

TOWARD A TRANSLINGUAL ORIENTATION TO WRITING INSTRUCTION AT A
HISPANIC-SERVING INSTITUTION

by

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I. INTRODUCTION: A LARGE-SCALE REIMAGINATION OF STANDARD AMERICAN ENGLISH

Standard American English; Standard Academic English; Standard Written English; they're often described as value-neutral, the assumed standard. However, none of these names actually address the core values of the monolingual perspective on language that lends these versions of English their power and agenda. These names and this monolingual perspective reinforce White Middle Class values. The question that arises here then is “why would we want to reinforce White Middle Class values in a place where a sizable portion of the population is not white or middle class?” We need to address this question by continually undertaking a large-scale reimagination of Standard American English in the academy in composition classes.

This concern is no more apparent than at Hispanic-Serving Institutions, especially those along the United States/Mexico borderlands. Texas State University, located in Central Texas, is a Hispanic-Serving Institution with nearly 39,000 students; of those 39,000, 35% identify as Hispanic (“Facts and Data”). On March 24, 2011, Texas State announced that the federal government had granted the university the designation of Hispanic-Serving Institution after the university reached 25% Hispanic enrollment in September 2010 (“Texas State”). Texas State University’s President, Denise Trauth, stated in response to receipt of the designation that Texas State had been committed to becoming an HSI but that “[i]t is not enough to recruit talented students from all ethnicities – we must also continue to retain those students and see that they graduate” and that the university “will continue to deliver exceptional educational opportunities for all of [its] students” (“Texas State”). This delivery of exceptional educational

opportunities has not always been the case. Some say that not much has changed within Texas State's core curriculum since receipt of the HSI designation. There was still an understanding that Standard Written English was the mode of communication we were responsible for teaching in our HSI setting.

It is out of this incongruence with what rhetoric and composition as a field and compositionists specifically know about writing and communication in general, the overall expectations of first-year English as a service discipline within the university, and the populations of students who are poorly served by this method of instruction that give rise to the problems addressed in my thesis. If we as advocates in composition accept as fact that Standard Written English is a myth, in that there is no one, singular, standard version of English, then the integrity of norms-based, monlingual teaching must be called into question.

Broadly, my research seeks to understand how and why composition instructors *do* translingual writing pedagogy, which involves broadening conceptions of language by attempting to collapse the boundaries between languages and registers as speakers do in every communicative act through a systematic borrowing of lexical and syntactic features, amending understandings of what instructors actually value in student writing and in their own instruction, and possibly revisiting the outcomes instructors hope to achieve in the composition classroom. My research asserts that composition instruction can be made more effective by teaching and writing with a translingual disposition.

Research Questions

My main research question—"how do writing instructors do translingual composition pedagogy?"—is fundamentally descriptive. The questions that follow this

one, which attend to what I believe to be the most important aspects of this question, provide a round perspective on how and why compositionists should do this type of pedagogy and, furthermore, what translingual writing instruction looks like. The following specific questions have guided this project:

1. What is translingualism and why should we teach from a translingual perspective?
2. What does translingual writing pedagogy look like?
3. How do teachers translate translingual theory into effective pedagogical practice?

This project seeks to describe the implications of translingual theory in composition studies, describe a translingual writing pedagogy instituted in the unique contact zone of a Hispanic-Serving Institution, and assess the effectiveness of this pedagogy as objectively as possible given the circumstances. The overall idea, then, is to respond to A. Suresh Canagarajah's call for more qualitative, descriptive information on translingual writing strategies and writing pedagogy. In essence, this project is my response to the central themes in *Translingual Practice: Global Englishes and Cosmopolitan Relations*, in which Canagarajah defines and characterizes translingualism.

Literature Review

The concept of translingualism can be found in applied linguistics research through the 1990s; however, translingualism as it is now understood has only been an area of inquiry in rhetoric and composition scholarship for around a decade. The predicative concepts have featured in the scholarship, like contact zones in literacy studies and sedimentation in Alistair Pennycook's work, but they did not exist under the particular theoretical heading of translingual theory. Although translingualism as a term does not appear in English studies until the late 2000s, recent scholarship in the January

2016 special issue of *College English* defines a body of translingual theory and its disciplinary role in rhetoric and composition. However, they were preceded in 2011 by Bruce Horner, Min-Zhan Lu, Jacqueline Jones Royster, and John Trimbur.

Horner et al. co-authored an article, “Language Difference in Writing: Toward a Translingual Approach,” that first described and defined the new translingual paradigm for this discipline. Granted, the decade before had seen much scholarship on multilingualism, new language paradigms, and ESL writing as a result of the globalization of the discipline. Horner et al. took up the call to develop a new language ideology that countered current-traditional and monolingual modes of writing instruction nonetheless. The co-authors’ answer to the current-traditional pursuit of linguistic homogeneity was to develop an approach that “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 et al 303). This new approach, as they describe it, is the translingual orientation and the inspiration for the project at hand.

It would be reasonable to say that Horner, Lu, Jones Royster, and Trimbur catalyzed interest in translingualism and the still amorphous translingual orientation at certain intersections in rhetoric and composition. While translingualism wasn’t clearly defined when they undertook this essay—in fact, the meaning and purview of this body of theory is still quite protean today—the co-authors started the development of a language ideology that extends the 1974 CCCC’s resolution on Students’ Rights to Their Own Language to differences *within* and *across* all languages, “adds recognition that the formation and definition of languages and language varieties are fluid,” and that “insists on viewing language differences and fluidities as resources to be preserved, developed

and utilized” (304). According to the co-authors, the teacher or researcher who takes a translingual approach sees language difference as a resource for learning and does not merely conceive of these differences as rights, which reflects the difference between multilingual and translingual orientations to language (304). This article and the questions asked within it would spawn many new contributions to translingual theory in English studies over the next five years, as evidenced by the almost two-page list at the end of the article that contains the names of those who support the co-authors’ work in further defining this new paradigm.

Suresh Canagarajah, one of the prominent names on that list and in my research has published widely on the topics of multilingualism, translanguaging, and translingualism and has, as a result, become one of the leading voices in conversations about the development of the translingual orientation in English. Canagarajah’s work has been absolutely key in conceptualizing and describing translingualism for its historical, anthropological, and critical take on the development of translingualism to date. In his 2013 edited collection, *Literacy as Translingual Practice: Between Communities and Classrooms*, Canagarajah defines translingualism by “focusing on the prefix,” asking what the prefix “trans-“ does to language and positing that “the term moves us beyond a consideration of individual or monolithic languages to life between and across languages” (1). The “trans-“ prefix “encourages us to treat acts of communication as involving more than words” (1). This explanation begs the question of why existing language ideology “-isms” don’t adequately express these ideas. Canagarajah explains that “the neologism ‘translingual’ is indeed needed” because “existing terms like *multilingual* and *pluralilingual* keep languages somewhat separated even as they address

the co-existence of multiple languages” (1, emphasis in original). These existing language ideologies don’t go far enough in their assertion that linguistic competencies are additive and always interrelated, and, furthermore, always changing in the generative conflict between languagers. Both multilingualism and plurilingualism still adhere to the strict language boundaries bemoaned by Louis Jean Calvet. On the other hand, “translingualism 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” (1-2). *Literacy as Translingual Practice* takes a much more sophisticated view of the way that languagers actually *do* language.

In another 2013 publication, a single-authored text titled *Translingual Practice: Global Englishes and Cosmopolitan Relations*, Canagarajah does much of the same work as in *Literacy as Translingual Practice* but moves closer to establishing the shape of a translingual orientation by more fully describing the longstanding history of communicators in translingual contexts, including language users in Asia, Western Europe, and the United States. Most importantly, though, *Translingual Practice* defines the actual translingual strategies that language users enact in real-life communicative interactions rather than simply in form, as in analysis of surface-level textual features.

Canagarajah defines four macro-level strategies: envoicing, recontextualization, interaction, and entextualization. These address “the central constructs in any act of communication, that is, personal, contextual, social, and textual dimensions respectively” (*Translingual Practice* 79). He defines these strategies as follows:

Envoicing strategies shape the extent and nature of hybridity, as a consideration of voice plays a critical role in appropriating mobile semiotic resources in one's texts and talk; recontextualization strategies frame the text/talk to facilitate and alter the footing to prepare the ground for appropriate negotiation; interactional strategies are adopted to negotiate and manage meaning-making activity; and entextualization strategies configure codes in the temporal and spatial dimension of the text/talk to facilitate and respond to these negotiations (79).

While the project at hand does not focus solely on these strategies, it's important to know how they have been defined in order to conceptualize how translingualism works in practice and on certain parts of my pedagogy. Envoicing determines what voices are appropriate in contact zones; recontextualization helps students make meaning in spaces with diverse and often incongruent semiotic affordances; interactional strategies govern how interlocutors communicate with one another and are characterized by reciprocity; and entextualization strategies ground communicative acts in particular spatiotemporal contexts.

In *Translingual Practice*, Canagarajah poses two possible concerns for researchers interested in translingualism. There are “two foci to this exploration in this book: one is research-based, and the other is pedagogical” (11). In narrowing down what, exactly, about translingualism needs to be studied, the research-based focus described above would have required analysis of how communicators use translingual negotiation strategies to navigate communicative situations without shallowly focusing on product-oriented analysis (11). The pedagogical focus better fits my own activist ethos as a

teacher and, ultimately, a translingual pedagogy can only be described as a liberatory pedagogy. I was drawn into focusing on pedagogy at the discovery of this confluence.

Canagarajah states that “the pedagogical implications of these translingual practices also need more exploration” and that “some scholars have started complaining that advances in theorization of translingual practices have far outstripped pedagogical implementation” (12). This concern has focused my research project and, as such, this thesis seeks to provide information on the pedagogical implementation of translingual orientations to language, at the pedagogical domain, which, according to Canagarajah, “is itself a site of complex translingual practices and generates useful insights into communicative practices” (12). While Canagarajah’s work has been extremely influential, by no means is his the only voice speaking out on the importance of the new translingual orientation.

In fact, *College English* published a special issue devoted to translingualism in January of 2016 with an introductory piece written by Bruce Horner and Min-Zhan Lu. “Introduction: Translingual Work” not only recaps the contributions that have been made over the five years since their last piece in *College English* on the topic but also lauds the research and scholarship undertaken “in diverse ways with diverse results” to expand our understanding of translingualism (Horner and Lu 207). Horner and Lu legitimize studies like mine that seek ultra-situated and local descriptions of translingual pedagogy. Here, Horner and Lu claim that, while much work has been done on translingualism, definitively describing the translingual orientation still needs to be done. And, what’s more, the real shortcomings and measurable benefits of this orientation in rhetoric and composition need to be explored.

The contributors to this issue continue to do this work in manifold ways. Consider, for instance, Suresh Canagarajah's contribution, "Translingual Writing and Teacher Development in Composition," in which he describes a practicum-style course he teaches at Pennsylvania State University that prepares composition instructors to teach with a translingual orientation and also employs translingualism to improve the efficacy of teacher training. Canagarajah's arguments for these particular facets of writing instruction—focusing on practice, dialogue, and ecology—and teacher training mirror some of the things that we in rhetoric and composition seem to know intuitively from our experiences with writing instruction. In a way, Canagarajah has proposed already what translingual writing pedagogy might look like in this article and does a similar thing in comparison to this thesis. First, it would be based in practice, meaning that it would be up to the students to "engage with the course content through their own writing...rather than depending on the usual teacher-fronted and product-oriented instruction" (266). It would also be dialogical, meaning that "interpretations of course materials are developed through collaborative discussion in the class" (266). Finally, translingual writing pedagogy would "treat the classroom as an ecologically rich environment, with resources that students can turn into 'affordances' for learning" (266). These principles have become pillars of my teaching philosophy.

Juan C. Guerra also contributes a perspective that reflects some of the concerns of detractors and skeptics. Guerra suggests:

teachers falter in their efforts to help their students understand what a translingual approach is because they have been leading them to think that they expect them to produce a particular kind of writing that mimics what they call code-meshing

rather than getting them to understand that what they want instead is for them to call on the rhetorical sensibilities (Guerra 228).

Guerra raises a huge concern about how easily translingualism could descend into the same prescriptivist ideologies that precede it. He states that his students were not able to produce translingual texts reliably “not because they are incapable of calling on their rich repertoires of multilingual practices, but because the school context lacked the social, personal, and inter-relational stakes, as well as the intimate, rhetorical familiarity, that they readily found at home with their friends and families,” where his students flourished rhetorically (230). Guerra raises many important concerns that should keep researchers in the future from defaulting to product-oriented writing instruction.

Keith Gilyard also grapples with the question of how much prescriptivism translingual theorists are able to stomach. He states that “translingualists grasp that the institutional enactment of language standards is repressive in some cases and restrictive in all,” but still imagines “that proponents of translingualism will still have to grapple with the question of how much language prescriptiveness they are comfortable with—lest they assert ‘none at all’” (Gilyard 284). This is, naturally, a difficult question for composition theory, involving inquiry into “the flattening of language differences, the notion of language as an abstraction, the danger of translingualism becoming an alienating theory for some scholars of color, and deeper study of powerfully translanguaging students” (284). Other contributors to this special issue, namely Ellen Cushman, would also propose ways that translingualists can avoid alienating scholars of color, misleading students, and colonizing translingual spaces. Gilyard finally states that “ultimately, the translingualist project will not be denied. It needs rhetorical refinement

and may at some point require another name. But its rejection of the monolingual paradigm is certainly the way forward” (289). I believe that, echoing Gilyard, undertaking this pedagogical project and the accompanying multi-part study is the way forward, not to mention timely.

Limitations

All of this said, this study is limited in a few ways. First and foremost, the scholarship portion of this study depends on largely positive takes on translingualism. There are no real opponents to this method of instruction. It appears there are only those who would oppose the adoption of a translingual perspective on the basis that they believe the best writing instruction is that which is norms-based and functional rather than social and mutable, a position not often found in recent rhetoric and composition scholarship. The final limitation involves my survey component. One might ask why one would want to measure language attitudes rather than something more concrete as in the product-oriented method described above. However, we cannot use the terminology and frameworks of an old ideology to measure the success of this new paradigm. To attempt to ascertain the use of translingual negotiation strategies in writing or to identify the textual features of the translingual negotiation strategies in completed essays would mean using product-oriented means to analyze a process-centric phenomenon. In other words, measuring language attitudes is the next best way to understand whether or not a translingual pedagogy is working.

Conclusion

I assert that translingualism is the next and best way to understand and teach writing in a quickly globalizing world wherein students travel away from their home

countries to receive their education more and more often. Very few theorists and researchers have examined what translingual pedagogy might actually mean or what it might entail on a concrete level. If we don't understand what this translingual method of instruction looks like, how can we hope to accomplish the construction of such a pedagogy and how can we hope to argue that it is, in fact, the way in which we should hope to shape other instructors' pedagogies? Canagarajah sets out a pedagogical question for researchers interested in translingualism when he laments the lack of sound scholarly work on how teachers translate translingual writing theory into effective pedagogical practice. This is the question that originally inspired me to do this research, and this kernel of an idea has guided all of my inquiry into translingual theory to this point: how do teachers translate translingual theory into effective pedagogical practice?

II. TRANSLINGUAL THEORY IN THE WRITING CLASSROOM: RATIONALIZING TRANSLINGUAL DISPOSITIONS

As new language paradigms are designed and theorized, the burden of proving the efficacy these new paradigms always remains on the theorists advancing these new ideas. Certain questions must be answered. Namely, the “why?” question. The case of translingual writing pedagogy is no different. The first and maybe most important question to answer at the outset of this pedagogical project is “why should educators individually and writing programs collectively adopt a translingual orientation in writing instruction?” That question guides this first chapter. This question has layers; however, there is only one truly integral argument for the adoption of a translingual orientation to writing instruction. The adoption of a translingual orientation allows writing instructors and programs to more effectively meet the disciplinary goals set out in the Council of Writing Program Administrators’ Outcomes Statement.

There are four outcomes listed in the statement. These are rhetorical knowledge; critical thinking, reading, and composing skills; composing processes and the related ideology; and genre conventions in English. Given translingual theory’s focus on the rhetorical deployment of semiotic resources, a translingual disposition in writing instruction could prove to be a more effective alternative to more traditional rhetorical instruction methods. With necessary elements of criticality in its theorizing of place, culture, language, and power, topics viewed through the translingual lense provide ample opportunities for criticality. Students in a translingual classroom must learn to think critically about their reading and writing on a meta level in order to identify the dynamics of power, language contact, and rhetorical attunement involved in a given text, as well as

demonstrate that critical thinking in their own compositions. While translingual theory does not deal explicitly with the development of understandings or the employment of composing processes, the translingual disposition does not hinder the development of effective composing processes. In another sense, when looking closely at the translingual paradigm, one could see an analog for the standard three-part composing process intimated in the early process movement. While this is a bit of a stretch, one can attribute the discrete actions of prewriting, drafting, and revising to the principles of ecology, practice, and dialogue, respectively, from translingual theory and elsewhere. The final macro-level outcome deals with knowledge of genre conventions, specifically in English. The development of a translingual disposition and awareness correlates with the cultivation of an awareness of genre conventions, particularly because this theory allows for a more relativist stance on language norms, collapsing the abstract boundaries between languages—as suggested by Jean Louis Calvet—and focusing on the mobile, variable acquisition of language norms in any given genre or context.

Rhetorical Knowledge

The first outcome concerns the cultivation of rhetorical knowledge, which the authors of the statement define as “the ability to analyze contexts and audiences and then to act on that analysis in comprehending and creating texts” and explains that “writers develop rhetorical knowledge by negotiating purpose, audience, context, and conventions as they compose” (Council). The use of the word “negotiating” requires some unpacking. “Negotiate” could mean simply “navigate” in this case; however, the authors more likely meant to use “negotiate” in the sense that translingual theory uses it. Translingual communication is a process of negotiating the meaning of protean, practice-based

semiotic resources using context, cues, and attunement. So, rhetorical knowledge appears to involve the same or at least similar processes of negotiation.

A translingual competence is an inherently rhetorical state. In *Literacy as Translingual Practice*, Suresh Canagarajah discusses the rhetorical aspects of the translingual orientation to language. The kinds of literacy events discussed in the text are, he claims, “intrinsically rhetorical” because they depend on an understanding that “words gain their logic and uptake in relation to the rhetorical objectives, participants, setting, and interests concerned” (*Literacy* 5-6). From within the translingual paradigm, communicative acts are always bound to context and rhetorical. Canagarajah goes further in stating that “uptake is primarily about persuasion—i.e., persuading listeners/readers on the appropriateness of one’s semiotic choices for one’s purposes,” uptake here being the only end of successful communicative actions (6). In encouraging language users, to develop a translingual disposition in their processes of textual analysis and production—textual defined broadly to refer to most compositions—teachers can simultaneously encourage an awareness of the appropriateness of language use and an attunement to the concerns of rhetorical knowledge.

Critical Thinking, Reading, and Composing

The second outcome deals with the development of critical thinking, reading, and composing skills. The authors define this outcome as “the ability to analyze, synthesize, interpret, and evaluate ideas, information, situations, and texts” (Council). Translingual theory is based on the questioning of assumptions that lead to normative homogenous language practices such as the myth of Standard American English. Canagarajah bemoans the lacking work on pluralizing writing practices in English Lingua Franca

contexts, while simultaneously stating that “multilinguals are increasingly questioning the attitude to written language as being standardized and neutral,” supporting the conclusion that a hallmark of translingual theory is critical reflection on writing, reading, and thinking processes (*Translingual* 108). In this way, translingual pedagogy instills criticality because it requires reflection and reciprocal action, some may call it praxis, which is inherently critical. Outside of that, a translingual *orientation* to texts requires not only positioning one’s self in such a way as to employ and develop critical reading skills that focus on the multiple and various semiotic resources at work, the power dynamics in compositions, and the play between interlocutors in communicative situations.

In teaching from a translingualist’s perspective, writing instructors inspire greater critical engagement with content, specifically through the appropriation of the contact zone metaphor as a critical frame through which students can evaluate the generative conflict between languages. The contact zone metaphor is the de facto keystone that unlocks the critical aspects of the translingual classrooms. Analyzing text and talk using this metaphor—with sufficient understanding of its purpose—in effect provides a depth of critical engagement that may not be matched by more traditional methods, in that these methods don’t get down to the roots of textual analysis and production in the way that a translingual orientation allows for.

Composing Processes

The third outcome has to do with the development of composing processes or, as the statement describes it, the use of “multiple strategies, or *composing processes*, to conceptualize, develop, and finalize projects” (Council). If one is willing to assume three steadfast principles around which one should organize a translingual writing pedagogy—

these principles being ecology, practice, and dialogue—then one can posit that the process of *doing*, so to speak, a translingual orientation in is a useful analogue for writing process theory.

In good translingual writing pedagogies, one will find the core principles of ecology, practice, and dialogue. These principles correlate to, respectively, the prewriting, drafting, and revising stages of the standard writing process. Harnessing ecological affordances involves the same processes of prewriting, requiring all manner of generative techniques and special attention to the ecology of the other languages in the communicative context. The classroom, as Canagarajah phrases it, should take on an “ecological orientation” because such an orientation “treats languages and literacies as shaped by the participants, processes, artifacts, and structures” taking part in the classroom (“Translingual” 267). The drafting stage of the well-defined writing process correlate with the practice-based principles of Canagarajah’s translingual writing classroom. The translingual writing course should “encourage students to engage with the course content through their own writing,” meaning that the translingual writing classroom should be based in the actual practice of writing (“Translingual” 267). That being said, there is more to a practice orientation than just writing. This orientation also encourages focus on actual writing *practices* and engagement with those practices through experimentation. In that regard, a focus on practice in the first-year composition classroom may more effectively reinforce healthy, productive writing practices. The revising stage of the writing process relates to the third basic principle of a translingual writing classroom: dialogicality. According to Canagarajah, dialogicality “refers to the interactions between peers and with the instructor” allowing for the class to

collaboratively interpret and discuss the course materials (“Translingual” 268). That’s less of an important point when one considers the implication of dialogicality in the development of writing practices. “As the essays of the students are revised in terms of feedback from peers and the instructor,” according to Canagarajah, “writers have to consider how to communicate their diverse language resources to those who may not understand them,” subsequently reinforcing the rhetorical attunement present in good translingual communication, whether in writing or elsewhere, and, in turn, resulting in a better finished product due to the care involved in reflecting on and revising one’s own writing (“Translingual” 268). The process of dialoguing with students about their writing, whether in class, in one-to-one meetings, or in the margins of essays, acts as a useful reimagination of the process of revision.

Translingual writing pedagogies support the development of multiple and various composing processes through the core principles of ecology, practice, and dialogue. Rather than mimic academic writing, my students took on an ecological orientation and discovered how to plumb their literate histories for semiotic resources and treat those as additive elements in their own academic writing as they began their prewriting processes. The dialogical principle supported draft development with respect to my commentary provided on their papers and, subsequently, the development of recontextualization and entextualization strategies, which correlate to changing drafts as students rewrite. Finally, the principle of practice facilitated writing and rewriting, as well as envoicing strategies. The principles outlined here don’t fit nicely into discrete boxes, as they necessarily influence one another; ecology inspires dialogue, which encourages practice, which in

turn cultivates further ecological affordances. These reciprocal principles mirror, in a way, the well-known composing process model of prewriting, drafting, and revision.

Genre Conventions

The final outcome, which may be the one most relevant in the current translingual literature, on the CWPA Statement focuses on the development of genre convention knowledge. The statement defines genre conventions as “the formal rules and informal guidelines that define genres, and in so doing, shape readers’ and writers’ perceptions of correctness and appropriateness” and further states that, while conventions are concerned with mechanics, they “also influence content, style, organization, graphics, and document design” (Council). There are several concepts to unpack in these statements. The definitions of several words in these statements are complicated from within the translingual orientation. First, the definition and characteristics of formality, correctness, and appropriateness are questioned for their relevance from within the translingual paradigm, which is something wholly different from the multilingual paradigm. Rules and correctness and appropriateness are, when viewed through a translingual lense, continually negotiated by interlocutors in communicative situations, making any rules-based instruction in the formal, prescriptive sense essentially moot. In addition to that, translingual theory focuses most of the interlocutors’ energy on attaining the rhetorical abilities relevant to shaping “readers’ and writers’ perceptions of correctness and appropriateness” on a meta-level. In an interview with Shakil Rabbi of Penn State University, Canagarajah claims that the development of a translingual awareness actually assists in the process of defining and adjusting to situational language norms, which is paramount in understanding both the rules of the game of academic writing in Standard

American English, so to speak, and in finding ways in which a writer may be able to flout those rules for greater rhetorical effect, to facilitate better and fuller uptake of meaning depending on the context, and encoding one's self in writing in order to be more fully understood (Rabbi). Knowing this, the translingual orientation should be the preferred method of instruction in accordance with the discipline's late focus on metacognitive awareness. Translingual writing pedagogies share this focus in that they inspire a metacognitive awareness of genre conventions and their development through sedimentation, rather than center on defining only those rules which govern academic literacies.

Conclusion

Through its unique framework, translingualism better addresses the Council of Writing Program Administrators' Outcomes Statement. With its focus on context and rhetorical attunement, translingual theory provides a pathway for writing instructors and writing programs to more effectively development rhetorical knowledge in students. Translingual theory also aids in the development of critical thinking, reading, and composing skills due to its roots in critical applied linguistics and adoption of a critical lense through which to view dynamics of language contact, culture, and power in different modalities. Due to its adoption of the core principles of ecology, practice, and dialogue, translingualism also aids in the development of solid composing processes. Finally, translingualism correlates with greater ease at understanding genre conventions.

There are questions and implications appended to conclusions like this one. First, if translingual writing instruction allows us to meet disciplinary goals, why not adopt it? At this point, it seems that not enough is known about how to implement translingual

theory in writing instruction. As Canagarajah points out, “we haven’t gone far beyond the product-oriented level of describing” the form and features of translingual writing (*Translingual* 11); however, this project has another related focus. Canagarajah states frankly that “the pedagogical implications of these translingual practices also need more exploration,” adding the clear question: “How do teachers translate theory and research findings for their classrooms in order to develop competence in these practices among their students?” (12). This is precisely the question the next chapter needs to answer. If a translingual orientation can help writing instructors and writing programs accomplish everything intimated above, then the question should not be “why?” but “how?”

III. DESIGNING A TRANSLINGUAL WRITING PEDAGOGY: METAPHOR, PHILOSOPHY, AND INSTITUTIONAL CONSTRAINTS

The pedagogical site is too interesting a site in which to play it safe; though I had the opportunity to use a pre-made syllabus and save myself the trouble of designing a pedagogy from the ground up, I could not let the opportunity presented to me as a teaching assistant at Texas State pass me by. The pedagogical site is a place to take risks, to fail and to succeed and to experiment. Given the argument laid out above detailing the advantages of a translingual disposition in writing instruction, this confluence of my research interests and my position as an instructor in the first-year English program represented an interesting opportunity to apply theory in much the same way that Canagarajah calls for in future works in the translingual tradition. Broadly, this chapter answers the question “what does a translingual writing pedagogy look like?” by describing the features of my own translingual pedagogy. The following intimates my expectations of this course, the organizational principles around which the course was built, and the reading and writing assignments, as well as the in-class structure of this course.

Course Design

This course was originally, optimistically, designed to attempt to inspire students to experiment with translinguality in their own writing. I had hoped that my pedagogy would encourage my students to pluralize their academic writing, borrow from their untapped literate experiences as affordances for learning, and to resist the homogenizing force of Standard American English. While some students did experiment in this way and the overall products my students produced at the end of the class did improve in

comparison to those from the earlier portion of the class, many students did not or would not attempt to undertake translingual writing.

My expectations for the course, as explained above, did involve inspiring my students to attempt translingual writing. However, it eventually became clear that my students were not necessarily ready to engage with the material of the course. There was, however, an underlying goal that was met. Canagarajah reminds us that, “[a]mong students who lack adequate socialization into multilingual and contact zones encounters,” like the majority of my students, “teachers may consider working at the level of attitudinal shifts and language awareness to prepare them for such interactions” (*Translingual* 5). In that regard, this pedagogy was successful.

Institutional Realities: HSI Designation and Standard Syllabus

Much the same as any other writing course, a translingual writing course has to contend with institutional realities facing instructors such as text selection, the goals of the curriculum, and the university’s ethos. In addition to these constraints, this course had to contend with the Hispanic-Serving Institution designation of Texas State and the outcomes of an ideal translingual writing pedagogy. That designation was probably the first and foremost issue in my mind as I designed this course.

In 2011, Texas State received the HSI designation from the federal government when the university reached 25% Hispanic enrollment. In a candid conversation during the summer before this pedagogy was implemented, it was revealed to me that, in effect, the designation had not changed much about the institution or its curriculum. This conversation eventually led to a discussion about what people in the English department should do to live up to the HSI designation and best serve the student population (Wilson

31-2). This translingual pedagogy design is my attempt at living up to the HSI designation.

The Texas State first-year English program is split into two courses, the first of which normally taught in the Fall semester is “a course in expository writing” that emphasizes “the improvement of papers through revision and the critical reading of substantive nonfiction texts” (“English”). The syllabus also maintains, due to English 1310’s status as a service course in the core communication curriculum, the hallmarks of a slightly functionalist perspective on writing in Standard Written English and the formal markings of Academic English. The syllabus states that, after completing English 1310, students should “demonstrate the ability to formulate a thesis (central idea) in an orderly way; form clear and effective paragraphs and sentences; use an appropriate vocabulary; and apply the grammatical conventions of written English” (“English”). This made it difficult to envision a translingual writing course that accomplished these goals due to this standard syllabus’ preoccupation with Standard Written English competency.

The standard syllabus also lays out several goal-oriented objectives of English 1310 that are derived from the Texas Core Curriculum. The first of these objectives is to “demonstrate command of oral, aural, written, and visual literacy skills that enable people to exchange messages appropriate to their subject, occasion and audience...creative thinking, innovation, inquiry, as well as analysis, evaluation, and synthesis of information”; the second is to “effectively develop, interpret and express ideas through written, oral, and visual communication”; the third is to “relate choices, actions, and consequences to ethical decision-making”; the fourth is to “recognize different points of view and work effectively with others to support a shared purpose or goal”; and the final

objective is to “demonstrate critical thinking skills, communication skills, teamwork, and personal responsibility” (“English”). It is in this set of goals that one can see the efficacy of a translingual orientation in writing instruction. Through a shared focus on practice, dialogue, and ecology, translingualists can approach and accomplish these goals in new ways, reimagining the ideas explained in these objectives.

Pedagogical Principles: Practice, Dialogue, and Ecology

The pedagogical principles of practice, dialogue, and ecology are the concepts around which good translingual writing instruction should be designed. These concepts organize, facilitate, and actuate translingual pedagogy by foregrounding student literacy experiences and the collaborative negotiations that get students to pay attention to these resources as affordances for learning, fostering conversation and mediation over these resources in both peer-to-peer and peer-to-authority contexts, and scaffolding learning through sound practice rather than abstraction. Achieving the establishment of a practice-based, dialogical, and ecologically rich class environment ensures the effective accomplishment of the goals set out by the Texas State first-year English curriculum while simultaneously allowing instructors the ability to address the concrete realities of globalization and changing student demographics that complicate the traditional classroom dynamic.

The efficacy of these principles—dialogue, practice, and ecology—has been explained by Canagarajah in the recent special issue of *College English* dedicated to translingualism. While it’s true that Canagarajah’s contribution does not deal with undergraduate education but with teacher-training in translingual contexts, the concepts he discusses in the article apply across contexts in writing instruction. As such, these

principles have made their way into my overall teaching philosophy as well as the design of the course at hand. What follows is a discussion of each of these three principles, including how Canagarajah defined them in his piece and the ways in which I've incorporated them into my own teaching. That being said, I reverse Canagarajah's order of these principles in my own teaching philosophy.

Ecology

The principle carrying the most weight in my class was ecology. It was the most helpful in organizing, designing, and implementing a translingual pedagogy because it allows instructors to treat the FYC classroom as rich “with resources that students can turn into ‘affordances’ for learning” (“Translingual” 267). This principle clearly focused my students on tapping into their own experiences with language as meaningful affordances for learning about writing in contact zones. Canagarajah states that “the mix of students and materials from diverse cultures and languages makes the classroom a contact zone” in itself, and “[s]uch a space is extremely valuable for reflections and negotiations on translinguality” (268). The course structure was aided by this focus on helping students harness and leverage their ecological affordances. Furthermore, this principle aided in the development of interactional negotiation strategies. Canagarajah defines such a strategy as “a social activity of co-constructing meaning by adopting reciprocal strategies” dependent on the interlocutors’ ability to “match the language resources they bring with people, situations, objects, and communicative ecologies for meaning-making” (*Translingual* 82). To support the development of these strategies, students were placed in unit groups that served as daily negotiation sessions wherein

students engaged their peers' language resources. As pedagogical tools go, these unit groups may have been the most effective site of practicing translanguality.

Arguably, the principle of ecology explains that teaching writing with a translangual orientation depends on harnessing the ecology afforded to you and that good instruction is not actually about encouraging the production of a particular form. The classroom, from the perspective of a translangualist, is rich with semiotic resources from all over the spectrum, the recruitment and exploitation of which is always bound to individual students as they see fit.

Dialogicality

The second principle, dialogicality, was also fulfilled through my students' participation in unit groups, but the most meaningful dialogue took place in the margins of their papers. Canagarajah affirms that “[a]s the essays of the students are revised in terms of the feedback from peers and the instructor, writers have to consider how to communicate their diverse language resources to those who may not understand them” (“Translingual” 267). The bulk of the dialogical work of teasing out the ways students can communicate their diverse language resources came down to my marginal commentary. This work was aided by Summer Smith, who describes several commentary genres, including Judgment, Reader Response, and Coaching. The most effective of these sub-genres, Coaching, facilitates the development of recontextualization and entextualization skills as described by Canagarajah, who defined these as strategies meant to “frame the text/talk to facilitate and alter the footing to prepare the ground for appropriate negotiation” and “configure codes in the temporal and spatial dimension of the text/talk to facilitate and respond to these negotiations” respectively (*Translingual*

79). Coaching sub-genre commentary allows instructors to “suggest ideas for revision of the current paper, suggest areas for improvement on future papers, or offer assistance to the student” (Smith 258). These comments, characterized by lexical hedges and syntactic structures, question rather than purely evaluate, suggesting a type of framing dialogue in the margins of the paper meant to facilitate revision. In this way, students are encouraged through the questioning and suggesting in the margins to recontextualize their language resources in ways that support uptake in their readers and demonstrate to the instructor and awareness of draft development in different spatiotemporal contexts. The principle of dialogue, then, became an extremely important pillar of my design.

Practice

The final principle, practice, dictates that students should “engage with the course content through their own writing...rather than depending on the usual teacher-fronted and product-oriented” modes of instruction (“Translingual” 267). This practice was accomplished through low-stakes in-class writing. It focused on their individual and collaborative interpretations of texts related to differences in culture, power, and/or language. In my class as well as in Canagarajah’s, students were able to “sharpen their own composing processes, experiment with ways to adopt translinguality in their essays, and critically reflect on their own writing experiences, attitudes, and development” through these actions (267). In no assignment was this set of goals more effectively realized than in the final project, which asked students to revise a paper of their choosing using my commentary and the examples of the four translingual negotiation strategies. In addition, they composed a reflective letter explaining where, how, and why they attempted to adopt a given strategy at a given point in their paper.

Translingual negotiation strategies don't fit nicely into discrete boxes, as they necessarily influence one another. The same must be true of the three principles outlined above. Ecology inspires dialogue, which encourages practice, which in turn inspires ecological affordances. As such, the discussion above was not meant as an exhaustive review of the ways these principles apply and relate.

Guiding Metaphor: Contact Zones

In the beginning, I appropriated Mary Louise Pratt's contact zone metaphor. In "Arts of the Contact Zone," Pratt defines contact zones as "social spaces where cultures meet, clash, and grapple with each other, often in contexts of highly asymmetrical relations of power," which is a useful analogue for the contexts in which translingual acts of communication take place (34). Canagarajah's discussion of the importance of the contact zone metaphor in translingual theory further encouraged me to foreground this idea as it is "a model that allows us to treat translingual practices as constrained by power and yet open to renegotiation" (*Translingual* 29-30). Understanding the translingual orientation to language in contexts of power disparities is central to student understanding of translingualism. The contact zone metaphor became the de facto keystone that unlocked the criticality of my translingual writing pedagogy and helped students characterize and understand relations of difference, culture, and power as these relate to language.

Pratt's contact zone metaphor is not a new concept in composition, as one can trace its roots in English Studies at least back to Pratt's original essay on the arts of the contact zone in 1991. In 1994, Patricia Bizzell picked up Pratt's metaphor in her opinion essay "'Contact Zones' and English Studies," which comments on the propensity to draw

strict lines in English Studies and offers the idea of the contact zone as a way to structure literature courses not around the “essential nature” of pieces but “rather on how they might, not ‘fit’ together exactly, but come into productive dialogue with one another” (165). Bizzell goes on to state that “‘Multiculturalism’ in English studies is the name for our recognition of this condition of living on contested cultural ground, and our desire to represent something of this complexity in our study of literature and literacy” (166). If we are now reimagining multiculturalism as transculturalism and, ergo, multilingualism as translingualism, then this metaphor holds true as a meaningful way to structure our courses in English Studies. The contact zone model, according to Bizzell, “treats difference as an asset, not a liability” (166). As such, I believe the contact zone metaphor allowed more effective framing of readings, class discussions, and writing assignments for the context of globalization.

Course Structure

The four units of this course were structured to scaffold understanding of contact zone encounters in multiple venues, raise language awareness and improve language attitudes and, eventually, inspire students to experiment with translinguality in their essays. The course was broken down into four units—Contact Zone Encounters; Rhetorical Analysis & Production; Visual, Spatial, and Cultural Rhetoric; and New Media—and paired with writing assignments—a literacy narrative, a Quintilian classical argument, an observational essay, and a rewrite of any of the previous papers in the course that accompanied a reflective letter on the students’ employment of the four macro-level translingual negotiation strategies.

That being said, the course structure was not perfect. By the end of week two, substantial changes to the reading and assignment schedule in both amount and intensity were made necessary. Students showed an inability to grasp certain concepts, namely Pratt's contact zone metaphor. As the central metaphor and analytical framework for this course, these students' misunderstanding of the contact zone metaphor was disconcerting to say the least. One could postulate that Pratt's presentation of the metaphor was too dense for my students to understand this early in the course. My students understood the parts that composed the contact zone metaphor. They understood the idea of autoethnography. They further understood the idea that context dictates rhetorical productions, which is, of course, a more erudite expression of their sentiments shared in class. The problem arose when I asked them to apply the metaphor and to ascertain the "so what?" of a literate production of a contact zone. Initially, this circumstance appeared to nullify the work undertaken in this study; it appeared as though I would be unable to continue this study because I was not an apt enough educator to help my students understand the implications of the contact zone metaphor for the course and later in their academic and working lives. However, this was not the case. As Geller et al. remind us, that "meaningful change is next to impossible to see," so we must "press on and embrace a kind of pessimistic pragmatism" because "[s]till, with all of this, we want to, need to, cling to 'idealism'" (11).

In *Literacy as Translingual Practice*, Canagarajah describes the dilemma in which I found myself upon realizing that my students were not prepared to apply critical lenses and discuss topics like contact zones, language ideology, and linguistic prejudice productively. "Among students who lack adequate socialization into multilingual and

contact zones encounters,” like the large majority of those who entered my classroom, “teachers may consider working at the level of attitudinal shifts and language awareness to prepare them for such interactions” like the ones aptly described using the contact zone metaphor (*Translingual* 5). That is to say that the project of teaching writing from a translingualist’s perspective is not the project of merely teaching translingual writing strategies as some formal finished product. Rather, the project involved in teaching writing with a translingual disposition involves moving students from solely monolingual orientations and ideologies to translingual orientations and ideologies. In light of all of this, I amended the reading and writing assignments in my class. Rather than pursue dogmatic adoption of a translingual awareness as the most meaningful outcome of this course, my class became about working to increase language awareness and socializing students into contact zone encounters.

Unit One: Contact Zone Encounters

The first unit, Contact Zone Encounters, was designed to facilitate the rest of the class. The main goals of this unit were, first, to model and complete literacy narratives and, second, to drill the definition and utility of the contact zone metaphor home for my students. These two goals were interrelated in that the literacy narrative and the contact zone metaphor would scaffold the rest of the class and, in turn, begin to activate the ecological affordances my students entered the classroom with.

This unit’s writing assignment was a literacy narrative, the completion of which would require students to introduce a discrete literacy experience from earlier in the student’s life, reflect on the meaning of that experience as it relates to their current levels

of literate development and how this experience has shaped them as writers, and to, finally, use the contact zone metaphor to situate this experience.

From this assignment, my students made it known that they had myriad anxieties about speaking, listening, reading, and writing through these narratives and, furthermore, that they had not considered relationships of power and conflict and how these relationships can affect schooling. However, this was not necessarily the end of the literacy narrative assignment. What these revealed more generally is that most of my students were unaware of the language resources they possessed when entering the classroom. Through the commentary process, these resources were highlighted and presented to the students as strengths to draw on and weaknesses to look out for in their writing processes. For instance, several students indicated that they were always chastised for writing how they might speak, which forced them to overcompensate and make their writing seem turgid and imprecise. The vocality of their language was considered a strength in the context of my classroom, as it constitutes a kind of borrowing from that lexicon that could, with rhetorical attunement, be used productively in their academic writing.

The readings assigned in this unit were arranged to scaffold important negotiations about language attitudes, language contact, and place. For the first full class period, my students read Mary Louis Pratt's "Arts of the Contact Zone." The main points I wanted them to take away from this reading were threefold: the definition of contact zones, the definition of autoethnography according to Pratt, and the core idea of the literate arts coming from contact zones. Of course, this reading was, as mentioned previously, somewhat tough for my students. They could not apply these ideas in any

meaningful way until subsequent class periods when we discussed Charles Krauthammer's "In Plain English: Let's Make it Official" and Gloria Anzaldua's much anthologized piece "How to Tame a Wild Tongue." Anzaldua's piece generated much discussion, particularly over the term "pocho" and Anzaldua's clear status as the foil to Krauthammer's "dual linguistic identity" argument. It was in this class period that my students were able to apply the contact zone metaphor as a spatial tool for analyzing language contact. They came to understand, without the vocabulary, the concept of some literate production (or person's identity, for that matter) emanating from a third, or liminal space, such as the borderlands between the United States and Mexico as an autoethnographic text and, in a way, began to understand on a surface level the translingual negotiation strategy of envoicing, which is the strategy that language users use to encode bits of their identity in their linguistic productions, be they purely in writing, visual art, or spoken.

The next set of readings, naturally, built on these ideas but did so to take on the idea that there is one, singular, Standard American English and that this standard was, somehow, a mark of superior intellect or potential for success. Amy Tan's "Mother Tongue" was extremely effective in inspiring students to challenge the idea of any standard language. Tan's status as a writer that, surprisingly, several of my students knew already, as well as her insistence on using the word "Englishes" rather than, perhaps, "dialects of English" or "styles of English" supported the point that there are, in fact, multiple Englishes. After all, a paid, known writer had said so right there in the second paragraph of her published piece (Tan). More importantly, "Mother Tongue" challenges the idea of deficiency as dictated by the sound and look and feel of one's particular

English. This dovetailed nicely with Min-Zhan Lu’s “From Silence to Words: Writing as Struggle.” Lu’s work was primarily utilized to support discussion about pluralizing student writing and, as the Burkean Parlor quotation in the epigraph of her piece suggests, to help my students “see themselves as responsible for forming or transforming as well as preserving the discourse they are learning” in pursuit of inspiring authority in their writing, regardless of the way their English sounds (Lu). June Jordan’s “Nobody Mean More to Me Than You and the Future Life of Willie Jordan” served an interesting and related purpose as well. Although this piece was assigned mostly to set up later discussions about African American Vernacular English or, as Geneva Smitherman and Sami Alim would call it, Black English, Jordan’s way of writing Black English became the central point my students decided to focus on (Smitherman and Alim). This contrasted with the style of Malcolm X’s literacy narrative, “Learning to Read,” leading us to discussions of how one masks or foregrounds one’s identity in writing depending on who needs to hear you, so to speak, and the effects of true literacy development beyond the style of literacy they learned throughout their school lives. Finally, Santiago Vacquera-Vasquez’ “Confessions of a Mercacirce,” an extreme example of the practice of code-meshing, drives home the idea that identity and language are inextricably linked and, through Vacquera-Vazquez’ passionate, erudite writing on the idea of the unapologetic, unrepentant border crosser, further elaborated the relationships between language attitudes, language contact, and place.

Unit Two: Rhetorical Analysis & Production

Admittedly, this unit does more to accomplish the goals set out in the Texas State First-Year English curriculum than it does to focus on translingualism and language

attitudes. However, this unit was also useful in explaining, through the lens of contact zones, the development of Standard Written English. Class discussion at the beginning of this unit was organized around and predicated on characterizing the relations of difference in power, culture, and language that gave rise to the so-called standard form of English these students were expected to reproduce throughout high school and, regrettably, may be required to reproduce in the next years of their college career.

The core writing assignment for this unit was a Quintilian style of argumentative paper. However, this paper was slightly different than these students expected. Students were asked to decide on a controversial topic of interest, controversial here meaning that the topics have stakeholders on either side of the related issue, not that these are *divisive* issues such as gay marriage, gun control, abortion, or drug legalization. In fact, these topics were expressly forbidden for this topic so as to minimize the use of unfair and unproductive emotional appeals and arguments predicated on belief and only belief. These essays were meant to teach students to recontextualize the classical invention and arrangement styles of Quintilian, recontextualization being the translingual negotiation strategy whereby interlocutors frame communicative acts in ways appropriate to the set and setting of an interaction in order to facilitate uptake. These essays, however, took recontextualization to a different place in that they required students to bring their language to a set form that was clearly “other” to these students and, thus, complicate the look and feel of academic writing in the modern university. They were encouraged to write their first drafts in ways that showcase their vocal register and then, for better or worse, translate that vocal piece of writing into their approximation of an academic code.

What these assignments revealed was the great power disparity between those who grew up using dialects or Englishes that are closer the assumed Standard American English and those who grew up in, for instance, households with parents who did not speak English. Many productive discussions in class arose from this type of language contact and supported the productive ecology and dialogue that was possible in my classroom after this power disparity was revealed. Whereas the majority of the work in the first unit was done on paper, in word processing software, and in the margins of student essays, the second unit was discussion-centric.

Beyond that, this unit had a secondary goal. In accordance with the Texas State curriculum, I focused on developing familiarity with native English speaker/writer norms in the university setting. Some of these norms were related to grammar and syntax in Standard Written English. Others were emphasized as formal norms and parts of the Academic English that many professors will expect of them. Others still related to classical invention, arrangement, and style in modern contexts. Essentially, this unit became one about translating form. These classical, normative, formal materials were not taught uncritically; in the discussions had during this unit, all of these formal hallmarks were discussed not as simply things as they are. Through the contact zone metaphor, these formal aspects of college writing were examined as not value-neutral but value-laden, and students were encouraged to interrogate where these norms come from.

Unit Three: Visual, Spatial, and Cultural Rhetoric

Where the first two units of my class focused primarily on linguistic productions in certain contact zones, this unit centered on several different types of compositions, including visual art, architecture, physical space, music, and performance art, that arise

from the generative conflict that takes place in contact zones. By this point in the semester, my students were ready to discuss contact zone encounters productively, providing answers to those aforementioned “so what?” questions and ready to apply the contact zone metaphor to ascertain relations of power and difference in context. As such, this unit was organized around readings that would allow us to discuss complex literate productions as well as, more importantly, help students learn to observe and characterize situations with power disparities, differences in culture, race, and/or language, and other circumstances to make sense of semiotic productions.

The writing assignment associated with this unit is best described as an observation report. Students were instructed to go, figuratively or literally, to a space that they felt they could characterize as a contact zone and then to describe certain features of the space in relation to certain parts of the metaphor. They were asked to compassionately characterize the actors in the situation, the power disparities experienced, and, pivotally, the “so what?” of this observation. This assignment generated commentary on topics ranging from religion to gender to race and social capital. However, fewer of my students than I would have liked actually did focus on purely linguistic interactions. Many did elect to focus their efforts on the social, cultural interactions implied in their observations, leaving the linguistic or semiotic interactions as afterthoughts. That being said, these papers did drive home the ideas about language we had discussed earlier by drawing their attention to interactional negotiation strategies, which focus the languager on how interactions develop. These firsthand accounts were, so to speak, proto-translingual descriptions of semiotic interactions bound by space and

time, which students were only able to characterize through their appropriation of the contact zone metaphor.

In order to facilitate these projects, readings were selected and scaffolded after David Foster Wallace's "Consider the Lobster." While it's true that this example does not deal with language difference at all, it's also true that the type of observation in Wallace's work is similar to the type that can be most effectively described by the contact zone metaphor. Besides the obvious power disparity between the human and the lobster, which is complicated by the lobster's inability to actually make literate productions—unless one is willing to consider the whistling noises and shaking pots in lobster kitchens as literate productions—there is also an ethical consideration ascertained through his observation of the display of the Main Lobster Festival; this is a good example of the type of ethical questioning I had hoped my students would come to through their own observational essays. Additionally, students tend to respond well to Wallace's observational style, I believe, because he was so good at folding contextual signposts into his important points.

After two days spent on Wallace, the topic of gender and the medium of visual art became our focus. Again focusing on the interactional negotiation strategies, my students read John Berger's "Ways of Seeing" to first gain perspective on gender in art and the politics of The Gaze. Then, they read Richard Leppert's "The Female Nude: Surfaces of Desire" in order to complicate that understanding and to aid in the uptake of information about how people in context change, appropriate, and amalgamate certain literate arts of the contact zone for their own purposes and in previously unheard of ways. Leppert's discussion of the 1970s feminist movement's appropriation of the gaze and refashioning of Berger's commentary is a good example of this. After gender had been discussed, we

moved on to spatial rhetorics, namely the physical arrangement of space as composition in Mike Davis' "Fortress Los Angeles: The Militarization of Public Space" and an excerpt from Eva Sperling Cockcroft and Holly Barnet-Sanchez' "Signs from the Heart: California Chicano Murals." These two pieces served to extend the discussion from our gender out to wider circles of literate productions. Furthermore, these two pieces cemented the idea of the "literate arts of the contact zone" from Pratt's article. My students finally came to understand the idea of art generated out of cultural contact that creates new, hybridized forms of communication by observing the mural art of Los Angeles in the context of Davis' discussion on the arrangement of public space as a deterrent for certain cultures. They saw the populations in Los Angeles from different socioeconomic backgrounds, races, cultures, nationalities, etc., rubbing up against other populations and these murals popping up along the fault lines.

Next, as my students had come to understand hybrid grammars and generative semiotic conflict, the focus of the course was turned toward composition in relation to other cultures, authenticities, and histories. These conversations were facilitated by the pairing of Douglas Haddow's "Hipster: The Dead End of Western Civilization" and Bikari Kitwana's "Rap and the Cotton Club," as well as rapper Common's "The Corner," featuring The Last Poets. This pairing amalgamated the inauthenticity of the hipster, the terminally cool black pop culture creator who is always in search of new literate forms of authenticity, and the conscious street poet. This also facilitated productive discussions about borrowing from the lexicon of Black English, or African American Vernacular English, characteristic of youth culture, and further drove home the earlier points I made in class about register and vocality. Although, I feel that my students started slightly

checking out by this point and did not get as much out of their listening to the multimodal composition of Common's "The Corner." Finally, this unit was wrapped up with purely visual compositions in photographs and appropriation art, including photography by Coco Fusco, Guillermo Gomez-Pena and La Pocha Nostra; Samuel Fosso; and Wang Qingsong. This was an important part of the unit and the course overall because, finally, they could see a physical representation of the conflicts between cultures in a rapidly globalizing world, which allowed us to have conversations about globalization and cultural imperialism. These conversations were accented by the *Codex Espangliensis* by La Pocha Nostra and excerpts from Cruz Medina's *Reclaiming Poch@ Pop* (Medina).

Unit Four: New Media

The fourth and final unit encouraged students to think about the contact zone metaphor and the linguistic interactions within these zones as not specifically bound by a physical space, although bound within a *space* broadly construed. The readings in this unit focus on *Reading Culture*'s discussion of multimodality as a translingual composition (employing multiple modes is considered a translingual production) and the way that new media may be affecting interlocutors' uptake of and within semiotic interactions. Andrew Lam's "I Tweet, Therefore I Am," excerpts from Gunther Kress' "Literacy in the New Media Age," Sherry Turkle's "Always On," and Alison Gopnik's "Diagnosing the Digital Revolution: Why It's So Hard to Tell Whether It's Really Changing Us," respectively, allowed us to discuss the ways semiotic technologies change our lives, speculation about the future of literacy when students start their real lives, the perils of digital contact zones, and the effect of prolonged participation in these spaces. However, these were not the ends of this unit, and these readings were selected more to

cover the area of digital contact zones rather than to support any significant work within these spaces. Rather, this unit was geared at imparting some confidence in my students to pluralize their world, be that world based more in their academic or social lives.

The main purpose of this unit was to serve as a venue for the fifth and final writing assignment in the course. This unit contained our first real, explicit conversation about translingualism and the translingual negotiation strategies they'd been learning and using unconsciously throughout the semester. This included watching Suresh Canagarajah's interviews with Shakil Rabbi from Penn State University, wherein he describes translingualism and its utility in the college composition classroom, as well as a guided revision activity that defined the individual negotiation strategies, linked them to their respective activities in the class, and allowed my students to incorporate them into a paper of their choosing. This activity encouraged my students to think about the strategies—envoicing, recontextualization, interaction, and entextualization—as moves we all make in communication and as moves that, when applied with some rhetorical attunement, could be effective composition strategies.

While this activity was important and did work, I would rewrite it given the chance. In this assignment, students were asked to identify one place in their essays for every negotiation strategy, to deploy a revision in those spaces that incorporated one of the strategies in each space, and then to reflect on what is gained or lost and the rhetorical reasons related to audience, voice, identity, etc., in those spaces. While this did succeed, I believe I expected a bit too much of them in this situation, given that it had taken them roughly half the semester to learn how to productively apply the contact zone metaphor and to actually discuss language contact.

I believe this activity was a success, as it finally resulted in some kind of metacognitive awareness of language use and what it means to be a languager in context, with his or her own voice, identity, and set of semiotic resources. The results of this writing assignment were not as precise as I might have liked. Some students were reluctant to experiment with any kind of borrowing from any other register and only two students out of 39 decided to turn in a product that featured any code other than English. Some demonstrated an ability to borrow from vocal lexicons, but none did this in a way that suggested the student wanted to encode anything in particular in those places other than their desire maintain the cooperative principle. Overall, my experience with this assignment was positive in that it established a baseline familiarity with the kinds of communicative acts that translinguals use in navigating very diverse discourse.

Conclusion

Throughout this class, students were challenged to engage with and address big ideas about identity, culture, language, and power through the principles of practice, dialogue, and ecology, and through a course design that emphasized collaboration, negotiation, and critical reflection on language practices. Through the organizational metaphor of contact zones, my students were able to more closely and productively examine semiotic and cultural conflict in the first place. Their levels of critical engagement steadily increased unit-by-unit as we discussed place and language, the origins and appropriate applications of Standard American English, visual, spatial, and cultural rhetorics that are characteristic of literate arts developing out of contact zones, and the digital contact zones quickly overtaking modern life. Although the course design did prove slightly too ambitious in that it originally was meant to inspire a translingual

competence and awareness, the goalposts were easily moved and goals amended to reflect my students' levels of preparedness to engage with and in multilingual and contact zone encounters. The effectiveness of such a pedagogy could be measured through textual analysis of student compositions. However, as a substitute for that, I've decided to focus on my students' ideologies and perspectives on culture, language, and power, specifically, how these changed over time. In accordance with this goal, the following chapter will recount a survey-based study undertaken with the purpose of triangulating results from this course.

IV. ATTITUDINAL SHIFTS: QUANTIFYING THE WORK OF TEACHING (AND LEARNING) WITH A TRANSLINGUAL DISPOSITION

Although the outcomes of this class could be observed in the quality and content of the papers my students produced, I felt that measuring the successes and failures of the class would require a mixed-methods approach involving a two-part survey study and a heuristic textual analysis that would yield results indicative of my students' movement along the spectrum from monolingual ideology to translingual disposition. My students did frequently write on issues related to language and cultural contact, which did demonstrate at least a burgeoning awareness of generative conflict as well as the requisite level of rhetorical attunement involved in producing pluralized academic texts over time. Those who could use different codes did so when given the opportunity. Those who could not or did not feel comfortable switching codes, strictly defined, experimented with a kind of borrowing from their vocal lexicon in their papers that represented at least an attempt at shifting register. Did my course design to undertake translingual writing? No. However, it did expose them to the reality of translingualism through modeling and examples, and it did prepare them for encounters in multilingual contexts such as the Southwest. Broadly, I believe these results indicate that my students succeeded in at least beginning to come to a translingual awareness. However, Institutional Review Board approval was not obtained, so my students' textual productions cannot be elaborated here.

That being said, the survey component does indicate some positive change in my students' language attitudes. There is one clear question associated with this survey: was there any measurable change in how my students view, interact with, and understand language? This study does indicate that my students as a group at least took the pivotal

first step along the spectrum from monolingual to translingual. Canagarajah reminds us that, “[a]mong students who lack adequate socialization into multilingual and contact zones encounters,” like the majority of my students, “teachers may consider working at the level of attitudinal shifts and language awareness to prepare them for such interactions” (*Translingual* 5). In light of this, the before and after shot of my students provided by this survey study demonstrates shifts in language attitudes and awareness.

Study Design and Rationale

The survey study described here was designed in response to a need to triangulate and ground my discussion of results in my students’ own words and experiences. As such, it required a longitudinal structure involving two five-question surveys administered at two times throughout the semester, a shared artifact, and a quantifiable method of analysis. In short, this study records changes in language awareness and attitudes over time by obtaining student responses and reactions to a Coca Cola commercial from 2014 that garnered criticism online and in the media.

The shared artifact viewed prior to each survey is a one-minute Coca Cola commercial entitled “It’s Beautiful” in which “America the Beautiful” is sung in seven different languages, including English, Spanish, Keres, Tagalog, Hindi, Senegalese French, and Hebrew. As one may expect, this commercial was received harshly at the time and has continued to attract the attention of those beholden to monolingualist ideologies. According to TIME Magazine, this commercial “showed us a panoply of American faces, young, old, brown, white, straight, gay (it included what are said to be the first gay parents depicted in a Super Bowl ad), in cowboy hats and hijabs, playing, eating, and exploring all-American vistas” (TIME). Coca Cola released a statement on

this advertisement in August 2016 in response to a renewed backlash regarding its decision to run the ad again during the 2016 Rio Olympics. Coca Cola affirms that the commercial “celebrates Coca-Cola moments among all Americans and features snapshots of American families living as many and standing as one” and that the company believes “it’s a powerful ad that promotes optimism, inclusion and celebrates humanity – values that are core to Coca-Cola” (Coca Cola). Due to the cultural contact played out in the juxtaposition of these languages in the commercial, I felt that the ad would elicit a powerful response from my students, bringing their deeper feelings about language and culture forward before the surveys.

The study was structured, as previously stated, in two parts. The five-question survey was administered on two strategic dates, on August 29th and December 7th, in two classes for a total of four different sets of surveys. These administrations were made in the same classroom, under similar circumstances, and with minimal prompting as to the length or content of the responses. The following questions comprised the survey:

1. What does this video mean to you?
2. Should this video be considered offensive? Why or why not?
3. Is the idea behind this video threatening? Why or why not?
4. Do you or would you like to speak another language? Why or why not?
5. Describe a time when you’ve had to communicate with a non-native English speaker.

Each of these questions approaches a different facet of language ideology and awareness.

The first question—“what does this video mean to you?”—is meant to obtain my students’ raw language attitudes. This question should reveal, in light of the shared artifact, students’ preparedness to discuss complex issues related to language, culture, and power when they came into the class. The second question—“should this video be considered offensive?”—was designed to identify any relationship between the way my

students talked about the commercial and the way the commercial was received on the internet and in the media. The third question—“is the idea behind this video threatening?”—ascertains similar information but with the added wrinkle that respondents had to identify, tacitly, what they thought the idea behind the commercial was as well contend with the abrasive term “threatening.”

The fourth and fifth questions seek broader information on second-language acquisition and the non-native English speaker. The fourth question had, on top of revealing which of my students were bilingual, the added benefit of making known how my students felt about learning languages themselves and their reasons why. Question five, which is more of a prompt, required my students to define “non-native English speaker,” describe their experiences with such a speaker, and to focus on how they communicated with such a speaker.

The structure of the study yielded largely subjective results, requiring a more objective method of analysis that focused on quantifying textual features. This method stems from Bennett’s work in cultural relativism, particularly in his contribution to R. Michael Paige’s *Education for the Intercultural Experience*. Bennett’s chapter, entitled “Towards Ethnorelativism: A developmental model of intercultural sensitivity,” provides the primary mode of analysis that I’ve adopted in this project. Bennett’s model of cultural competency places people on a six-point, two-sided scale that ranges from ethnocentric to ethnorelative (Bennett, M.J. *Towards Ethnorelativism*). I simply made a few modifications to the spectrum of points on the way between ethnocentric and ethnorelative. The purpose of Bennett’s model is to measure cultural competence, which is the process by which people learn to value and respond respectfully to people of all

cultures. The six points on the scale from least desirable to most desirable are denial, defense, minimization, acceptance, adaptation, and integration. Denial is as it sounds: students in the denial range deny that cultural differences exist. Defense is characterized as acknowledgement of but feeling threatened by cultural difference. The minimization level, as these are relatively intuitive categories, is characterized by minimization of cultural difference in pursuit of protecting one's own cultural identity. The acceptance stage means recognizing and valuing cultural differences without judging them a positive or negative. The adaptation stage is characterized as adapting behavior to cultural difference and operating successfully within another culture. The sixth and final stage, the integration stage, means being able to interact comfortably with a variety of cultures and integrating cultural awareness into everyday interactions.

Even though language and culture are intimately related, this model needed to be adapted to address language difference more specifically. The first change made was in the number of stages. Denial of language difference is not something that anyone can really argue. So, denial was dropped from my revised model, leaving defense, minimization, acceptance, adaptation, and integration. The next challenge was in characterizing each of these stages. Bennett provided three defense strategies that create an "us/them" binary for their users: denigration, superiority, and reversal. If a survey response denigrates other languages, asserts the superiority of his or her own language, or reverses their language ideology by adopting another language solely, then that survey respondent falls into the defense stage. The minimization stage is also relatively simple to identify. In the minimization stage, language difference will often be trivialized or romanticized, resulting in physical or transcendental universalism. These conditions

could be manifest in statements like “we’re all language-using animals” and about a common universal morality regardless of the language in which it is expressed.

The second change made was in the grouping of ethnocentric vs. ethnorelative or, in my terms, lingua-centric vs. lingua-relative. Because there were six stages in the original model but this study only utilizes five, there is no longer a strict three stage vs. three stage dichotomy. With five, the acceptance stage must be placed in the middle. This implies that acceptance is the middleground between focusing too much on the negative aspects of language difference and too little on the positive aspects. Acceptance, then, is the least one can hope for in terms of placing these students after their first survey responses. The acceptance stage is characterized, as one might expect, as respect for and acknowledgment of all language difference. The linguarerelative side of the scale begins with adaptation, which is characterized by empathy and pluralism. Responses that fall into the adaptation category would center around intercultural communication skills and the ability to adapt to language difference by using hybrid grammars including gesturing, facial expressions, and minimal verbal communication. These responses would also indicate a level of understanding that difference is always situated within a particular cultural context and that the responder has internalized more than one worldview.

The fifth and final stage on the lingua-relative side, integration, is a little tricky. The only fully integrated responder can be a bi- or multilingual student who is able to consciously move back and forth between and among languages and registers. These responses would treat language difference as a matter of choice. These responses could also indicate that the responder’s identity is not primarily based on any one language or culture.

The Initial Survey Response

The initial response to the survey, which was administered on August 29th, revealed a class culture that fit into the minimization stage of the modified Bennett DMIS scale. Although many students did give responses that suggested that these individuals fit into the acceptance stage and even the adaptation stage, the majority of respondents gave answers that incorporated themes of physical or transcendental universalism, indicating an overall class culture aptly placed in the minimization stage. The results of these initial responses to this video are reported below.

Question One

Student responses to the first question on the survey—“What does this video mean to you?”—are the most explicit indicators of a kind of physical or transcendent universalism inherent in the minimization stage of the modified Bennett DMIS scale. This stage is characterized as a condition of assuming that at an essential level people share certain characteristics. While this can be true to a point, the responses to this question try to make language difference a non-issue, so to speak. The best lexical and syntactic indicator of this physical or transcendent universalism is the recurring theme of unity. Of course, not every mention of unity corresponds to a flattening of difference and turning away from embracing difference; responses that reject homogenization and flattening of different would actually fit into the acceptance stage of the modified DMIS. Consider these sample responses that each show features of the minimization and acceptance stages, respectively, under a type of unity.

“This video shows that we are united as a nation and that is very important.”
“I feel like the Coke company was trying to say that no matter where we come from we can be American. And just because we are different those differences prove we are the same because we are different.”

In the first response, the student somewhat pays lip service to the idea of unity under Americanism. This response posits that Americans are united, which is only true if one considers the broadest of labels, such as “a nation,” and doesn’t acknowledge difference at all. The second response makes a similar move but with a critical variance. The second respondent makes a similar statement by claiming that “no matter where we come from we can be American.” This seems somewhat saccharine and, furthermore, indicates the physical universalism of homogenization under the label of “American.” However, the second line of this response indicates the acceptance stage in that it acknowledges the reality that the only thing Americans and really any human has in common with another at an essential level is that they are different. In *varietate unitas; e pluribus unum*. This response somewhat straddles the line between minimization and acceptance, but, because of the mention of difference and the respondent’s failure to try to collapse difference in the second line, this response is better placed in the acceptance stage. All of this being said, the majority of responses that mention unity or similarity and difference did so in ways that indicated a flattening of difference rather than an embrace of difference-as-similarity.

Question Two

13 out of 40 responses to the second question—“Should this video be considered offensive?”—generated what I believe to be the most important and intriguing theme evident in this survey data. Consider these two responses that don’t necessarily fall into one of the discrete modified DMIS stages. The first of these responses represents a more gruff, to-the-point way to express that the respondent can understand and identify with

someone who might be offended by language difference. The second response does the same thing, but in a more compassionate way.

“I do not think this video should be considered offensive, although I am sure it could be perceived by others as very offensive. This would be due to the various cultures shown all singing an American song.”

“[The video is] not offensive but a little disrespectful that it was not in English. When showing pride or allegiance (sic) to a country you should adhere (sic) to that country’s ways.”

The first response demonstrates purely the empathy mentioned above. The respondent him or herself does not believe the video “should be considered offensive.” However, this respondent could see why others may find the language contact in the video “very offensive.” This was attributed by the respondent to the fact that there were “various cultures shown all singing an ‘American song.’” Unfortunately, it isn’t possible to ascertain if the respondent’s core ideas about the so-called “American song,” but it is an important indicator of empathy and understanding of those who believe “America the Beautiful” is meant to be sung in English. The second response builds on this empathetic response in the first featured response. This student found it “disrespectful” that the commercial was not all in English. The important information appears in the second line. The respondent links “pride” and “allegence” (sic) to the “country’s ways,” which indicates an understanding that the official language of the United States is English. This student found it disrespectful that these Americans, who are in fact Americans, use their heritage languages to sing their praise of the United States. This indicates some of the denigration of other languages and cultures inherent in the defense stage of the modified DMIS. The first response, however, simply demonstrates some type of empathy for those who *could* be offended due to this unexpected language contact.

There was another major theme present in the responses that indicated these responses' placement in the minimization stage: unity. Respondents continually referred to, as mentioned in the above discussion of the responses to the first question, ideas of unity, similarity, and diversity, but did so in ways that relegated individualism to Americanism. 15 of the 40 first responses referenced some kind of unity and universalism through that unity under the title of "American." Another indicator of these responses' placement in the minimization stage is that several of these responses othered the singers featured in the video by positing that they were not American. These respondents understood these singers to be non-American, the imagined "us vs. them" dichotomy.

Question Three

The answers to the third question were slightly different, yet indicated most of the same features of the answers to the first and second survey questions. This third question—"Should the idea behind this video be considered offensive? Why or why not?"—had the sole purpose of signaling whether any of my students entered the classroom already threatened by language difference. Zero out of 40 total responses indicated that the respondent would themselves feel threatened by this type of language contact or this video specifically. This demonstrates the fact that none of my students' responses deserved to be placed in the defense stage of the modified DMIS.

A few responses were interesting in that they illustrated the same empathy for someone who could feel threatened by this video and language contact in general. Some even went so far as to speculate that people from other countries may be offended to hear people using their heritage language to sing a distinctly American tune. One student remarks that the video isn't threatening from an American standpoint, but that a person

from another country may be offended or threatened by the video. Although the majority of responses did not mention this idea, some respondents empathized with those who would feel threatened on the same basis that those from other countries may be offended: “America the Beautiful” is a distinctly American song. From the responses to this question, regardless of how broad and diverse the respondents’ opinions and speculations were, one cannot in confidence place these students into the defense stage, effectively eliminating the need to consider this stage as a part of the modified DMIS scale.

Questions Four and Five

The initial responses to questions four and five were a study in inconsistency and misunderstanding. In the responses to the fourth question—“Do you or would you like to speak another language? Why or why not?”—it was revealed that all of the students who were not bilingual would like to be for various reasons. In the response to the fifth question—“Describe a time when you’ve had to communicate with a non-native English speaker.”—it was revealed that the respondents did not have a good grasp on the idea of the non-native English speaker.

Six out of 40 total responses to question four indicated at least bilingual ability, while a lone respondent claimed to be trilingual in English, Mandarin, and French. These responses were clear standouts next to the one student who identified Latin as his preferred second language, so that he or she could “speak more English.” While this was a slightly troubling response, it is heartening to find that the other 33 responses to question four stated at least a passing interest in learning a language for myriad reasons. Some stated that bilingualism helps with jobs; others claimed to be interested in learning a language other than English to open up potential friendships. Others still stated that

they would like to learn a language in addition to English in order to be more open to other cultures. All things considered, this question did not reveal much about where to place these respondents on the modified DMIS scale. However, it did reveal that students do want the added benefits of bilingualism. This may seem like it goes without saying. But the real utility in this question can be inferred when considered in light of the responses to the fifth question.

The fifth question, which is actually more of a prompt—“Describe a time when you’ve had to communicate with a non-native English speaker.”—indicated an understanding of non-native English speakers as deficient. These responses spoke to a misunderstanding about what is meant by “non-native English speaker.” The great majority of these actually didn’t refer to non-native English speakers at all; the respondents actually wrote about non-English speakers. This is revealing of the respondents’ attitudes about English proficiency and fluency. Most of these responses recounted memories of working in retail, traveling to other countries, and, in the case of Hispanic respondents, family events where most of the family members don’t speak English. These were revealing responses for what they demonstrated about fluency and how they view the process of learning a language in addition to one’s “native” language. These responses clearly indicated frustration with the idea of a language barrier. Only 8 out of 40 responses indicated a willingness and/or ability to adopt a translingual grammar, involving gestures, facial expressions, or basic adoption of lexical features of other languages, when one needs to communicate with a speaker of another language.

Discussion

These answers complicate ideas about language learning in that these respondents stated that they believe learning a language other than English would be an additive process both for them and for the other speakers of that language whom they encounter and would be able to more clearly communicate with. However, many of them also indicated a deep-level misunderstanding about speakers of other languages and non-fluent speakers of English (if they reference non-native English speakers at all). What is evident here is that they define speakers of languages by their level of fluency almost across the board. The ones who did not appear to hold these views, or at least express the views in their responses, were bilingual students who frequently responded to the fifth survey question with stories about interacting with their family members who were more fluent in languages other than English.

In isolation, these initial responses don't mean anything. The results of this first survey work out to suggest that the respondents should be placed in the minimization stage due to the frequency with which the responses indicate a physical or transcendental universalism among languages and cultures. In order to demonstrate any change over time, the following section will examine the responses to the second survey and discuss how the same themes do or do not appear.

The Second Responses

The follow-up survey, completed on December 14th, did indicate some positive change, as the responses demonstrated that many more of the respondents than before did fall into the acceptance stage. However, there was one flaw in the way the second survey was carried out. Due to time constraints, the respondents had much less time to complete the survey. This is evident in the brevity of the responses. Whereas in the first set of

survey responses there was an average of three to four lines per response, the second set was much sparser, with most responses, especially to the first three questions, taking place in one line. One could interpret this to mean that the data was corrupted by improper administration. However, the brevity of these responses could be interpreted alternatively.

Question One

The responses to the first survey question in the second survey were quite different in comparison to the responses from the first set of responses. There was a marked change in the level of unity and diversity references that did not subsume people under the label “American” and flatten the differences between people of different heritages. As is apt to happen over the course of a semester, through drops and what one might call fatigue, there were 10 fewer responses in the second set of survey responses. Of 30 total responses to the first survey questions, 24 respondents made some reference to unity, diversity, and cultural difference in ways that suggested not that they were looking to flatten difference but, rather, they intended to revel in difference. For example, one student, who probably gave the most thoughtful answer in this set of responses, wrote that this video means “America is a diverse land” and that the video “shows we aren’t just white people and we should have [America the Beautiful] sung in different languages” because “its just how America is.” Another student made reference to the old standby comments about America being a nation of immigrants and that we should embrace this fact.

Admittedly, this set of answers to the first question is encouraging in that it shows great improvement in understanding the actual idea behind the video and, to my mind,

shows greater engagement with the actual content of the video, language contact, and the multicultural project of the United States.

Question Two

The second set of responses to survey question two indicated, broadly, embrace of the same types of unity signaling as in the responses to the first question. Importantly, however, these responses did not, as in the first set of responses, tend to flatten difference. These responses were overwhelmingly positive and almost always began with a negative assertion, such as an emphatic “no,” followed by an affirmative phrase. The more important responses, though, are related to the empathetic qualification that was done. Out of 30 total responses, only three respondents indicated that they could empathize with someone who would be offended by the language contact illustrated in the video or otherwise understand why someone would be offended by this type of contact. In addition, two other respondents stated that they could understand why someone from outside the United States could be offended by videos like this one because, in one student’s words, “some might see it as imperialistic, a way of saying America influences everyone, whether in another country” or not. Another respondent echoed this response, stating that he or she could see why someone from a culture different from his or her own would be offended by the video “because not all cultures praise and worship America how the video makes it seem.” While these are, probably, overreactions to a misunderstanding of what the video is about, these may indicate small scale othering of these singers based on their different languages. In other words, these two students seem to be the only ones who truly understood the speakers to be non-American.

Question Three

The second set of responses to the third survey question, much the same as the responses to question two, featured a greater emphasis on themes unity. Although, these answers were more emphatic than the answers to the second question. Most of these begin with a “no” and continue to assert some kind of universalism. Regrettably, these responses did suggest more of the physical and transcendent universalism than the responses to the second question. Consider the following responses from students that, respectfully, would be placed in the minimization and acceptance stages.

“No. In times of fear we all need to know that we all make one culture.”

“No, how is it threatening to have a different culture?”

The first response posits a physical and universal transcendental value to being American and being subsumed under that one culture. This is evident by the apparent alarmism and “safety in numbers” type of argument made here. The second response, however, indicates through questioning that they emphasize difference in these interactions. In addition, this respondent actively questions why someone would feel threatened, indicating that this respondent would find it hard to understand, or empathize with, someone who did feel threatened. In these responses, one can find only two instances of respondents empathizing with someone who would feel threatened by this video or the subject of the video.

Questions Four and Five

Finally, the responses to questions four and five showed no overall change. Students still indicated, across the board, at least a passing interest in learning a language in addition to English. As for question five, there was no change in the way that students conceptualized and defined non-native English speakers, aside from the brevity of these

responses. Many respondents even recounted the same stories that they had in the first set of survey responses.

Analysis and Discussion

Now that the survey results have been laid out, these need to be analyzed more closely and discussed so as to reveal any movement out of the minimization stage in which the first set of responses fell. With subjective analyses like this one, it's important to bear in mind that the spirit of the words written is important. As such, the analysis that follows takes both liberties and pains in order to carefully explain any overall change in language attitudes and awareness. Preliminarily, it appears that this course could be called an early success in a few ways.

Overall, though it is still mostly passive, the second set of responses indicates an acceptance of language difference, meaning that these student responses could mostly be placed in the middle of the lingua-centric/lingua-relative scale adapted from Bennett's scale. Of the 25 positive, though brief, sets of responses, one can see that these respondents indicated at least a deeper understanding of language and culture and some positive change in the way they conceptualize language rights and linguistic prejudice after the course concluded. The five remaining responses, which indicated a more negative relative response, did not in fact denigrate cultures or language or exalt one's own in relation to another culture or language. As a result, these five responses were placed in the minimization stage, as they often indicated some sort of universalism among people that trivialized linguistic and cultural difference.

At best, through misunderstanding the purpose of the video or through plain combative ignorance, these responses indicate their respondents' membership in the

minimization stage. These respondents were not effectively reached by my translingual writing pedagogy and, as a result, they were not advanced into the acceptance stage of the scale. One could speculate as to the reasons behind their unwillingness to engage in several ways. One such reason could be, simply, that they were tired of talking about language ideology and language awareness at the end of the semester. However, that would be slightly easy, if not a little lazy. A better explanation may have to do with the culture from which they came—the geographic location of their home town, their family's life and prejudices, or perhaps their socialization with people of different cultures as children and throughout adolescence—and how those processes and prejudices experienced throughout their lives might have affected their development throughout the class. One cannot accurately determine through the data obtained during this study what, exactly, might have caused their unwillingness to engage critically with these ideas and the content provided throughout the course. In that regard, this study was unsuccessful.

The more positive responses, however, are quite heartening and, in my opinion, indicate an overall improvement in the group language ideology and awareness of language difference and contact as these relate to culture in, at least, the United States of America. Overall, I believe that the survey response in combination with the improvement of writing assignment products at the end of the class indicate that the translingual orientation of my writing pedagogy may have had a somewhat significant effect on the development of these more favorable, conscious, critical survey responses, as well as a something of a proto-translingual awareness of language.

V. CONCLUSION: IMPLICATIONS FOR TRANSLINGUAL THEORY IN THE HSI COMPOSITION CLASSROOM

For all of the research and intellectual labor that went into this pedagogical project, it is peculiar that the most interesting finding that, to my mind, definitely bears further exploration in subsequent research is the decrease in empathy signaled in my students' second set of survey responses. Of course, I would like to say that the most significant part of this study was the translingual product of pluralized student academic writing; these products were important although not as important as the empathy findings. The course was not strictly successful in creating a particularly translingual product. The decrease in the empathetic responses could, nonetheless, indicate a new intersection in the theories of translingualism, empathy, and first-year composition instruction. This condition raises an ethical question: is it okay to support the resistance of empathy in students? A related question might pertain to the other binary value related to empathy: justice. How do we cultivate a capacity for justice in students, rather than empathy, without risking indictment of translingual pedagogies?

In the first set of responses, respondents empathized with those who may be offended by language difference. The second set seems to imply the inverse. The second set of responses indicates a search for justice for language users, rather than empathy for them from the outside looking in, which suggests a new unwillingness to allow their language ideologies to lapse into systems that make non-English speakers, or at least non-native English speakers, into Others. Some may suggest that, due to this reversal of my students' stances, I as the teacher may have perniciously influenced the formation of new prejudices against the home groups of my students.

The Next Steps

A few questions for further research in this field should, at least in part, speak to this reallocation of empathy. Is it okay to knowingly support decreasing empathy? In a translingual context, who is it that deserves our empathy? And how can we do this work in ways that support the development of empathy with and for translinguals? Is empathy even the word to use in this context? Preliminarily, C. Daniel Batson's *Altruism in Humans* can provide a framework for understanding this empathy issue as it relates to the ethical implications for translingual writing instructors. It's possible that the "empathy-altruism hypothesis" could complicate the relationship between increasing translingual awareness and decreasing empathy for those ethnocentric groups the respondents in my study appeared to, at least in a superficial way, identify with at the outset of the course. Batson's hypothesis states that empathy can essentially produce altruism in humans, which makes humans want to help those groups with which they empathize (Batson). The empathy demonstrated in the initial responses could be an indicator of these respondents' subconscious desire to help and remain intertwined with and intimately related to those ethnocentric groups they seem to have parted with throughout the class. They may have thought that not showing this empathy for these groups would mark them as, somehow, a traitor. Paul Bloom's *Against Empathy* might also have implications for translingual writing instruction in that Bloom's stance might complicate the empathy/sympathy binary and pose a sense of justice as a target value for instructors and students in translingual contexts. Bloom states that certain actions, perhaps those by educators and administrators forwarding and perpetuating monolingual perspectives on language instructor, "impose costs on real people in the here and now...so tackling them may require overriding

empathetic responses that favor the comfort and well-being” of certain individuals over others, for instance those students who need and deserve to draw on the entire, complex web of language competencies they possess (Bloom). In this regard, the decrease in empathy for ethno- and lingua-centric individuals is not necessarily ethically questionable if translingualists are in fact attempting to posit that *justice*, not empathy for all groups of languages, should be a goal in this type of language instruction. The ethical questions attending the intersection of empathy and translingualism should be, and need to be, unpacked and analyzed further in subsequent research. This study only scratches the surface of these tangential relationships in translingual theory.

Although this study does not fully explore the most intriguing intersection uncovered in the research and in the survey study—it could not due to the timing of this discovery—it does represent a good faith attempt at encouraging the pluralization of academic writing through socially and culturally-conscious pedagogy. It represents my attempt at contributing to a large-scale reimagining of the entire concept of Standard American English, the (re)envisioning of which is made all the more prescient given current circumstances in the United States. Belkin and Chen from *The Wall Street Journal* cite Department of Education Chairman Jason Lane’s assessment that, due to the election of Donald Trump, “there will be a short-term chilling effect on international students coming here not unlike there was after 9/11” (Belkin and Chen). After this chilling effect has passed and international enrollments tick up again, which I maintain will happen as long as United States-based institutions of higher learning strive to be the best in the world, the work of translingual writing pedagogies will become increasingly important and strictly necessary. Even now, through the chill period described by Belkin

and Chen, students continue to strive to get here (Jordan). In order to continue the domination of the global education market, U.S. institutions will need to further embrace and contribute to the aforementioned reimagination of Standard American English. Translingual pedagogies do this by their very nature.

Conclusion

The work I originally planned to undertake in this thesis is different from what is presented here. At the outset, I hoped to introduce a pedagogy with a translingual disposition that would result in at least a majority of my students feeling comfortable and prepared enough to attempt and understand translingual writing. The core goal of my pedagogy was to help students pluralize their own writing. A translingual disposition in writing instruction encourages the pluralization of academic composition and aids in achieving the outcomes set by the Council of Writing Program Administrators' Outcomes Statement, while not at all hindering the development of Standard American English proficiency.

However, it became apparent that I was idealistic in designing my class this way. It became clear early in the semester that my students lacked “adequate socialization into multilingual and contact zones encounters” (*Literacy* 5). In response, I began “working at the level of attitudinal shifts and language awareness to prepare [my students] for such interactions” rather than attempt a more product-oriented method that would have, as Juan C. Guerra warns against, locked me into encouraging students simply to attempt code-switching or meshing, however one defines these terms (5). While it was disconcerting to find that my students were unable to engage critically with information on language ideology, language contact, and the implications of language for identity, I

was nonetheless optimistic that they would be able to in time. And, furthermore, maybe pluralizing writing is not the correct core goal for a translingual pedagogy anyway. Maybe the best goal for the translingualist educator is to do one's best to expose students to language contact and to cultivate the greatest rhetorical capacity for engaging with and within multilingual literate arts, as an inferential reading of Keith Gilyard's contribution to *College English* in January 2016 may reveal.

This class eventually became a study on, echoing the CCCC's 2017 theme, focusing on cultivating the capacity to engage with and within multilingual contexts, with multilingual writers, and changing how students conceptualize the language resources they and other languagers possess. I argue that bringing students to this level of preparedness is the all-important first step along the spectrum from monolingual perspectives to translingual dispositions and that this first step must be accomplished in First-Year Composition contexts for their broad and early draw of students across the college campus. These are the spaces where we as educators collaboratively test and interrogate the multicultural project of the United States.

The primary concern of a writing class—improving student writing—was realized through my translingual pedagogy as well. In fact, several students did experiment with code-meshing; some students systematically borrowed from their other discrete language capacities, namely Spanish, while others employed African American Vernacular English or, in some cases, a kind of folksy, southern language that they brought from home. In the final revision projects specifically, students successfully borrowed from their vocal, less formal, lexicon, expressing better critical thinking skills while simultaneously reaching the broader audience of their peers through their experimentation with new and different

linguistic resources and succeeding in demonstrating a rhetorical attunement to where, when, and how they deployed their diverse semiotic resources. Aside from improvement in their deployment of Standard American English norms, the development of which was clear throughout the class as their “finished” projects got better and better in terms of punctuation, usage, and grammar, students also showed marked improvement in their audience awareness, critical thinking, and overall composing processes. This is evident in the quality of the fourth and fifth writing assignments at the end of the course. As one final note on how my students’ writing as well as their understanding of and ability to harness translingual writing strategies improved, I point to the fifth writing assignment, a structured revision that asked them to identify translingual strategies in the piece they chose to revise and then reflect on this piece and those places where they had used those translingual negotiation strategies. Suffice it to say, because IRB approval was not obtained in time to use the textual data produced in these assignments, that these products did, although not across the board, demonstrate measurable improvement in student writing and the way my students understood and employed translingual writing strategies.

For its successes and failures, this pedagogy does represent my attempt at countering the global rightward turn in foreign policy and the dim view of global integration and cultural contact held by those who would isolate the United States economically, politically, and socially. The unique contact zone in which this study took place, Texas State University, a Hispanic-Serving Institution in Central Texas, contributes to this activist goal in my work. After the university received the HSI designation from the federal government, not much changed in the curriculum. Anecdotal evidence suggests that, for the university’s best efforts, little attention has been paid to

opening up the curriculum from the top down. This type of work was left to the instructors and those activist administrators with the ability and disposition to do this work. I developed and enacted this pedagogy in order to take part in this work that these educators do. Perhaps it was idealistic and, as is par for the course where my research is concerned, I bit off more than I could chew, resulting in less-than-stellar results. However, as Geller et al. state, “meaningful change is next to impossible to see,” and so we must “press on and embrace a kind of pessimistic pragmatism...we want to, need to, cling to idealism” (11). In implementing translingual theory with the purpose of creating more inclusive spaces for forward-thinking individuals who value similarity-in-difference, unity through diversity, and welcome students with disparate linguistic and cultural backgrounds, we must cling to idealism. We cannot let pessimistic pragmatism close our minds to the possibilities of liberating writing instruction for those students who need it the most.

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