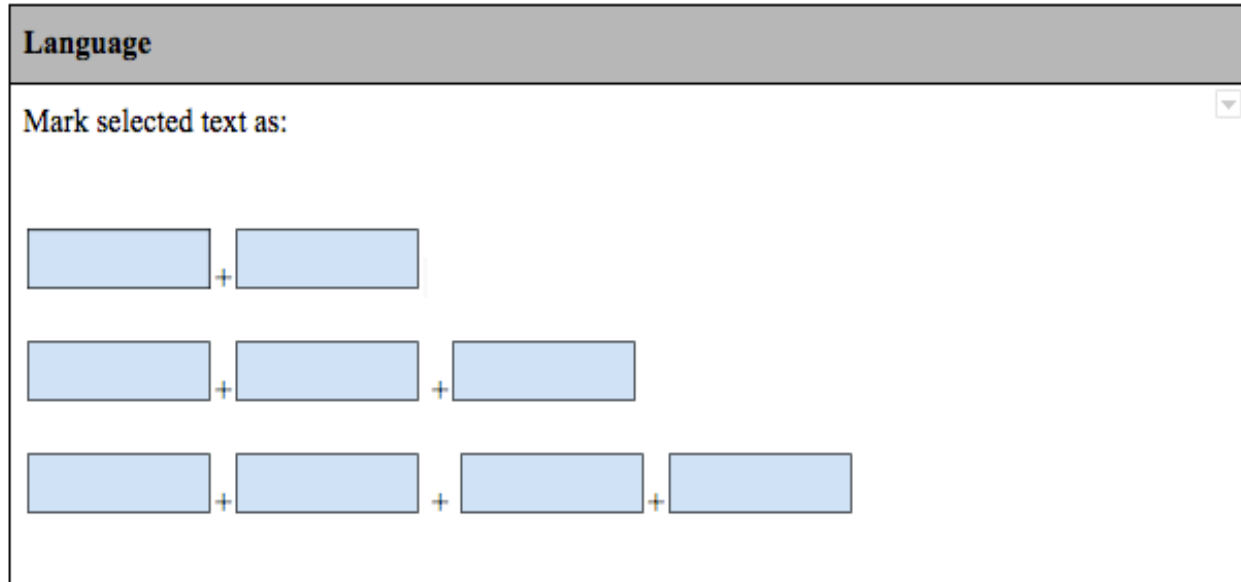
Language

Mark selected text as:

[ ] + [ ]

[ ] + [ ] + [ ]

[ ] + [ ] + [ ] + [ ]

Figure 4: Sample Revised User Interface of Language Menu in Microsoft Word

This preliminary model would enable MS Word users to select primary and secondary languages by dragging and dropping desired languages into the boxes provided instead of having a pre-set, static list. The end goal on the Microsoft development team's behalf would be a limitless language menu that would offer a much wider diversity of preferred language combinations for writing and editing. The practice of code-meshing would be further supported as a result. This personalized language menu would also better serve Google Docs users.

4.6 Track Changes and Canagarajah's Dialogical Pedagogy

Speaking of more advanced editing tools in Microsoft Word, I believe Track Changes has potential to be more effectual. Some propositions I have include making Track Changes an online editor where writer and reviewer share the same editing session or are both present at the time of review. Here, I borrow from the editor in Google Docs, which enables multiple reviewers simultaneously, including the creators/writers. However, my proposition for Track Changes in MS Word would differ from the Google Docs editor as it would be modelled on

Canagarajah's "dialogical pedagogy" (*Translingual Practice* 185) whereby the teacher would inquire or propose a suggestion and the student would have a chance to provide rebuttal or reconsider their original text, both in real-time. I suppose these inquiries and suggestions could also be implemented through asynchronous means;[76] however, the advantages of working in real-time would be compromised. Using the cloud to facilitate greater connectivity could minimize these concerns by providing a semi-real-time solution where even asynchronous feedback can be seen and read as it is written. There may be privacy concerns in storing student material and feedback on a cloud server but with proper controls these should be fairly minimal. Feedback can be futile if it does not feed forward or "truly feed something" (Brookhart 60). Students must engage with the feedback for it to have any weight. Specifically, students are more likely to ignore descriptive feedback when it is accompanied by a grade (6) and/or it is delivered in an untimely manner and is therefore inapplicable to future coursework (60). Students can grow as writers when they have the opportunity to interact with, internalize, and implement feedback. Teacher feedback will have more salience if feedback is delivered in real-time; real-time feedback requires students to be present at the time of and participate in the act of assessment. My suggested approach to the Track Changes tool would facilitate student-teacher dialogue. I think it could also be useful to allow for other kinds of feedback, not simply written feedback as MS Word currently supports. The ultimate goal would be to transform teacher evaluation from a solitary, asynchronous, one-way activity to a dyadic, real-time, social activity.

---

[76] For example, in Google Docs two students might view the same document at different times provided the document is shared. One party may seek clarification on select changes and/or comments but if the other party is not online, communication will by nature become asynchronous resulting in delays and loss of immediacy.

Currently, the activities of writing and reviewing are quite divorced from one another. The proposed Track Changes editor would be more conversational as students would be critically engaged in the editing process. They would not be overwhelmed by large quantities of feedback all at once without opportunities for justification and real-time revision. Copious comments and critiques can be counterproductive to student learning: "If there is a large amount of feedback, this may overwhelm students and leave them unable to take in more than a fraction (Brockbank & McGill, 1998)" (qtd. in Crisp 573; see also Brockbank and McGill, 205). Core criticism and commentary can therefore be overlooked when ample feedback is provided or the feedback appears to be superfluous because of its delivery (offline); students' attention can be drawn to issues or areas that are less concerning. Determining an appropriate amount of feedback "requires deep knowledge and consideration of" the topic and learning objectives, typical learning progressions for those objectives, and individual students (Brookhart 16). Generally speaking, feedback should cover two or three main points, relate to and advance course learning objectives, and address as many strengths as weaknesses (17). Offline written feedback is typically delivered in one block or chunk at the end of the document and is supplemented with various in-text markings and marginal comments. Teachers are naturally inclined "to want to 'fix' everything [they] see" (Brookhart 16). In the name of learning, it is easy for instructors to get carried away by their overzealousness, which makes marking a more arduous task. In my experience as a Teaching Assistant at UW, for instance, I often encountered the issue of unpaid overtime; during peak times my offline marking responsibilities often exceeded the assigned 10 hours per week. Real-time and asynchronous feedback helps to break these habits as teachers can impose and

abide by stricter time limits (e.g. 15-minutes per paper) and prioritize feedback. Frantic and

defensive emails from students following receipt of feedback and grades can also be reduced

with a new and advanced Track Changes online editor. Overall, this feedback paradigm

would improve teacher assessment and student learning by increasing marking efficiency and

providing students with feedback that is timely and interactive.

4.7 Expanding the Language Repertoire in Digital Writing Programs

In order to optimize the proposed language templates in both writing programs, I

recommend the available languages be broadened to encompass other languages proper and

ultimately other codes and modes as well. To no surprise, the language in both MS Word and

Google Docs is English: "English [is] the privileged language of computer interfaces and the

effects of the design decisions that support this system are certainly not limited to the United

States" (Selfe and Selfe, "The Politics of the Interface" 490). While English and other default

languages, which are disproportionately European, take precedence, others are segregated or

even omitted from these programs. For example, the language pack add-ons for Microsoft

Word make certain languages not easily accessible. Users have to go out of their way to find,

install, and configure desired language packs that are not part of the default language menu.

Additionally, the language packs tend to privilege the 'standard' form of languages over

minority dialects. For instance, there is Modern Standard Arabic in the most recent versions

of Microsoft Word both online and offline and as part of the language packs; however,

Arabic dialects are absent. Aboriginal languages are also excluded from the language menu

in both MS Word and Google Docs. To accommodate primarily oral languages and

languages steeped in oral tradition, MS Word and Google Docs could integrate voice typing support for oral languages in their proofing and spelling tools.

4.8 Creating Customizable Electronic Dictionaries

Another of my propositions for improving inclusivity and rhetorical awareness in Microsoft Word and Google Docs is to enable fully customizable dictionaries for each new document, and not simply all program documents. The option of choosing from an existing dictionary should also be available to users. Customizable dictionaries in each Word or Google Docs document would increase linguistic and rhetorical awareness. I think that it is important to treat every composition as its own space, and by that I mean that each composition is contextual. That is not to say that separate documents cannot build upon one another or merge; however, each document represents a different rhetorical space and cannot be decontextualized. Students could make their dictionaries as small or as expansive as they like. The dictionaries could also include a tab for definitions so that as students acquire a more fluid and culturally diverse vocabulary they can have immediate access to correct spelling. Fully customizable dictionaries in word processing programs, notably Microsoft Word and Google Docs, changes the composition game because they take writerly consciousness or awareness to a whole new level while promoting linguistic integration.

4.9 Composing Programs and Alternative Input Devices

More generally, digital composing can be ameliorated with other input devices. Manual keyboards are comprised of primarily alpha-numeric characters. Given that Microsoft Word and Google Docs are text editors, it is evident that their primary focus is the alphabetic or

216

words. We should note that according to Canagarajah, translingual theory and practice involves movement away from the alphabetic (*Literacy as Translingual Practice* 1). Additionally, the twenty-first century is the digital age: "We are already in the age of new media, where visual and video forms of expression supersede alphabetic text" (Porter 389). Keyboards are evolving and classrooms need to keep current. Virtual keyboards open up endless text and non-text-based possibilities; however, these possibilities depend on composing program capabilities. These keyboards are software-based. They appear on screen and are interacted with by another input method such as a mouse or a touchscreen. They are commonly used in tablets and smart phones. Virtual keyboards can support many features, many of which have yet to be explored. For instance, by using virtual keyboards, speakers of other languages than English or non-written communicative modes could easily switch between their multiple tongues or codes without any manual keyboard installation setups or language interface changes. With advances in technology, users (and not simply programmers) can customize their virtual keyboards, and not just upon purchase but on a regular basis. The latter proposition aligns with Vershawn Young's classroom dictionary idea[77] (as does my suggestion for expanding and customizing the dictionaries in Microsoft Word and Google Docs) except it has to do with language input as opposed to vocabulary. Likewise, digital pens are another good alternative to manual keyboards as they allow for more artistic and personalized input. Input devices need to be further developed alongside traditional text-based composing programs to accommodate new linguistic possibilities.

---

[77] See Chapters 1 and 2

4.10 Meshing Digital Composing Technologies

Looking to and integrating other composing technologies into Microsoft Word and Google Docs may provide solutions to the problematic print-based world that is so pervasive in the humanities at present. As Yancey notes, over the past 50 years, Composition Studies has evolved from print to digital texts and now multi-modal texts ("Looking for Sources" 101). The question, then, is how to encourage and support these multi-modal texts that are the products of our times. We cannot expect to continue using text-editors for academic purposes in an age where multimodal compositions are flourishing. If Microsoft Word is essentially "a glorified typewriter" (Palmquist 9),[78] its limitations are obvious. MS Word cannot be all things digital; its primary focus is textual. In other words, it is a general-purpose text editor, but not a universal editor. However, I am not suggesting that MS Word should be discarded altogether either. As McGee and Ericsson rightly point out, "Slaying the giant probably isn't possible (and perhaps not that we know so much more about the software, it might not even be desirable)" although there are ways that "composition teachers [can] minimize the harms it could cause" (464). Despite its ubiquity, Microsoft Word has its disadvantages. It is important to keep in mind that "MS WORD [is] the most widely used word processing software in the world" (McGee and Ericsson 454). MS Word is a technological powerhouse and a corporate giant. Nevertheless, program users have the ability to overthrow certain built-in features by means of resistance: "We need a revolt in ranks--people currently teaching with these technologies need to take critical interest. And we need

---

[78] "*Microsoft Word* . . . uses the typewriter as its primary metaphor" (Bray 204).

218

to include our students in this uprising" (McGee and Ericsson 466). Students and instructors need not be passive technology users; they can be part of a technological revolution.

4.11 Beyond MS Word

Alternatively, some scholars have suggested maybe turning away from MS Word monoculture and no longer relying solely on that one, singular program for all compositional purposes. For example, Writing Studies scholar Nancy Bray turned to *Scrivener* for her "master's project" because it allowed her to write "in small pieces, pieces it calls scrivenings" and also has "a left navigation column . . . that shows [her] an organized list of [her] chunks of writing" (200). She found that "using a standard word processor may have fostered [her] nonlinear compositional style . . . [while], ironically, it was also holding [her] back somehow," which is why she looked to *Scrivener* for this particular project (200). Digital tools must accommodate users' writing processes. As one student-participant in my second focus group suggested, a wide array of diverse program add-ons would be an asset. He praises, for instance, LaTex add-ons for Microsft Word. I suggest enabling the use of other writing technologies and composing platforms such as movie editors (e.g. Adobe After Effects, Final Cut Pro X, iMovie), photo editors (e.g. PhotoShop, iPhoto), music editors (e.g. Sibelius, MuseScore), code editors (e.g. LaTex, C++) in the classroom and for academic purposes. I also suggest urging tech companies to merge humanities-tech internship and employment opportunities to bridge the divide between these two fields/sectors. Microsoft Word in and of itself has limitations so it is wise to diversify into other composing programs or integrate their unique features into MS Word.

4.12 Conclusion

Overall, students need to realize that they do play a salient role in the critique and construction of these composing platforms. They have the power to reshape these tools and are not simply passive technology users. Despite the ubiquity and seeming invisibility of programs like Google Docs and MS Word, user experience matters. As McGee and Ericsson posit, "Mindlessly accepting a piece of software is irresponsible -- even if everyone in the world is using it, even if we can't really change it, even if we're afraid of breaking it" (465). Regardless of the risk, technology users have a responsibility to thoughtfully engage with the programs they use, understand how these programs impact their writing experience, and transform them to their advantage.

Conclusion, Discussion, and Future Work

Translingual directions for the technological realm are imperative. We cannot divorce translingual theory and practice from technology. Composing software needs to accommodate various languaging strategies. Currently, writing programs like MS Word and Google Docs do not take into account language diversity and fluidity. Their language templates fit with the monolingual paradigm and their spellcheckers conform to the CT agenda. Moreover, these programs do not support translingual pedagogy because they are prescriptive and directive. Traditional assessment and technological assessment are currently synonymous. Ironically, students are using up-to-date software but are simultaneously steeped in antiquated language ideologies. Writing tools and technologies need to keep current with the field of Writing Studies.

We have to be conscious of the changing linguistic scene around us. By that, I do not simply mean the ethnic make-up of any specific environment (e.g. university or workplace). Of course, Canada has witnessed an influx of immigrants since 2016 and immigration levels are said to rise come 2018. However, a variety of different languages proper are only part of this scene. Revisiting my first chapter, Canagarajah defines two core features of the translingual paradigm: 1) the transcendence of individual languages and 2) the transcendence of words (*Literacy as Translingual Practice* 1; *Translingual Practice* 6). Moreover, he states that "all of us have translingual competence, with differences in degree and not kind" (*Translingual Practice* 8). Therefore, the changing linguistic scene is not simply the product of newcomers or international students. As I've discussed at length in Chapter 2, English, like all languages, is a living language. More specifically, Min-Zhan Lu coins the term

"living-English" to account for the dynamism of the English language in her article "Living-English Work" (2006). We cannot immobilize a language any more than we can immortalize it. Individual markers and improvisation are key aspects of how we do language. Neologisms and portmanteaus are an example of improvisation in action. As language users and learners, we will continue to personalize, improvise upon, and revolutionize the communicative modes and codes available to us.

   Individual markers are more difficult to list and identify, which is why I hesitate to provide arbitrary examples. What I can say for myself is that my eclectic writing style draws upon my musical training,[79] literary background, academic knowledge, and creative writing abilities. I include the following unconventional alphabetic and non-alphabetic content in my dissertation: text messages, a Facebook post, a freehand drawing (poster), a table, and rhythmic notation. Moreover, my ethnographic chapter[80] blends narrative and analysis, as Kahn recommends (176). As a braided narrative, this particular chapter draws more freely on my literary talent given that I am a natural storyteller. I also include extensive footnotes throughout my dissertation for further contextualization and additional resources. Moving beyond my own personal example, my dissertation showcases a number of scholars and students whose individual style emerges in their compositions. Canagarajah, for instance, defines himself as a bilingual writer whose "oral discourse in the vernacular has influenced [his] writing" ("The Fortunate Traveler" 25). More specifically, he speaks of "negotiat[ing] the communicative traditions in Tamil and English –not to mention the hybrid discourses of

---

[79] Take, for example, the rhythmic response used in choir, references to rap music, as well as my use of repeat signs as punctuation, all of which appear in this dissertation. I also refer to one of my undergraduate Composition classes at Laurier where I did minors in both music and French.
[80] Chapter 3

diverse institutions and contexts—as [he] continue[s] to develop a literate voice as a bilingual" (24). When Canagarajah identifies as "bilingual," I interpret that descriptor as an assessment of his competence in languages proper. However, he is, of course, translingual in other capacities. Likewise, Young has his own distinct style of writing. He always code meshes and both practices and "promotes a thorough, seamless mixture of BEV and WEV that leads to more natural, less artificial, well-expressed prose" (*Your Average* 106). Referring back to my ethnographic study, the Russian student-participant in both sessions was onto something unique about his writing style that he could not pin down. Not everyone is conscious of their linguistic choices and rhetorical moves; even instructors require training in this respect. We need to help foster in students an awareness of how agency is at work in their writing. We also need to encourage students to code-mesh and make agentful choices purposely. Good writing should not be measured by "correctness" and competence in so-called Standard Academic English.

Student writers need to follow the leads of creative writers. Authors have their own distinctive literary styles, which evolve over time. Similarly, student writers need to recognize that they can develop a voice of their own. Finding their innermost voice may be a challenge given that academic writing presently demands objectivity. We have to make sure that authenticity, not difference, is the focal point. Many factors impact writerly agency. Among them are technological reasons such as those observed in my study including: digital composing programs, typing abilities, and keyboard layouts. Other factors consist of academic language and institutional policies, traditional methods of teaching and evaluation, and genre conventions. It matters not only what students write, but also how they compose.

223

We must help students be technologically critical and rhetorically aware. Until students have an understanding of their writing and writing tools, they cannot utilize the resources that composing programs might provide to them in future, some of which will likely comprise suggestions or variations of the suggestions I put forth in my fifth chapter.

While discussing my research with friends and colleagues, I have come across a few detractors who dismiss this approach and language philosophy as elitist and erudite nonsense. They reject the translingual label, but acknowledge its realities. These non-believers, I think, are living in denial: a proto-translingual world. Calling translingualism by another name or withholding a name does not change its core essence. My goal in this dissertation has been to emphasize praxis, which translingual scholarship currently lacks. I give concrete examples of how to ameliorate technology according to the translingual paradigm. To summarize, I propose the following suggestions for improving user experience with composing software like Google Docs and MS Word: more inclusive spelling and grammar checkers,[81] voice support for oral languages in proofing and spelling tools, a real-time Track Changes editor based on Canagarajah's "dialogical pedagogy," customizable dictionaries for each new document, alternative input devices, and diversification into other programs or integration of their unique features into these software. These suggestions emerge out of my ethnographic study findings. I also provide real-world examples of translingualism in action in order to legitimize its presence and potency. From popular culture to political speeches and art forms, I demonstrate the richness of translingual application. These examples give meaning and

---

[81] Which implies more inclusive and diverse language templates.

salience to the theory behind them. Translingualism is not merely an abstract, theoretical approach and philosophy.

Currently, translingual scholarship is still largely separate from technological-based writing studies. As most writing is digitally produced, we need to consider the implications translingual theory and praxis has on composing programs like MS Word and Google Docs. While I have brought these implications to the fore, we need to see them through. It is not enough to deliver impactful suggestions that are never shared with or implemented by the development teams at these software companies. Part of my future project, then, is to join forces with leading tech and software companies who play a salient role in technologically-mediated composition. I wish to further assert myself and my ideas in both academia and industry to see results and gain recognition as both a promising translingual scholar and technophile.

Works Cited

Al-Ghamdi, Asmaa. "Building a Positive Environment in Classrooms through Feedback and Praise." *English Language Teaching*, vol. 10, no. 6, May 2017, pp. 37-43. www.ccsenet.org/journal/index.php/elt/article/view/68447/37120.

AnttiKukkonen. "Q: On the automatic recognition of languages in Word." *Microsoft Community*, 27 Apr. 2016, answers.microsoft.com/en-us/msoffice/forum/ msoffice_word-mso_win10/on-the-automatic-recognition-of-languages-in-word/ da856160-eb80-4384-a12a-acac5147041c?auth=1.

Atkinson, Dwight et al. "Clarifying the Relationship Between L2 Writing and Translingual Writing: An Open Letter to Writing Studies Editors and Organization Leaders." *College English*, vol. 77, no. 4, Mar. 2015, pp. 383-386. NCTE, www.ncte.org.proxy.lib.uwaterloo.ca/journals/ce/issues/v77-4.

Auffray, Elodie. "Houmani, la chanson 'miroir' des quartiers tunisiens." *L'Express*, 26 Nov. 2013, www.lexpress.fr/actualite/monde/afrique/houmani-la-chanson-miroir-des-quartiers-tunisiens_1302555.html.

Banks, Adam J. *Digital Griots: African American Rhetoric in a Multimedia Age*. Southern Illinois University Press, 2011.

Barrett, Rusty. "You Are What You Speak: Language Ideology and Prescriptive Grammar." *Other People's English: Code-Meshing, Code-Switching, and African American Literacy*, by Young et al, Teachers College Press, 2014, pp. 24-32.

Bartholomae, David. "Inventing the University." *Journal of Basic Writing*, vol. 5, no. 1 1986, pp. 4-23. wac.colostate.edu/jbw/v5n1/bartholomae.pdf.

Bawarshi, Anis. "Beyond the Genre Fixation: A Translingual Perspective on Genre."

    College English, vol. 78, no. 3, Jan. 2016, pp. 243-249. *ProQuest*, literature.proquest.

    com/pageImage.do?ftnum=3901599381&fmt=page&area=criticism&journalid=

    00100994&articleid=R05303493&pubdate=2016&queryid=3025892378692.

---. "The Challenges and Possibilities of Taking Up Multiple Discursive Resources in

    U.S. College Composition." *Cross Language Relations*, edited by Bruce Horner, Min-

    Zhan Lu, and Paul Matsuda, SIUP, 2010, pp. 196-203.

Bazerman, Charles. "Global and Local Communicative Networks and Implications for

    Literacy." *Literacy as Translingual Practice: Between Communities and Classrooms*,

    edited by A. Suresh Canagarjah, Routledge, 2013, pp. 13-25.

Benjamin, Walter. *The Work of Art in the Age of Mechanical Reproduction*. Penguin UK,

    2008.

---. "Trying Out Translingualism: From Small Talk to Group Trial." Risk and Reward,

    Conference on College Composition and Communication, 20 March 2015, Tampa

    Marriott Waterside, Tampa, FL. Conference Presentation/Seminar.

Bishop, Wendy. *Ethnographic Writing Research: Writing It Down, Writing It Up, and

    Reading It*. Boynton/Cook, 1999.

Bizzell, Patricia. "Toward 'Transcultural Literacy' at a Liberal Arts College." *Reworking

    English in Rhetoric and Composition: Global Interrogations, Local Interventions*,

    edited by Bruce Horner and Karen Kopelson, SIUP, 2014, pp. 131-149.

Broad, Bob. "Strategies and Passions in Empirical Qualitative Research." *Writing Studies

    Research in Practice: Methods and Methodologies in Composition Research*, edited

    by Gesa Kirch and Patricia A. Sullivan, SIUP, 2012, pp. 197-209.

Brockbank, Anne and Ian McGill. *Facilitating Reflective Learning in Higher Education*.

    McGraw-Hill, 1998.

Brooke, Robert. "Ethnographic Practice as a Means of Invention Seeking a Rhetorical

    Paradigm for Ethnographic Writing." *Voices and Visions*, edited by Cristina

    Kirklighter, Cloe Vincent, and Joseph Michael Moxley, Boynton/Cook, 1997, 11-23.

Brookhart, Susan M. *How to Give Effective Feedback to Your Students*. ASCD, 2017.

Brown, Stephen Gilbert and Sidney I. Dobrin. "New Writers of the Cultural Sage: From

    Postmodern Theory Shock to Critical Praxis." Introduction. *Ethnography Unbound:*

    From Theory Shock to Critical Praxis, edited by Brown and Dobrin, State University

    of New York Press, 2004, pp. 1-10.

Bray, Nancy. "Writing with Scrivener: A Hopeful Tale of Disappearing Tools,

    Flatulence, and Word Processing Redemption." *Computers and Composition*, vol. 30,

    no. 3, Sept. 2013, pp. 197-210. *CRKN Elsevier ScienceDirect*, ac.els-cdn.com/

    S8755461513000406/1-s2.0-S8755461513000406-main.pdf?_tid=f15c045c-ce35-

    11e7-b898 .00000aacb35d&acdnat=1511211854_de7079225569a81c6fcf84955

    d812104.

Canagarajah, A. Suresh. Introduction. *Literacy as Translingual Practice: Between*

    Communities and Classrooms, edited by A. Suresh Canagarjah, Routledge, 2013, pp.

    1-10.

---. "Afterword: World Englishes as Code-Meshing." Afterword. *Code-Meshing as World*

    English: Pedagogy, Policy, Performance, edited by Vershawn Ashanti Young and Aja

    Y. Martinez, NCTE, 2011, pp. 273-281.

---. "Codemeshing in Academic Writing: Identifying Teachable Strategies of

Translanguaging." *The Modern Language Journal*, vol. 95, no. 3, Sept. 2011, pp. 401-
417. *Scholars Portal*, journals.scholarsportal.info/pdf/00267902/ v95i0003/
401_ciawitsot.xml.

---. "Linguistic Double Consciousness." *Code-Meshing as World English: Pedagogy,
Policy, Performance*, edited by Vershawn Ashanti Young and Aja Y. Martinez,
NCTE, 2011, pp. 55-65.

---. "Negotiating Translingual Literacy: An Enactment." *Research in the Teaching of
English*, vol. 48, no. 1, Aug. 2013, pp. 40-67. *JSTOR*, www.jstor.org.proxy.lib.
uwaterloo.ca/stable/pdf/24398646.pdf.

---. "The Ecology of Global English." *International Multilingual Research Journal*, vol
1, no. 2, Aug. 2007, pp. 89-100. *Scholars Portal*, journals.scholarsportal.info/pdf/1931
3152/v01i0002/89_teoge.xml.

---. "The Place of World Englishes in Composition: Pluralization Continued." *College
Composition and Communication*, vol. 57, no. 4, June 2006, pp. 586-619. *JSTOR*,
www.jstor.org/stable/pdf/20456910.pdf.

---. *Translingual Practice: Global Englishes and Cosmopolitan Relations*. Routledge,
2013.

Casey, Mara, et al. "Ethnographic Dissertations: Understanding and Negotiating the
Traps." *Voices and Visions*, edited by Cristina Kirklighter, Cloe Vincent, and Joseph
Michael Moxley, Boynton/Cook, 1997, pp. 116-127.

CCCC. "Students' Right to Their Own Language." *Students' Right to Their Own
Language: A Critical Sourcebook*, edited by Staci Perryman-Clark, David E.
Kirkland, and Austin Jackson, Bedford/St. Martin's, 2015, pp. 19-57.

Chaouch, Rebecca. "Le mot de l'année 2013 en Tunisie: 'Houmani'!" *Al Huffington Post: Maghreb-Tunisia*, 20 Dec. 2013, www.huffpostmaghreb.com/2013/12/20/houmani-tunisie_n_4480835.html.

Chiseri-Strater, Elizabeth and Bonnie Stone Sunstein. *Fieldworking: Reading and Writing Research*. Prentice Hall, 1997.

Chow, Olivia. "Olivia Chow on new book, possible mayoral run." Interview by Melanie Ng.YouTube. *CityNews Toronto*, www.youtube.com/watch?v=KV4Kf2oe8So.

Cintron, Ralph. "Wearing a Pith Helmet at a Sly Angle: Or, Can Writing Researchers Do Ethnography in a Postmodern Era?" *Written Communication*, vol. 10, no. 3, July 1993, pp. 371-412. *Scholars Portal*. journals.scholarsportal.info/pdf/07410883/ v10i0003/371_waphaasa.xml.

Colombo, Laura Violeta. "Standard Written Academic English: A Critical Appraisal." *Working Papers in Literacy, Culture and Language Education (WPLCLE)*, vol. 1, 2012, pp. 125-140. education.indiana.edu/docs/literacy-culture-language-docs/working-papers-in-lcl.pdf.

Condon, Frances. "Re: Dissertation Questions." Received by Lacey Beer, 18 June 2015.

---. "Pedagogy: A Place Where There Isn't Any Trouble." *Code-Meshing as World English: Pedagogy, Policy, Performance*, edited by Vershawn Ashanti Young and Aja Y. Martinez, NCTE, 2011, pp. 1- 8.

---, performer. Tongues Tide: Translingual Directions for a Better Life. Lacey Beer, director. Performers. Frankie Condon, Jay Dolmage, Sarah Tolmie and Tanya Williams, and Lacey Beer. imovie, 2015.

Condon, Frances and Vershawn Young. "Letters on Language Plurality and Racial Justice: Antiracism as a Framework for Writing Work." 2016. TS.

Cooper, Marilyn M. "The Being of Language*." Reworking English in Rhetoric and Composition: Global Interrogations, Local Interventions*, edited by Bruce Horner and Karen Kopelson, SIUP, 2014, pp. 13-30.

---. "Rhetorical Agency as Emergent and Enacted." *College Composition and Communication*, vol. 62, no. 3, Feb. 2011, pp. 420-449. *JSTOR*, www.jstor.org/stable/pdf/27917907.pdf.

Cormier-Grubb, Devontée. Interview by Slava Pastuk. "Whether Producing for P Reign Or Rapping With Kevin Durant, Devontée Is Always Working On Excellence." *Noisey*. 12 Dec. 2014. noisey.vice.com/en_ca/article/6vg45x/devontee-woe-interview-2014.

Crisp, Beth R. "Is it Worth the Effort? How Feedback Influences Students' Subsequent Submission of Assessable Work." *Assessment and Evaluation in Higher Education*, vol. 32, no. 5, Oct. 2007, pp. 571-581. *Scholars Portal*, journals.scholarsportal.info/pdf/02602938/v32i0005/571_iiwtehsssoaw.xml.

Daniell, Mark. "Drake finally explains 'The Six.'" *Toronto Sun*, 13 May 2016, torontosun.com/2016/05/13/drake-finally-explains-the-six/wcm/14bd7267-22e9-40b8-91db-54372acb32fa.

Davis, Philip J. "The Prospects for Mathematics in a Multimedia Civilization." *The Best Writing on Mathematics*, edited by Mircea Pitici, Princeton University Press, 2014, pp. 1-22.

Diederich, Paul B. "Correcting Papers." *CCC*, vol. 14, no. 4, Dec. 1963, pp. 234-236.

JSTOR, www.jstor.org.proxy.lib.uwaterloo.ca/stable/pdf/355629.pdf.

"Docs editors Help." support.google.com/docs/answer/57859?hl=en.

Doheny-Farina, Stephen. "Writing in an Emerging Organization: An Ethnographic Study." *Written Communication*, vol. 3, no. 2, Apr. 1986, pp 158-185. *Scholars Portal*, journals.scholarsportal.info/pdf/07410883/v03i0002/158_wiaeo.xml.

Dunn and Lindblom. "Why Revitalize Grammar?" *English Journal*, vol. 92, no. 3, Jan. 2003, pp. 43-50. *JSTOR*. www.jstor.org.proxy.lib.uwaterloo.ca/stable/pdf/822259.pdf.

Dzaka, David. "Resisting Writing: Reflections on the Postcolonial Factor in Writing." *Crossing Borderlands: Composition and Postcolonial Studies*, edited by Andrea A. Lunsford and Lahoucine Ouzgane, University of Pittsburgh Press, 2004, pp. 157-170.

Elbow, Peter. "Inviting the Mother Tongue: Beyond 'Mistakes,' 'Bad English,' and 'Wrong Language.'" *Cross-Talk in Comp Theory: A Reader*, edited by Victor Villanueva and Kristin L. Arola, NCTE, 2011. pp. 641-672.

Eliot, Thomas Stearns. "Tradition and the Individual Talent." *Perspecta*, vol 19, 1982, pp. 36-42. *JSTOR*, www.jstor.org/stable/pdf/1567048.pdf.

Fang He, Ming, Elaine Chen and JoAnn Phillion. "Language, Culture, Identity, and Power: Immigrant Students' Experience of Schooling." *Growing a Soul for Social Change: Building the Knowledge Base for Social Justice*, edited by Tonya Huber-Warring, Information Age Publishing, 2008. pp. 119-144.

Fish, Stanley. "What Should Colleges Teach? Part 3" *The New York Times*. 7 September 2009, The Opinion Pages.

Geertz, Clifford. "Thick Description: Toward an Interpretive Theory of Culture." *Readings in the Philosophy of Science,* edited by Michael Martin and Lee C.

McIntyre, The MIT Press, 1994, pp. 213-231.

Gonzales, Laura. "Multimodality, Translingualism, and Rhetorical Genre Studies." *Composition Forum*, vol.31, Spr. 2015, pp. 1-20. *ERIC*, files.eric.ed.gov/fulltext/ EJ1061559.pdf.

Greenfield, Laura. "The 'Standard English' Fairy Tale: A Rhetorical Analysis of Racist Pedagogies and Commonplace Assumptions about Language Diversity." *Writing Centers and the New Racism: A Call for Sustainable Dialogue and Change*, edited by Laura Greenfield and Karen Rowan, Utah State University Press, 2011, pp. 33-60.

Graff, Harvey J. *The Literacy Myth: Literacy and Social Structure in the Nineteenth-Century City*. Academic Press, 1979.

Greenfield, Laura. "The 'Standard English' Fairy Tale: A Rhetorical Analysis of Racist Pedagogies and Commonplace Assumptions about Language Diversity." *Writing Centers and the New Racism: A Call for Sustainable Dialogue and Change*, edited by Laura Greenfield and Karen Rowan, Utah State University Press, 2011, pp. 33-60.

Greer, Nick, Jaime Teevan, and Shamsi T. Iqbal. "An Introduction to Technological Support for Writing." Technical Report. Microsoft Research Tech Report. MSR-TR-2016-00, 2016, pp. 1-12. teevan.org/publications/papers/msr16-writing.pdf.

Haas, Christina. *Writing Technology: Studies on the Materiality of Literacy*. Routledge, 2013.

Haas, Christina, Pamela Takayoshi, and Brandon Carr. "Analytic Strategies, Competent Inquiries, and Methodological Tensions in the Study of Writing." *Writing Studies Research in Practice: Methods and Methodologies*, edited by Lee Nickoson and Mary P. Sheridan, SIUP, 2012, pp. 51-62.

Hall, Jonathan. "Multilinguality is the Mainstream." *Reworking English in Rhetoric and Composition: Global Interrogations, Local Interventions*, edited by Bruce Horner and Karen Kopelson, SIUP, 2014, pp. 31-48.

Hennink, Monique M. *Focus Group Discussions: Understanding Qualitative Research*. Oxford University Press, 2014.

Hickey, Raymond. "English Dialect Input to the Caribbean." *Legacies of Colonial English: Studies in Transported Dialects*, edited by Raymond Hickey, Cambridge University Press, 2004, pp. 326-362.

Horner, Bruce. "Critical Ethnography, Ethics, and Work: Rearticulating Labor." *Ethnography Unbound: From Theory Shock to Critical Praxis*, edited by Stephen Gilbert Brown and Sidney I. Dobrin, State University of New York Press, 2004, pp. 13-34.

---. "Relocating Basic Writing." *Journal of Basic Writing (CUNY)*, vol. 30, no. 2, Fall 2011, pp. 5-23. *EBSCOhost*. web.a.ebscohost.com.proxy.lib.uwaterloo.ca/ehost/pdf viewer/pdfviewer?vid=1&sid=729897d7-7726-403c-aef2 6131fd62989d%40session mgr4007.

---. "Introduction: Reworking English in Rhetoric and Composition: Global Interrogations, Local Interventions." Introduction. *Reworking English in Rhetoric and Composition: Global Interrogations, Local Interventions*, edited by Bruce Horner and Karen Kopelson, SIUP, 2014, pp. 1-10.

Horner, Bruce et al. "Opinion: Language Difference in Writing: Toward a Translingual Approach." *College English*, vol. 73, no. 3, Jan. 2011, pp. 303-321. *JSTOR*, www.jstor.org.proxy.lib.uwaterloo.ca/stable/pdf/25790477.pdf

Horner, Bruce, Samantha NeCamp, and Christiane Donahue. "Toward a Multilingual

    Composition Scholarship: From English Only to a Translingual Norm." *College*

    Composition and Communication, Dec. 2011, vol. 63, no. 2, pp. 269-300. *JSTOR*,

    www.jstor.org.proxy.lib.uwaterloo.ca/stable/pdf/23131585.pdf.

Horner, Bruce and Cynthia L. Selfe. "Translinguality/Transmodality Relations:

    Snapshots from a Dialogue." *The Working Paper Series on Negotiating Difference in*

    Language and Literacy, 2013, pp. 1-34. louisville.edu/workingpapers/doc/self-horner-

    working-papers-version.

Hynes, Kathleen. "Rethinking the Rubric: Assessment in the Translingual Composition

    Classroom." *Risk and Reward, Conference on College Composition and*

    Communication, 19 March 2015, Tampa Convention Centre, Tampa, FL. Conference

    Presentation.

Inman, James A. *Computers and Writing: The Cyborg Era*. Lawrence Eribaum, 2004.

jenesaisquoi. "Q: 'Detect language automatically' doesn't work." *Microsoft Community*,

    3 Sept. 2012, answers.microsoft.com/en-us/office/forum/office_2010-word/detect-

    language-automatically-doesnt-work/0f30b952-7238-4269-bd63-2728a4647f70.

Jolliffe, David A., Donnelley Hayde, and Jeannie Waller. "A Tale of Two Regions:

    Politics and Language in Belize and the Arkansas Delta." *Code-Meshing as World*

    English: Pedagogy, Policy, Performance, edited by Vershawn Ashanti Young and Aja

    Y. Martinez, NCTE, 2011, pp. 55-78.

Kahn, Seth. "Putting Ethnographic Writing in Context." *Writing Spaces: Readings on*

    Writing, edited by Charles Lowe and Pavel Zemliansky, vol. 2, Parlor Press, 2011, pp.

    175-192.

Kellman, Steven G. *The Translingual Imagination*. University of Nebraska Press, 2000.

---. ""¿ Qué es Literatura Translingual?" *American Book Review*, vol. 35, no. 5, July/Aug. 2014, pp. 6-6. *Project Muse*, muse.jhu.edu/article/557809/pdf.

--- and Ilan Stavans. "The Translingual Sensibility: A Conversation Between Steven G. Kellman and Ilan Stavans." *L2 Journal*, vol. 7, no. 1, Jan. 2015, pp. 6-17. *eScholarship*, escholarship.org/content/qt0c50d7k6/qt0c50d7k6.pdf.

Kirsch, Gesa E. "Foreword: New Methodological Challenges for Writing Studies Researchers." Foreword. *Writing Studies Research in Practice: Methods and Methodologies*, edited by Lee Nickoson and Mary P. Sheridan, SIUP, 2012, pp. xi-xvi.

"Introduction: Are You Part of the Conversation?" Introduction. *Other People's English: Code-Meshing, Code-Switching, and African American Literacy*, by Young et al, Teachers College Press, 2014, pp. 1-11.

Kopelson, Karen. "On the Politics of Not Paying Attention (and the Resistance of Resistance)." *Reworking English in Rhetoric and Composition: Global Interrogations, Local Interventions*, edited by Bruce Horner and Karen Kopelson, SIUP, 2014, pp. 207-218.

Krall-Lanoue, Aimee. "'And Yea I'm Venting, But Hey I'm Writing Isn't I?' A Translingual Approach to Error in a Multilingual Context." *Literacy as Translingual Practice: Between Communities and Classrooms*, edited by A. Suresh Canagarjah, Routledge, 2013, pp. 228-234.

Lee, Melissa. "Shifting to the World Englishes Paradigm by Way of the Translingual Approach: Code-Meshing as a Necessary Means of Transforming Composition Pedagogy." *TESOL*, vol. 5, no. 2, June 2014, pp. 312-329. *Scholars Portal*. journals-

scholarsportal-info.proxy.lib.uwaterloo.ca/pdf/10567941/v05i0002/312_

sttwepnmotcp.xml.

Lippi Green, Rosina. Foreword. *Code-Meshing as World English: Pedagogy, Policy, Performance*, edited by Young and Martinez, NCTE, 2011, pp. xi-xv.

Lovejoy, Kim Brian. "Composing Code-Meshing: Thoughts on What to Do and How to Do It." *Other People's English: Code-Meshing, Code-Switching, and African American Literacy*, by Young et al, Teachers College Press, 2014, pp. 141-152.

Lu, Min-Zhan. "An Essay on the Work of Composition: Composing English Against the Order of Fast Capitalism." *College Composition and Communication*, vol. 56, no.1, Sept. 2004, pp. 16-50. *JSTOR*, www.jstor.org.proxy.lib.uwaterloo.ca/stable/pdf/ 4140679.pdf.

---. "Living-English Work." *Cross-Language Relations in Composition*, edited by Bruce Horner, Min-Zhan Lu, and Paul Kei Matsuda, SIUP, 2010, pp. 42-56.

---"Professing Multiculturalism: The Politics of Style in the Contact Zone." *Cross-Talk in Comp Theory: A Reader*, edited by Victor Villanueva and Kristin L. Arola, NCTE, 2011, pp. 467-484.

Lu, Min-Zhan and Bruce Horner. "The Logic of Listening to Global Englishes." *Code-Meshing as World English: Pedagogy, Policy, Performance*, edited by Vershawn Ashanti Young and Aja Y. Martinez, NCTE, 2011, pp. 99-114.

---. "Translingual Literacy, Language Difference, and Matters of Agency." *College English*, vol. 75, no 6, July 2013, pp. 582-607. *NCTE*, www.ncte.org/library/NCTE Files/Resources/Journals/CE/0756-jul2013/CE0756Trans.pdf.

---. "Translingual Literacy and Matters of Agency." *Literacy as Translingual Practice:*

Between Communities and Classrooms, edited by A. Suresh Canagarajah, Routledge, 2013, pp. 26-38.

"Oxford Dictionaries Word of the Year 2013." *Oxford Dictionaries*, 2013, en.oxford dictionaries.com/word-of-the-year/word-of-the-year-2013.

Macrorie, Ken. *Telling Writing*. Hayden Book Co., 1976.

Mangen, Anne and Jean-Luc Velay. "Digitizing Literacy: Reflections on the Haptics of Writing." *Advances in Haptics*, edited by Mehrdad Hosseini Zadeh, Apr. 2010, pp. 385-402. *InTech*, cdn.intechopen.com/pdfs-wm/9927.pdf.

Matsuda, Paul Kei. "Composition Studies and ESL Writing: A Disciplinary Division of Labor." *College Composition and Communication*, vol. 50, no.4, June 1999, pp. 699-721. *ProQuest*, literature-proquest com.proxy.lib.uwaterloo.ca/pageImage.do?ftnum= 42011 156&fmt=page&area=criticism&journalid=0010096X&articleid=R03640674 &pubdate=1999&queryid=3022283914460.

---. "The Lure of Translingual Writing." *PMLA*, vol. 129, no. 3, May 2014, pp. 478-483. *Miscellaneous Ejournals*, www.mlajournals.org/doi/pdf/10.1632/pmla.2014.129.3. 478.

McGee, Tim and Patricia Ericsson. "The Politics of the Program: MS Word as the Invisible Grammarian." *Computers and Composition*, vol. 19, no. 4, Dec. 2002, pp. 453-470. *Scholars Portal*, journals.scholarsportal.info/pdf/87554615/v19i0004/453_ tpotpmwatig.xml.

Miller, Jennifer, Alex Kostogriz, and Margaret Gearon. "The Challenges of Diversity in Language Education." *Culturally and Linguistically Diverse Classrooms: New Dilemmas for Teachers*, edited by Miller, Kostogriz and Gearon, Multilingual Matters,

2009, pp. 3-17.

Milson-Whyte, Vivette. "Working English through Code-Meshing: Implications for

Denigrated Language Varieties and Their Users." *Reworking English in*

Rhetoric and Composition: Global Interrogations, Local Interventions, edited by

Bruce Horner and Karen Kopelson, SIUP, 2014, pp. 103-115.

Milu, Esther. "Translingual Practices in Kenyan Hiphop: Pedagogical Implications."

Literacy as Translingual Practice: Between Communities and Classrooms, edited by

A. Suresh Canagarajah, Routledge, 2013, pp. 104-112.

Montgomery, Michael B. "The Structural History of Y'all, You All, and You'uns."

Southern Journal of Linguistics, vol. 26. 2002, 19-27.

Moss, Beverley J. "Ethnography and Composition: Studying Language at Home."

Writing Studies Research in Practice: Methods and Methodologies in Composition

Research, edited by Gesa Kirch and Patricia A. Sullivan, SIUP, 2012, pp. 153-171.

Mullin, Joan, Carol Peterson Haviland and Amy Zenger. "Import/Export Work?: Using

Cross-Cultural Theories to Rethink Englishes, Identities, and Genres in Writing

Centers." *Reworking English in Rhetoric and Composition: Global*

Interrogations, Local Interventions, edited by Bruce Horner and Karen Kopelson,

SIUP, 2014, pp. 150-165.

Nettell, Richard Westbury. "Depreciating Diversity: Language Prejudice, Pidgin, and the

Aloha State." *Code-Meshing as World English: Pedagogy, Policy, Performance*,

edited by Vershawn Ashanti Young and Aja Y, NCTE, 2011, pp. 168-184.

Obey Your Thirst. Episode 1. Performances by Drake, The Fader and Sprite. The Fader, 24

June 2015, www.youtube.com/watch?v=VqIdFWZyYXQ.

239

O'Neil, Lauren. "February expected to be brutal for winter weather in Toronto." *blogTO*, Jan. 2018, www.blogto.com/city/2018/01/february-brutal-winter-weather-toronto-2018/.

Palmquist, Mike. "Tracing the Development of Digital Tools for Writers and Writing Teachers." *Digital Tools in Composition Studies: Critical Dimensions and Implications*, by Ollie O. Oveido, Joyce R. Walker, and Bryon Hawk. Hampton Press, 2010, pp. 3-45.

Pennycook, Alastair. "English as a Language Always in Translation." *European Journal of English Studies*, vol. 12, no.1, Apr. 2008, pp. 33-47. *Scholars Portal*, journals. scholarsportal.info/pdf/13825577/v12i0001/33_eaalait.xml.

---. "Language Education as Translingual Activism." May 2006. *Asia Pacific Journal of Education*, vol. 26, no. 1, May 2006, pp. 111-114. *Scholars Portal*. journals.scholars portal.info/pdf/02188791/v26i0001/111_leata.xml.

---. "Translingual English." *Australian Review of Applied Linguistics*, vol. 31, no. 3, Dec. 2008, pp. 30.1-30.9. *Research Gate*, www.researchgate.net/publication/250079429_ Translingual_English.

---. "What Might Translingual Education Look Like?" *Babel*, vol. 47, no. 1, Nov. 2012, pp. 4-13.

Porter, Jim. "Why Technology Matters to Writing: A Cyberwriter's Tale." *Computers and Composition*, vol. 20, no. 4, 2003, pp. 375-394. *Scholars Portal*, journals. scholarsportal.info/pdf/87554615/v20i0004/375_wtmtwact.xml.

Puchta, Claudia and Jonathan Potter. *Focus Group Practice*. Sage, 2004.

Qu, Weiguo. "Critical Literacy and Writing in English: Teaching English in a Cross-Cultural Context." *Reworking English in Rhetoric and Composition: Global*

Interrogations, Local Interventions, edited by Bruce Horner and Karen Kopelson, SIUP, 2014, pp. 64-76.

Ray, Brian. "A Progymnasmata for Our Time: Adapting Classical Exercises to Teach Translingual Style." *Rhetoric Review*, vol. 32, no. 2, Apr. 2013, 191-209. *Scholars Portal*, journals-scholarsportal info.proxy.lib.uwaterloo.ca/pdf/07350198/v32i0002/ 191_apfotacettts.xml.

Renier van Burick. "Q: Office 2013 Language." *Microsoft Community*, 21 Feb. 2016, answers.microsoft.com/en-us/msoffice/forum/msoffice_word-mso_windows8/office-2013-language/67da4150-2ac8-4f61-a30b-ac83f49a9569.

Ridolfo, Jim and Dànielle Nicole Devoss. "Composing for Recomposition: Rhetorical Velocity and Delivery." *Kairos: A Journal of Rhetoric, Technology, and Pedagogy*, vol. 13, no. 2, 2009. *Kairos*, kairos.technorhetoric.net/13.2/topoi/ridolfo_devoss/ future.html.

Ruggles Gere, Anne. Foreword. *Computers and Writing: The Cyborg Era*, by James A. Inman. Routledge, 2004, pp vii-viii.

Santa, Tracy. *Dead Letters: Errors in Composition, 1873-2004*. Hampton Press, 2008.

@sarabareilles. Sara Bareilles. Sympathies for Victims and Affectees of the 2016 Italian Earthquake. *Facebook*, 24 Aug. 2016, www.facebook.com/sarabareilles/.

Schlossberg, Mallory. "Mark Jacobs subtly used a plus-size model in a runway show." *Business Insider*, 18 Sept. 2015, www.businessinsider.com/a-plus-size-model-walked-the-runway-at-marc-jacobs-show-at-new-york-fashion-week-2015-9.

Schneider, Edgar W. "Synopsis: Morphological and Syntactic Variation in the Americas and the Caribbean." *The Americas and the Caribbean*, edited by Edgar W. Schneider,

Mouton de Gruyter, 2008, pp. 763-776.

Selber, Stuart A. *Multiliteracies for a Digital Age*. SIUP, 2004.

Selfe, Cynthia L. "If You Don't Believe That You're Doing Some Good with the Work
That You Do Then You Shouldn't Be Doing It." Interview by Brian Bailie.
Composition Forum, vol. 21, Spr. 2010, pp. 1-8. *ERIC*, files.eric.ed.gov/fulltext/
EJ1080580.pdf.

Selfe, Cynthia L., and Richard J. Selfe. "The Politics of the Interface: Power and Its
Exercise in Electronic Contact Zones." *College Composition and Communication*, vol
45, no. 4, Dec. 1994, pp. 480-504. *JSTOR*, www.jstor.org.proxy.lib.uwaterloo.ca/
stable/pdf/358761.pdf.

Sharples, Mike. "Computer Support for the Rhythms of Writing." *Computers and
Composition*, vol. 11, 1994, pp. 217-226. *Scholars Portal*, journals.scholarsportal.info/
pdf/87554615/v11i0003_s/217_csftrow.xml.

Shaughnessy, Mina P. *Errors and Expectations: A Guide for the Teacher of Basic
Writing*. Oxford University Press, 1979.

Sheridan, Mary P. "Making Ethnography Our Own: Why and How Writing Studies Must
Define Core Research Practices." *Writing Studies Research in Practice: Methods and
Methodologies*, edited by Lee Nickoson and Mary P. Sheridan, SIUP, 2012, pp. 73-85.

Sohan, Vanessa Kraemer. "Relocalized Listening: Responding to All Student Texts from
a Translingual Starting Point." *Reworking English in Rhetoric and Composition:
Global Interrogations, Local Interventions*, edited by Bruce Horner and Karen
Kopelson, SIUP, 2014, pp. 191-206.

Shohamy, Elana and Durk Gorter. Introduction. *Linguistic Landscape: Expanding the*

Scenery, edited by Shohamy and Gorter. Routledge, 2009, pp. 1-10.

Smitherman, Geneva. "CCCC's Role in the Struggle for Language Rights." *Students'*

Right to Their Own Language: A Critical Sourcebook, edited by Staci Perryman-

Clark, David E. Kirkland, and Austin Jackson, Bedford/St. Martin's, 2015, pp. 58-82.

---. "CCCC's Role in the Struggle for Language Rights." *College Composition and*

Communication, vol. 50, no. 3, Feb. 1999, pp 349-376. *JSTOR*, www.jstor.org.proxy.

lib.uwaterloo.ca/stable/pdf/358856.pdf.

Sohan, Vanessa Kraemer. "Relocalized Listening: Responding to All Student Texts from

a Translingual Starting Point." *Reworking English in Rhetoric and Composition:*

Global Interrogations, Local Interventions, edited by Bruce Horner and Karen

Kopelson, SIUP, 2014, pp. 191-206.

Stanford, Nichole E. "Publishing in the Contact Zone: Strategies from the Cajun

Canaille." *Code-Meshing as World English: Pedagogy, Policy, Performance*, edited

by Vershawn Ashanti Young and Aja Y. Martinez, NCTE, 2011, pp. 115-142.

Stanley, Sarah. "Noticing the Way: Translingual Possibility and Basic Writers." *Journal*

of Basic Writing, vol. 32, no. 1, Spr. 2013, pp. 37-61. *EBSCOhost*. web.a.ebscohost.

com.proxy.lib.uwaterloo.ca/ehost/pdfviewer/pdfviewer?vid=1&sid=f53f2396-6fd9-

4fbe-a26d-477cfc584c4a%40sessionmgr4008.

Talarico, Brittany. "For Rihanna, VMA Stands for 'Very Minimal Attire.'" *People Style*, 22

Aug. 2016, people.com/style/rihanna-best-skin-baring-style-moments/mtv-video-music-

awards-2007/.

Trimbur, John. "Translingualism and Close Reading." *College English*, vol. 78, no. 3,

Jan. 2016, pp. 219-227. *NCTE*, www.ncte.org/library/NCTEFiles/Resources/Journals/

CE/0783jan2016/CE0783Translingualism.pdf.

Vaquera-Vasquez. "Meshed América: Confessions of a Mercacirce." *Code-Meshing as World English: Pedagogy, Policy, Performance*, edited by Vershawn Ashanti Young and Aja Y. Martinez, NCTE, 2011, pp. 257-271.

Vernon, Alex. "Computerized Grammar Checkers 2000: Capabilities, Limitations, and Pedagogical Possibilities." *Computers and Composition*, vol. 17, no. 3, Dec. 2000, pp. 329-349. *Scholars Portal*, journals.scholarsportal.info/pdf/87554615/v17i0003/329_ cgc2clapp.xml.

Welford, Theresa Malphrus. "Code-Meshing and Creative Assignments: How Students Can Stop Worrying and Learn to Write Like Da Bomb." *Code-Meshing as World English: Pedagogy, Policy, Performance*, edited by Young and Martinez, NCTE, 2011, pp. 21-54.

Whithaus, Carl. *Teaching and Evaluating Writing in the Age of Computers and High-Stakes Testing*. Routledge, 2005.

Wible, Scott. "Rhetorical Activities of Global Citizens." *Literacy as Translingual Practice: Between Communities and Classrooms*, edited by A. Suresh Canagarajah, Routledge, 2013, pp. 39-46.

Williams, Julia. "Translingualism in Composition Studies and Second Language Writing: A Possible Alliance?" 3 May 2015. Proposal (Individual Portion of Group Proposal) for the 2016 CCCC Convention, Waterloo.

Wimsatt, William K. and Monroe C. Beardley. "The Intentional Fallacy." *The Sewanee Review*, vol. 54, no. 3, July-Sept. 1946, pp. 468-488. *JSTOR*, www.jstor.org/stable/pdf /27537676.pdf.

"Windows Glasses - Microsoft HoloLens with Holographic Technology." *YouTube*, uploaded by WT VOX – Fashion Innovation, 21 Jan. 2015, www.youtube.com/ watch?v=0YR-CChdZnI.

"woe." Def. A.1. *Oxford English Dictionary*. 3rd ed. Dec. 2016, www. oed.com/view/Entry/ 229821?redirectedFrom=woe#eid.

Worden, Dorothy. "Afterword: Reflections from the Ground Floor." Afterword. *Literacy as Translingual Practice: Between Communities and Classrooms*, edited by A. Suresh Canagarajah, Routledge, 2013, pp. 235-238.

Yam, Sharon. "'Dynamic Language Practices,' Review of *Translingual Practice: Global Englishes and Cosmopolitan Relations*, by Suresh Canagarajah." *Critical Multilingualism Studies*, vol. 2, no. 1, 2014, pp. 170-173. http://cms.arizona.edu/ index.php/multilingual/article/view/52/93.

Yancey, Kathleen Blake. "Looking for Sources of Coherence in a Fragmented World: Notes Towards a New Assessment Design." *Computers and Composition*, vol. 21, no.1, Mar. 2004, pp. 89-102. *Scholars Portal*, journals.scholarsportal.info/pdf/ 87554615/v21i0001/89_lfsocintanad.xml.

---. "Made Not Only in Words: Composition in a New Key." *College Composition and Communication*, vol. 56, no.2, Dec. 2004, pp. 297-328. *JSTOR*, www.jstor.org.proxy. lib.uwaterloo.ca/stable/pdf/4140651.pdf.

Young, Vershawn Ashanti, and Aja Y. Martinez. Introduction. "Introduction: Code-Meshing as World English." *Code-Meshing as World English: Pedagogy, Policy, Performance*, edited by Young and Martinez, NCTE, 2011, pp. xix-xxxi.

Young, Vershawn Ashanti. Acknowledgments. *Other People's English: Code-Meshing,*

Code-Switching, and African American Literacy, by Young et al., Teachers College Press, 2014, pp. xiii-xv.

---. "Coda: The Power of Language." *Other People's English: Code-Meshing, Code-Switching, and African American Literacy*, by Young et al., Teachers College Press, 2014, pp. 153-156.

---. "Code-Meshing: The New Way to Do English." *Other People's English: Code-Meshing, Code-Switching, and African American Literacy*, by Young et al., Teachers College Press, 2014, pp. 76-83.

---. "Introduction: Are You Part of the Conversation?" Introduction. *Other People's English: Code-Meshing, Code-Switching, and African American Literacy*, by Young et al, Teachers College Press, 2014, pp. 1-11.

---. "Linguistic Double Consciousness." *Other People's English: Code-Meshing, Code-Switching, and African American Literacy*, by Young et al., Teachers College Press, 2014, pp. 55-65.

---. Group Discussion at the UW Graduate House for CCCC 2016 Panel Proposal. 25 Apr. 2015.

---. "Keep Code-Meshing." *Literacy as Translingual Practice: Between Communities and Classrooms*, edited by A. Suresh Canagarjah, Routledge, 2013, pp. 139-145.

---. "Re: Dissertation Committee Member Request." Received by Lacey Beer, 6 October 2014.

---. "Should Writers Use They Own English?" *Iowa Journal of Cultural Studies (IJCS)*, vol. 12, no. 1, Spr. 2010, pp. 110-118. ir.uiowa.edu/cgi/viewcontent.cgi?article=1095 &context=ijcs.

---. *Your Average Nigga: Performing Race, Literacy, and Masculinity*. Wayne State

   University Press, 2007.

Young-Riviera, Y'Shanda. "Code-Meshing and Responsible Education." *Other People's*

   English: Code-Meshing, Code- Switching, and African American Literacy, by Young

   et al., Teachers College Press, 2014, pp. 87-93.

Zorn, Jeff. "'Students' Right to Their Own Language': A Counter-Argument." *Students'*

   Right to Their Own Language: A Critical Sourcebook, edited by Staci Perryman-

   Clark, David E. Kirkland, and Austin Jackson, Bedford/St. Martin's, 2015, pp. 150-

   162.

---. "Translingualism: Tongue-Tied in English Composition." *Academic Questions*, vol.

   28, no. 2, Apr. 2015, pp. 175-181. *Scholars Portal*. journals-scholarsportal-info.proxy.

   lib.uwaterloo.ca/pdf/08954852/v28i0002/175_ttiec.xml.