

Supporting Linguistically Minoritized Learners at Community Colleges:  
Developing a Translanguaging Approach to Remedial Writing Instruction

By

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To my grandmother, Marie

and

To Rocky, *mo mhadadh beag*, who both continue to watch over me

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## CHAPTER 1

### INTRODUCTION

**Vanesa<sup>1</sup>:** yeah, it's hard because you know  
sometimes I don't understand what the teacher's saying.  
and so that's a disadvantage, compared against the other students,  
but I try to record sometimes.  
sometimes I will write like what I hear and then write it in Google.  
and it will suggest like, maybe you mean these words.  
so now I know oh okay, he was talking about this.  
yeah. so I have to translate all the time.

Vanesa, a first-semester Latin@ woman studying at a large, urban community college in the Northeastern US, is no stranger to the task of translation. Born and raised in the Dominican Republic, she emigrated from her homeland just three years ago, shortly after earning her *Bachillerato*, or high school diploma. Prior to beginning her college studies in the US, Vanesa's schooling was predominantly Spanish language-based. She learned to understand spoken English with the help of Netflix, watching popular American television series like *Breaking Bad* and *Orange is the New Black*. When we met to talk about participating in a research study involving undergraduate bi/multilingual learners, I was curious to know the extent to which Vanesa engaged in translation tasks in her daily life. Her response, captured in the excerpt above, not only sheds light on her understanding of the act of translation itself, but also illuminates the degree to which translanguaging plays a regular and integral part of her life as a new undergrad, transitioning to monolingual college surroundings in an English-dominant metropolis.

According to García and Li (2014), translanguaging “integrates bilingual acts in ways that reflect the unified constitution of the learner,” furthering “the integration of new language practices into one linguistic repertoire;” with regard to school-based learning environments, they

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<sup>1</sup> All participant names are self-chosen pseudonyms.

emphasize the necessity of introducing familiar language practices to emergent bilingual learners, asserting that “language practices cannot be developed except through the students’ existing knowledge” (p. 80). Applying this line of thinking to the question I originally posed to Vanesa, her familiarity with translation was already a part of her existing knowledge about meaning-making, as a result of her classroom experiences, and likely, also based on her encounters outside of school. As she continues to develop her biliteracy, Vanesa’s linguistic repertoire will reflect the totality of her languaging practices, as they emerge in relation to social interactions with other language brokers. Vanesa’s translanguaging practices inside the classroom, as demonstrated by her use of *Google Translate*, offer tremendous insight into the pre-existing knowledge bases with which bi/multilingual learners are readily equipped; combining both her listening and written transcription skills, she has developed a highly personalized languaging practice that enables her to unpack an instructor’s input during class time. Heeding the advice of García and Li, instructors can, and should, integrate familiar translanguaging practices like translation tasks into their courses, in order to impart new knowledge via recognizable pathways that facilitate learning objectives. Moreover, from a social justice standpoint, instructors and researchers alike are responsible for promoting so-called safe spaces where linguistically minoritized (LM) learners<sup>2</sup> like Vanesa have full access to their familiar languaging practices, affording transformational learning opportunities that bridge new and existing knowledge. In this dissertation study, I seek to uncover some of these familiar languaging practices, along with the specific skills and beliefs that LM learners bring with them

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<sup>2</sup> I borrow from Flores & Rosa’s (2015) notions of *linguistically minoritized (LM) learners* to emphasize the racialization and subordination of this student population within monolingual US classrooms. This phrasing draws special attention to the unequal power relationships that students encounter as a consequence of their everyday language practices, and their nonconformity to standardized American English.

to designated “translanguaging spaces” (Li, 2011), when they are given full access to their linguistic repertoires.

While we know a considerable amount about the value of integrating languaging practices that are beneficial to LM learners in K-12 settings, far less is known within post-secondary contexts. Despite increasing enrollments of foreign-born students in US community colleges, extant research on serving the needs of LM learners in higher education is decidedly scarce (Bunch & Endris, 2012; Flores & Drake, 2014; Harklau, 1999; Kanno & Harklau, 2012; Kanno & Varghese, 2010). When LM learners enter post-secondary settings, they simultaneously inherit the burden of securing the academic resources needed to navigate college coursework; within the post-secondary domain, this burden typically takes the form of required remediation classes (Núñez, Rios-Aguilar, Kanno, & Flores, 2016). In the field of basic writing, scholars have already called for the implementation of multilingual or translingual approaches to address language differences (Horner, Lu, Royster, & Trimbur, 2011; Horner & Trimbur, 2002; Matsuda, 2006). In response to these calls for multi-/translingual approaches, this dissertation study considers the potential utility of translanguaging pedagogy in basic writing instruction, as an equitable means of assisting LM learners as they transition to community college settings. Ultimately, I intend to show how translanguaging, in its aim to foster linguistic parity, offers LM learners a chance to recontextualize and make use of their sophisticated language abilities, particularly as they first enter college and encounter unfamiliar forms of evaluation that could make or break their college careers.

One such form of evaluation that LM learners typically experience is placement testing, prior to registering for their first semester of college coursework; based on the outcome of these tests, students may be required to enroll in subsequent “evaluations” that take the form of

remedial, and oftentimes non-credit, writing courses aimed at improving their written English. Where these courses function as a gateway to subsequent coursework, they simultaneously determine whether or not LM learners will be able to fulfill additional course requirements for degree completion. For this reason, I have selected remedial writing coursework as a point of entry into exploring the transition period for LM learners they enter into community college settings.

For community college students like Vanesa who enroll in remedial writing courses, content learning objectives are typically tied to textual analysis; in English writing and composition courses, works of literature primarily serve as the texts. Students are required to demonstrate their understanding of these texts through writing. But how, exactly, are students expected to analyze literary texts? According to Blake and Blake (2002), “the influence of New Critical theories of instruction in universities, colleges, and secondary schools has never really died out,” even though some researchers contend that New Criticism<sup>3</sup> was the predominant literary lens during the 1930’s and 1960’s (p. 143). Lynn (2001) contends that “the odds in fact are excellent that some of your English teachers were trained in the methods of New Criticism, even if they never heard the term;” despite the development of many critical theories since the last century, New Critical theories are “essentially the only approach on the menu” (p. 34). Recognizing the extent to which New Criticism is so firmly rooted in the foundation of composition studies, I argue that students enrolled in remedial writing courses would be well served by receiving instruction that is informed by its primary tenets; as such, learning how to

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<sup>3</sup> The New Criticism movement can be traced to John Crowe Ransom, a Vanderbilt University professor, who founded a scholarly collective called the New Critics; in his 1937 article, “Criticism, Inc.,” he reimagined literary criticism as a mode of scientific inquiry, while maintaining a clear distinction between science and the arts (Pokrivčák, 2017, p. 35).

identify “the complexities, unifying features, and supporting details of a text” is key to developing the level of understanding that written analysis demands (Lynn, 2001, pp. 41-42). For LM learners like Vanesa, they already possess the depth and breadth of sophisticated language skills needed to construct meaning; my contention is that their capacity for meaning-making could be exponentially greater, if given the opportunity to integrate their everyday languaging acts into their exploration of literary texts. Deriving insights from Lynn’s method of New Critical textual analysis, this dissertation study seeks to investigate how LM learners can engage in translanguaging, specifically the familiar practice of translation, in order to deepen their understanding of texts, and subsequently develop more coherent written analyses.

Written translation tasks have previously been utilized in post-secondary translanguaging studies, but in very limited ways. Canagarajah’s (2011) singular participant engaged in codemeshing practices in order to produce a literacy narrative; however, she was not prompted to include translations of her writing in Arabic, and only translated for her readers as she deemed necessary. Three of the four instructors in Pujol-Ferran, DiSanto, Núñez Rodríguez, and Morales’ (2016) study utilized translation tasks as part of their plurilingual pedagogies, along with “code-switching, cross-linguistic analysis, and the use of students’ dominant languages to complete assignments,” and to support disciplinary learning objectives (p. 533). Apart from general vocabulary translations, students enrolled in an acting course had the greatest opportunity to produce written translations while authoring their own scripts for a play. Notwithstanding the successful integration of translanguaging practices in each of these studies, neither Canagarajah, nor Pujol-Ferran et. al., specifically employed translation tasks in order to deepen their participants’ understanding of texts, or to develop written analyses demonstrating their comprehension.

In this dissertation study, I will extend the thinking that was recently taken up by McBride and Jiménez (2019), a pilot study involving a small group of community college LM learners enrolled in remedial writing courses; combining García's (2009) view toward bilingualism with Norton's (2013) notion of language development and identity, the study's participants were tasked with completing a translation exercise involving a literary text. Largely influenced by the research leading to the development of TRANSLATE (Teaching Reading and New Strategic Language Approaches to English learners) (Jiménez et al., 2015), an instructional protocol involving translation for middle school ELs, McBride and Jiménez implemented comparable translation tasks, as a means of improving students' reading comprehension, as well as supporting students' growth as bi/multilingual scholars. In order to deepen students' understanding of texts, and to further support their written analytical skills, this dissertation study frames translation as a model activity for developing a translanguaging approach to remedial writing instruction. Accordingly, this study asks the following research questions:

### **Research Questions**

1. What skills, beliefs, and familiar language practices do LM learners bring with them, when given the opportunity to participate in a translanguaging space (Li, 2011)?
2. What are the potential affordances of a translanguaging approach to remedial writing instruction? How can translation assist LM learners with identifying the complexities, unifying features, and supporting details of a text (Lynn, 2001)?



## Terminology

Research involving the student population under review generally employs one of two classifications: English learners (ELs) or linguistic minority (LM) learners. Although the EL designation is less common among post-secondary education journals, Núñez, Rios-Aguilar, Kanno, and Flores (2016) endorse the usage of the term EL in higher education research for two main reasons: (1) to be consistent with other journals that use EL in studies involving students' progression from high school to post-secondary education; (2) state and federal documentation uses the term ELs to refer to these students in K-12 educational settings. Furthermore, Núñez et al. appear to be drawn to the EL designation mainly because of its linkage to the pre-college experiences of this student population; this makes sense, given their focus on pre-college experiences in order to improve post-secondary outcomes for ELs.

In my own research, I prefer to use a broader term that captures the usage of home languages other than English: linguistically minoritized (LM) learners. Similar to Núñez, Rios-Aguilar, Kanno, and Flores (2016), I recognize the varying degrees of English proficiency among LM learners, and for this reason, I share their same belief that LM learners should not be automatically designated as ELs. In fact, I believe it is actually misleading to label students who are fully proficient in English as ELs upon entering college, simply because they have been placed into remediation coursework. Marshall (2010) points out that frequently enough, students taking required remediation classes have already exited EL programs in their previous K-12 education. The term emergent bilingual is similarly problematic, since it posits the notion that some students are linguistically incomplete, but striving toward an arbitrary goal of wholeness in their language usage. For all of these reasons, I argue that using the term LM learner instead of

EL shifts attention to students' home languages, instead of their perceived weaknesses in English.

Similarly, I also recognize the problematic use of the term “remedial” in the context of writing instruction, particularly as a scholar who embraces a translanguaging perspective that rejects linguistic hierarchies, and instead, draws attention to the competences that LM learners possess. For purposes of clarity, and to more accurately reflect the deficit positioning of these courses with regard to other higher level writing courses, I employ “remedial” to emphasize the differences in approaches to writing instruction, both within and across institutions of higher education.

### **Overview of the Dissertation**

This dissertation is divided into a total of six chapters. In this chapter, I present the overarching objectives of this study, in relation to the potential utility of translanguaging as a means of improving remedial writing instruction for LM learners in community college settings. In Chapter 2, I explore the theoretical frameworks contributing to the design of this study and subsequent data analysis. Also in Chapter 2, I review two distinct bodies of literature that likewise contributed to the execution of this dissertation study: 1) research on LM learners and their transition to post-secondary settings; 2) research on translanguaging pedagogies in post-secondary contexts. At the conclusion of Chapter 2, I explain how this dissertation study seeks to reconcile these seemingly disparate bodies of literature by addressing a major knowledge gap. In Chapter 3, I describe this study's research methodology. I provide a description of the research context and site, and I outline my process of participant selection, including my rationale for selecting the five focal participants of this study. I also describe my role as a researcher by attempting to define my positionality as a white, multilingual woman. Next, I describe the

different sources of data that I collected in two separate phases of this study, in addition to describing my methods of data analysis.

This study's findings correspond to Chapters 4 and 5, and are guided by the study's primary research questions. In Chapter 4, I explore the skills, beliefs, and familiar language practices that individual participants brought with them, when given the opportunity to co-construct a translanguaging space. I also describe the specific translanguaging pedagogies that I enacted with participants, in order to raise their awareness of the funds of knowledge (Moll, Amanti, Neff, & González, 1992) in their possession. In Chapter 5, I identify the potential affordances of a translanguaging approach to remedial writing instruction. Once again, returning to examine participants' languaging practices during the semi-structured interviews, I locate common themes among the skills, beliefs, and familiar language practices that emerged in response to the different translanguaging pedagogies that I enacted with them. Next, I narrow my focus to specifically examine the affordances of the translation exercise, with respect to facilitating textual analysis, or what Lynn (2001) describes as identifying "the complexities, unifying features, and supporting details of a text" (pp. 41-42). Focusing on participants' written translations and open-ended survey responses, I integrate my observations from the translanguaging space with feedback from outside translators to assess participants' comprehension of a text. Finally, in Chapter 6, I present an overview of the study's findings, a discussion of its contributions, limitations, and suggestions for future research.

## CHAPTER 2

### THEORETICAL FRAMEWORK AND LITERATURE REVIEW

In this chapter, I review both the theoretical and empirical literature guiding this dissertation study. First, I explore the two primary theoretical constructs informing the design of this study: translanguaging pedagogies and translanguaging space. Then, I investigate two distinct bodies of literature to illustrate the rationale behind the implementation of this study: (1) research on LM learners and their transition to post-secondary settings; (2) research involving translanguaging pedagogies in post-secondary settings. Within this review of literature, I categorize researchers' conceptualizations of language, as well as their positioning of translanguaging acts, in order to highlight different approaches to translanguaging pedagogies that might address some of the complex challenges that LM learners encounter upon entering community college settings. Finally, I frame this study's research questions as a means of mitigating current knowledge gaps in the literature related to this specific student population, responding to extant calls for change in remediation instruction for LM learners.

#### **Theoretical Framework**

Two primary theoretical constructs inform the design of this study: translanguaging pedagogies (García, 2009; García & Li, 2014; Orellana & García, 2014) and translanguaging space (Li, 2011; Li, 2018). Each of these constructs build from an understanding of translanguaging theory (Canagarajah, 2012; García, 2009; García & Li, 2014), which I describe in relation to the inherent power dynamics of languages, drawing influence from Bourdieu's (1991) writings on linguistic hierarchies.

#### **Translanguaging Pedagogies**

First and foremost, in this dissertation study, I consider translanguaging pedagogies

through the lens of two combined theoretical perspectives: (1) García's (2009) practice-based view toward bilingualism and corresponding translanguaging theory; (2) Bourdieu's (1991) notion of symbolic capital and its embedded presence within language structures. It is in this way that I view translanguaging pedagogy as a responsive strategy for countering language inequality that takes into account the language practices of LM learners, as well as the highly stratified nature of different linguistic forms.

In its most basic form, translanguaging is a languaging practice in which bi/multilinguals flexibly draw from all of their linguistic resources to process information, make meaning, and convey it to others (Baker, 2006; García, 2009; Creese & Blackledge, 2010). Canagarajah (2012) further distinguishes the flexible languaging processes of bi/multilinguals from "codemeshing," or translanguaging in written form (p. 403). My interest in the utility of translanguaging as a pedagogical tool is specifically related to García's (2009) brand of translanguaging, which she defines as an "act performed by bilinguals of accessing different linguistic features... in order to maximize communication potential;" in a somewhat provocative fashion, she further adds that bilingualism is centered "not on languages as has often been the case, but on the practices of bilinguals that are readily observable in order to make sense of their multilingual worlds" (p. 140). This perspective toward bilingualism represents a poststructuralist mindset toward language study, reflecting a shift from individual languages to language practices, in order to capture the dynamic aspect of the global interactions that occur in daily life.

Further developing this notion of language practices, García and Li (2014) extol the benefits of translanguaging pedagogy, "because it builds on students' linguistic strengths," regardless of their level of biliteracy (p. 92). Particularly within the context of community college writing courses, students' English language backgrounds can reflect a multitude of

different experience levels. Translanguaging pedagogy aids in leveling the playing field, by inviting all learners to contribute the linguistic strengths they possess, regardless of their command of the English language.

Besides leveraging students' linguistic strengths, the integration of translanguaging pedagogies into community college writing classes has the potential to offer bilingual learners an academic experience that is quite different from traditional, monolingual English language settings. An inherently subversive act, translanguaging “transgresses and destabilizes language hierarchies” by encouraging fluid language usage, which in turn leads to the development of new languaging practices (García & Li, 2014, p. 68). Orellana and García (2014) describe this effect as “a transformative process that actually builds creativity and power, while also interrogating [the] linguistic inequalities that often exist in classrooms” (p. 388). It is precisely this capacity to interrogate linguistic inequalities that draws my attention, specifically with regard to the power dynamics of English-dominant college writing courses in community colleges.

A similar emphasis on the intrinsic power dynamics of language, along with the implicit value attributed to dominant discourses, can also be observed in Bourdieu's (1991) analysis of linguistic practices. Bourdieu notes that “it is rare in everyday life for language to function as a pure instrument of communication,” where the aims of languaging are often deeply wrought with the “pursuit of symbolic profit”; that is to say, interpersonal communications are rarely neutral interactions, but rather, they are usually tied to external gains, which in turn, “symbolically” denote access to power (p. 480). Extending this metaphor a step further, Bourdieu indicates that “utterances receive their value only in their relation to a market, characterized by a particular law of price formation,” where “prices” are determined relative to the “symbolic capital” associated with the language in use, as well as the quality of the utterance (pp. 481-482). Bourdieu's notion

of symbolic capital seems to run parallel to Orellana and García's (2014) positioning of translanguaging as a means of shifting the power dynamics of teaching and learning; one could argue that translanguaging facilitates the integration of so-called minority languages as an attempt to increase the symbolic capital of LM learners. Moreover, incorporating translanguaging practices into traditional monolingual pedagogies is an exercise in democratizing the "linguistic market" (Bourdieu, 1991, p. 482) of the classroom, in that all learners gain equal access to the full range of their linguistic repertoires.

Along with Bourdieu's (1991) notion of symbolic capital, his discussion of "expressive style," or "the differential manner of communicating," is also particularly relevant to translanguaging pedagogy at the post-secondary level (p. 480). He argues that interpersonal communications serve a purpose that goes beyond the transmission of information; they also reveal a great deal about "expressive style, which, being perceived and appreciated with reference to the universe of theoretically or practically competing styles, takes on a social value and a symbolic efficacy" (p. 480). Applying these same ideas to a community college setting, an approach to teaching and learning that is based solely on the transmission of information is naïve in its assessment of LM learners' abilities, and the highly individualized aspects of their linguistic output; for García and Li (2014), they describe this individualization as a process in which bilinguals "soft assemble" their languaging, in order to "fit their communicative situations" (p. 25). Instructors that seek only to provide students with greater access to languages of power fall into the trap of ignoring, or worse yet, negating this process of soft assembly, by diminishing the matrix of strengths and abilities with which LM learners have at their disposal. As such, I argue that these skill sets should instead be nurtured, arguably, by welcoming translanguaging practice, and by providing students with ample opportunities to develop their

own “expressive styles” as bi/multilingual learners; in this dissertation study, the translanguaging pedagogies that I utilize with my participants are meant to provide bi/multilingual learners with just this sort of opportunity, by promoting their access to their full range of linguistic resources in a multimodal context. I adopt the construct of translanguaging space within my application of translanguaging pedagogies to further describe how I promote participants’ access to flexible languaging practices.

### **Translanguaging Space**

In this dissertation study, my reliance on the notion of translanguaging space grows out of the need to secure and define a dedicated space for participants to engage in dynamic language usage. Recognizing the constraints of monolingual English language writing instruction within this study’s community college setting, I seek to destabilize the insistence upon English-only pedagogies that limit and pre-determine the creative languaging potential of bi/multilingual learners. Where Canagarajah (2011) refers to “safe spaces” that instructors can create for their students within classroom spaces, I wondered how I might designate similar spaces with my own study’s participants, particularly if my interactions with them were to take place outside the scope of their writing classes. Within these safe spaces, Canagarajah outlines a “dialogical pedagogy” where students have the opportunity to question their choices, and critically engage with the languaging decisions that they have made. Borrowing from these same ideas, I too co-construct languaging spaces with the participants in this study, where critical engagement with the decisions that define these spaces lies at the center of our interactions with one another.

Marshall and Moore (2013) go a step further than Canagarajah (2011), suggesting an added consideration be placed on the “individual as the locus and actor of contact,” in light of the differences in “multilingual learning spaces and local contexts around the world” (p. 494). In my



interactions with the participants of this study, I endeavor to increase my awareness of the differences between our languaging practices and experiences, but more importantly, I also aim to increase my understanding of the differences to which I am completely unaware; that is to say, my goal is to know more about what I do not know. The act of co-constructing a designated translanguaging space provides an opportunity to shine a light on these differences, where the participants in this study are invited to showcase the global venues of learning that have shaped and contributed to their ways of knowing. It is in this way that participants' views, lived experiences, and sense-making capabilities take center stage as they perform within the translanguaging space.

Turning to Li (2011) for perhaps the most explicit conceptualization of translanguaging space, his framing is neither restricted to the confines of a traditional classroom setting, nor to any one physical space; to the contrary, he views translanguaging space as a performative space that is created *through* translanguaging, in the way that it reflects a bi/multilingual's "personal history, experience and environment, their attitude, belief and ideology, [and] their cognitive and physical capacity" (p. 1223). In short, Li's framing of translanguaging space accommodates the spatial requirements of this study's extracurricular design without sacrificing the individual differences that distinguish each of the participants' linguistic performances. Taking Li's broadscale view of translanguaging space under consideration, I utilize this construct as a means of more deeply interrogating the languaging performances of bi/multilingual participants in their interactions with me, and with a textual passage, in an attempt to better understand the "transformative" capacity of their translingual practices (p. 1223).

## **Underlying Assumptions Influencing the Design of This Study**

Together with this study's theoretical framework, this dissertation is founded upon collective research involving LM learners and post-secondary writing instruction, as well as the enactment of translanguaging pedagogies at the post-secondary level. Likewise, after my preliminary observations in the field, specifically the wide-focused descriptive observations (Spradley, 1980) that I completed in order to familiarize myself with this study's research site, I also wanted to account for the New Critical orientations to writing instruction in the classes I observed. Consequently, the design of this study, informed by my own observations and extant research, incorporates assumptions related to: (1) English monolingualism as a cornerstone of post-secondary remedial writing instruction; (2) New Critical orientations as flawed, but still potentially useful means for generating productive talk about texts.

**English monolingualism as a cornerstone of post-secondary remedial writing instruction.** Taking a step back for a moment, and pausing to examine this study's main problem area from a more holistic perspective, one could argue the entire positioning of post-secondary remedial writing instruction is fraught with tension. On the one hand, the fact that many of the required writing courses that LM learners take are non-credit bearing makes plain how these courses are perceived in relation to credit-bearing ones: they are less than equal counterparts. And while academic institutions may argue in favor of acquiring a baseline writing skill set in order to graduate, they do not always see it as their responsibility to include the corresponding coursework within the requirements for degree completion; instead, students oftentimes find themselves forced to work their way through gateway courses before moving onto the ones that actually count toward their degrees.

Besides the issue of accountability, however, there is also a sense that students who are required to take remediation courses are somehow in need of fixing, or that their existing skill set is inadequate to meet the demands of college coursework. Kanno and Varghese (2010) believe that “requiring ESL students to take remedial courses that bear no academic credits sends them a strong message that they have arrived at the university with a deficit” (p. 324), undermining students’ own efforts to seek higher learning, even before they have had the opportunity to perform. Benesch (1988) points out that these students, “unlike their native counterparts, they have not had twelve years of schooling in English” (p. 2); LM learners’ languaging abilities, while they may reflect varying degrees of exposure to English language instruction, should not be conflated with linguistic inadequacies. This is not to say that carefully scaffolded English language instruction is a worthless endeavor, insofar as adapting pedagogical practices to accommodate students’ diverse experiences with English, but not because LM learners are inherently deficient as language users.

Similar to what Benesch (1988) signals regarding differences in exposure to English-medium instruction, Kanno and Varghese (2010) go a step further by stating that remediation efforts for LM learners should not be “punitive” in nature (p. 324). Furthermore, they also highlight the fallacy of interpreting bi-/multilingual students’ access to higher education from a perspective that does not simultaneously consider the unfair advantages that their native English-speaking counterparts possess; furthermore, to ignore these advantages is tantamount to the erasure of these students’ lived experiences as minoritized individuals. As Kanno and Varghese make clear, “simply increasing the amount of instruction in their L1 by offering them dual-language immersion programs will not alleviate language minority students’ educational problems,” especially without first addressing the inconsistencies with which LM learners and

native English speakers are tasked and evaluated (p. 324). Perhaps less clear, or at least less plainly stated, is that English monolingualism is a cornerstone of post-secondary remedial writing instruction, and without making an adjustment to this problematic perspective toward teaching and learning, any attempts at ameliorating writing instruction for LM learners will quite simply be in vain.

Taking a broad look at the study of writing, Horner and Trimbur (2002) identify “a tacit language policy of unidirectional English monolingualism [that] has shaped the historical formation of U.S. writing instruction, and continues to influence its theory and practice in shadowy, largely unexamined ways” (p. 594). Indeed, the scant body of research dedicated specifically to writing remediation for LM learners is testament to the ways in which this subject remain underexplored. Yet, what appears to be a common theme across extant research is the long overdue call to modify monolingual leanings toward writing instruction in general. The design of this dissertation study heeds this call by integrating initial findings from early ethnographic observations confirming the overwhelming presence of monolingual ideologies at the research site. Accordingly, this study primarily assumes that English monolingualism is a cornerstone of post-secondary remedial writing instruction, leading to the design of subsequent translanguaging spaces where participants had the opportunity to express themselves in writing, in settings that embraced the globalized context in which everyday languaging takes place.

**New Critical orientations as imperfect, but still potentially useful means for generating productive talk about texts.** In a similar fashion to this study’s primary assumption regarding English monolingualism, the second major assumption was also developed as a result of initial field observations conducted in remedial writing classes at the research site. These observations helped to propel forward important considerations concerning this study’s design,

namely, in the selection of a text and corresponding objectives for extended analysis involving dynamic language usage. Having read the literature concerning the prevalence of New Critical methods of textual analysis in US composition courses, it was imperative to first determine how writing instruction was structured within the research site's remediation courses. By and large, preliminary observations of classroom instruction were consistent with the close reading and textual analysis that are typical of New Criticism, along with "diligent attention to the text and nothing but the text as a self-contained entity" (Hinchman & Moore, 2013, p. 443). That is to say, these observations revealed the limited potential for bi/multilingual learners to situate their individual views and experiences within their interpretations of the assigned texts for written analysis.

Acknowledging its intrinsic flaws, researchers have consistently signaled the pitfalls of a New Critical reading of texts, particularly in terms of the impact on students' ability to connect with the works they are responsible for reading (Brewer, 2018; Carillo, 2016; Drew, 2012; Eppley, 2015; Hinchman & Moore, 2013). Moreover, Brewer (2018) underscores the detriment of focusing solely on the so-called "formal elements of writing," which minimize students' personal connections to reading in favor of more "decontextualized" understandings; perhaps even worse, she also points out the added complications for culturally and linguistically diverse students, particularly when they "are asked to move from reading to writing" (p. 635). As pointed out in the previous section, post-secondary LM learners typically do not share the same length of experience with English language instruction as their native speaker counterparts; when charged with writing about texts from a decontextualized perspective, it is fair to assume that bi/multilinguals may struggle to express their understandings in written form. Without the aid of any guideposts for interpretation, how can LM learners be expected to write about texts that are

completely detached from their lived experiences? For that matter, how can anyone write extensively and thoughtfully about a subject that is completely foreign to them, regardless of their command of the language in question?

Brewer (2018) addresses the issue of decontextualization, and even offers a potential solution by “locating close reading in a broader context of other reading strategies;” she also calls post-secondary instructors to “advise students about the benefits of reading extensively and talk through strategies for managing the often large amounts of reading that they have to do for school” (p. 638). Her guidance does not entirely eschew New Critical notions of texts; to the contrary, Brewer builds upon the foundation of extensive textual analysis that includes room for discussion and deliberation, offering a potential space for bi/multilingual voices to enter into the traditional remedial writing classroom. However, she stops short of explicitly advocating for a translanguaging approach that would also welcome languages other than English. In this dissertation study, I see the inclusion of a translingual turn (Horner, Lu, Royster, & Trimbur, 2011) as a necessary step forward in advancing more equitable teaching and learning outcomes in the field of composition studies. And while New Critical methods may be far from perfect, they still provide useful means for generating productive talk about texts by isolating “the complexities, unifying features, and supporting details” (Lynn, 2001, pp. 41-42) linked to comprehension that are key starting points for written analysis.

This dissertation study rests upon the assumption that the close reading and textual analysis commonly associated with New Critical methods can serve as a vehicle for linking talk through strategies to the pursuit of translanguaging in writing. And while there is limited scholarship dedicated to codemeshing, much less how to design instruction that promotes translingual writing, Canagarajah (2011) keenly observes that writing demands much more than

“linguistic competence,” in that “one has to learn the relevant textual and rhetorical conventions for literate activity” (p. 402); this singular observation points to the primordial nature of understanding *how* texts work in order to be able to write about them, independent of the languaging in question. Canagarajah also signals the “limitless possibilities for development” emanating from both the spoken and written word, since speaking and writing are each permeated “with art, affect, voice, and style” (Canagarajah, 2011, p. 415). I view these highly individualized aspects of speaking and writing as fundamental components of self-expression that can be developed alongside the analytical skills required of post-secondary writing coursework. And as such, this study assumes the built-in capacity of a New Critical interpretive lens to generate productive talk, which in turn, can facilitate productive writing about texts.

In summary, this study operates on the basis of two major assumptions related to the framing of post-secondary writing remediation and its pedagogical implications. Grounded in observations conducted at the research site, this study assumes English monolingualism as a cornerstone upon which these courses are structured; likewise, initial findings also inspired the assumption that New Critical orientations, while imperfect, are still potentially useful means for generating productive talk about texts. Together, these two assumptions help to problematize the larger context in which this study’s main research questions are situated, in an effort to reveal a much clearer picture of the design considerations that went into its execution.

## Literature Review

According to a study conducted by the National Center for Education Statistics, students from immigrant backgrounds make up nearly 25 percent of community college enrollments in the U.S. (Horn, Nevill, & Griffith, 2006). While this number is expected to grow, there is limited scholarship detailing the experiences of LM learners in higher education, much less the ways in which community colleges go about serving the needs of these students (Bunch & Endris, 2012; Flores & Drake, 2014; Harklau, 1999; Kanno & Harklau, 2012; Kanno & Varghese, 2010).

In this review of literature, I seek to elucidate the potential usefulness of translanguaging pedagogy as an equitable means of addressing the complex challenges that LM learners encounter as they transition to community college settings. This investigation requires close analysis of two bodies of literature<sup>4</sup> that at first glance, may appear disparate in their subject matter: (1) research on LM learners and their transition to post-secondary settings; (2) research involving translanguaging pedagogies in post-secondary settings. As a means of linking these seemingly unrelated topics together, I aim to show how translanguaging pedagogies can help to mitigate the linguistic inequalities that are often typical of LM learners' initial experiences with post-secondary learning environments.

### **LM Learners and Their Transition to Post-Secondary Settings**

Far from being a homogenous group, levels of English language proficiency for LM learners are highly varied, underscoring the importance of providing the appropriate supports for students who may be less proficient than others. As LM learners transition from high school to post-secondary settings, a significant shift occurs in terms of allocating the resources needed to navigate through college coursework; within the post-secondary domain, the burden rests upon

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<sup>4</sup> Each subset of literature was drawn from a combination of two research databases: *EBSCO Education Full Text* and *ERIC ProQuest*, using the search terms “translanguaging and higher education,” and “linguistic minority students and writing.”



the shoulders of LM learners themselves, in that “ESL *support* in K-12 education becomes ESL basic skill *requirements* in college” (Núñez, Rios-Aguilar, Kanno, & Flores, 2016, p. 66). These basic skills requirements, often collectively referred to as remediation courses<sup>5</sup>, are typically aimed at developing students’ reading and writing skills, although little research has focused on identifying the specific coursework that would best support LM learners in their transition to college (Bunch & Endris, 2012; Flores & Drake, 2014).

Adopting a funds of knowledge (Moll, Amanti, Neff, & González, 1992) approach to the design of coursework for LM learners may appear to be a logical step forward in terms of leveraging the different forms of cultural and linguistic capital these students possess. Unfortunately, remedial English instruction typically emphasizes U.S. culture and English grammar (Blumenthal, 2002), while completely ignoring the complexities of multilingualism in writing (Horner & Trimbur, 2002; Matsuda, 2006). Perhaps even worse, Harklau (1999) argues that many academic assistance programs inadvertently “normalize and legitimate the very deficits and positions of disadvantage” that they claim to mitigate (p. 259), exposing LM learners to even greater vulnerabilities as they try to navigate their way through coursework. Matsuda (2006) describes the dominance of English monolingualism in college composition programs as a “perpetuation of the myth of linguistic homogeneity” (p. 638), a severely limiting perspective that undermines the presence of multilingual students on college campuses. As stated by Kanno and Varghese (2010), “linguistic diversity is not the kind of diversity that most colleges and universities have learned to embrace” (p. 311), placing LM learners in the unreasonable position

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<sup>5</sup> While remediation courses vary widely across institutions and geographic regions, they typically are non-credit bearing, or do not count toward the completion of degree requirements. Organizationally speaking, sometimes they are housed within English departments, or separate writing divisions geared specifically toward English as a Second Language (ESL) programming, leading to differences in instructional lenses as well. Owing to such a high degree of variability, the study of remediation coursework is a very complicated task.

of having to perform in accordance with monolingual English language standards.

In an effort to counter monolingual language ideologies, researchers have called for the implementation of multilingual or translingual approaches to address language differences in college composition courses (Horner, Lu, Royster, & Trimbur, 2011; Horner & Trimbur, 2002; Matsuda, 2006). While these studies represent an important step forward in identifying potential approaches to fill this research gap, greater emphasis is needed in terms of developing practical strategies for integrating LM learners' language profiles into college writing classrooms. Simply put, remedial writing instruction for LM learners must operate within a space that is conducive to their rising identities as new college students, and future college graduates. To that end, I argue in favor of translanguaging pedagogy as an equitable approach to remedial writing instruction because of its capacity to redirect deficit views as strengths, in addition to providing LM learners with the space to more accurately reveal the depths of their bi/multilingual literacies.

### **Post-Secondary Translanguaging Studies**

Although most translanguaging studies have been situated in K-12 settings, there is an emerging body of research dedicated to exploring the utility of translanguaging in the post-secondary realm. Table A1 (Appendix A) lists the ten post-secondary translanguaging studies that are included in this literature review, along with a brief snapshot of the participants, methods, data sources, and primary research questions corresponding to each study.

In the first section, I synthesize recent translanguaging literature involving undergraduate bi/multilingual learners<sup>6</sup> studying in the US and abroad, with the purpose of clarifying how post-secondary researchers define translanguaging based on their conceptualizations of language; Table B1 (Appendix B) identifies researchers' corresponding viewpoints toward participants'

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<sup>6</sup> Here, I do not say "LM learners" because this term is not embraced by all of the researchers in this literature review. As a means of achieving structural coherence, I use bi/multilingual learners throughout this section.

linguaging processes. I then propose an organizational framework for further analysis of the research questions, design methodologies, and findings of each of the ten studies included in this review. Based on the manner in which researchers position the act of translanguaging within these studies, I have developed the following three categories: instructor-centered, student-centered, and language-centered; Table C1 (Appendix C) lists the studies corresponding to each one of these categories. As a means of underscoring the role of researchers' perspectives toward language in general, I begin by exploring their strategic implementations of translanguaging.

**Conceptualizations of language.** Translanguaging approaches to teaching and learning can be taken up in myriad ways, and as such, their different varieties lend insight into researchers' conceptualizations of language itself. For instance, a researcher might impart structuralist views, positing a notion of language that is comprised of discrete sign units, or what Saussure (1916/1983) collectively named "signifier" and "signified," which then become further organized into sign systems, or individual languages. These underlying views give way to the understanding that languages exist as separate entities or codes that are frequently designated by the order in which they have been acquired; an individual's first, second, and third language would thus be referred to as their L1, L2, and L3 respectively. While García's (2009) translanguaging lens "goes beyond the use of two separate autonomous languages" (García & Li, 2014, p. 65), there are other translanguaging researchers who have developed theoretical frameworks that share more common ground with Cen Williams (1994) original notion<sup>7</sup> of the term; these researchers instead focus their attention on the development of a bi/multilingual's weaker languages through careful scaffolding of the more dominant language(s). Consequently,

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<sup>7</sup> In the 1980s, Cen Williams introduced the Welsh term *trawsieithu*, translanguaging, to describe the systematic practice of switching languages in bilingual classrooms, in order to increase understanding and develop competence in both languages.

a translanguaging approach that is built upon the viewpoint of languages as separate entities also takes into account similar distinctions when isolating the linguistic components of an individual's bi/multilingualism.

Adamson and Coulson (2015) and Pujol-Ferran, DiSanto, Núñez, Rodríguez, & Morales (2016) both establish their translanguaging approaches via L1/L2 distinctions, in addition to promoting the combined use of students' L1 and L2 to foster the development of academic writing skills; moreover, both sets of researchers also perceive the maximization of students' L1 as instrumental to this process. Adopted as "a pragmatic response to the cognitively challenging task of critical second language writing," Adamson and Coulson view the integration of translanguaging practice into classroom pedagogies as a means of providing a support system for struggling L2 writers (p. 29). Borrowing from Doiz, Lasagabaster, and Sierra (2013), they define translanguaging as "the adoption of bilingual supportive scaffolding practices" (p. 218), highlighting the importance of L1 involvement in developing L2 writing skills.

Similarly, Pujol-Ferran et al. make a distinction between bi/multilingual students' "dominant" and "less dominant languages," emphasizing the role that dominant language skills play in the development of literacy skills in the less dominant language (pp. 534; 536). For them, translanguaging "consists of dynamic mixing and switching languages in various contexts" (p. 533), a perspective that rests upon the belief that languages are separate entities that can be "mixed" and "switched" as needed, to further the aims of communication. It is in this way that both Adamson and Coulson and Pujol-Ferran et al. assert a translanguaging approach that seeks to enhance an individual's bi/multilingualism, and subsequent academic success, by improving L2 weaknesses through the activation of L1 strengths.

While some post-secondary translanguaging researchers focus a great deal of attention on

L1/L2 distinctions, such emphasis is not a universal feature of the literature produced to date. Alternate views of translanguaging reflect poststructural understandings of language that are spectral, evolving over time, and built upon a holistic premise that does not require discrete language entities. Moreover, these views are largely sociocultural, in that language becomes central to the ways in which people come to know and interact with their surroundings. Some highly poststructural interpretations of translanguaging eschew traditional notions of language altogether in favor of languaging, a term preferred by Becker (1991) to describe “an activity of human beings in the world;” drawing influence from Chilean biologists Maturana and Varela (1980), Becker highlights the recurrent aspects of languaging by stating how “it is a skill learned over a lifetime, not a system of systems perfected in infancy” (p. 34). More recently, Li (2018) has taken up a view of languaging that connects language learning to “embodied participation and resemiotization” (p. 17); drawing on Swain’s (2006) perspective that languaging mediates cognition, Li seeks to capture the ever-evolving nature of language acquisition that is intimately tied to bi/multilinguals’ thinking. When languaging is viewed as a developmental skill, and not an endpoint within a closed system, corresponding approaches to translanguaging extend these same views to an individual’s spectrum of bi/multilingualism, imparting a dynamic potential for meaning-making over time.

Post-secondary translanguaging studies that emphasize spectral views of their participants’ languaging practices typically characterize these activities along a broad literacy continuum that is intimately tied to an individual’s identity (Esquinca, 2011; Marshall, Hayashi, & Yeung, 2012; Marshall & Moore, 2013). Where languaging practices are driven by context, placement on this continuum is subject to change from one context to the next, as individuals encounter different linguistic environments; as these contexts change, so too do individuals

themselves, as they discursively perform their identities in relation to changing local discourses.

Sharing in common Giddens's (1996) notions of "high modernity," both Marshall, Hayashi, and Yeung (2012) and Marshall and Moore (2013) stress the impact of global interactions on local discourses in ways that are ultimately manifested through their participants' translanguaging practices. For participants in Marshall et al.'s study, the globalization of local discourses takes place "as part of their negotiation of the multi in their multilingualism and multiliteracies," resulting in their enactment of "different identities through their formal and less formal language and literacy practices" (p. 33). Embracing a slightly more nuanced perspective, Marshall and Moore favor "the hyphenated pluri-/multilingual(ism)" over the term multilingualism, not only to reflect individuals' broad literacy continua (p. 474), but also "to address new forms of hybrid urban pluri-/multilingualism" that might otherwise be excluded by conventional notions of bi/multilingualism (p. 477). For both Marshall et al. and Marshall and Moore, translanguaging practices mirror the mobility of their participants' language usage, geographically traversing a range of linguistic landscapes, and also from a creative standpoint, in which individuals draw from all of the languaging resources at their disposal.

Also arguing in favor of the integration of "local and global contexts" in the shaping of an individual's biliteracy continuum, Esquinca (2011) investigates the ways in which bilinguals "construct the socially valued discourse of mathematics" (p. 151). Similar to Marshall, Hayashi, and Yeung (2012) and Marshall and Moore (2013), Esquinca also underscores the mobility of his participants' translanguaging practices, noting the impact of attending school internationally on the academic literacies students bring with them to US post-secondary math classrooms; moreover, by providing his participants with the opportunity to collaboratively engage in writing word problems, he notes the role of "verbal recollections" in advancing "movement along the

oral-written continuum” (p. 164). Together with the verbal recollections that give rise to translanguaging practices, Esquinca also considers the influences of intertextuality (Kamberelis & Bovino, 1999; Lemke, 1992) on participants’ writing within the genre of mathematics, a view that extends the reach of global interactions to texts as well. It is in this way that Esquinca recognizes both “language knowledge” and “knowledge of genres” as the primary components of bilingual meaning-making (p. 150).

While Esquinca (2011), Marshall, Hayashi, and Yeung (2012), and Marshall and Moore (2013) elaborate on the components of an individual’s spectrum of bi/pluri-/multilingualism, as well as the contextual factors influencing their development, other scholars draw attention to the spaces where these components become activated or restricted, depending on sanctions for translanguaging activities at the institutional and/or classroom level (Canagarajah, 2011; Carroll & Mazak, 2017; Carroll & Sambolín Morales, 2016; Parmegiani, 2014; Li, 2011). Canagarajah (2011) stresses the need for designated “safe spaces” in academic settings in order for students to be able to freely engage in translanguaging practices (p. 415). Focusing his attention on codemeshing, or “the realization of translanguaging in texts” (p. 403), he shares a common view with Esquinca (2011) concerning the effects of context and genre on the ways that bi/multilinguals negotiate meaning-making under varying circumstances (p. 415). Far from being a “mechanical activity,” Canagarajah describes translanguaging as “a rhetorical choice” that is not only situation-dependent, but also imbued with an individual’s “rhetorical awareness and communicative proficiency” (p. 404). Borrowing from Canagarajah’s definition of codemeshing, Parmegiani (2014) stresses the need for a “basic writing space” for his students “by formally inviting their mother tongue into Academic Discourse” (p. 24); although he uses the term “mother tongue,” it is not so much to designate L1/L2, but rather, he makes the distinction to

describe “a nurturing pedagogical space” that openly welcomes students’ home languaging practices, bridging a “wide gap between the rhetorical expectations that shape Academic Discourse in U.S. colleges” and students’ previous encounters with school-based learning in their native countries (p. 35). Similarly, Li (2011) also argues in favor of spaces where multilinguals have room to initiate the “creative and critical use of the full range of their socio-cultural resources,” giving rise to the construct of “translanguaging space;” he describes a “sense of connectedness” among individuals within this space, highlighting the positive interrelational aspects of translanguaging that can be achieved when such languaging practices are condoned (pp. 1222-1223). Central to all of these arguments in favor of a dedicated space for translanguaging activity, it is clear that instructors play a critical role in carving out this space, working within the confines of institutional policies and demands.

Where Canagarajah (2011), Parmegiani (2014), and Li (2011) identify what can be called translanguaging spaces, Carroll and Mazak (2017) and Carroll and Sambolín Morales (2016) take a closer look at the policies and underlying assumptions responsible for shaping these spaces at Puerto Rican universities, where instruction is typically delivered in both Spanish and English. Arguably the most commodified perspective held by post-secondary translanguaging researchers, Carroll and Mazak draw from Appadurai’s (1986) perspective in which commodities are “objects of economic value” (p. 3); they posit dynamic language usage from a similar vein, where languages too possess economic value as they circulate through social life. Consequently, they define translanguaging as “a natural byproduct of tertiary institutions as they seek to internationalize,” displacing the meaning-making features of translanguaging with its capacity for market-worthy, globalized appeal (p. 19). They also indicate the dominance of microlevel policies over mesolevel ones when institutions do not clearly provide instructors with concrete



policies concerning “the language of materials, lectures, assignments, and exams;” left to determine classroom policies on their own, instructors that aren’t restricted by mesolevel language policies gain the autonomy to decide whether or not translanguaging practice aligns with individual course objectives (p. 5). Carroll and Sambolín Morales also compare and contrast different language policy outcomes, noting the nation-state, “macrolevel influences” behind the belief that “ESL courses are assumed to be English-only” (p. 250). As a means of challenging this strict separation of languages, they argue in favor of a translanguaging approach that adheres to Ruiz’s (1984) “language-as-a-resource orientation,” with the ultimate goal of increasing “the linguistic proficiencies of students,” without privileging English as the preferred language of instruction (p. 252). Both Carroll and Mazak and Carroll and Sambolín Morales demonstrate how established policies and underlying beliefs about language usage can be challenged and reinterpreted in ways that are mutually beneficial to students’ learning, as well as the aims of university guidelines.

**Methodologies, research questions, and findings.** In the previous section, I explored multiple ways that researchers’ translanguaging approaches lend insight to their specific conceptualizations of language itself. Here, I discuss how researchers designed methodologies and corresponding research questions to align with their perspectives toward translanguaging practice, and then, I subsequently trace these perspectives across their studies’ findings. Firstly, in thinking broadly about the research paradigms of the ten studies under review, all but two of them are entirely qualitative in their design (Canagarajah, 2011; Carroll & Sambolín Morales, 2016; Esquinca, 2011; Marshall, Hayashi, & Yeung, 2012; Marshall & Moore, 2013; Parmegiani, 2014; Pujol-Ferran, DiSanto, Núñez Rodríguez, & Morales 2016; Li, 2011). Adamson and Coulson (2015) and Carroll and Mazak (2017), on the other hand, conducted

mixed methods studies. Nevertheless, there are similarities among the designs of all ten studies that are not necessarily distinguished along the lines of qualitative versus quantitative research paradigms; to the contrary, I argue that the research questions, and subsequent design methodologies of these studies, can be grouped into three categories, based on the manner in which researchers position the act of translanguaging. Accordingly, I have defined these categories as instructor-centered, student-centered, and language-centered, to call attention to researchers' different perspectives toward the analysis of translanguaging practice within each of the studies.

### ***Instructor-centered studies***

Three of the studies under review fall into the “instructor-centered” category (Carroll & Sambolín Morales, 2016; Parmegiani, 2014; Pujol-Ferran, DiSanto, Núñez Rodríguez, & Morales 2016), that is to say, the design methodologies and corresponding research questions within these studies position translanguaging practice from an overtly instructional-dependent orientation, where the participants' language usage was carefully scaffolded by instructor inputs. Perhaps the clearest example of an instructor-centered orientation is demonstrated by the primary research question investigated by Carroll and Sambolín Morales (2016): “what happens when an ESL instructor of a Basic English course uses translanguaging as a resource for understanding a culturally relevant novel?” (p. 249). Through their design of a month-long course unit, Carroll and Sambolín Morales altered the traditional English-only parameters for an ESL writing course, allowing the instructor to use both Spanish and English as the official class languages. Consequently, the potential for translanguaging practice was conveniently built into the class, and the instructor likewise had the ability to model a dynamic form of language usage for students. Similarly, Pujol-Ferran, DiSanto, Núñez Rodríguez, and Morales (2016) ask how to

integrate dynamic, translingual teaching practices to complete assignments in multilingual classrooms; once again, the focus of the research question at hand rests upon the design of instructional inputs that foster translanguaging practice. The researchers explore this question via four case studies, spanning four different disciplines: linguistics, early childhood education, natural sciences, and the humanities. In each of the case studies, the instructors modeled a combination of dynamic Spanish and English language usage, plurilingual readings, translation, and code-switching, setting the stage for students to follow their lead. Parmegiani (2014) also lays the groundwork to facilitate translanguaging practice for students by arranging a collaborative learning community between an ESL class and a Spanish composition course, with the express purpose of establishing “a basic writing space to meet the special learning needs for Latin@ ESL students” (p. 25). Borrowing from Hanson and Heller’s (2009) notion of learning communities, Parmegiani investigates the impact of learning community clusters on students’ success indicators in a community college. Like Carroll and Sambolín Morales, and Pujol-Ferran et. al., Parmegiani specifically designed these learning community clusters to promote translanguaging practice, simultaneously placing classroom instructors at the helm of initiating dynamic language usage.

In terms of research findings, Carroll and Sambolín Morales (2016) showed that when students are not restricted in their language usage, they have the ability to reveal a more accurate account of their reading comprehension, “by not limiting their answers as a result of their language proficiency;” moreover, they also demonstrated how the combined use of home and target languages enabled students to more deeply relate to “themes that connected to their cultural and linguistic experiences” (p. 258). Pujol-Ferran, DiSanto, Núñez Rodríguez, and Morales (2016) also underscore the benefits that students reap when permitted to leverage both

their experiences and background knowledge: students gain agency over their learning when their instructors empower them to show others “what they really know,” simultaneously giving rise to “social and intellectual epiphanies that become catalysts to strong motivation in their overall learning” (p. 534). Similarly, Parmegiani (2014) found that learning community clusters comprised of both ESL writing and second language composition courses have the potential to “increase success indicators significantly,” when students can be grouped together with classmates who share home languages in common; acknowledging the small size of the study’s learning community, the immediate outcomes for these students were nonetheless impressive, given that their semesterly retention rate was 100%, compared with only 65% for all newly entering students who began their programs during the same year (p. 44).

### *Student-centered studies*

In contrast to the aforementioned instructor-centered orientations of translanguaging practice, four of the studies under review exhibit student-centered orientations, where students themselves exercised a greater degree of freedom over their linguistic output (Adamson & Coulson, 2015; Carroll and Mazak, 2017; Canagarajah, 2011; Marshall & Moore, 2013); three of these four studies specifically seek to understand how students translanguage in their writing (Adamson & Coulson, 2015; Canagarajah, 2011; Marshall & Moore, 2013). Canagarajah’s (2011) codemeshing study stands out as having, arguably, the most student-centered orientation within the group; using an ethnographically-informed approach, he closely examined the rhetorical choices of a single Saudi Arabian graduate student enrolled in a course on the teaching of second language writing. Marshall and Moore (2013) gathered a considerably larger sample of student writing in their three-year longitudinal study, but similarly, they examined the plurilingual choices of transnational students in an introductory literacy course in Vancouver,

Canada. And finally, Adamson and Coulson (2015) focused their attention on the L1/L2 decisions invoked by Japanese undergraduates in their final reports for a required English language preparation course. In each of these studies, the researchers are clearly interested in uncovering the decision-making processes that drive students' translanguaging in the written form; whether or not they call these processes "rhetorical choices," "plurilingual choices," or "L1/L2 decisions," all of these studies position the act of translanguaging in writing as a student-centered, autonomous practice that ultimately speaks to the context-awareness of the individual writer (Adamson & Coulson, 2015; Canagarajah, 2011; Marshall & Moore, 2013).

As previously mentioned, not all of the student-centered studies focus exclusively on students' translanguaging in writing; two of these studies explore questions surrounding students' language ideologies (Adamson & Coulson, 2015; Carroll & Mazak, 2017), an area of investigation rooted explicitly in students' own perceptions of language use. Besides their analysis of students' writing samples, Adamson and Coulson (2015) also used bilingual questionnaires to learn more about students' beliefs toward translanguaging in general; these questionnaires included Likert scale questions concerning the effectiveness of the English language preparation class, in addition to some open-ended questions intended to elicit students' impressions of L1 usage in class. Carroll and Mazak (2017) also used surveys to gauge students' beliefs about dynamic language usage, although they relied much more heavily on classroom ethnographic data when they reported their findings. Earlier, I noted that both Adamson and Coulson and Carroll and Mazak conducted mixed methods studies; while both research teams investigated the language ideologies of their participants, a line of inquiry closely aligned with the naturalistic paradigm, Adamson and Coulson largely depended on quantitative Likert scale data, whereas Carroll and Mazak primarily analyzed thick, descriptive, observational data to

inform their interpretations. In naturalistic inquiry, it is essential to ensure that research findings are tied to the study's participants, not the researchers; said differently, the data collected should consist of confirmable representations of the participants' views only (Lincoln & Guba, 1985). Distinguishing participants' responses from the built-in assumptions of Likert scale questionnaires presents serious challenges to the confirmability of Adamson and Coulson's language ideology data; had they included more analysis of the open-ended responses, perhaps their study would have yielded more balanced and confirmable representations of their participants' views. Carroll and Mazak made a stronger match between their study's design and corresponding line of questioning, resulting in more robust, student-centered views toward translanguaging practice.

All of the student-centered studies emphasize the important developmental skills that students acquired as a result of their participation in translanguaging acts (Adamson & Coulson, 2015; Canagarajah, 2011; Carroll & Mazak, 2017; Marshall & Moore, 2013). Adamson and Coulson (2015) reported students "overcoming reticence," as a positive consequence of their access to both Japanese and English during class time, in addition to greater amounts of "risk taking" in their interactions with fellow students, as well as the instructor; on the ideological front, they also indicated that translanguaging contributed to "positive perceptions of L1 use" (p. 34). Canagarajah (2011) noted the significance of "offering feedback when students codemesh," so that students could "assess different levels of rhetorical and communicative effectiveness," along with further developing "a metacognitive awareness of codemeshing practices" (p. 415). Marshall and Moore (2013) echo Canagarajah's sentiments, urging educators to embrace a "dialogical pedagogy" that gives students the space "to question their choices, think critically about these choices and their assessment, and develop metacognitive awareness" (p. 494). And

lastly, Carroll and Mazak (2017) similarly point out what happens when “language practices are thoughtful and student centered;” ultimately, students are capable of more fully developing their linguistic potential by engaging in acts “that both reify and disrupt widely circulated societal language ideologies” (p. 19).

### *Language-centered studies*

A third category of research studies considers translanguaging practice from a viewpoint that is less dependent upon student- and instructor-centered orientations, but more concerned with deconstructing the underlying processes of dynamic language usage; where these studies are largely dedicated to unpacking the act of translanguaging itself, I have named this group language-centered studies (Esquinca, 2011; Marshall, Hayashi, & Yeung, 2012; Li, 2011).

While all three of these studies devote considerable attention to understanding participants’ talk, only Esquinca (2011) applied methods of discourse analysis to interactional data samples, with the purpose of “understanding bilingual and biliterate practices in writing mathematics discourse for teaching” (p. 155). Designing his study around the collaborative writing of word problems, Esquinca explores the question of biliteracy development as students navigate the continua of biliteracy (Hornberger, 1989), a framework for understanding the nexus of interrelated, linguistic continua where meaning-making processes take place. Borrowing from Heath’s (1982) terminology, he identifies “the literacy event” as the study’s unit of analysis (p. 156), given the function of the written word within students’ collaborative interactions; as such, Esquinca’s use of the continua of biliteracy is well- suited to describing the range of linguistic proficiency that bi/multilingual students demonstrate when they engage in translanguaging acts. Somewhat similarly, Marshall, Hayashi, and Yeung (2012) explore the ways that students “negotiate the multi in their multilingualism and multiliteracies,” where the “multi” corresponds to the

multifaceted influences of “social and institutional discourses” on the literacy practices of multilingual learners (p. 30). Like Esquinca, they too conceptualize a broad continuum of multiliteracy, but pay added attention to the impact of sociocultural influences on a multilingual student’s movement along this continuum. In order to trace this movement, Marshall, Hayashi, and Yeung examined both formal and informal writing samples to see how changing patterns of students’ discourse might be linked to different situational contexts, thereby designing their investigation of the “multi” to uncover how and where dynamic language usage occurs. Finally, Li (2011), like Marshall, Hayashi, and Yeung, and Esquinca, also examines multilingual practices, by considering participants’ “creativity and criticality” in dynamic language usage; to contextualize these dimensions, Li developed a construct known as “translanguaging space,” tying linguistic interactions to the “socio-cultural resources” giving rise to their production (p. 1222). Compared with the other two language-centered studies, however, Li does not explicitly make use of a bi/multiliteracy continuum, but rather, he invents a method called “moment analysis” to pinpoint spontaneous moments of creativity and criticality within the translanguaging space (p. 1223).

Taking a closer look at the language-centered studies in this review, researchers dedicated a considerable portion of their analyses to unpacking the act of translanguaging itself, while also demonstrating how dynamic language usage contributed to the growth of students’ bi/multilingual literacies (Esquinca, 2011; Marshall, Hayashi, & Yeung, 2012; Li, 2011). Esquinca (2011) showed how the co-construction of word problems permitted students “to traverse the continua of biliteracy” in English and in Spanish, by way of their bilingual “verbal recollections,” a major resource contributing to their writing of mathematical word problems (p. 164). Marshall, Hayashi, and Yeung (2012) also described students’ movement along a broad



literacy continuum, illustrating their sophistication as learners “who negotiate the liminal language and literacy spaces that they inhabit in their daily university lives” (p. 51). Although Li (2011) did not contextualize his students’ translanguaging practices by means of a literacy continuum, he nonetheless hailed their ability to “position themselves flexibly and strategically,” by both creatively and critically “flouting the linguistic and cultural conventions” of their verbal exchanges with one another (p. 1233).

### **Implications for the Current Study**

Extant college-level translanguaging studies have attempted to overcome barriers to providing equitable instruction to LM learners in myriad ways, through varied perspectives toward language usage. Adamson and Coulson (2015) and Pujol-Ferran, DiSanto, Núñez, Rodríguez, & Morales (2016) both establish their translanguaging approaches via L1/L2 distinctions, in addition to promoting the combined use of students’ L1 and L2 to foster the development of academic writing skills; moreover, both sets of researchers also perceive the maximization of students’ L1 as instrumental to this process. Other studies characterize participants’ languaging practices along a broad literacy continuum that is intimately tied to an individual’s identity (Esquinca, 2011; Marshall, Hayashi, & Yeung, 2012; Marshall & Moore, 2013). While Esquinca (2011), Marshall, Hayashi, and Yeung (2012), and Marshall and Moore (2013) elaborate on the components of an individual’s spectrum of bi/pluri-/multilingualism, as well as the contextual factors influencing their development, other scholars draw attention to the spaces where these components become activated or restricted, depending on sanctions for translanguaging activities at the institutional and/or classroom level (Canagarajah, 2011; Carroll & Mazak, 2017; Carroll & Sambolín Morales, 2016; Parmegiani, 2014; Li, 2011). Where Canagarajah (2011), Parmegiani (2014), and Li (2011) provide the rationale for so-called

translanguaging spaces, Carroll and Mazak (2017) and Carroll and Sambolín Morales (2016) take a closer look at the policies and underlying assumptions responsible for shaping these spaces at Puerto Rican universities.

In designing this dissertation study for community college LM learners, I argue that it is useful to consider the manner in which extant research positions the act of translanguaging. Furthermore, I have also shown how the research questions, and subsequent design methodologies of these studies can be grouped into the following three categories: instructor-centered, student-centered, and language-centered. Drawing inspiration from studies within each of these categories, I sought to integrate similar methodological choices in my study, focusing most of my attention on the studies that highlight the spaces where an individual's bi/pluri-/multilingualism becomes activated or restricted (Canagarajah, 2011; Carroll & Mazak, 2017; Carroll & Sambolín Morales, 2016; Parmegiani, 2014; Li, 2011). In some cases, investigators invited LM learners to openly engage in translanguaging practice during class time and in written assignments (Carroll & Mazak, 2017; Carroll & Sambolín Morales, 2016; Parmegiani, 2014); other investigators, however, made arrangements for LM learners to translanguage outside of regular class time (Canagarajah, 2011; Li, 2011). Following the examples of the latter two studies, I invited LM learners to engage in codemeshing practices (Canagarajah, 2011), within a designated translanguaging space (Li, 2011), in order for them to openly experience the ways in which language differences are manifested in writing.

## Research Questions

In this section, I describe how this study's research questions address knowledge gaps in the existing literature on LM learners' transition to post-secondary settings, as well as the research on post-secondary translanguaging studies.

**RQ1: What skills, beliefs, and familiar language practices do LM learners make visible, when given the opportunity to participate in a translanguaging space (Li, 2011)?**

Research on LM learners' transition to post-secondary settings consistently refutes a monolithic view toward students' levels of English language proficiency; the LM learner population is far from homogeneous, and as such, constructing the appropriate pedagogical supports for individual learners is a crucial endeavor. Recognizing the relatively small body of literature that seeks to elucidate the construction of these supports, this study seeks to fill in a number of gaps, beginning with a clearer understanding of all that LM learners bring with them into post-secondary learning environments, or more specifically, within the space of remedial writing classrooms. Kanno and Varghese (2010) describe the "linguistic diversity" of LM learners (p. 311), while others emphasize the complexities of multilingualism that become manifest through writing (Horner & Trimbur, 2002; Matsuda, 2006). Still, there is very little research that unpacks the specific skills, beliefs, and familiar language practices of LM learners in writing remediation settings. This study ventures a step further into the unknown by investigating each one of these categories within a designated translanguaging space (Li, 2011), where LM learners were expressly invited to access all of the linguistic resources at their disposal.

Combining extant knowledge on LM learners' transition to post-secondary settings with research on post-secondary translanguaging studies, extensive gaps remain with regard to the enactment of translanguaging pedagogies in post-secondary remedial writing classes. Drawing inspiration from studies that highlight the spaces where an individual's bi/pluri-/multilingualism becomes activated or restricted (Canagarajah, 2011; Carroll & Mazak, 2017; Carroll & Sambolín Morales, 2016; Parmegiani, 2014; Li, 2011), participants in the present research study were encouraged to draw upon all of their linguistic resources while performing a combination of written and oral tasks. Where the current investigation diverges from other studies lies within the exploration of translanguaging space itself; accordingly, this study fills a gap concerning participants' linguistic performances within a designated translanguaging space, as well as the extent to which these performances exhibited the various theoretical dimensions that Li (2011) attributes to translanguaging space as a socially constructed entity.

**RQ2: What are the potential affordances of a translanguaging approach to remedial writing instruction? How can translation assist LM learners with identifying the complexities, unifying features, and supporting details of a text (Lynn, 2001)?**

Since relatively few studies have investigated the enactment of translanguaging pedagogies with post-secondary students enrolled in English language writing courses (Adamson & Coulson, 2015; Carroll & Sambolín Morales, 2016; McBride & Jiménez, 2019; Parmegiani, 2014; Pujol-Ferran, DiSanto, Núñez Rodríguez, & Morales, 2016), more research is needed to substantiate the affordances of a translanguaging approach to remedial writing instruction. The current study seeks to add to this growing body of literature by articulating how LM learners benefitted from their participation in a translanguaging space, both on the whole, and also, more

specifically, by translating a written text.

While the first part of this research question seeks to broadly identify the affordances of a translanguaging approach to remedial writing instruction, the second part targets a single translanguaging pedagogy: written translation. Moreover, this study incorporates early observational findings into its design regarding the theoretical underpinnings of remedial writing courses at the research site. Consistent with a New Critical lens toward writing instruction, I investigate the affordances of a translation exercise, with respect to facilitating textual analysis, and identifying “the complexities, unifying features, and supporting details of a text” (Lynn, 2001, pp. 41-42). Focusing on participants’ written translations, I integrate my observations from the translanguaging space with feedback from outside translators to assess participants’ comprehension of a text, addressing an additional gap in the literature concerning the “rhetorical effectiveness” of participants’ written translations (Canagarajah, 2011, pp. 402-403).

## CHAPTER 3

### RESEARCH METHODOLOGY

This qualitative research study examines how LM learners' participation in a designated translanguaging space might offer new insights on designing appropriate supports for post-secondary remedial writing instruction. Consequently, this study addresses the following research questions:

1. What skills, beliefs, and familiar language practices do LM learners bring with them, when given the opportunity to participate in a translanguaging space (Li, 2011)?
2. What are the potential affordances of a translanguaging approach to remedial writing instruction? How can translation assist LM learners with identifying the complexities, unifying features, and supporting details of a text (Lynn, 2001)?

In this chapter, I describe the study's design, research context, research site, participants, and my own role as a researcher. Next, I describe the methods for data collection, the data sources, and the methods of data analysis. I conclude this chapter with a discussion of the study's strengths and limitations.

#### **Study Design, Research Context, Site, Participants, and Researcher Role**

This section describes the rationale and subsequent design of this study. Next, I describe the context for conducting the research. I move on to describe the research site and rationale for choosing this site. Similarly, I describe the process of participant selection, and the rationale behind the selection of the study's focal participants. Finally, I elaborate on my positionality as the study's primary researcher.

## Study Design and Rationale

In the pursuit of clarifying theoretical notions of translanguaging space, as well as its potential application to translingual orientations of writing instruction, this study's emergent approach to qualitative research is designed with the aim of allowing new themes to emerge alongside themes that align with existing understandings of dynamic language usage. To this end, the study's data analysis procedures begin with a deductive process involving the a priori "indexing" (Ritchie & Spencer, 1994) of themes aligning with Li's (2011) notion of translanguaging space, followed by an inductive, grounded theory coding (Charmaz, 2006) of new themes emerging together with existing ones. Where this study considers the spoken and written words of its participants among its primary data sources, it also borrows approaches to language study that are grounded in translation theory (Hall, Smith, & Wickasono, 2017) and, to an extent, critical discourse analysis (Fairclough, 2015), in the way that participants' talk was transcribed for further analysis. Finally, I seek to perform a level of conceptual analysis that leads to the development of substantive theories (Glaser, 2002) regarding the application of translanguaging pedagogies to remedial writing instruction.

Taking a step back and identifying the rationale behind this study's qualitative design, three major considerations regarding extant research influenced the decision-making process. First and foremost, the call for multilingual or translingual approaches to address language differences in college composition courses (Horner, Lu, Royster, & Trimbur, 2011; Horner & Trimbur, 2002; Matsuda, 2006) requires investigation into existing practices at the institutional level, coupled with a willingness to embrace relatively novel pedagogies in post-secondary writing instruction. Consistent with a move from wide-focused descriptive observations to more selective ones (Spradley, 1980), this study employs an ethnographic approach to participant

observation at a community college setting, which helped to later establish the emergent design of this study's primary research questions. Multiple stages of data collection, partnered with constant comparison (Corbin & Strauss, 2008) and theoretical sampling characterize the grounded theory development (Charmaz, 2006) that evolved from taking a leap into the unknown, and exploring the application of a translanguaging approach to remedial writing instruction.

Secondly, drawing inspiration from post-secondary translanguaging studies that highlight the activation of an individual's bi/pluri-/multilingualism (Canagarajah, 2011; Carroll & Mazak, 2017; Carroll & Sambolin Morales, 2016; Parmegiani, 2014; Li, 2011), these studies all employ qualitative design methodologies in response to questions surrounding dynamic language usage and writing instruction. Specifically with regard to Canagarajah's (2011) and Wei's (2011) studies, they endeavor to more clearly describe the strategies that bi/multilinguals employ during translanguaging acts. I too seek to better understand codemeshing practices, particularly as they relate to the construction and use of designated translanguaging spaces, and an emergent qualitative design has the built in capacity to allow for conceptual development to emerge from the data itself (Corbin & Strauss; 2008); by closely considering the patterns of both participants' and my own languaging moves as a co-constructor of these translanguaging spaces, I aim to contribute to the growing body of literature defining translingual writing practices.

Finally, this study's qualitative design elements are also owed to McBride and Jiménez (2019), the pilot study for this dissertation, in which a small group of community college LM learners enrolled in remedial writing courses were tasked with completing a translation exercise involving a literary text. Heeding the call from Jiménez et al. (2015) for a closer investigation of the ways in which bi/multilinguals "develop conceptual understandings about language and



apply them to the specific task of comprehension of English language texts” (p. 249), McBride and Jiménez argue in favor of providing LM learners with more opportunities to: (1) learn about language and its functions; (2) leverage their linguistic strengths; (3) integrate their home literacy practices. Accordingly, this study mirrors the same qualitative design imprints, as well as the inclusion of a translation exercise, in order to both provide participants with the opportunity to reflexively consider their own bi/multilingual capabilities, and to generate subsequent theories about how they arrived at these new newfound understandings.

### **Research Context**

As the primary investigator, I established a research partnership with the study’s singular data collection site through a personal connection in the English Department at Sylvan Community College (SCC)<sup>8</sup>. My colleague there introduced me to the departmental chairperson, who in turn, introduced me to several writing instructors in the department. Beginning in April 2019, I exchanged regular correspondence with the chairperson, both in person and through email, throughout the duration of the data collection period at the research site, which came to a close toward the end of December 2020.

Although the chairperson was at first resistant to the idea of translanguaging, especially in classes aimed at improving English language writing, she eventually warmed to my suggestion that students translanguage outside of regular class time. Prior to our communications, the chairperson was not familiar with translanguaging pedagogies, and during our initial interactions, she staunchly defended a monolingual English language approach to improving writing outcomes for LM learners. Nonetheless, as a bilingual speaker herself, the chairperson was intrigued by our early conversations, and was highly supportive of my efforts to get instructors on board for class observations, as well as to eventually recruit student participants for one-on-

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<sup>8</sup> Sylvan Community College (SCC) is a pseudonym.

one “translanguaging sessions,” the layman’s description that I used to refer to my interactions with students.

Similar to the departmental chairperson, none of the writing instructors that became part of this research study were familiar with translanguaging pedagogies prior to our written and verbal communications. However, each one of them held open-minded perspectives from the very beginning of our interactions with one another. I was pleasantly surprised by their receptivity, and the suggestions by at least two instructors to host translanguaging sessions during their classes. Still, I wanted to honor the agreement made with the chair, and all students recruited for the study met with me outside of regular class time, in sessions that were ancillary to their regular coursework.

Bearing in mind the novelty of translanguaging pedagogies at this study’s research site, the participation of members of the student body likely generated practices and dispositions that were not typical of everyday classroom occurrences. It is in this way that this study afforded transformational learning opportunities for its student participants, bridging new and existing knowledge bases by actively encouraging dynamic language usage during the one-on-one translanguaging sessions.

### **Research Site and Rationale**

This study takes place at SCC, a large, urban community college, in one of the largest cities in the Northeastern US. More than 70 percent of the student body is composed of minoritized learners. About half of all students are enrolled full-time, while the vast majority of students balance work and family commitments, in addition to pursuing their studies. The college also draws a significant number of international students who enroll in English as a Second Language (ESL) courses and remedial writing classes.

SCC students have the ability to enroll in writing classes year round, during the spring, summer, and fall semesters. These classes are divided into remediation level courses that do not count toward degree requirements, and traditional credit bearing ones that count toward major and general education requirements for graduation. Based on the results of placement tests, LM learners might begin their writing coursework in either remediation level or traditional writing classes. To capture this variability, courses were selected for observation in each of these two categories, in order to ascertain a broader sense of the theoretical underpinnings of writing coursework at the research site.

### **Focal Participants and Selection Rationale**

Upon receiving IRB approval from SCC in May 2019, the English Department chairperson agreed to introduce me to the writing instructors in her department, sharing information with them about my background and research plans. She also provided me with contact information for 10 writing instructors so that I could directly reach out to them, learn about their classes, and subsequently enlist their help in recruiting student participants.

Beginning in May 2019, I reached out via email to the 5 writing instructors that were teaching summer courses. Using the contact information I had received from the chairperson, along with the SCC course catalog and summer schedule, I wanted to pinpoint potential classes that I could observe. My intention was to gain a broader understanding of what SCC remedial writing classes actually looked like, and to attempt to decipher any critical lenses operating within individual classroom spaces, beyond what had been communicated to me by the chairperson, or described within the college's course listings. In line with my objective of developing instructional supports to benefit LM learners enrolled in remediation coursework, I sought to learn as much as I could about these classes, so that I could increase my understanding

of the relationship between instructors' pedagogical practices and the learning objectives outlined in each course syllabus.

As a means of navigating ways to interact with students outside of class time, I also viewed these class observations as an opportunity to build rapport with the instructors, and to eventually seek their help in recruiting student participants. Accordingly, the classroom observations that I conducted during this initial stage of data collection, Phase I, served three major functions: (1) to understand how instructors' pedagogical practices mapped onto the learning objectives of their courses; (2) to develop initial theories about the analytical lenses framing classroom instruction; (3) to recruit student participants, and conduct a translanguaging activity that not only drew on their funds of knowledge as bi/multilinguals, but also integrated similar analytical lenses to what they had already encountered in their writing classes.

Two writing instructors responded to my initial email: Professor Becker and Professor Reddy<sup>9</sup>. Both instructors invited me to meet with them in person and to observe their classes, in addition to providing me with copies of their syllabi and assignment calendars for each of their writing courses. Each instructor taught a section of the following two courses: WRIT 003 Advanced Intermediate Writing for English as a Second Language (ESL) Speakers, and WRIT 101 Elementary Composition. Both sections of these courses, 4 courses in total, became the focal courses for all classroom observations that were used to develop initial theories about the analytical lenses framing classroom instruction.

After I had observed three weeks of classes with Professor Becker and Professor Reddy, I asked for their assistance with recruiting their students as participants for my dissertation study. I provided them with paper and electronic flyers for distribution to students, in addition to paper forms for obtaining students' written consent. Both instructors collected students' signed consent

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<sup>9</sup> Both names are pseudonyms.

forms on my behalf, and I began meeting with students shortly thereafter. During the summer 2019 and fall 2019 semesters at SCC, I met individually with a total of 8 students that were recruited with the assistance of their writing instructors. These students were recommended by their instructors on account of their professional dispositions, their willingness to participate in class, and their self-reported language capabilities. Table 1 below identifies the age, language background, program of study, and career objective of each participant.

**Table 1. Student Participant Profiles**

Name	Age	Language(s) Spoken at Home	Major	Career Goals
Arturo	26	Spanish	Criminal Justice	Lawyer
Chelo	31	Spanish	Culinary Arts	Pastry Chef
Dinh	20	Vietnamese	Hospitality	Hotel manager
Hasina	19	Arabic	Human Services	Social Worker
Ignacio	20	Spanish, English	Business Leadership	Manager
Khalid	20	Arabic	Information Technology	Computer Analyst
Liliya	23	Ukrainian, Russian	Photographic Imaging	Photographer
Vanesa	22	Spanish, English	Architecture	Urban Planner

Two students declined to participate because they did not feel confident in their home language writing abilities; one student withdrew from SCC. Ultimately, five students decided that they wanted to participate, after briefly meeting with me during initial intake sessions. Based on their self-reported bi/multilingual writing abilities, and their self-awareness concerning language usage in general, they were selected as the focal participants of this research study. The five focal participants include: Chelo, Dinh, Khalid, Liliya, and Vanesa. All of the student participants recruited for this study are self-identified LM learners, and they have each taken one or more remedial writing courses at SCC. All of the focal participants agreed to participate in

one, hour-long translanguaging session with me, and I agreed to compensate them for their time with \$20 Amazon gift cards. The focal participants were also amenable to subsequent member checking, via text message and email correspondence, after having completed these sessions.

### **Role of Researcher**

I am a multilingual English/Spanish/Portuguese/Irish speaker. Although English is my native tongue, I first started learning Spanish while I was still an adolescent. Growing up in a working-class, urban Philadelphia neighborhood, I came into regular contact with the city's thriving Puerto Rican community, which in turn left an indelible impression on my childhood, igniting a lifelong passion for language learning. Working my way through college, I struggled to find my place in an exclusive, Ivy League setting. It was during this time that I found myself more drawn than ever before to improving my written command of the Spanish language. For me, the process of language learning brought me closer to my upbringing, and to the community I held dear to my heart. Spanish became my refuge and my home in the middle of an unwelcoming, highly socially stratified college campus. Consequently, I decided on a Spanish major, studied abroad, joined a Spanish language fraternity, and took advantage of every opportunity I could to feel more at home. I persisted, and I proudly earned my status as a first-generation college graduate.

Besides my language and socioeconomic status, I am also a white woman. And I am keenly aware of the privileges afforded by my whiteness, particularly as a white woman, born in the US, who also speaks minority languages. Within a US context, my multilingualism is considered to be a rare and highly valuable skill set; yet the same language skills are not nearly as valued, if the speaker in question happens to be Black or Brown. Double standards abound in terms of the ways that linguistic practices are racialized, not only in the US, but also around the

world. Flores and Rosa (2015) coined the term “raciolinguistic ideologies” to capture the deficient views imparted by the “white gaze” onto non-white speakers of the English language (p. 150); similar ideological forces also hold true for non-white speakers of minoritized languages as well. Bi/multilingualism for non-white speakers does not garner the same linguistic capital as it does for white speakers. As a white, multilingual researcher, I strive to attune my sensibilities by embracing an anti-racist stance, while at the same time, recognizing my own inability to ever fully comprehend the racialized experiences of minoritized learners. At the same time, I also view my own multilingualism as one way to mitigate the distance imparted by racialized contextualizations of language usage. In many ways, my interactions with the participants in this study were guided by my own multilingual instincts, and I believe their views toward me were also shaped by knowing that, to an extent, I could relate to their experiences as bi/multilinguals.

### **Data Collection and Sources**

Within this section, I describe the procedures for acquiring and analyzing this study’s collection of data sources. In Table 2 below, I provide an outline of all data sources, including a timeframe for their acquisition, relative to the nine-month period in which the data collection process extended, from April, 2019, to December, 2020. I have divided the data collection into two separate phases, to distinguish data sources related to the local ecology of the research site from other data sources corresponding to the one-on-one translanguaging sessions. Primary sources of data collected during Phase I include: classroom observations with field notes and audio recordings. For Phase II, primary sources of data include: student participant-produced translations; semi-structured interviews with audio and video recordings; exit surveys. Table 3 then illustrates how each of the primary data sources collected during Phase II map onto the

study's research questions.

**Table 2.** Data Sources and Acquisition Calendar

Phase I Data	April	May	June	July	August	September	October	November	December
<i>Emails with Chair and instructors</i>	X	X	X	X	X				
<i>Remedial writing course syllabi</i>	X								
<i>SCC course catalog, schedules, and student demographic information from SCC website</i>	X								
<i>Field notes and audio recordings from Chair and instructor meetings</i>	X	X							
<i>Classroom observations with field notes and audio recordings</i>			X	X	X				
<i>Handouts, images, and assignment guidelines distributed during class observations</i>			X	X	X				
<b>Phase II Data</b>									
<i>Emails with Chair and instructors</i>			X	X	X	X	X	X	X
<i>Field notes from initial intake sessions with student participants</i>			X	X	X		X	X	X
<i>Student participant-produced translations</i>					X			X	X
<i>Semi-structured interviews with audio and video recordings</i>					X			X	X
<i>Exit surveys</i>					X			X	X



**Table 3.** Mapping Phase II Primary Data Sources onto Research Questions

Primary Data Sources	<b>RQ1:</b> What skills, beliefs, and familiar language practices do LM learners bring with them, when given the opportunity to participate in a translanguaging space (Li, 2011)?	<b>RQ2:</b> What are the potential affordances of a translanguaging approach to remedial writing instruction? How can translation assist LM learners with identifying the complexities, unifying features, and supporting details of a text (Lynn, 2001)?
<i>Student participant-produced translations</i>	X	X
<i>Semi-structured interviews with audio and video recordings</i>	X	X
<i>Exit surveys</i>		X

### Phase I Data Collection & Sources

In the following section, I describe the processes by which primary data sources were obtained during Phase I of the study's data collection. Here I provide a detailed description of the data sources in order to establish the relevance of these materials to developing the study's main research questions.

**Classroom Observations with Field Notes and Audio Recordings.** After gaining IRB approval from SCC in May 2019, I began the process of securing permission from writing instructors in order to observe their classes. Although the Chair provided me with contact information for 10 writing instructors, only 5 were teaching summer courses; I reached out to these 5 instructors so that I could tell them more about the study, and to let them know in advance that I would also seek their help in recruiting student participants.

Professor Becker and Professor Reddy quickly responded to my initial email and expressed their interest in learning more. After meeting with each of them in person at the research site, they agreed to allow me to observe their classes; they also provided me with their course syllabi and assignment calendars. Both of them had been assigned to teach two sections of two different writing classes during the summer 2019 semester: WRIT 003 Advanced Intermediate Writing for English as a Second Language (ESL) Speakers, and WRIT 101 Elementary Composition. I planned to observe each of their assigned course sections, organizing an observation schedule for all four courses.

In terms of content and target audience, WRIT 003 and WRIT 101 share certain learning objectives in common, while differing along the lines of student population. WRIT 003 is a course that meets three days per week for 60 minutes. It is the third and final course in a series of remedial writing courses designed to prepare non-native English-speaking students for entry into WRIT 101, Elementary Composition. Students may enroll in this course if they have successfully completed two pre-requisite courses, WRIT 001 and WRIT 002, or, if they have achieved a high enough score on a departmental placement test. Where success, or failure, in WRIT 003 determines whether or not students will proceed onto their first English class counting toward degree requirements, it is a true “gatekeeper” course for LM learners.

WRIT 101 is another writing course that meets three days per week for 60 minutes. It is the most basic level writing course that counts toward fulfilling Associate’s degree requirements. It is also a required course for all academic majors at SCC. Students earning the appropriate placement test score, or students who have completed WRIT 003 as a pre-requisite, may enroll in this course. Unlike the WRIT 001 through 003 series, WRIT 101 classes include students from both native English and bi/multilingual backgrounds. At present, SCC does not track the

language backgrounds of students enrolling in WRIT 101, and instructors generally do not know if their students speak languages other than English while taking this course.

The 14-week summer 2019 session began during the third week of May, concluding at the end of the third week of August. I met briefly with each instructor during the fourth and fifth weeks of May, namely to get reacquainted in person before visiting their classes, but also to ask follow-up questions about their syllabi, assignments, and student expectations. I gathered written notes and audio recordings from these meetings to keep track of what I learned from each instructor.

Table 4 below provides a summary of the WRIT 003 and WRIT 101 classes that I observed during the summer 2019 semester at SCC.

**Table 4.** Summer 2019 Class Observations

<b>Course</b>	<b>Description</b>	<b>Instructor</b>	<b>Observations</b>
WRIT 003	Level 3 Writing (non-native English-speakers)	Professor Becker	9
WRIT 003	Level 3 Writing (non-native English-speakers)	Professor Reddy	9
WRIT 101	Intro Writing (native/non-native English-speakers)	Professor Becker	9
WRIT 101	Intro Writing (native/non-native English-speakers)	Professor Reddy	9

I attended Professor Becker’s WRIT 003 and WRIT 101 classes for three consecutive weeks in June, and then, at the end of July, beginning of August, I also attended Professor Reddy’s WRIT 003 and WRIT 101 classes for three consecutive weeks. Assuming the role of a passive participant (Spradley, 1980), I typically kept my interactions with the instructors and students to a minimum during these observations, remaining on the sidelines to carefully jot down what was happening, and to describe the level of interaction among all members of the class. Using the iPhone app *AudioNote2*, I recorded speech events (Hymes, 1974) occurring

within the span of the class period. Besides taking written notes during each class I attended, I also drafted analytic memos each week, summarizing the content that was covered during class time, and infusing my own theoretical and personal notes on what I had observed. A sample memo is provided in Appendix D.

My observations and insights led me to further explore New Critical orientations toward textual analysis as a potential underlying framework for remedial writing instruction at SCC, based on the instruction I had witnessed during the classes I attended. In brief, what I observed during class time reflected a pattern of the same skills being assessed, skills that also coincided with what Lynn (2001) signals as hallmarks of a New Critical lens: reading comprehension via the close reading of texts; critical analysis of texts to uncover their unity; composition of thesis-driven arguments in identifying a text's unifying themes and complexities.

Noticeably absent from these class observations, however, was any targeted effort to incorporate students' non-English language profiles into the pedagogical decisions exercised by either of the instructors; in this sense, my observations were consistent with Horner and Trimbur's (2002) and Matsuda's (2006) findings that the complexities of multilingualism in writing are largely ignored in remedial writing instruction. Knowing that studies have called for the implementation of translingual approaches to address language differences in college composition courses (Horner, Lu, Royster, & Trimbur, 2011; Horner & Trimbur, 2002; Matsuda, 2006), I wondered if there was a way to utilize translanguaging pedagogy to further the aims of remedial writing instruction at SCC, while simultaneously adhering to the Chair's policy that my work with students take place outside of regular class time.

Applying what I had learned from observing a total of 36 hours of remedial writing classes and developing a preliminary theory about the analytical lenses framing classroom

instruction, I set out to create a designated translanguaging space (Wei, 2011) where student participants could access their full range of linguistic expertise in demonstrating their comprehension of a text. Modeling a student-centered approach to dynamic language usage, I led a series of one-on-one translanguaging sessions with student participants, supporting the development of their analytical skills, while also engaging with them in language acts to “both reify and disrupt widely circulated societal language ideologies” endemic to traditional remedial writing classroom spaces (Carroll & Mazak, 2017, p. 19).

At the heart of this experiment was the close analysis of a short textual passage in which participants activated critical thinking and metalinguistic skills to reveal its intricacies. More specifically, in line with a New Critical orientation to textual analysis, this passage was selected because of its use of highly figurative language and ironic narration, providing participants with ample opportunities to unpack “the complexities, unifying features, and supporting details” of a text (Lynn, 2001, pp. 41-42), while simultaneously tapping into their critical thinking and metalinguistic capabilities. The eleven-line passage is borrowed from Carmen María Machado’s (2017) short story, “The Husband Stitch,” and recounts a childbirth scene in which a woman delivers her newborn son via cesarean section. In lines 1-5, the reader is introduced to this newborn, or “Little One,” as the woman narrates her surgical experience and first holds her child, who is “the color of a sunset sky, and streaked in red.” The narrator extends her metaphorical descriptions of Little One in lines 6-8, more steadfastly unifying the maternal features of the text by describing “the curls of his fingers, little commas, each of them.” Finally, in lines 9-11, the narrator abruptly breaks with the style of narration introduced in lines 1-8, and via a parenthetical pause, she openly addresses her audience, ironically directing listeners to “cut the tender flap of skin between your index finger and thumb. Afterward, thank them.” In all, this passage gives

participants a variety of options for language reflection, and a chance to think critically about literal and figurative descriptions within the context of a painful, yet beautifully constructed childbirth scene.

Within the translanguaging space, participants were first charged with translating this passage into their home language(s), engaging in codemeshing practices (Canagarajah, 2011) as they deemed fit. Embracing a “dialogical pedagogy,” I subsequently asked participants to reflect on their translations in conjunction with the underlying meaning behind the source text, giving them room “to question their choices, think critically about these choices and their assessment,” and to potentially “develop metacognitive awareness” (Marshall & Moore, 2013, p. 494). Through this combination of translation and reflection, participants engaged in a process of “cross-linguistic analysis” intended to help “raise their metalinguistic awareness, enhance their bilingual proficiencies, and take charge of their rich and dynamic language-learning experiences” (Pujol-Ferran, DiSanto, Núñez Rodríguez, & Morales, 2016, p. 543).

## **Phase II Data Collection & Sources**

In the following section I describe the processes by which primary data sources were obtained during this study’s second phase of data collection, after completing 36 hours of classroom observations at SCC. Where Phase I data sources contributed to the development of the study’s main research questions, Phase II data sources contribute to the study’s subsequent findings. Here I provide a detailed description of Phase II data sources in order to clarify how these materials are related to the investigative aims of this study.

**Student Participant-Produced Translations.** After I had conducted observations of classes with Professor Becker and Professor Reddy, I asked for their assistance with recruiting their students as participants for my dissertation study. I provided them with paper and electronic

flyers for distribution to students, in addition to paper forms for obtaining students' written consent. Both instructors collected students' signed consent forms on my behalf, and I began meeting with students shortly thereafter. During the summer 2019 and fall 2019<sup>10</sup> semesters at SCC, I met individually with a total of 8 students that were recruited with the assistance of their writing instructors; 5 of these students decided that they wanted to participate in my research study.

I met with each of the 8 student participants on two separate occasions, during either the summer 2019 or fall 2019 semester. Our initial meetings served as intake sessions, where I spoke about the context of the research study and outlined the parameters for participation. I reviewed the information contained in the consent forms, and I invited participants to ask me any questions. These initial meetings also allowed me to learn more about students' language profiles in an informal, relaxed setting, where participants were not being audio or video recorded. We typically met in the café area near the main entrance of the lobby, a bustling, crowded space located across from the main entrance of SCC's central building. I chose this space because of its informality, and also because it was convenient for students either headed to class, or on their way off campus. During these initial meetings, I gathered brief written notes on the personal details that participants shared with me regarding their language competencies, educational backgrounds, and career plans. Some participants also shared their impressions of SCC, divulging anecdotal accounts of their experiences as students. All of the participants seemed to express a sense of excitement about being part of a research study. Likewise, all of them demonstrated an eagerness to speak about themselves and their wide range of linguistic knowledge; even though I had only requested 10-15 minutes of participants' time for these initial

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<sup>10</sup> Professor Becker and Professor Reddy continued to help me recruit student participants from their classes during the fall 2019 semester.

meetings, nearly all of these sessions lasted about 30 minutes because the participants simply continued to talk to me. Before parting ways, I scheduled a second meeting with each participant, and agreed upon a more quiet campus location to conduct the translanguaging session.

All of the translanguaging sessions took place in either the campus library or study skills center, in areas that were relatively private, in order to help eliminate background noise or any other distraction. Nearly all of these meetings took place immediately following the participants' scheduled classes, to be respectful of their busy schedules as both students and part-time employees off-campus. Since I had already met with each of the participants, we got to work relatively quickly at the start of each hour-long meeting. Table 5 below outlines the experimental procedures that I followed with each student during the translanguaging sessions.

**Table 5.** Translanguaging Session Protocol

<b>Step</b>	<b>Description</b>	<b>Researcher</b>	<b>Participant</b>	<b>Artifacts</b>	<b>Recording</b>
1	<i>Introduce the text</i>	Explains translation task to participant	Listens to researcher; asks researcher questions	Text excerpt	Audio & video
2	<i>Read the text</i>	Responds to participant's questions; jots down notes	Reads text; jots down notes	Text excerpt; participant's note paper; researcher's field notes	None
3	<i>Write translation</i>	Responds to participant's questions; jots down notes	Writes translation; re-reads text as needed	Text excerpt; participant's note paper; researcher's field notes	None
4	<i>Semi-structured interview</i>	Asks participant questions; adjusts interview protocol based on participant's responses; jots down notes	Responds to researcher's questions; connects text excerpt to note paper to show correspondence	Text excerpt; participant's note paper; researcher's field notes	Audio & video
5	<i>Exit survey</i>	Responds to participant's questions; jots down notes	Responds to survey questions by completing questionnaire	Questionnaire	None
6	<i>Closing</i>	Asks permission to follow-up with	Responds to researcher; provides contact	Researcher's field notes	None



At the beginning of each translanguaging session, I introduced the text excerpt to participants by showing them a copy of the complete collection of short stories, *Her Body and Other Parties*, and by mentioning that it was a National Book Award finalist in 2017. In an effort to provide additional contextualization, and to draw a parallel to participants' own bi/multilingualism and lived experiences, I explained that the text was authored by a bilingual Latinx woman born of Cuban immigrants, who currently resides in Philadelphia, PA. I also flipped the book over to reveal the critics' reviews on the backside, inviting participants to take a look for themselves, prior to engaging with the excerpt I had selected for translation. My intent was to pique their interest in the subject matter of the text, by allowing them to see that the book had not only received critical acclaim, but that it was written by someone who, much like themselves, viewed the world through a bilingual lens. Furthermore, I also wanted to stimulate participants' thinking about the connections between writing and bi/multilingualism, and potentially open their eyes to the rich possibilities for self-expression that could be afforded by their own lenses as bi/multilinguals. In line with constructing a translanguaging space that was supportive of both "creativity and criticality" (Wei, 2011), I wanted to ensure that participants' interactions with the text would be as fruitful as possible.

After introducing the text and its author, I handed participants a printed copy of an 11-line excerpt, depicted below, in Figure 1.

**Figure 1.** Translanguaging Session Text Excerpt

"The Husband Stitch," in <i>Her Body and Other Parties</i> , by Carmen Maria Machado	
1	Little One is born twenty minutes later. They do have to make a cut, but
2	not across my stomach as I had feared. The doctor draws his scalpel down
3	instead, and I feel little, just tugging, though perhaps it is what they have given
4	me. When the baby is placed in my arms, I examine the wrinkled body from head
5	to toe, the color of a sunset sky, and streaked in red.
6	No ribbon. A boy. I begin to weep, and curl the unmarked baby into my
7	chest. The nurse shows me how to nurse him, and I am so happy to feel him
8	drink, to touch the curls of his fingers, little commas, each of them.
9	(If you are reading this story out loud, give a paring knife to the listeners
10	and ask them to cut the tender flap of skin between your index finger and thumb.
11	Afterward, thank them.)

I asked participants to first read the text excerpt in its entirety, and to think about how they would communicate this information in their home languages. I also told them not to worry about accuracy, but rather, to focus on what they deemed most essential to understanding the text. They could codemesh (Canagarajah, 2011), using all of their language knowledge, if they liked, but this was not required. There was no time limit for this part of the exercise, and participants could ask me questions as they worked on their translations. Most participants needed just under 12 minutes to finish writing, although some students needed a bit more time. There were 2 students who repeatedly asked questions concerning vocabulary, and I did my best to convey the meaning of the words that impeded their comprehension of the text. I jotted down these and other observations in my field notes as participants worked to complete their translations.

While the participants were reading and translating the text excerpt, I paused the audio and video recordings that I had begun at the very beginning of our meeting, when I had first introduced Machado's collection of short stories. I wanted to reduce participants' potential for anxiety, hopefully lowering any fears of having to perform a written task while being recorded.

Based on my prior directive that accuracy was not the paramount concern, I did not want to create an atmosphere where participants might have felt judged by their translation abilities.

**Semi-Structured Interviews with Audio and Video Recordings.** After the participants were finished translating, I resumed the audio and video recordings, and proceeded to conduct semi-structured interviews to learn more about the translations that each participant had produced. Operating from the standpoint that translanguaging spaces are “interactionally constructed,” the semi-structured interviews provided me with an access point to tap into participants’ “creative and critical capacity and practice in social interaction” (Wei, 2011, p. 1225), extending their potential for meaning-making even further beyond their written translations. During these interviews, I followed a protocol, depicted below, in Figure 2.

**Figure 2.** Semi-structured Interview Protocol

Post-Translation Questions to Student Participants
<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• Describe how you went about translating the passage into your home language(s).</li><li>• Can you tell me what caused you the most difficulty? How did you navigate this challenge?</li><li>• What was your overall impression of the passage? What is happening? What elements of the text led you to this understanding?</li><li>• Describe the tone of the passage. Is it the same throughout each of the paragraphs, or does it change? Why or why not?</li><li>• Did the translation activity affect your comprehension of the passage? In what way?</li><li>• Did the translation activity cause you to think differently about the way you would write something in your home language(s)? In what way?</li><li>• How did you learn your first language? Did you attend school in your first language? How did you learn to write?</li><li>• How frequently do you use your first language? How comfortable do you feel using your first language?</li><li>• Do you have any additional comments regarding your experience participating in today’s translation activity?</li></ul>

Depending on the responses that participants provided, I would typically reframe subsequent questions, or adjust the line of questioning to suit the order in which participants segued into different topics. For example, if I first asked a participant to describe how they went about translating the passage, and they centered their response around what caused them the most difficulty, I would not deter them from expressing their thoughts for the sake of adhering to the protocol sequence; instead, I would let them speak uninterrupted, and then revisit the original question that I had posed.

I also made every effort to get participants to dig deeper into the rhetorical moves that shaped their translations, asking them to show me explicitly in the source text where their translations corresponded to the original passage. At times, this was challenging for me to follow, particularly with regard to understanding participants' home languages that I am unfamiliar with; in these instances, I had to rely entirely on participants' willingness to explain to me how they interpreted the source text, in conjunction with their knowledge of the mechanics and cultural aspects of their home languages. During these types of interactions with participants, I adopted a backseat approach, temporarily suspending my control of the conversation, and engaging with participants as a co-learner in the translanguaging space. That is to say, by extending participants the opportunity to demonstrate their linguistic know-how, my intent was to give them greater agency in both a creative and critical sense (García & Wei, 2014; Wei, 2011), to demonstrate the extent of their language expertise within a carefully constructed, multimodal context.

In other instances, when participants' home languages included Spanish, my role within the translanguaging space was quite different. While I endeavored to maintain the role of co-learner throughout all of the semi-structured interviews, with Spanish speaking participants, my

role as a co-learner was quite different, mainly because of the insider knowledge I possess as a Spanish speaker myself. Nonetheless, the Spanish language is far from monolithic, and there are varieties that lie outside my range of familiarity. Beyond the scope of language knowledge, my interactions with Spanish speaking participants were also different because we could communicate with each other in a language other than English; when I asked these participants to show me explicitly in the source text where their translations corresponded to the original passage, I could signal a specific portion of their translation by reading it aloud in Spanish. The participants, in turn, would often code-switch in their responses to me, in recognition of our mutual capacity for meaning-making across both languages.

**Exit Surveys.** At the conclusion of the semi-structured interviews, when I felt that I had exhausted the list of questions in the protocol, and that participants had ample time to elaborate on their translations, I would stop the audio and video recording, and hand the participants an exit survey to complete. In an effort to triangulate the data sources produced during the translanguaging sessions, I designed this questionnaire as a means of gathering additional feedback from participants about their experiences during our time spent together.

In the first part of the exit survey, participants were asked to respond to five Likert scale questions related to their participation in the translanguaging activity, indicating the extent to which they agreed or disagreed with each statement; these questions are listed below, in Figure 3.

**Figure 3. Exit Survey Likert Scale Questions**

Likert Scale Questions					
Below are a number of statements regarding language usage during your participation in today's translation exercise. Please read each one and indicate to what extent you agree or disagree with each statement.					
	<i>Strongly Disagree</i>	<i>Disagree</i>	<i>No Opinion</i>	<i>Agree</i>	<i>Strongly Agree</i>
<i>My participation in today's translation exercise enabled me to use knowledge of my first language and the English language.</i>	<i>0</i>	<i>0</i>	<i>0</i>	<i>0</i>	<i>0</i>
<i>Knowledge of my first language allowed me to translate the passage from English into my first language.</i>	<i>0</i>	<i>0</i>	<i>0</i>	<i>0</i>	<i>0</i>
<i>While participating in the translation exercise I became more aware of my bilingual capabilities.</i>	<i>0</i>	<i>0</i>	<i>0</i>	<i>0</i>	<i>0</i>
<i>By participating in the translation exercise, I was able to think about similarities and/or differences between my first language and the English language.</i>	<i>0</i>	<i>0</i>	<i>0</i>	<i>0</i>	<i>0</i>
<i>When I translated the passage into my first language, I was prompted to think about the way I express my bilingualism through my own writing.</i>	<i>0</i>	<i>0</i>	<i>0</i>	<i>0</i>	<i>0</i>

Next, in the second part of the exit survey, participants were asked to respond to two open-ended questions related to their participation in the translanguaging activity; these questions are listed below, in Figure 4.

**Figure 4.** Exit Survey Open-Ended Questions

Open-Ended Questions
Please provide a brief response to each of the following questions:
<i>How much do you think your participation in today's translation exercise reflects your typical writing process? In what way was today's exercise similar or different?</i>
_____
_____
_____
<i>Do you think the translation exercise was a helpful way to think about your individual writing process? Why or why not?</i>
_____
_____
_____

Finally, after participants completed the exit surveys, I asked for their permission to follow up with any potential questions or concerns, writing down contact information for future reference in my field notes. As a modest gesture of appreciation, I gave each participant a \$20 Amazon gift card for their time and effort. I also gave participants a copy of Machado's *Her Body and Other Parties* so that they could continue to read the rest of the story they had just analyzed and translated.

To summarize, the data collected during Phase I of this dissertation study was both foundational and subsequently informed the development of the translanguaging spaces that I co-constructed with individual LM learners during one-on-one sessions. Using the descriptive, ethnographic data that I gathered from classroom observations, I acquired a deeper understanding of the learning objectives, student expectations, and pedagogical constraints of monolingual-based teaching practices that were consistent across the classes I attended; reflective of dominant societal power structures and associated language hierarchies (Bourdieu,

1991), these classes afforded little to no opportunities for LM learners to demonstrate the fullness of their rich linguistic potential. As a means of mitigating these circumstances, I leveraged classroom observation data to develop a translanguaging activity where student participants were required to think about a text in ways that were parallel to the aims of their existing coursework, but with a twist: student participants were explicitly called upon to activate language skills that were otherwise underutilized within the confines of SCC's remedial writing classroom spaces. Analysis of the data collected from individual, Phase II translanguaging sessions will closely examine participants' rhetorical moves as evidenced by their written translations and oral interviews, as well as their open-ended responses to the exit survey. Furthermore, viewing the translanguaging session data as "an intensive, holistic description and analysis of a bounded phenomenon," student participants' translations, interview responses, and exit surveys are analyzed in detail as individual case studies (Merriam, 1998, p. 27) in chapters 4 and 5 of this dissertation.

### **Data Analysis**

This section outlines the data analysis procedures of the dissertation study, concluding with a discussion of the study's trustworthiness. Data analysis was conducted in separate, but closely related stages, and was tied to the main research questions driving this study.

The first research question investigates the creation of translanguaging spaces with LM learners; to address this question, a constant comparative method (Corbin & Strauss, 2008) was applied to the following data sources: field notes, and audio and video recordings of the semi-structured interviews. Data analysis of these sources began with a deductive process involving the a priori "indexing" (Ritchie & Spencer, 1994) of themes aligning with Li's (2011) notion of translanguaging space, followed by an inductive, grounded theory coding (Charmaz, 2006) of



new themes emerging together with existing ones. Using methods of discourse analysis (Gee, 2014), transcripts of the audio and video recordings were closely examined to determine which “dimensions” of Li’s translanguaging space were observable during the translanguaging sessions (p. 1223), along with new dimensions related to my own dialogical contributions throughout the semi-structured interviews.

The second research question examines the affordances of a translanguaging approach to remedial writing instruction, or more specifically, the ways that translation might aid LM learners in performing a textual analysis. In pursuit of this question, I first return to examine participants’ languaging practices during the semi-structured interviews, locating common themes among the skills, beliefs, and familiar language practices that emerged in response to the different translanguaging pedagogies that I enacted with them. Next, grounded theory coding (Charmaz, 2006) was applied to participant-produced translations and accompanying feedback provided by outside translators, in addition to open-ended responses from the exit surveys, and relevant transcript selections from the semi-structured interviews. Adopting a systematic and iterative approach, these data were coded to demonstrate the ways in which translation assisted LM learners with identifying “the complexities, unifying features, and supporting details of a text” (Lynn, 2001, pp 41-42).

Following a case study design (Merriam, 1998), the aforementioned analyses corresponding to the first research question are presented as individual cases, where each case is defined at the participant level. Accordingly, there are five cases presented, accounting for each of the five focal participants in this study. In line with Merriam’s (1998) belief that a case is “a thing, a single entity, a unit around which there are boundaries,” this design is well suited to explore the individual language practices taking place within the pre-set boundaries of a

translanguaging space (p. 27). In my investigation of research question 2, I navigate through each of the five participant-produced translations to construct theory that is based on strong conceptual density, with the eventual goal of achieving theoretical saturation (Glaser, 1978, p. 71), and developing new hypotheses about the impact of a translanguaging approach on remedial writing instruction.

### **Research Question 1: Creating Translanguaging Spaces with LM Learners**

*What skills, beliefs, and familiar language practices do LM learners bring with them, when given the opportunity to participate in a translanguaging space (Li, 2011)?*

The first stage of data analysis was aimed at investigating the creation of translanguaging spaces with LM learners, to uncover the skills, beliefs, and familiar language practices that multilinguals bring with them, when permitted to utilize their full linguistic repertoires. Research question 1 primary data sources included: audio and video recordings of the semi-structured interviews. Using constant comparative methods (Corbin & Strauss, 2008), I continuously reviewed these data sources to make sure that the space I had co-created with student participants reflected Li's (2011) requisite dimensions, and that our collaborative efforts were in fact conducive to "bringing together different dimensions of their personal history, experience and environment, their attitude, belief and ideology, their cognitive and physical capacity into one coordinated and meaningful performance" (p. 1223). Through this process of ongoing analysis, I carefully monitored my language usage after each translanguaging session to determine whether or not I was targeting any of the dimensions outlined by Li; reviewing my field notes, in conjunction with audio and video recordings, I conducted systematic analyses following each session to become more conscientious of my own rhetorical moves, and their impact on participants' capacity for translanguaging. Below, I outline the translanguaging space dimensions

enumerated by Li, along with the a priori coding scheme that I paired with each observable manifestation from participants' speech.

Prior to applying the coding scheme I developed based on Li's (2011) dimensions of translanguaging space, I first transcribed the audio and video recording data from the semi-structured interviews, using Temi, an online speech recognition software. The transcriptions produced by Temi required extensive editing to capture the nuances of participants' speech, in addition to non-English words and phrases. Bearing in mind that transcription is "a selective process reflecting theoretical goals and definitions," combined with the notion that "a more useful transcript is a more selective one" (Ochs, 2014, p. 167), I was both cautious and deliberate about the edits I made to the interview transcripts, while also mindful of my ultimate goal to reveal Li's dimensions of translanguaging space within participants' speech. I also intended to later return to this same interview data in order to address subsequent research questions, and for this reason, I sought to be as comprehensive as possible in my editing of these transcripts. Recognizing the importance of pragmatic factors in assessing the meaning of discourse, I adopted Dressler and Kreuz's (2000) system of transcription conventions in order to more adequately capture how individual utterances were rendered by participants. Table 6 below outlines the specific conventions that were utilized during the transcription process.

**Table 6.** Dressler and Kreuz's (2000) Transcription Conventions Applied to Semi-Structured Interview Data

Symbol	Description
?	Rising intonation
.	Falling intonation
,	Continuing intonation
TEXT	Whole-word stress, or, speech that is louder than surrounding discourse
..	Pause of one-half second or less
...	Pause of more than a half-second
°text°	Words spoken more softly than surrounding discourse
<text>	Words spoken more slowly than surrounding discourse
>text<	Words spoken more quickly than surrounding discourse
:	Prolonging of the prior sound or syllable
-	An abrupt self-termination
=	Latched talk; lack of temporal gap between two speakers
((behavior))	Paralinguistic behavior

**Co-Constructing a Translanguaging Space.** After applying Dressler and Kreuz's (2000) system of transcription conventions to edited selections of participants' semi-structured interview data, I returned to the transcripts once more to begin coding for Li's (2011) dimensions of translanguaging space within participants' speech, bearing in mind that these dimensions could conceivably overlap with one another. Table 7 below includes each dimension, a brief description reflecting Li's definitions of these dimensions, and a color-coded abbreviation that I assigned to participants' speech, to signal the presence of these dimensions.

**Table 7.** Coding Scheme for Li’s (2011) Dimensions of Translanguaging Space

Dimension	Description	Code
Cultural Translation Dimension	Hybridized practices of perspective-taking and/or moments of enlightenment	CT
Cognitive Dimension	Indexicality made evident through metatalk	CG
Socio-Historical Dimension	Personal histories and experiences, attitudes, values and ideologies	SH
Cultural Dimension:		
Creativity	Flouting the rules and norms of behaviour, including the use of language	CV
Criticality	Using available evidence appropriately, systematically, and insightfully to inform views of cultural, social, and linguistic phenomena; to question and problematize received wisdom	CL

Li’s (2011) notion of translanguaging space stems from his conceptualization of languaging, which he defines as “a process of using language to gain knowledge, to make sense, to articulate one’s thought, and to communicate about using language;” applying these same ideas to *translanguaging*, the process of languaging inherits “transformative” potential, enabling bi/multilinguals to go “between different linguistic structures and systems,” and to also go “beyond them” in their pursuit of meaning-making (p. 1223). Part of my motivation for exploring the construct of translanguaging space via the semi-structured interview data is precisely related to the way that Li defines his views toward languaging; his emphasis on sense-making and language talk suggests that metalinguistic awareness is an underlying feature of translanguaging. By providing participants with the time and space to reflect upon the rhetorical strategies they employed in their translations, I was able to directly tap into the metalinguistic

aspects of their written work, in a way that otherwise might not have been possible by simply reviewing the translations alone.

In planning the aforementioned time and space for this reflection to happen, I considered both logistical and theoretical aspects. On the logistics side, I relied on the semi-structured interview protocol (Fig. 2) to be consistent in my interactions with participants, and I constantly compared the interview audio and video recordings throughout the data collection process to monitor the quality of the interviews. Theoretically speaking, I was also guided by the four dimensions that Li (2011) uses to describe the translanguaging space; I aimed to create opportunities for participants to express themselves in as many ways as possible, pushing them further along in their thinking, and encouraging them to elaborate on their decision-making. It is in this way that the translanguaging spaces that I co-constructed with participants were also pedagogically oriented, in that my interactions with participants included planned actions (García & Li, 2014; Williams, 2012) meant to scaffold their understanding of both the language and content of the passage they were tasked with translating. Lewis, Jones, and Baker (2012) use the term “teacher-directed translanguaging” to describe this combination of planning and scaffolding, whereas García and Li (2014) further characterize these practices as “transformative pedagogy” (p. 92). Consequently, this study’s translanguaging spaces were also shaped by translanguaging pedagogies, in addition to the four dimensions outlined by Li.

**Li’s (2011) Four Dimensions of Translanguaging Space.** As previously stated, Li (2011) proposes four dimensions of translanguaging space. Beginning with the first dimension, the notion of cultural translation corresponds to a process first described by Bhabha (1994), where old and new “identities, values, and practices” merge together through a process of hybridization (Li, p. 1223). In coding participants’ speech, I noted signs of hybridity when

participants adjusted their perspective, temporarily placing themselves in the mindsets of others, as they weighed their options concerning word choice and tone. I also associated hybridity with practices marked by moments of enlightenment, where participants incorporated my feedback into their understandings of the textual passage, thereby increasing their capacity for knowledge building. Next, the cognitive dimension, for Li, is less about expanding knowledge, but more concerned with how bi/multilinguals mediate the linguistic skills they possess; forging a deictic role, the cognitive dimension “has a special indexical meaning” for individuals as they determine and enforce “the rules of interaction and interpretation within the space” (p. 1223). Participants’ speech patterns were rife with examples of indexicality, largely made evident through instances of metalinguistic talk, or “commentaries on the language users own practices as lived experience” (Li, 2011, p. 1224). Metatalk, or metalinguistic reflection on language use, is a linguistic concept typically attributed to Swain (1995, 1998). According to Swain (1998), metatalk is “a surfacing of language used in problem solving; that is, language used for cognitive purposes” (p. 69). I detected metatalk in participants’ speech that extended across all five levels of language: phonology, morphology, syntax, semantics, and pragmatics. Elements of the socio-historical dimension were equally commonplace, and consisted of the “personal histories and experiences, attitudes, values, and ideologies” of participants (Li, 2011, p. 1224). I found that participants were keen on sharing their stories with me, and they often framed their translations and understandings of the source text around their own lived experiences. Lastly, the cultural dimension, according to Li, is comprised of two closely related multilingual practices: creativity and criticality. Creativity involves the choice between “following and flouting” standardized language practices, while criticality is concerned with systematic reasoning and the ability to “question and problematize received wisdom” through languaging; Li notes that these concepts

“are intrinsically linked,” and as such, I regularly coded for both creativity and criticality as a consolidated dimension within participants’ speech (p. 1223). García and Li (2014) posit “creative and critical moments” as events that anticipate “a transformation of a cycle of actions,” and this description applies to my interactions with participants in the translanguaging space; creative and critical moments were frequently accompanied by subsequent transformations involving participants’ understanding of the source text (p. 29). Taken as a whole, all four dimensions of the translanguaging space rest upon the premise that translanguaging is “transformative in nature” (Li, 2011, p. 1223), and for this reason, participation in the translanguaging space is closely aligned with the potential for change, and the possibility of charting new avenues of understanding. In the five case studies that follow, I highlight these transformations by linking excerpts from the semi-structured interview transcripts to the different dimensions of translanguaging space, illustrating the diversity of skills, beliefs and familiar language practices that participants utilized across all dimensions.

**Pedagogical Dimensions of Translanguaging Space.** Apart from coding the semi-structured interview data for Li’s (2011) dimensions of translanguaging space, in thinking about the future applicability of this study’s findings to classroom writing spaces, I was also curious to more closely investigate my role in the translanguaging spaces I had co-created with participants. Whether or not a translanguaging approach can be easily integrated into existing pedagogies, it would be misleading to assume that all multilinguals are expertly equipped to engage in translanguaging practices in academic settings, with no need for the further development of their multilingual competencies; to the contrary, translanguaging competence is strengthened through regular opportunities for practice (Canagarajah, 2007, 2011). Moreover, as Canagarajah (2011) points out, when researchers “romanticize the translanguaging practices of students,” they run



the risk of misinterpreting their multilingual strategies, or worse yet, overestimating the “appropriateness and effectiveness” of students’ translanguaging practices (p. 402). How, then, can instructors avoid these pitfalls, while simultaneously supporting the development of students’ translanguaging skills?

From a pedagogical standpoint, researchers suggest adopting a dialogical approach, in the form of consistent peer and instructor feedback, to allow multilinguals to reflect on the impact of their translanguaging practices (Canagarajah, 2011; Marshall & Moore, 2013). In reflecting on my own role in cultivating translanguaging spaces with the student participants in this study, I view my dialogical contributions as an essential component of these spaces, and the foundation upon which I enacted translanguaging pedagogies. Ultimately, these pedagogies influenced the ways in which participants’ skills, beliefs, and familiar language practices became manifest in the translanguaging space. For these reasons, in addition to coding for Li’s dimensions of translanguaging space, I also engaged in open coding to keep track of the different forms of translanguaging pedagogies that I enacted with participants; assigning a set of novel categories to each of these forms, I later conducted axial coding to more easily discern the relationship between both sets of codes (Corbin & Strauss, 2008). Table 8 below lists the categories and definitions I generated for these different translanguaging pedagogies, along with the abbreviations that I assigned to signal the presence of each category.

**Table 8.** Coding Scheme for Researcher’s Categories of Translanguaging Pedagogies

Category	Description	Code
Affirming	Affirms participant’s existing knowledge/practices related to the source text/translation	A
Affirming and Extending	Affirms participant’s existing knowledge/practices related to the source text/translation, and seeks to extend capabilities for meaning-making	AE
Bridging Out-of-School Literacies	Bridges participant’s out-of-school literacy practices with the source text/translation	BR
Co-Learning	Adopts the position of co-learner to transfer greater agency to the participant, in the co-construction of the translanguaging space	CL

Lastly, for each of the five focal participants in this study, I reviewed the combination of codes assigned to their semi-structured interview transcripts in order to respond to the parameters of research question 1, extrapolating the skills, beliefs, and language practices that individual LM learners brought with them to the translanguaging space. Later, to respond to research question 2, I also integrated these findings in a move toward abstraction, to address the potential affordances of a translanguaging approach to remedial writing instruction.

### **Research Question 2: Translation and Textual Analysis**

*What are the potential affordances of a translanguaging approach to remedial writing instruction? How can translation assist LM learners with identifying the complexities, unifying features, and supporting details of a text (Lynn, 2001)?*

Where the first stage of data analysis was aimed at investigating the creation of translanguaging spaces with LM learners, the second stage was centered around the potential

affordances of a translanguaging approach to remedial writing instruction, along with the ways that, in the future, translation tasks might be leveraged to assist LM learners with coursework centered around textual analysis. Based on classroom observations at the research site that revealed New Critical orientations toward textual analysis, in this second stage of data analysis, I wanted to see how the participants' written translations might have offered insights into "the complexities, unifying features, and supporting details" of the passage selected for translation (Lynn, 2001, pp. 41-42). Research question 2 primary data sources included: audio and video recordings of the semi-structured interviews, student participant-produced translations, and exit surveys.

To describe the potential affordances of a translanguaging approach, I first returned to the student participants' semi-structured interviews and conducted a constant comparative analysis (Corbin & Strauss, 2008) of the different translanguaging pedagogies that I enacted with them, linking common themes related to the process of writing. Rather than analyzing these pedagogies at the individual participant level, I elected to compare across the participants to see how our dialogical exchanges might contribute to identifying the broader affordances of each pedagogical approach. To facilitate this analysis, I returned to the same coded interview transcripts that I utilized to respond to research question 1, and I more closely compared the languaging moves that were taking place in proximity to each of the enacted translanguaging pedagogies. Bearing in mind the combined social and cognitive aspects of Li's (2011) dimensions of translanguaging space, I sought to more clearly articulate connections to writing instruction that were supported by social cognitive theories of writing (Flower, 1994; Myhill, 2011; Myhill & Newman, 2016; Pajares & Johnson, 1994; Zimmerman & Bandura, 1994; Zimmerman & Risemberg, 1997). Table 9 below lists the potential affordances in writing instruction that I related to each of the

pedagogies that were enacted with student participants in the translanguaging space.

**Table 9.** Connecting Translanguaging Pedagogies to Writing Instruction

Translanguaging Pedagogies	Potential Affordances in Writing Instruction
Affirming	Promoting self-efficacy
Affirming & Extending	Extending lines of enquiry
Bridging Out of School Literacies	Invoking self-regulation
Co-Learning	Considering readers' perspectives

In linking together the abovementioned translanguaging pedagogies with potential affordances in writing instruction, I not only sought to ground my thinking in social cognitive theories of writing, but also the practical considerations of writing instructors in community colleges. My intention was to describe ways that translanguaging could benefit LM learners in their everyday experiences in remedial writing classrooms. Beginning with notions of self-efficacy in writing (Pajares & Johnson, 1994; Zimmerman & Bandura, 1994; Zimmerman & Risemberg, 1997), I saw links between my own affirming practices and the belief that a writer's sense of their capabilities in writing are intimately connected. When I combined my affirmations with practices that extended participants' metatalk (Swain, 1995, 1998) about their written translations, participants were also afforded opportunities to extend lines of enquiry into their interpretations of the source text; these extended periods of reflection are the sort of opportunities that Myhill (2011) describes as part of the revision process, and generally speaking, part of the metalinguistic nature of writing itself. Taking the revision process a step further, self-regulation in writing (Zimmerman & Risemberg, 1997) describes what writers do

themselves to take active steps toward improving their craft. In the context of this research study, I saw one participant, Chelo, embrace this regulatory process as I attempted to bridge her out of school literacies with the translation task. Finally, another potential affordance concerning reader perspectives also emerged in relation to my efforts to become a co-learner with participants in the translanguaging space. Audience recognition is a paramount concern for all writers, and my dialogical contributions as a co-learner were similar to what Flower (1994) describes as “collaborative planning” in writing, a practice in which both teacher and student engage in “rhetorical, reflective thinking,” moving past the typical solitary practice of fleshing out one’s thoughts in writing (p. 143); a primary goal of such thinking is to encourage student writers to assume different readers’ perspectives, in the same way that my role as a co-learner in the translanguaging space inspired participants to consider potential readers’ interpretations of their written translations. In sum, a constant comparison of each of the translanguaging pedagogies that I enacted with the focal participants showed how my efforts drew them closer toward many of the exact same objectives that students encounter in typical remedial writing classrooms.

Next, after generating a list of potential affordances that were largely centered in my own practices as a co-structor of translanguaging space, I sought to achieve greater balance in my approach to the study’s data analysis. Shifting my attention to the written artifacts produced by student participants, I elected to focus more closely on their written translations and open-ended survey responses in order to show how translation might assist LM learners with identifying “the complexities, unifying features, and supporting details of a text” (Lynn, 2001, pp. 41-42). Revisiting the translation exercise and its application to textual analysis, specifically in line with a New Critical lens, I sought to more clearly articulate how the student participants demonstrated their understanding of the text excerpt via their written translations. By constantly comparing

participants' written translations, in conjunction with feedback from outside translators, I integrated my observations from the translanguaging space to assess student participants' comprehension of, arguably, the most complex feature of the source text: its use of ironic language in lines 9-11. Likewise, to assess students' comprehension of the unifying features of the source text, I considered their renderings of the maternal and childbirth-related features in their written translations, largely focusing on lines 1-8 of the source text. In terms of supporting details, I also focused on lines 1-8, incorporating feedback that I received from the outside translators regarding the overall functionality of participants' written translations. Bearing in mind the differences in training and professional perspectives of the translators versus the participants, I aimed to distill the translators' extensive feedback, focusing instead on the varying degrees of success that participants achieved in conveying the essential meanings of the passage.

In an attempt to triangulate the primary data sources linked to this second research question, and to capture the voices of participants themselves, I also incorporated feedback from participants' open-ended survey responses. I wanted to incorporate the participants' own perspectives in order to more thoroughly evaluate the utility of translation within a New Critical framing of textual analysis. The exit surveys contained two open-ended questions, and the first question consisted of two parts: "how much do you think your participation in today's translation exercise reflects your typical writing process? In what way was today's exercise similar or different?" By asking participants to reflect on their typical writing process, I wanted them to consider their written translations in the context of their usual written tasks. Moreover, I intentionally stated "writing *process*" to encourage them to structure their responses in thinking about the stages leading up to, and including, the act of writing. In particular, I was curious to see if they identified similarities and/or differences in their pre-writing strategies that might shed

light on relevant metalinguistic connections between translation and other written tasks.

The second open-ended survey question also consisted of two parts: “do you think the translation exercise was a helpful way to think about your individual writing process? Why or why not?” In this second question, I more pointedly ask the participants to share their thoughts about the usefulness of the translation exercise, specifically as it relates to their own personal experience. Again, I opted to situate writing as a “process” to encourage participants to include both the act of writing and the thinking that preceded their putting pen to paper. My intention was to learn more about the ways that participants viewed their writing processes in general, and to see whether or not they made a distinction between processes tied to written translation and traditional writing class tasks.

## CHAPTER 4

### LEVERAGING LM LEARNERS' FUNDS OF KNOWLEDGE IN A CO-CONSTRUCTED TRANSLANGUAGING SPACE

This chapter addresses the research question: *What skills, beliefs, and familiar language practices do LM learners bring with them, when given the opportunity to participate in a translanguaging space (Li, 2011)?* This question arises from the perspective that LM learners possess a wide range of sophisticated language skills, beliefs, and practices that are intimately tied to their bi/multilingual capabilities; in an effort to raise students' awareness of the funds of knowledge (Moll, Amanti, Neff, & González, 1992) at their disposal, participants were tasked with a brief translation exercise, to subsequently engage their languaging competencies. At the conclusion of this exercise, I debriefed with individual participants through semi-structured interviews; bearing in mind Li's (2011) belief that translanguaging spaces are "interactionally constructed," I conducted these interviews with the explicit intention to stimulate participants' "creative and critical capacity," via an interactive medium (p. 1225). In order to uncover the skills, beliefs, and familiar language practices that participants brought with them to the translanguaging space, I analyze the field notes, and audio and video recordings of the semi-structured interviews, focusing my attention on the exchange of discourse between myself and the five focal participants.

Following a case study design (Merriam, 1998), this chapter presents substantial evidence of how the translanguaging spaces that I co-created with participants consistently reflected each of the four dimensions that Li (2011) uses to describe the translanguaging space, including: cultural translation; cognitive; socio-historical; and cultural, the latter encompassing the sub-dimensions of creativity and criticality. In each of the five cases studies that follow, I trace the



presence of these dimensions, demonstrating how they help to illuminate the skills, beliefs, and familiar language practices that participants brought with them to the translanguaging space. Similarly, I also note how my collaborative efforts with participants facilitated their performances within the translanguaging space, arguing that my dialogical contributions influenced the ways in which participants leveraged their funds of knowledge during the semi-structured interviews. I present findings for each of the five focal participants, identifying patterns of their speech that corresponded to the different dimensions of translanguaging space. Within these dimensions, I further analyzed participants' speech to better understand the extent to which they accessed their full linguistic repertoires. Based on this analysis, I enumerate the specific skills, beliefs, and familiar language practices that participants leveraged during the semi-structured interviews. Finally, I compare findings across all of the individual case studies, with the purpose of more broadly identifying the funds of knowledge that participants brought with them to the translanguaging space.

### **Case Study 1: Co-Constructing a Translanguaging Space with Chelo**

Chelo, a 31-year-old Dominican American woman, rushed toward the library table, backpack and two tote bags in hand, plopping down her belongings with a loud thump onto the old solid wood surface. As a mother, and a part-time student in her second semester of the culinary arts program, Chelo leads a very busy life. “It’s been one of those days,” she says, sitting down for our meeting, on a chilly winter afternoon, just one week before winter break. The upcoming holidays had brought an onslaught of foot traffic to the food pantry where she works six days per week, delaying her a few minutes from arriving on time. I ask her about her day so far, and she tells me about a newsletter that she was translating into Spanish for the food pantry. Located in one of the most linguistically diverse neighborhoods in the city, Chelo estimates about half of the community speaks Spanish as their first language, followed by Vietnamese, Arabic, and Khmer as the next most common languages. She explains that the newsletter has been challenging because some of the words might have different meanings for people from different countries. “You know, different people, even though they um, they all speak Spanish, Mexicans have different words that you use. Puerto Ricans, Dominicans too. So how do I get it across so they *all* understand?” Even before we delve into the translation exercise that I have planned, Chelo raises an important concern for all translators, namely, knowing one’s audience. But she also reveals her knowledge about the variations that exist among different Spanish dialects, which could potentially limit an individual’s ability to comprehend certain words and phrases.

During our interview, Chelo again divulged similar thoughts about comprehensibility, while reflecting on her process of preparing a written translation of the passage I had given to her. In the excerpt below, I remind her of what she told me earlier about her newsletter in an

attempt to bridge her out-of-school literacy practices with the translation task at hand.

Alexis:	1 it kind of sounds like your ne:wsletter,	Bridging Out-of-School Literacies
	2 like while you were writing, you also considered your re:aders.	
	3 can you tell me more?	
Chelo:	4 yes. I mean, I try to picture the words like..	<b>Cultural Translation</b>
	5 if I was saying this to somebody who's speaking Spa:nish,	
	6 how would they.. like vi:sualize it.	

In this example, Chelo adjusts her perspective as the writer/translator, and assumes the point-of-view of the reader, in order to assess how she will approach the task of translation. Focusing her attention on the word level, she ponders what her translation will communicate to the reader. Her languaging also reflects an intriguing combination of modalities, where she blends “saying” with “picturing/visualizing,” suggesting a mixture of both written and spoken words. All of these aspects of Chelo’s response exhibit the hybridity that is characteristic of the cultural translation dimension of Li’s (2011) translanguaging space. Particularly with regard to her emphasis on the reader’s interpretation of her writing, the translation task for Chelo was largely an exercise in merging together the essence of the source text, with the collective sensibilities of the Spanish speaking world. She is arguably driving toward what Bhabha (1994) calls “the untranslatable that goes beyond the transferal of subject matter between cultural texts or practices,” as she repeatedly sought to transfer specific meanings from the source text to her own written translation; Chelo’s “drive for cultural translation” resulted in the creation of “hybrid sites of meaning,” where she negotiated new understandings of the source text that she believed would be relatable to her readers (p. 163).

While Chelo remained persistent in her efforts to achieve understandability, her languaging also frequently signaled the metalinguistic knowledge that she incorporated into her

written translation. According to Nagy and Anderson (1995), metalinguistic awareness refers to the “ability to reflect on and manipulate the structural features of language” (p. 2); in the excerpt below, Chelo reflects on some of the structural differences she sees between the Spanish and English languages.

Chelo:	7 I didn't- like some words in Spanish like,	<div style="background-color: #00FF00; padding: 2px;">Socio-historical</div> <div style="background-color: #FFFF00; padding: 2px;">Cognitive</div>
	8 in MY culture, like the word is basically the same,	
	9 but you proNO:unce it differently,	
	10 or it's just wri:ttten a little bit differently.	
	11 but there are some words that are completely different.	
	12 so I think it- just, you proNO:unce it differently.	

For Chelo, there are very strong similarities between the two languages, so much so, that she views some words as “basically the same.” Although she doesn’t specifically reference the term cognate here, it appears that she is describing words that share parallel meanings, in spite of their structural differences. She goes on to point out these differences, calling attention to the phonological and orthographic components that distinguish one language from the other. Furthermore, she also alludes to an awareness of false cognates by stating that “there are some words that are completely different.” Chelo’s inventorying of the structural differences between languages corresponds to the “special indexical meaning” that Li (2011) ascribes to the cognitive dimension of the translanguaging space; her knowledge of these structures helped to establish “the rules of interaction and interpretation within the space,” as she considered the decision-making behind her word choices (p. 1223).

Besides pointing out structural differences, Chelo’s languaging is also situated within the socio-historical dimension in the way that she links the Spanish language to her own lived experiences. With added emphasis on the “my,” she chooses “my culture” as a means of anchoring her mother tongue to her Dominican heritage. These two simple words, when combined, echo Bourdieu’s (1977) notion of habitus, the “systems of durable, transposable

dispositions” that are shaped by the social worlds of individuals (p. 72). By stating “my culture,” Chelo is not only invoking her own structural knowledge of the Spanish language, but also speaking on behalf of those individuals who inhabit the same social world to which she belongs.

Chelo’s reliance upon the social and historical factors influencing her languaging was a common trend throughout her performance in co-constructing the translanguaging space. In fact, more than any of the other dimensions, her speech was primarily situated in the socio-historical dimension as she elaborated on the language moves that she took up in her translation. From the very beginning of the semi-structured interview, she infused her own personal history in responding to my question about the steps she took to translate the source text:

Chelo:	13 um.. I translated the passage um	<b>Socio-historical</b>
	14 to the best of MY understanding,	
	15 of what she was trying to say.	
	16 and then with some of the phy:sical words- because	<b>Creativity</b> <b>Criticality</b> <b>Socio-historical</b>
	17 if I translate too li:teral sometimes,	
	18 it doesn't MEAN the same thing in Spanish.	
	19 um.. and also um trying to figure out the RIGHT word- because	<b>Creativity</b> <b>Criticality</b> <b>Socio-historical</b>
	20 >basic Spanish words I use every day come to me e:asily but<	
	21 words that I don't really u:se, sometimes I forget.	
22 you know I was um,	<b>Socio-historical</b>	
23 I was born in New York City, Brooklyn New York,		
24 but I was ra:ised in the Dominican Republic.		
25 as a chi:ld I went to school there.		
26 so I know both languages well.. but uh		
27 I do speak- >like I said I speak to my aunt and my cousins		
28 in Spa:nish and that but< I don't speak it like ALL day		
29 or speak about a LOT of things so..		

Here, Chelo delivers a response to my question that seems to diverge from both the source text and the translation that she prepared. Without priming her to speak about her typical translation tasks, her home country, or her family members, she frames her answer by pinpointing the underlying sociocultural factors that have shaped her analytical lens as a translator. Instead of

outlining a superficial, step-by-step list of procedures, she goes beneath the surface, to reveal key aspects of her lived experiences that influenced the steps she took in writing the translation. As Bourdieu (1977) states, “in practice,” the habitus reflects “history turned into nature,” and for Chelo, her life history is deeply embedded within her repertoire of linguistic practices, including translation, to the extent that these practices appear to be imbued with “the second natures of habitus” (pp. 78-79). Nearly every time she was prompted to speak about her translation, or her understanding of the source text, Chelo would infuse her own background knowledge, values, and language ideologies in formulating her responses. Owing largely to these attributes, her insights toward language, translation, and the content of the source text were rich with sophistication.

In addition to social and historical factors, Chelo’s response in the excerpt above also reveals a degree of tension with regard to locating what she terms the “physical words,” devising a contrast between her comprehension of the source text, and the ability to produce the accompanying language to express this understanding. She goes on to further define this tension, weighing the consequences of too “literal” a translation, that would result in an assembly of words that, frankly, “doesn’t mean the same thing in Spanish.” Chelo then voices concern over the challenge of figuring out “the right word,” alluding to the belief that there are, in fact, “right” words, as well as wrong ones, that can be chosen. Her repeated hedging over word choice aligns with the creativity and criticality that is emblematic of translanguaging practice. The amount of decision-making behind her language usage suggests a high level of creativity, along with a critical evaluation of the potential outcomes of these decisions. In other instances, however, Chelo’s insistence on securing the “right” words, at times, hindered her ability to reach beyond word-for-word equivalents in her own translanguaging.

The excerpt below further illustrates Chelo’s creativity and criticality in the translanguaging space, while also providing an example where her focus on word choice seemed to restrict her translanguaging capacity.

Chelo:	30 um like the word sunset and um, sunset sky.	Creativity Criticality
	31 I don't know how to °exactly°. I know that- um	
	32 <i>atardecer</i> means like the e:vening, like the su:nset,	
	33 but I don't know exactly the wo:rd for sunset.	
Alexis:	34 okay, so you're thinking-maybe there's a di:fference there.	
	35 like that- <i>atardecer</i> is the word for e:vening,	
	36 but then su:nset would be di:fferent word?	
Chelo:	37 a different word. yeah.	Socio-historical Creativity Criticality
	38 you know, you know we just talk about TI:me,	
	39 like- you know it's the e:vening, it's the night, being nighttime,	
	40 but we don't talk about necessarily,	
	41 the sun is SE:ttng right now.. yeah.	
Alexis:	42 so the sun is setting right now,	
	43 that's just- it's a totally different expression for you.	
Chelo:	44 it's different. yeah.	Creativity Criticality

Although she begins by saying that the word *atardecer* “means like the evening, like the sunset,” she follows up by stating that she is unsure of “exactly the word for sunset.” In Spanish, the word *atardecer* is both a noun and a verb; to make matters more confusing, as a noun, it can mean sunset or evening, while as a verb, it can mean to get dark, or to become nightfall. There are also multiple other ways to express the word sunset, including *puesta del sol* and *anocheecer*. It is not entirely surprising, then, that the phrase “the color of a sunset sky” caused a considerable amount of confusion for Chelo, especially bearing in mind the polysemy of the words occupying her mental lexicon (Hall, Smith, & Wickasono). At the same time, her initial statement regarding the meaning of *atardecer* was indeed a correct assertion, and her usage of *atardecer* to form the expression “sunset sky” made sense; the source of her confusion appears to be linked to the fact

that in the source text, the word sunset acts as adjective modifying the word sky. Where the author has invoked a fair amount of poetic license in establishing this imagery, Chelo appears bewildered upon encountering such unfamiliar phrasing. She sticks to the more familiar terrain of word-level knowledge, focusing all of her attention on locating “exactly the word for sunset.” During this search, Chelo grasps toward all of the background information within her reach, including the social and historical realms; in an attempt to justify her misgivings about the word *atardecer*, she makes the claim that “we just talk about time,” bolstering her argument with the addition of a collective “we.” Shifting away from “the color of a sunset sky,” she has creatively and critically managed to make meaning; by contributing her personal attitude and experiences, Chelo has also cleverly avoided the more difficult task of interpreting a complex adjectival phrase.

In the previous example, I could have interjected when Chelo revealed her initial confusion over the word for sunset. As a Spanish speaker myself, I was immediately aware that *atardecer* could be used to express both the noun sunset, and to indicate that the sun is setting. However, I chose not to insert my perspective for two main reasons. In the first place, I was mindful of my interactions with all Spanish-speaking participants, and I avoided directly assessing participants’ written translations, or using my insider knowledge in a corrective capacity; this does not mean that I avoided speaking Spanish or reading directly from participants’ translations, but I did my best to carefully manage my dialogical contributions, focusing primarily on participants’ engagement with the source text. In the excerpt below, for instance, I used my knowledge of Spanish to read aloud from Chelo’s translation, as she engaged in dynamic language usage to outline her translation process, exhibiting additional moments of creativity and criticality in the translanguaging space.



Alexis:	45 okay, so then you said <i>como comas, cada unos</i> .. okay.	Affirming and Extending
	46 and then what did she say right before that..	
	47 let's go back and look at the book.	
	48 ((turns pages))... alright so this waaas..	
	49 where does this correspond? this is..	
Chelo:	50 like commas.	Creativity Criticality
	51 sentir las curvas de los dedos- like.. in the shape of them..	
	52 ((bends fingers and thumb of one hand to make a little "c" shape))	
	53 little commas.	
Alexis:	54 yes, okay. and that's kind of an interesting image, right?	Affirming and Extending
	55 ((reads from the passage)) to touch the curls of his fingers,	
	55 especially since she's talking about- she's describing a body part.	
Chelo:	56 yeah.	Creativity Criticality
	57 and so I put <i>sentir las curvas de sus dedos</i> ,	
	58 so <i>curvas</i> , like the curves.	
	59 like a literal translation of the curves.	

Here, as in the previous example, I withheld judgment on Chelo's choice of the word *curvas* to describe "the curls of his fingers." Instead, I pushed her to more closely interact with the imagery of the source text, signaling that "curls" were an interesting way to describe a body part. This example leads to my second reason for not offering my opinions of Spanish-speaking participants' translanguaging.

In the spirit of translanguaging pedagogies, I wanted to honor "a commitment to multidiscursivity," while interacting with participants in the translanguaging space, and this meant that I welcomed all of their languaging contributions, including their "discourses, concerns, and topics of interest" (García & Li, 2014, p. 94). In Chelo's case, this entailed hearing her out, as she explained her process of translation, and divulged all of the supporting details that inspired her writing. At the same time, I also wanted to push her toward a greater awareness of her skill at translating figurative language, encouraging her to more closely interact with the source text in formulating her responses; to do this, I would either rephrase, or repeat, what she

had just said, adding a follow-up question to keep our dialogue moving forward. I named this practice “affirming and extending” to emphasize the fact that participants each brought with them an assortment of linguistic tools at their disposal; by participating in the translanguaging space, they extended their bi/multilingual awareness, having had the opportunity to utilize and sharpen these tools for future use.

### Conclusions about Co-Constructing a Translanguaging Space with Chelo

Chelo accessed her funds of knowledge in an assortment of ways as we co-constructed a translanguaging space together. Table 4 below connects a sampling of these funds to the dimensions of translanguaging space where they were most recognizable, in addition to the translanguaging pedagogies that I enacted to promote her usage of the linguistic resources that were already in her possession.

**Table 10.** Connecting Chelo’s Funds of Knowledge to the Translanguaging Space

Skills, Beliefs, & Familiar Language Practices	Dimensions of Translanguaging Space	Translanguaging Pedagogies
Perspective-taking in writing	Cultural Translation Dimension	Bridging out-of-school literacies
Knowledge of phonological and orthographic features of language; cognate awareness	Cognitive Dimension	
Translation (written/spoken); habitual language practices	Socio-Historical Dimension	
Critical evaluation of word choice and subsequent outcomes	Cultural Dimension (creativity/criticality)	Affirming and Extending

In summary, Chelo demonstrated a clear understanding of perspective-taking in writing, making careful adjustments to her choice of language, and assuming the viewpoint of the reader as she developed her translation of the source text; this was perhaps her strongest skill, in terms

of assessing how to approach the translation assignment. To raise her awareness of this strength, I attempted to bridge an out-of-school literacy practice of newsletter translating to the task of literary translation, reminding her that she similarly considered her audience while preparing a translation for the food pantry. Chelo also had a strong sense of structural differences between Spanish and English, articulating the phonological and orthographic components of each language. Likewise, she intimated her knowledge of cognates and false cognates by noting the similar and different meanings attributed to words sharing common structures. For Chelo, the social and historical factors contributing to her languaging practices were particularly resonant. She spoke at length about regularly producing translations for her job and for family members, in both written and oral formats. And her frequent invocation of the collective “we” when speaking about habitual language practices added a sense of authority to her language choices, conveying a sense that her decision-making reflected the cultural consciousness of her entire language community. Lastly, Chelo also demonstrated a significant level of creativity and criticality while debating over word choice and the impact of specific words on a potential reader’s comprehension. Closely related to her sense of perspective-taking in writing, she was highly preoccupied with achieving understandability throughout our time together in the translanguaging space. Sometimes her preoccupation with word choice seemed to weaken her creativity and criticality; I attempted to intervene by attuning her focus back toward the larger picture, to develop an appreciation of the imagery of the source text, and to think about how to best capture those same sentiments in writing.

## Case Study 2: Co-Constructing a Translanguaging Space with Vanesa

When asked whether or not the mood of the source text factored into her process of translation, Vanesa leaned back in the chair, and thought for a moment before responding. “I mean, I wasn't thinking about recreating it, but I was thinking like, about *her*. Like I was imagining *her*.” Growing more animated in her tone, and with eyes widened, she added, “well maybe she's *scared* because she has a *baby*. And then she says she feels good when she's feeling him *drinking*. And then I was like, just imagining, but also thinking I have NO idea what that feels like!”

Vanesa, a 22-year-old woman of Dominican and Puerto Rican heritage was highly enthusiastic about participating in a research study, especially when she learned that she would have the opportunity to translate part of a short story authored by a writer who shared Spanish-speaking ancestry. A full-time student in her second semester of the architecture program, her creative interests also include poetry and writing, and she described herself as someone who would love to journal more, if she only had the time. I could detect some of these same interests in the way that I witnessed Vanesa insert herself so fully into the source text, embracing the narrator's condition as a new mother with awe and curiosity. Wondering aloud if the narrator felt “scared” by motherhood, she not only attempted to enter the mindset of the character, but also considered the possible emotions that she was feeling, temporarily adopting a hybridized stance as a reader, and as a mother holding her baby for the first time. Vanesa reacted with surprise and a sense of unfamiliarity when reading that the mother felt “good” while “feeling him drinking,” not having personally experienced nursing herself. In describing the characteristics of cultural translation, Bhabha (1994) contends that “the 'given' content becomes alien and estranged” (p. 164); in Vanesa's case, her estrangement with the source text was at times due to the unfamiliar

theme of motherhood, the process of giving birth, or a combination of the two. But in other instances, her distancing from the story’s content suggested a breakdown in comprehension, potentially stemming from gaps in vocabulary knowledge, or general confusion over the use of figurative language.

In the excerpt below, I walk through Vanesa’s translation with her, in an attempt to help her understand what the author meant by the expression “the curls of his fingers.”

Alexis:	1 whe:re were the curls again?	Affirming and Extending
	2 oh, here. ((reads from the passage)) to touch the cu:rls of his fingers.	
	3 okay, so you started to say <i>de tocar los.. de sus dedos</i> ,	
	4 <i>pequeñas comas</i> . got it. okay.	
	5 yeah, that's ano:ther example	
	6 where it's kind of like a metaphor, right?	
	7 she's saying, I can picture his hands maybe looking like this.	
	8 it's not like they're a:ctual curls, but he's curling up his fi:ngers.	
Vanesa:	9 like this? ((curls up fingers on each hand to make little “c’s”))	<b>Cultural Translation</b>
Alexis:	10 YES. exactly.	Affirming

Here, I bring Vanesa back to the source text when I notice that she has left a blank space marked with a line, separating “*tocar los*” and “*de sus dedos*,” effectively indicating her confusion over the word “curls.” After reading the complete expression in the source text, “to touch the curls of his fingers,” I also read aloud from her translation, building up to my explanation of the author’s use of figurative language, by first affirming what Vanesa has accomplished thus far in her translation. By using the word “metaphor” in my subsequent explanation, I was also trying to extend her knowledge via the use of academic language, to make a connection to her in-class learning objectives; as a student currently enrolled in a remedial writing class, she would likely encounter this same terminology. Vanessa renders her understanding by physically gesturing in a way that is similar to the actions described in the source text, signaling her enlightened state through physical embodiment. As noted previously, in coding participants’ semi-structured

interview data, I associated the hybridity of Li’s (2011) cultural translation dimension with practices marked by moments of enlightenment; in this example, Vanesa incorporated my verbal feedback into her comprehension of the source text, and demonstrated her knowledge uptake through a physical response. When she curled up her fingers, making little “c’s” with each of her hands, Vanessa communicated that she had reached an understanding of the source text’s metaphor.

I continued to exercise similar pedagogical strategies with Vanesa in prompting her to reflect on the larger ideas that guided her process of translation. My sustained efforts eventually led her to engage in the metatalk associated with Li’s (2011) cognitive dimension of translanguaging space. In the excerpt below, I attempt to extend her thinking beyond vocabulary differences, so that she could gain a better sense of the underlying processes permeating through her written translation, along with a recognition of her own skill set as a translator.

Alexis:	11 so other than the vocabulary, 12 like just thinking about some of the la:rger ideas, 13 what else do you think was really important 14 when you were writing the translation?	Affirming and Extending
Vanesa:	15 uhh to make se:nse.. because.. you know in um.. 16 like how you talk in E:nglish 17 is not how you talk in Spa:nish sometimes. 18 like when you tra:nslate, it doesn't make SE:NSE 19 in the other language. 20 so you have to write it in a way 21 that makes se:nse in the language you are ta:lking. 22 so I changed, you know, the O:Rder of some words, 23 and some words- the meaning, I put one that we will use, 24 like something that we U:SE.. 25 yeah. to try to, that it makes se:nse.	<b>Cognitive</b> <b>Socio-historical</b>

Vanesa’s immediate response is centered on sense-making, and revolves around the notion that there are distinct ways to achieve sense-making in English and in Spanish. Her response also highlights a metalinguistic awareness of the pragmatic features of language, as she points out

“how you talk in English is not like how you talk in Spanish sometimes,” conveying a perspective that meaning is constructed differently in each language. Vanesa suggests that the differences between English and Spanish are made apparent “when you translate,” and that “it doesn’t make sense in the other language;” here she appears to refer to the process of literal translation, or semantic translation (Hall, Smith, & Wickasono, 2017), a text-focused style of translation that establishes the literal meaning of the source text, without attending to implicitly or figuratively expressed features. Where attention to the implicit features of a text would help to bridge meaning across languages, a translation such as the one Vanesa describes would not be as effective at communicating the intended meaning of a speaker, or a text. She goes on to offer a solution to the challenge of sense-making in translation, by stating “you have to write it in a way that makes sense in the language you are talking;” here, she points to communicative translation (Hall, Smith, & Wickasono, 2017) as a means of preserving the intended meaning of a speaker, addressing the potential need for adjustments at the word level. Again, signaling her metalinguistic awareness, this time via an understanding of syntax and semantics, Vanesa notes that sometimes she altered “the order of some words,” along with some of the words themselves.

Perhaps the most interesting aspect of Vanesa’s attention to the semantic level of language relates to her comments about word choice. Similar to Chelo’s use of the collective “we,” Vanesa also traverses the socio-historic dimension of the translanguaging space in saying “I put one that *we* will use, like something that *we use*.” Combining both metalinguistic knowledge, and her own set of attitudes, values, and ideologies toward Spanish language usage, she validates her decisions at the word level as an individual, and also as a member of her language community. Hall, Smith, and Wickasono (2017) point out that words, on account of their nature as “social objects,” transmit meaning tied to their contextual usage; consequently,

their meanings are “infinitely variable and can’t be recorded in the finite limits of dictionaries” (p. 251). Vanesa’s semantic knowledge, then, transcends these limits by incorporating the contextual expertise that can only be ascertained through social engagement.

While Vanesa’s speech patterns did not reveal nearly as many embedded social and historical influences as Chelo’s, she did reference her personal experiences from time to time. Below, she discusses her familiarity with the process of translation, making a connection to the task assigned to her in the translanguaging space.

Alexis:	26 what was this exercise li:ke for you.	
	27 could you tell me some of the steps that you took?	
Vanesa:	28 ummm.. it was something like familiar to me	<b>Socio-historical</b> <b>Cognitive</b>
	29 cause I do it a:ll the time.	
	30 um..but.. it was interesting..	
	31 cause there were some words that I didn't kno:w,	
	32 but I would say the two.. kind of like- thanks to the cons, the co:ntext	
	33 I was able to kind of know what they mean.	
	34 at first I was thinking, maybe I should read EVERYthing,	
	35 so I know what is it about,	
	36 but I didn't do it.	
	37 so I just read like.. the whole se:ntence and then translated it.	
	38 and if I didn't get the sentence,	
39 I will read a little bit more and the:n translate.		


While noting that translation is a familiar process, and one that she practices “all the time,” Vanesa then pivots by stating that this particular exercise was “interesting,” in that “there were some words that I didn’t know.” Confronted with the dilemma of unknown words, she faced a dual challenge involving both reading comprehension and meaning-making in writing. In reviewing Vanesa’s written translation, she left a total of 8 blank spaces marked with lines as placeholders for these unknown words; her frequency of word omission underscores a key difference between spoken translanguaging and translanguaging in writing, in that the written domain does not allow for the real-time negotiation of meaning-making between individuals, at



least when writing is conducted as a solitary practice.

In spite of her challenges at the word level, Vanesa pushed through the source text, and endeavored to cultivate meaning through contextual references, noting that “thanks to the context, I was able to kind of know what they mean.” Operating from a pragmatic perspective toward language, she first thought “maybe I should read everything,” in order to extract additional meaning from the context, but then, she decided to work with just one sentence at a time. Outlining deliberate processes of meaning-making through metatalk, Vanesa’s metalinguistic awareness of pragmatic, syntactic, and semantic features of translation was repeatedly made clear during our time together in the translanguaging space. According to Myhill and Newman (2016), pedagogical practices leading to metatalk not only “foster language learning,” but also help instructors “to understand what students are learning” (p. 179). In Vanesa’s case, her proclivity toward metatalk helped me to gauge her gradual comprehension of the source text, in addition to showcasing her recognition of context as a key component of translation.

Comprehension-related issues continued to limit Vanesa’s capacity for meaning-making in writing, even as she evaluated contextual clues in the source text. However, her reflection on these limitations revealed much more than what was included in her written translation. In the excerpt below, Vanesa discusses with me some of the words and expressions that proved to be stumbling blocks.

Alexis:	40 can you show me some of the words 41 that you weren't so sure about?	
Vanesa:	42 okay, so.. like when it says the doctor draws.. his <i>escalpe</i> - I didn't 43 know what it's called, um what it means. 44 and then when she was, when she was talking about the curls, 45 the curls, um, the fi:ngers, I know when she said, 46 co:mmas, but related to fi:ngers. 47 I.. didn't know exa:ctly how to translate it,	

	48 so I put <i>pequeñas comas</i>	
Alexis:	49 right. okay, go:od. let's start with the doctor..	Affirming and Extending
	50 ((scans through the passage and points to the word “draw”))	
	51 so first the doctor dra:ws his scalpel down, right?	
	52 we're not necessarily looking for a literal, like he's not dra:wing it,	
	53 ((grabs a pen between thumb and index finger and pulls downward))	
54 he's taking it, right? and moving it do:wn.		
Vanesa:	55 oooh ((laughter)) I see.	<b>Cultural Translation</b>
	56 yeah I didn't know what that meant. ((laughter))	
	57 I put <i>dibuja</i> like, like the doctor's literally dra:wing,	
	58 cause I did-I didn't know wha:t that meant.	

Here, Vanesa describes a scene in the source text where the delivery room doctor prepares for surgery; she begins by saying “when the doctor draws his *escalpe*,” cutting herself off from expressing the word *escalpelo* in its entirety. She also says “I didn’t know what it’s called, um what it means,” yet she was able to verbalize the correct word for scalpel while speaking in the translanguaging space, or at least, she started to produce the word; for some reason, she self-regulated her own speech, perhaps doubting the existence of a cognate form for scalpel in Spanish. Had I detected her utterance during the semi-structured interview, I would have called her attention to it; unfortunately, I did not notice her fleeting *escalpe* until later on when I listened carefully to the audio recording. It is worth noting that without the interview data, the blank space left in Vanesa’s written translation would have led me to believe that she simply didn’t know the word for scalpel; the clarification provided by Vanesa’s speech points to the need for more than one representation of reality, in order to more accurately demonstrate the “truth value” of naturalistic inquiry (Lincoln & Guba, 1985, p. 290).

Vanesa also explains how she arrived at “*pequeñas comas*” for “little commas,” despite not knowing “exactly how to translate it,” voicing a very similar concern about “exact” language that was repeatedly echoed by Chelo in the translanguaging space. Unlike Chelo, however, Vanesa typically left blank spaces in her written translation when she couldn’t find the right

words to capture the meaning expressed by the source text; while Chelo would often circumlocute her way through unfamiliar words or phrases, Vanesa typically omitted words that she was unacquainted with, leaving a trail of blank spaces in her writing. Although with “little commas,” she appears to have made a creative and critical choice, selecting “*pequeñas comas*,” in spite of her uncertainty; her selection here marked one of the few instances where she pursued risk-taking in her linguistic choices.

In response to Vanesa’s description of the words she wasn’t sure about, I proceeded to unpack her statements, starting with “the doctor draws his scalpel down.” First, I affirm the choices she has already made regarding “*pequeñas comas*.” Next, having noticed Vanesa’s literal translation of the verb “draws,” I wanted to clarify the context without overtly correcting her use of the word “*dibuja*,” the Spanish verb for “draws,” as in to sketch, or to trace. For this reason, I explain to her that “he’s not drawing it,” and using a pen as a visual aid, I move the pen downward and say “he’s taking it, right? And moving it down.” Here, I attempted to visually illustrate the action taking place in the source text, avoiding a more complicated grammatical explanation about the word “*dibuja*” being far less polysemous than the word “draws.” Vanesa clearly understands that “*dibuja*” conveys the act of drawing in an artistic sense; my pedagogical practices helped to extend her semantic knowledge, inducing a moment of enlightenment where, finally, she exclaims, “oh, I see!” Moving from unfamiliarity to understanding, Vanesa’s exclamation signals the hybrid semantic meaning she has acquired via the cultural translation dimension of the translanguaging space, having expanded her existing knowledge to include an alternative meaning for the verb “to draw.”

## Conclusions about Co-Constructing a Translanguaging Space with Vanesa

Vanesa utilized her funds of knowledge in the translanguaging space in a variety of ways.

Table 5 below lists those funds that were observable, in conjunction with the translanguaging pedagogies that I practiced during our co-construction of this space.

**Table 11.** Connecting Vanesa’s Funds of Knowledge to the Translanguaging Space

Skills, Beliefs, & Familiar Language Practices	Dimensions of Translanguaging Space	Translanguaging Pedagogies
Flexibility and self-regulation, with regard to language and content learning; perspective-taking in writing	Cultural Translation Dimension	Affirming and Extending
Knowledge of pragmatic, semantic, and syntactic features of language; strong consideration of context and word order in translation	Cognitive Dimension	Affirming and Extending
Translation (spoken); attitudes, values, and ideologies associated with the language community	Socio-Historical Dimension	Affirming and Extending
Critical evaluation of word choice and subsequent outcomes	Cultural Dimension (creativity/criticality)	Affirming and Extending

Compared with Chelo, I consistently relied upon the same pedagogical strategies with Vanesa throughout our interactions together in the translanguaging space; in spite of several instances of comprehension breakdown at the word level, Vanesa still brought a wealth of linguistic knowledge with her, which I regularly endeavored to both affirm and extend. According to García and Li (2014), translanguaging is distinguished by the “flexibility of bilingual learners to take control of their own learning,” and to “self-regulate” based on the given context. Vanesa showed impressive dexterity at integrating my explanations of various words and phrases into her comprehension of the source text. Thanks to her existing familiarity with

semantic variation across languages, she quickly adapted her understandings of verbs such as “draw,” which aren’t quite as polysemous in Spanish. She also demonstrated an attempt to enter the mindset of the narrator; adopting a hybridized stance, she considered emotions outside of her own, even ones that were completely foreign to her. Vanesa enthusiastically embraced the unfamiliar, flexibly responding to new language and literary themes she encountered in the source text. With a bit of coaxing, Vanesa engaged in metatalk, exhibiting her metalinguistic awareness of the pragmatic, semantic, and syntactic features of language. She regularly conveyed the perspective that meaning is constructed differently from one language to the next. Vanesa focused the majority of her metatalk on the importance of context in translation, in addition to signaling differences in word order that could potentially alter the meaning of a sentence. Traversing the socio-historic dimension of the translanguaging space, Vanesa described the frequency with which she practices translation on a daily basis. She also used the collective “we” in characterizing decisions around word choice, selecting words “that *we* will use,” in her written translation. Vanesa’s treatment of words as social objects allowed her to make selections that were infused with the attitudes, values, and ideologies associated with her language community. Lastly, Vanesa’s concerns over word choice appeared to weaken her creativity and criticality in the translanguaging space, perhaps to a greater extent than in Chelo’s case. Vanesa frequently omitted unfamiliar words altogether, as opposed to engaging in circumlocution. Regardless of these shortcomings, her willingness to participate in the translanguaging space far outweighed any unsuccessful attempts at meaning-making in her writing.

### **Case Study 3: Co-Constructing a Translanguaging Space with Dinh**

“Oh wow, it’s just like IELTS,” said Dinh, as I switched on the video recording application on my laptop, and we began the semi-structured interview portion of our meeting. Noticeably unnerved by the presence of the camera, Dinh, a 20 year old international student from Vietnam, started to fidget in his chair, first toying with a pen, and then scrunching up his hands inside of his long sleeve shirt. “I got really nervous in my speaking exam. It’s so different from normal speaking.” Not wanting Dinh to feel judged or distracted by either me or the camera lens, I told him, “well this is a lot less formal; there aren’t any wrong answers, and there’s no evaluation at the end.” As a brand new student in his first semester of the hospitality program, I was aware that he hadn’t had much time to get adjusted to his surroundings. I hoped that I could put his mind at ease, so that he wouldn’t associate our activity in the translanguaging space with something as high stakes as the English language test for international study. Admittedly, I too felt a little nervous about whether or not I’d be able to ask him questions about a translation written in Vietnamese; this was my first attempt at enacting translanguaging pedagogies with a participant who had written in a language I didn’t know, and I honestly wasn’t sure what to expect. García and Li (2014) faithfully assert that both monolingual teachers, and teachers who do not know their students’ home languages, can “successfully” engage in translanguaging with their students (p. 110); however, the only examples they provide to translanguaging neophytes are based on scenarios involving the languages they know themselves. For researchers and practitioners alike, it largely remains elusive as to what pedagogical practices look like when students are encouraged to write in languages that are unfamiliar to their instructors. Accepting the challenge of these same circumstances myself, I heeded my own advice: “there aren’t any wrong answers, and there’s no evaluation at the end.”

Deciding that I would begin with the same questions that I had used with Spanish-speaking participants, I first asked Dinh to tell me about the steps he took in translating the source text.

Alexis:	1 and ho:w did you go about translating this passage. 2 can you walk me through the steps you took?	
Dinh:	3 um.. general, generally uh... 4 I can understand the uh, you know, the the meaning of this passage. 5 um... but in some places that I like... some, some words is, 6 it's hard to be, it's hard to translate to my la:nguage. 7 and uh, there are some words that uh... mmm... <let me see.> 8 um.. I'm not good at, you know, explaining. 9 ((nervous laughter))	<b>Socio-historical</b>
Alexis:	10 that's oka:y,	
Dinh:	11 ... there are some words that um... 12 if we have, if uh... when I translate to my la:nguage, 13 I have to change the meaning of it... 14 to uh, you know, to uh, be suitable to my la:nguage. 15 and uh.. yeah.	<b>Socio-historical</b> <b>Cognitive</b>

Dinh's response to my question was punctuated by brief to moderately-long lapses, as he paused intermittently to gather his thoughts. At the beginning of our time together, Dinh was slow in responding to me, and at times he struggled to find the words to express himself. When he started to reply, it struck me as odd that the first thing he said was, "I can understand the... meaning of this passage," as if he felt the need to confirm his comprehension of the source text, almost anticipating that he would have difficulty in verbalizing his process of translation. He went on to say that some words were "hard to translate to my language," a sentiment that he emphasized repeatedly during the interview. Without having any intimate knowledge of Vietnamese grammar, I was uncertain about whether or not some words or concepts in the source text could in fact correspond to lexical gaps. Like English, the Vietnamese alphabet<sup>11</sup>, uses Latin

<sup>11</sup> *Quốc ngữ*, the modern Vietnamese alphabet, traces its roots to Portuguese, Italian, and French missionaries who arrived in Vietnam during the 17<sup>th</sup> century and initiated the romanization of the Chinese-based Vietnamese script (Haudricourt, 2015).

orthography, but there are abundant grammatical differences, such as the absence of contractions, or the low frequency of relative pronouns in Vietnamese (Nguyen, 2015). While together in the translanguaging space, I had to rely solely on Dinh's expertise to guide me through his process of translation, and based on his knowledge, I tried to determine if his difficulties at the word level were comprehension-related, or indicative of lexical gaps.

In responding to my preliminary question, Dinh centered his response within Li's (2011) socio-historical and cognitive dimensions of translanguaging space. In referring to Vietnamese, he used the phrase "my language," binding his identity to his linguistic practices, and stressing his ownership of the language. In fact, not once did he use the word "Vietnamese," instead relying on "my language" throughout the entire interview. Dinh gravitated toward metatalk in describing why he found it difficult to translate, noting that with some words, "I have to change the meaning of it," alluding to semantic concerns with translation to Vietnamese. He also intimates at having practiced communicative translation (Hall, Smith, & Wickasono, 2017), having to "change the meaning" of certain words to "be suitable to my language." Here, he shows his metalinguistic awareness by addressing both the need for adjustments at the word level, and pragmatic concerns, in order to preserve the intended meaning of the source text.

Initially, Dinh seemed frustrated by his inability to communicate more smoothly; gradually, as the interview progressed, I noticed that his fluency increased, and he slowly appeared less anxious about speaking to me. To put things in perspective, compared to the other participants in this study, Dinh had spent the least amount of time in a US classroom setting, and he had only been studying English for about three years. For these reasons, I was worried about a perceived imbalance of linguistic authority in the translanguaging space, where I was directing all of the questions in English, and unlike my interactions with Spanish-speaking participants, I



could not read aloud from Dinh’s translation to help facilitate our conversation. As Bourdieu (1977) notes, “the constitutive power which is granted to ordinary language lies not in the language itself, but in the group which authorizes it and invests it with authority” (p. 21). In other words, language is not inherently endowed with authority, but rather, it gains authority from those who enforce its usage. As a means of divesting authority from English in the translanguaging space, I encouraged Dinh to familiarize me with the sights and sounds of his language. In the excerpt below, I ask Dinh for an example of a word or phrase that was difficult to translate, following up with questions aimed at increasing his authority to use Vietnamese.

Dinh:	16 like examine.	
Alexis:	17 examine. okay. tell me about that.	
Dinh:	18 the examine in, in uh, in English, right. 19 it's like uh, we examine so:mething, 20 like in the re:search. 21 yeah. and uh, in my la:nguage, 22 it's more likely the fe:eling. 23 so we, we don't have the wo- exactly the word 24 for examine, to describe in my language.	<b>Socio-historical</b> <b>Creativity</b> <b>Criticality</b>
Alexis:	25 right. okay, can you point to me where, 26 where's the wo:rd, or the phra:ses that you used?	Co-learning
Dinh:	27 yes. ((points to the phrase <i>cảm nhận</i> in his translation))	<b>Creativity</b> <b>Criticality</b>
Alexis:	28 okay. can you pronounce that for me?	Co-learning
Dinh:	29 in my language?	<b>Socio-historical</b>
Alexis:	30 yes.	Co-learning
Dinh:	31 [kam nɔŋ] is like.. fe:eling.	<b>Creativity</b> <b>Criticality</b>
Alexis:	32 fe:eling. [ka kam nɔŋ] 33 ((writes down the word feeling beside <i>cảm nhận</i> in field notes)) 34 okay,	Co-learning
Dinh:	35 yeah. but um, I know it's different, in English, 36 but in my language, it should be thi:s word.	<b>Creativity</b> <b>Criticality</b> <b>Socio-historical</b>
Alexis:	37 okay=	
Dinh:	38 =for the reader to understand it.	<b>Cultural</b> <b>Translation</b>

Dinh replied to my question with the word “examine” to illustrate his difficulty in capturing the meaning of the source text, explaining that “in my language, it’s more likely the feeling,” and suggesting that physical contact is implied by the word “examine” in Vietnamese. In English, according to Dinh, “examine” is used when “we examine something,” as in “research.” At first glance, it seems that there may be a comprehension breakdown, and that Dinh possesses only a myopic understanding of the word “examine” that is limited to a research context; in Vanesa’s case, there were similar circumstances involving her understanding of the word “draws,” where she was only familiar with the term in an artistic capacity. Taking a look at the source text, the line in question states: “when the baby is placed in my arms, I *examine* the wrinkled body from head to toe.” There is physical interaction when the new infant is placed in his mother’s arms, but it is unclear whether or not the mother also touched the baby while “examining” him for the first time. Generally speaking, the word “examine” implies visual inspection, but here, Dinh has exercised creativity in flouting its standard usage; likewise, he has also exercised criticality in evaluating potential meanings for this term across languages and cultural perspectives. While Vanesa relied on a literal translation of “draws” to overcome her confusion, Dinh once again used communicative translation (Hall, Smith, & Wickasono, 2017) to make a semantic adjustment that involved both creative and critical choices. He also continued to invoke the use of “my language,” backing his decision-making at the word level with social and historical clout.

Next, I recognized that I would not be able to locate where Dinh had written the word to replace “examine” in his translation. Suspending my control of the conversation and altering my pedagogical stance, I engaged with Dinh as a co-learner in the translanguaging space, to try to learn more about his language. I asked him to point to the word or phrase that he used, and to

pronounce it for me. He showed me that *cảm nhận* is pronounced [kəm nən], and that it is similar to “feeling” in English. Although I stumbled a bit in pronouncing the word myself, at that moment I realized that the larger task of collaborative meaning-making was indeed taking place within the translanguaging space. Later on, when I reviewed the audio and video recordings of the interview, I noticed that Dinh seemed more relaxed and confident in speaking with me, after having the opportunity to showcase the entirety of his linguistic knowledge. There were less filler words and prolonged lapses in his speech, and he demonstrated more agency in voicing his interpretations, without waiting to be prompted by my questioning. For instance, in the excerpt above, Dinh not only confirmed for a second time that in English, the word should be “examine,” but he also added, “in my language, it should be *this* word,” holding firm in his evaluation of the source text’s meaning. Believing that he had finished his thought, I replied, “okay,” but Dinh interrupted to continue explaining the rationale behind his thinking; adjusting his perspective and assuming the mindset of another, he chose *cảm nhận* “for the reader to understand it.” His hybrid point-of-view signaled Li’s (2011) cultural translation dimension of the translanguaging space, in addition to illustrating his careful weighing of the semantic features of translation.

Dinh’s hybridized practices were not limited to perspective-taking within the cultural translation dimension; he also experienced moments of enlightenment, increasing his capacity for meaning-making as I affirmed and extended his existing understanding of the source text. In the excerpt below, we co-constructed an explanation of the figurative language employed in a phrase that he found challenging to translate.

Alexis:	39 can you show me ano:ther example?	
	40 is there another word or phrase that just seems a little different	
	41 if you were to describe it in Vietnamese?	
Dinh:	42 <that’s all so far.>	
Alexis:	43 how about thi:s one.	
	44 I thought this one was interesting..	

	45 ((reads from the passage))	
	46 to touch the curls of his fingers.	
Dinh:	47 <a:ctually I don't really understand this.>	
Alexis:	48 okay, yeah=	
Dinh:	49 =can you explain?	
Alexis:	50 so I think what's going on maybe,	Affirming and Extending
	51 because then she says	
	52 ((reads the passage)) little co:mmas, each of them,	
	53 and a comma is shaped like that,	
	54 ((bends fingers and thumb to make a comma shape))	
	55 so maybe she's saying his fingers were cu:rvd.	
	56 so she's using=	
Dinh:	57 =like a shape, right?	<b>Cultural Translation</b>
Alexis:	58 ye:s. she's using that language to describe the shape.	Affirming and Extending
	59 so it's really, it's like a me:taphor.	
Dinh:	60 yeah.	
Alexis:	61 the fingers weren't actually=	Affirming and Extending
Dinh:	62 =yeah. curved like a sha:pe.	<b>Cultural Translation</b>

While at first, Dinh stated he couldn't think of any additional words or phrases that seemed different in Vietnamese, he admitted "actually I don't really understand this," when I asked him about "the curls of his fingers." In the ensuing dialogue, Dinh engaged in several instances of latched talk, excitedly wanting to know what this expression meant, and eagerly providing me with his newfound understanding. As I attempted to clarify the meaning of the source text, I used my fingers as a visual aid to demonstrate what "curls" might look like. After mentioning that the baby's fingers were "curved," Dinh quickly interrupted to add "like a *shape*, right," almost as if a lightbulb had gone off in his head, and he was seeking affirmation of his input. Using his same language, I replied, "yes, she's using that language to describe the *shape*." To extend his understanding even further, and especially in consideration of basic writing course learning

objectives, I also stated, “it’s like a metaphor,” in an effort to combine the use of figurative language with an academic term. Although I proceeded to explain further, Dinh interrupted again to emphasize his understanding that “the curls of his fingers” meant that they were “curved like a shape.”

This last excerpt represented some of the most significant risk-taking that Dinh employed in the translanguaging space, as he interrupted me several times, latching onto my remarks, while simultaneously developing the confidence to introduce his own perspectives. Compared to the beginning of the audio and video recordings of the interview, the middle-to-end portions look quite different, not only in terms of the frequency of his pauses, but in the overall quantity and quality of his utterances. For an international student like Dinh, with very little previous experience studying English, it was essential that he feel comfortable enough to take risks in his languaging; based on my interactions with him in the translanguaging space, it appeared that he grew more confident after I made conscious efforts to validate his home language, by inviting him to teach me the orthographic and phonological representations of Vietnamese words. Research points to the benefits of post-secondary instructors’ usage of students’ home languages in their pedagogical practices as a means of facilitating metatalk, and also to help lessen students’ anxiety about using the target language (Lasagabaster, 2013). As demonstrated in this case study, having a dedicated translanguaging space had a positive impact on Dinh’s confidence-building, and on his ability to construct new knowledge regarding the source text and his written translation.

### **Conclusions about Co-Constructing a Translanguaging Space with Dinh**

After a rocky start, Dinh gradually accessed his funds of knowledge while negotiating meaning in the translanguaging space. Table 6 below includes the skills, beliefs, and familiar

language practices that he brought with him to the space, along with the translanguaging pedagogies that I used to help him leverage these funds during our time together.

**Table 12.** Connecting Dinh’s Funds of Knowledge to the Translanguaging Space

Skills, Beliefs, & Familiar Language Practices	Dimensions of Translanguaging Space	Translanguaging Pedagogies
Perspective-taking in writing; flexibility and self-regulation, with regard to language and content learning	Cultural Translation Dimension	Co-learning; Affirming and Extending
Knowledge of semantic and pragmatic features of language	Cognitive Dimension	
Connections between language and identity	Socio-Historical Dimension	Co-learning
Critical evaluation of word choice and subsequent outcomes	Cultural Dimension (creativity/criticality)	Co-learning

My overall impression of Dinh’s performance in the translanguaging space is that he comprehended more than his speech patterns may have indicated. Initially, his largest obstacle seemed to involve overcoming his anxiety, especially since the interview set-up reminded him of a recent standardized testing experience. In spite of these circumstances, Dinh showed a great deal of resilience, pushing ahead to communicate his understanding of the source text, regardless of his fluency. He demonstrated a sense of perspective-taking in writing by adopting a hybridized stance, and making changes at the word level that he felt were necessary to impart cross-linguistic meaning to his language community. Dinh also embraced the “flexibility of bilingual learners” as he co-constructed new knowledge along with me, particularly in response to my explanations of figurative language; likewise, he modeled “self-regulation,” interjecting his viewpoints as I affirmed and extended his existing understandings of the source text (García

& Li, 2014, p. 80). Dinh practiced metatalk to a much less extent than the other participants in this study, and I wondered whether or not this reflected poorly on my scaffolding techniques, or if he was simply unable to more effectively communicate his metalinguistic knowledge; perhaps a combination of both factors led to his infrequent use of metatalk. Myhill and Newman (2016) point out that limited research exists to guide instructors on promoting metatalk in their classrooms, despite strong evidence that metatalk is beneficial to both language learning and the development of writing skills. From a pedagogical perspective, it is possible that my efforts to affirm and extend Dinh's existing metalinguistic knowledge were not that effective, but based on limited research in this area, it is difficult to make judgment one way or the other. Nonetheless, Dinh still gravitated toward metatalk to describe his concerns with the semantic features of language. Moreover, he centered his entire process of translation around semantic and pragmatic concerns, having to "change the meaning" of certain words to make them "suitable" to his language community. Throughout the entire interview, Dinh only referred to Vietnamese as "my language," placing emphasis on the close relationship between his identity and linguistic practices as a Vietnamese speaker. Finally, Dinh showed great creativity and criticality in his decisions over word choice, especially when he flouted traditional understandings of the word "examine" to include physical contact. He was also resolute in his decision-making, and even repeated his assertions, making his views abundantly clear.

#### Case Study 4: Co-Constructing a Translanguaging Space with Liliya

As we walked down the busy hallway together, on our way to the school library, the sounds of students' footsteps on the worn linoleum floor were suddenly muted by a chorus of folk singers, accompanied by what sounded like the pulsating rhythms of violins and tambourines. Liliya, a 23-year-old woman from the Ukraine, fumbled through her backpack to silence the musical interlude, finally locating her cellphone and answering the call from her mother. "I tell her, don't call *me*, I call *you*. She knows when I finish class, so she always calls me anyway." To distinguish incoming calls from her mother, Liliya has assigned her a ringtone that plays a traditional Ukrainian folk tune. Overhearing part of her conversation, I noticed that her speech was studded by several words in English, and I was curious to know more about her language practices with her family. "Mostly I speak Ukrainian at home, a little bit of English. Sometimes I have to translate for my parents. And I just can't, I *know* the meaning in English, but I just can't find a *flow* for it in Ukrainian." The "flow" that Liliya describes here gets at the heart of bi/multilingual languaging practices that transcend traditional notions of code-switching, to encompass "speakers' construction and use of original and complex interrelated discursive practices that cannot be easily assigned to one or another traditional definition of a language" (García & Li, 2014, p. 22). Liliya recognizes the cohesiveness of expression that she is able to attain in her sophisticated use of both languages, and consequently, it feels difficult to limit herself to just one part of her linguistic repertoire when communicating with her parents. Having moved to the US when she was 17, Liliya had already completed high school in the Ukraine, so she started taking English classes at several different community colleges before coming to Sylvan Community College in 2019 to pursue a degree in photographic imaging. For nearly 6 years, she has been focused on increasing her English language competencies, and at times, she



feels like she is forgetting some words in Ukrainian. During the semi-structured interview, I discovered that Liliya's language background was even more complex than I originally anticipated, due to social and geopolitical factors affecting the linguistic landscape of her homeland.

In the excerpt below, I ask Liliya to tell me about her process of translation, and I learn that she has also used Russian, in addition to Ukrainian, in her written translation.

Alexis:	1 so what did you think of the passage that you just read.	
Liliya:	2 it was i:nteresting. I was >at first I was like< 3 o:h. it's about a ba:by. 4 >I don't know what I'm gonna find.< 5 interesting.. yeah.	
Alexis:	6 and when you were going through, 7 and tra:nsulating the passage.. can you, can you tell me 8 what was your pla:n.	
Liliya:	9 oh >well I just started to< 10 from the beginning, go word by wo:rd, 11 and try to find the words in MY language.. uh yeah.	<b>Socio-historical</b>
Alexis:	12 I remember you told me you speak Ukrainian a:nd Russian. did=	
Liliya:	13 =yeah, yeah, I can understand Russian. 14 and I can speak Russian. 15 but the gra:mmar, I really don't know it well. 16 it's different than from Ukrainian.	<b>Socio-historical</b> <b>Cognitive</b>
Alexis:	17 did you study Russian in school?	
Liliya:	18 >ah well Ukrainian is my< na:tive language. 19 I was born in Ukraine. 20 ah I learned, ah Ru:ssian from TV, 21 yeah >ah just they just have< little sho:ws, 22 you know, Russian on Ukrainian TV. 23 like they have the su:btitles. 24 so yeah. that's how I learned it.	<b>Socio-historical</b>
Alexis:	25 are there a lot of- forgive my ignorance, 26 are there a lot of similarities between Ukrainian and Russian?	Co-learning
Liliya:	27 so:me words, but the grammar is di:fferent. 28 they have com- there are some le:tters in Russian. 29 so it's like an "E" with two dots on the top, 30 or an "E" with one dot >or something like that< 31 it's confu:sing.	<b>Cognitive</b> <b>Socio-historical</b>

	32 yeah >sometimes I use some words from< Ru:ssian	
	33 because you know, they're kind of si:milar.	

Remembering my recent interview experience with Dinh, I wanted to start off by asking Liliya about her general impressions of the passage, to get a sense if she had experienced any overarching comprehension issues. I was also thinking about differences in orthography, and knowing that Liliya was my first participant to write in a non-Latin script, I wasn't sure if she would voice any concerns about having to translate into Cyrillic. Neither of my concerns seemed to play out, and instead, she seemed quite enthralled by the subject of the source text, exclaiming, "I don't know what I'm gonna find." Interestingly, she described her process of translation in a very similar manner to Dinh, noting that she began by going "word by word," in an effort "to find the words in *my* language," not stating Ukrainian by name, but still linking her linguistic practices to her personal identity. Throughout her responses in this excerpt, Liliya primarily centered her speech in Li's (2011) socio-historical dimension of the translanguaging space, emphasizing the social and historical factors contributing to both her linguistic profile, and her knowledge about language. After reviewing the audio and video recordings of the interview in their entirety, I began to question whether or not her use of "*my* language" might actually have included Russian as well. Liliya described Ukrainian as her "native language," while she identified Russian as a language she learned through watching television shows. In his writings about the hybrid aspects of border cultures, Mignolo (2000) argues that "you cannot avoid 'being born' in one or more language(s), to have them inscribed in your body" (p. 229); at least initially, it appeared that Liliya portrayed Ukrainian as the language she was born in, while her relationship with Russian was more distant, and acquired through the influences of mass media and state-run television programming.

In addition to revealing the social and historical underpinnings of her language background, Liliya also engaged in metatalk that was characteristic of Li’s (2011) cognitive dimension of translanguaging space. Demonstrating her metalinguistic awareness at the syntactic level of language, she pointed out that Russian and Ukrainian have different systems of grammar. She also contrasted orthographic differences between the representation of certain letters in each language, stating that “it’s like an E with two dots on the top, or an E with one dot, or something like that. It’s confusing.” Her lack of precision in identifying these distinctions suggested that her familiarity with written Russian might not be that strong. Likewise, I was surprised that when I asked if there were many similarities between Ukrainian and Russian, I wasn’t expecting her to limit her response to differences in orthography; this led me to believe that perhaps her overall knowledge of Russian was not that extensive. Still, I was intrigued by Liliya’s remark that “sometimes I use some words from Russian, because you know, they’re kind of similar.” In addition to syntax then, she also alluded to an awareness of the semantic features of language, by noting there are similar meanings among certain words. I still wondered *why* she would use these words in Russian, beyond their similarities with Ukrainian, and also, *when* would she be motivated to use a combination of these languages, in response to the linguistic features of the source text?

Based on Liliya’s comment regarding her occasional use of Russian words, I wanted to know if she had engaged in this practice in her written translation. In the excerpt below, I ask her to clarify this information for me, before going any further with my questioning.

Alexis	34 so this was, what languages were you writing in here?	
Liliya:	35 ah Ukrainian.	<b>Cultural Translation</b>
	36 and there's maybe like a one or two words in ah Russian,	
	37 kind of mi:x?	
	38 there's some like a- there's like a mix of Ukrainian and Russian	
	39 that people speak too. yeah.	

Alexis:	40 oh really? that makes this even mo:re interesting.	
Liliya:	41 <there's some part of Ukraine like e:ast of middle> yeah.	Socio-historical Cultural Translation
	42 where I am from.	
	43 people- <we mix up the languages> a:ll the time.	

Liliya’s response indicated there were much larger, external factors involved in her translation that went beyond the sporadic insertion of Russian words. Situating her writing within the geographic sphere where she first acquired her language practices, she explained that a “mix of Ukrainian and Russian” languaging was common to her region. After the interview, I researched language mixing in the Ukraine, and discovered that *Surzhyk*<sup>12</sup> is a nonstandard, hybrid language based on Ukrainian, with “certain inserted Russian features,” and is quite common in Eastern Ukraine, where Liliya was raised as a child (Grenoble, 2013, p. 592). According to Flier (1998), more than any other issue, the subject of Ukraine’s official language is “central to the notion of Ukrainian nationality;” amid “the battle for language supremacy” between those in favor of Ukrainian versus those supporting Russian, the use of Surzhyk is “disregarded by officials and despised by purists,” and continues to be “a poorly understood phenomenon in contemporary Ukrainian society” (p. 113). Most notably, Flier also argues that despite its past “stigmatization,” and lack of official recognition, Surzhyk has emerged as “the language of the alienated and the rebellious, of those who press against the norms of social convention, whether members of the youth culture, the underworld, the military, or the socially conscious hip crowd” (p. 114). Upon learning more about the implications of combining features of the Russian language with Ukrainian, I realized that the hybridity of Liliya’s language practices on the whole were positioned within Li’s (2011) cultural translation dimension of the translanguaging space; where

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<sup>12</sup> *Surzhyk* is a word found in multiple East and West Slavic languages. Etymologically speaking, it comes from a term used to describe impure, or mixed, bread grains. The word *surzhyk* can refer to any combination of two or more languages. Ukrainian-Russian Surzhyk is an “asymmetrical” hybrid language, since it includes all grammatical features of Ukrainian, and only some features of Russian (Flier, 1998, pp. 113-115; Grenoble, 2013, p. 592).

the hybrid nature of her languaging was essentially a given, perhaps the more unclear aspect concerned the specific circumstances that inspired her language mixing. And while Flier suggests a rising countercultural movement around such practices, there is other research that claims more arbitrary decision-making may be involved (Serbens'ka, 1994). Having no prior experience with either Ukrainian or Russian, I reflected on the time I spent with Liliya in the translanguaging space to determine whether or not her speech might have pointed toward one explanation or the other, or maybe somewhere in between.

After Liliya had sparked my curiosity with her comments about language mixing, I asked her to point out an example that we could look at together in the translanguaging space.

Alexis:	53 could you show me where you used a mix of Ukrainian and Russian 54 in your translation? 55 maybe circle the words or phrases=	
Liliya:	56 =ahh yeah. okay. 57 ((circles the word заходящего in her translation)) 58 this one he:re.. it's kind of like a mix..	<b>Creativity</b> <b>Criticality</b> <b>Cultural</b> <b>Translation</b>
Alexis:	59 okay, cool. 60 can you show me up here, ((points to the passage)) 61 where, where we are in the ori:ginal text.	
Liliya:	62 ah okay, yeah. ((points to the word "sunset" in the passage))	
Alexis:	63 so we're looking at sunset. okay, interesting. 64 and in Ukra:inian, is there a way to say sunset, or not- not re:ally. 65 like, did Russian help you get that meaning across be:tter than=	Co-learning
Liliya:	66 =yeah, just a bit. but, uh, it's kind of..I dunno.. 67 >cause I'm just using ah both languages.< 68 ((reads from her translation)) заходящего 69 yeah, it just wo:rks. ((laughter))	<b>Creativity</b> <b>Criticality</b> <b>Cultural</b> <b>Translation</b>
Alexis:	70 okay. can you say the word aga:in for me? 71 so I can try it.	Co-learning
Liliya:	72 okay, yeah. ((pronounces very slowly)) [zʌkadjɛ'ʃɪvɑ] 73 ((pronounces very slowly)) [zʌkadjɛ'ʃɪvɑ] 74 ((laughter)) now yo:u try.	
Alexis:	75 ((pronounces very slowly)) [zʌkadjɛ'ʃɪvɑ]	Co-learning
Liliya:	76 ye:ah. ((laughter)) that's what it is.	

Liliya pointed out the word *заходящего* in her translation, and indicated that it corresponded to the word “sunset.” In the source text, the full phrase includes “the color of a sunset sky.” When I asked her to tell me more about why she used this word, it seemed like her decision-making felt more natural, almost ingrained, but certainly not arbitrary, as Serbens’ka (1994) suggests. Liliya explained, “I’m just using both languages,” and followed up by stating, “it just works.” In the absence of reliable research, it is difficult to know whether or not language mixing among speakers of Surzhyk is “regular and predictable,” or more “idiosyncratic;” Grenoble (2013) suggests that such mixing may point to “incomplete knowledge” of one of the two languages, or potentially, “a perceived norm for the speech community” (p. 592). In Liliya’s case, regardless of the specific rationale behind her word choice, she demonstrated both the creativity and criticality that distinguishes Li’s cultural dimension of the translanguaging space, flouting the standard conventions of written language, and integrating her own insights into her interpretation of the source text. Moreover, she was enthusiastic about teaching me the pronunciation of a Russian word, and playfully taking over the reins of our conversation, she declared, “now *you* try!” In adjusting my pedagogical stance and becoming a co-learner, I strategically worked to increase Liliya’s agency in the co-construction of our translanguaging space; as our time together progressed, she continued to take a more active role in building new knowledge about the source text.

I continued to press Liliya for more information about her translation of the word “sunset,” in an attempt to affirm what she had already shared with me, and also to further extend her thinking. In the excerpt below, I begin to pose a hypothetical comparison between the affordances of Ukrainian versus Russian, when Liliya interrupts me in midstream.

Alexis:	77 so this word just works for you, right?	Affirming and Extending
	78 so maybe then, it doesn't necessarily mean	
	79 that one language was better- a better or worse fit than the other=	

Liliya:	80 =yeah yeah. that's >that's what it is<	<b>Socio-historical</b> <b>Creativity</b> <b>Criticality</b> <b>Cultural</b> <b>Translation</b>
	81 like, not one of them better.	
	82 just, I just couldn't get a- the correct wo:rd in MY language.	
	83 I couldn't find the correct words in Ru:ssian so..	
	84 I kind of.. used them bo:th.	

As illustrated by the coding scheme, Liliya’s response reflects a multi-layered intersection of several dimensions of the translanguaging space. Beginning with the socio-historical realm, she again uses the phrase “my language,” closely linking her identity with her linguistic practices. Earlier, I questioned whether or not her use of “my language” included both Ukrainian and Russian; here, she makes the distinction that she “couldn’t find the correct words in Russian,” so it is safe to assume that, for Liliya, “my language” involves Ukrainian only. It is also clear that she hedged back and forth between languages in constructing the phrase in its entirety, underscoring both creativity and criticality in her interpretation of the source text, and subsequent translation. And finally, the resulting hybridity of her construction rests well within the cultural translation dimension of the translanguaging space, reflecting a perspective toward reality that encompasses the highly sophisticated lens through which Liliya interacts with her surroundings.

### **Conclusions about Co-Constructing a Translanguaging Space with Liliya**

Liliya accessed her funds of knowledge in a variety of ways during our time together in the translanguaging space. Table 7 below includes the skills, beliefs, and familiar language practices that she demonstrated, in conjunction with the translanguaging pedagogies that I enacted to help her leverage these funds.

**Table 13.** Connecting Liliya’s Funds of Knowledge to the Translanguaging Space

Skills, Beliefs, & Familiar Language Practices	Dimensions of Translanguaging Space	Translanguaging Pedagogies
Flexibility and self-regulation, with regard to language and content learning	Cultural Translation Dimension	Co-learning; Affirming and Extending
Knowledge of syntactical, orthographic, and semantic features of language	Cognitive Dimension	Co-learning
Translation (spoken); connections between language and identity	Socio-Historical Dimension	Co-learning
Critical evaluation of word choice and subsequent outcomes	Cultural Dimension (creativity/criticality)	Co-learning; Affirming and Extending

When I sat down with Liliya to conduct the translation activity, I did not anticipate the extent to which hybrid practices of languaging would characterize her performance in the translanguaging space, much less her daily lived experiences. Through our interactions, I came to realize more than ever before why such practices cannot be categorized by named languages alone; framing Liliya’s language practices requires a careful degree of nuance, with specific attention to the social, geographic, and political factors that give rise to what she described as a “mix” of Ukrainian and Russian. Compared to my interactions with the other participants, I assumed the role of co-learner much more frequently, perhaps due to her mixing of languages, and also because of the script she was using. Not only did Liliya write in Cyrillic, but she also used cursive as opposed to block letters; I tried to learn as much as I could from her, so that later on, I would be able to work with a translator to understand what she had written. Liliya fully embraced the “flexibility of bilingual learners” as she described her process of translation, and likewise, she modeled “self-regulation,” in explaining why her use of hybrid constructions “worked” for her (García & Li, 2014, p. 80). She practiced metatalk to describe differences



between Ukrainian and Russian, mainly focusing on orthography, but also noting that the systems of grammar are quite distinct, in spite of the similarities among many individual words. Liliya reported having to translate quite frequently while at home with her parents, referring to Ukrainian as “my language” in ways that were comparable to Dinh’s experience in the translanguaging space. Like Dinh, Liliya also defined her linguistic identity according to her home language practices, while othering her use of Russian, and excluding it from what she had established as “my language.” Still, I wonder whether or not she is completely cognizant of the ways in which Russian has entered into her lexicon, and whether or not her sense of “my language” might reflect more of the social and geopolitical undertones highlighted by Flier’s (1998) description of Surzhyk language use. Lastly, Liliya demonstrated creativity and criticality in her decisions over word choice, and she responded to my pedagogical moves to affirm and extend her knowledge by further critically engaging with the source text.

### **Case Study 5: Co-Constructing a Translanguaging Space with Khalid**

Khalid, a 20-year-old man originally from Palestine, relished the opportunity to be the center of attention. Balancing his coffee cup atop the chair he was straddling, he launched into a mini lesson on Arabic poetics before I had taken my seat at the café table beside the library entrance. “I was asking my friend before I came here. Do you think I should mention a poem to the teacher? They say no, it's too hard. Not to explain. And yet the most special thing about Arabic is the *poetry*.” Luckily, I had my phone in hand, so I was able to begin the audio recording before opening my laptop to video record our interview. Khalid didn't wait for me to respond one way or the other; instead, he went straight to work, and with a flourish of his pen, he wrote me a poem about a red castle in Spain, exclaiming at the end, “oh how beautiful is the meeting without appointment!” While pursuing a degree in Information Technology, Khalid is also an avid writer, and wishes he could study poetry in his required writing classes, instead of the “tasteless” readings that are typically assigned. He was quite vocal about expressing his disappointment with the content of these classes, and he seemed doubtful about how much his writing had actually improved in the year since he had first enrolled. From a collective standpoint, Khalid's comments draw attention to the integration of “cultural knowledge” with “prior experiences,” in order to promote opportunities for learning (Parmegiani, 2014); moreover, his earnest desire to share his knowledge of Arabic poetry with me highlights the need for remedial writing instructors to seek ways to enhance students' writing skills through the use of culturally relevant materials (Carroll & Sambolín Morales, 2016; Pujol-Ferran, DiSanto, Nuñez Rodríguez, & Morales, 2016). When I arrived for our appointment, I thought it was interesting that Khalid had referred to me as “the teacher,” and I wasn't sure if it meant that he saw me as an authority figure, or if he simply didn't know what else to call me; as we examined

his translation, I regarded his form of address for me as a sign of his willingness to learn. Khalid’s level of investment in the activity also suggested that he viewed the opportunity as a worthwhile learning experience, based on his keen interest in the subject matter of the source text, and the fact that he could challenge himself to relate this content by using his home language.

After Khalid had finished his written translation, I immediately tried to engage him with questions about the source text, knowing how much he loved to talk about his language, and wanting to avoid getting sidetracked at the very beginning of the semi-structured interview. Below, I ask him to identify challenges he encountered with the source text, and he responds by pointing out similarities and differences between Arabic and English.

Alexis:	1 okay. so wa:lk me through here.	
	2 what were, what would you say are	
	3 some of the most challenging aspects of this particular passage.	
Khalid:	4 the changing.. between English to Arabic with..	<b>Cognitive</b>
	5 with considering the different laws.. of language.	
Alexis:	6 okay. so tell me more about that.	
Khalid:	7 yeah. okay, so there is some similarities.	<b>Cognitive</b>
	8 the similarities is the comma and uh.. uhhh the other one,	
	9 the comma and the... uhhh... I- I >don't remember the name.<	
Alexis:	10 do you mean=	
Khalid:	11 =PERIOD. the comma and the period.	<b>Cognitive</b>

Khalid described “the changing” between languages as the most challenging aspect of interpreting the source text, in “considering the different laws of language.” There were several instances during our time together that he used the expression “laws of language” when referring to systems of grammar, and I thought it was interesting how such terminology might also convey a sense of inflexibility, especially with regard to languaging practices. The first time he uttered

this expression, I wondered whether or not his stance toward translation might reflect a similar degree of rigidity, potentially limiting his ability to be creative and critical in the translanguaging space.

Centering his response within Li’s (2011) cognitive dimension of the translanguaging space, Khalid also highlighted some similarities between Arabic and English, using metatalk to define structures shared in common. Admittedly, I did not expect him to talk about punctuation when he noted there were similarities; after his elaborate poetry lesson, I was anticipating a response with more depth and breadth. Then again, having spoken about the “laws of language,” it is not so surprising that he followed up his previous marks with a subject as prescriptive as the conventions of punctuation. In any event, he identified the comma and the period as two common entities found in both languages, nonetheless demonstrating his metalinguistic awareness of the markers used to organize basic units of syntax.

Feeling confident that Khalid knew a lot more about language than just commas and periods, I pressed him for more details, and asked him more specifically about how his process of translation might have changed when he encountered unfamiliar words or expressions.

Alexis:	12 so I know there were some words that you asked me about when, 13 when you first re:ad the passage. 14 I’m wondering ho:w you dealt with parts that weren’t 15 quite as cle:ar to you.	
Khalid:	16 to be honest, I tried my be:st. 17 if I want to, if I want to stop at <e:very si:ngle wo:rd> that I didn’t 18 understand, I would never finish. this is the first thing. 19 the second thing, I will lose my fo:cus. 20 like okay. so let me give you an example. the unma:rked baby. 21 so I read ((reads from the passage)) <I begin to weep 22 and curl the unmarked baby.> 23 so there is-there’s cry:ing and ba:by. 24 and so she said- when she’s crying, 25 so it’s a:fter the baby is delivered. 26 so what usually do women do after she first touch the baby? 27 she to:uches the baby. she cry. so bo:om. yeah. so that’s i:t. 28 I guess that’s what she, what was happening. tha:t’s how I do it.	<b>Cognitive</b>

Alexis:	29 so you were using co:ntext then.	Affirming and Extending
	30 like the de:tails of the story	
	30 to try to predict what was happening.	
	31 it sounds like that was your strategy.	
Khalid:	32 yes yes, tha:t's it exactly.	
	33 that was the strategy.	

Khalid met my expectations and provided far more details about his process of translation, after I became more specific about the type of information I was seeking from him. In this excerpt, and in several other instances, he had a way about framing his responses by repeating the expression “let me give you an example.” At times, it felt like he was building an argument in each of these “examples,” and instead of giving a direct answer, he would first lay the foundation to support his stance. Knowing that speech styles are replete with “symbolic value,” and their “interpretive consequences” require analysis beyond the linguistic level (Gumperz, 1982, vii), I viewed Khalid’s style of argumentation as a persuasive strategy that potentially carried over from his previous experiences. In the translanguaging space, this strategy was an effective way of navigating the cognitive dimension (Li, 2011), as he engaged in metatalk to outline a series of pragmatic factors contributing to his overall understanding of the source text.

Khalid initiated his argument by debunking a possible counterclaim; noting that if he stopped “at every single word,” he’d “never finish,” besides losing the ability to “focus.” Next, he returned to the source text to read aloud, pointing out the noun phrase “unmarked baby” as a stumbling block. Using context clues, he determined that the scene takes place “after the baby is delivered.” And finally, applying his background knowledge about birth, he answered his own rhetorical question: “so what usually do women do after she first touch the baby? She touches the baby.” In this manner, Khalid was able derive a basic understanding of the source text, making it clear that the mother’s actions implied the physical act of touching the newborn. While his

understanding lacks the complexity of the original passage, Khalid still comprehended some of the key details. Furthermore, by affirming his knowledge and reframing the skills that he used to comprehend the source text, I aimed to extend his metacognitive awareness of his ability to use context as a reading strategy. Perhaps the main takeaway from this example, however, is the insight I gained into Khalid's processing of the source text, which helped me to subsequently interpret his moments of creativity and criticality in the translanguaging space.

In the excerpt below, Khalid defends his decision-making around adding an extra word to his translation of a segment of the source text, partaking in a similar style of argumentation that he demonstrated previously in the translanguaging space.

Khalid:	34 I tried the be- the best I can not to add anything.. 35 but uh ((laughter)) I had- then I ha:d to. I had to.	<b>Creativity</b> <b>Criticality</b>
Alexis:	36 okay. show me an example. 37 that's what I'm re:ally interested in.	
Khalid:	38 okay here, this sentence, I think I add.. 39 maybe one word to it.. like, let me see. 40 uhhh ((reads the passage)) 41 <they do have to make a cut 42 but not across my stomach as I had feared.> 43 so.. uhh not, not across my stomach as I had feared. 44 I translate it like [walakun lays kama 'aetaqid] 45 ((pronounces ولكن ليس كما أعتقد in Arabic)) 46 but not, uh the way I THI:NK >they're gonna cut my stomach.< 47 so I, I THI:NK. thi:s is the extra word. 48 one extra word...maybe I have another one, let me check.	<b>Creativity</b> <b>Criticality</b>
Alexis:	49 so tha:t one appears in the text <as I had fe:ared> 50 like the person was afra:id=	
Khalid:	51 =yeah. yeah. so fe:ared i made thi:nk too=	<b>Creativity</b> <b>Criticality</b>
Alexis:	52 =and you're saying <that I tho:ught.> okay=	
Khalid:	53 =yeah. yeah. it didn't say that here- that is 54 <she thi:nks that she fears> she, she, 55 here it said fe:ar o:nly. 56 but it's what she was thi:nking. so that's what I said. 57 and in Ara- my country, 58 that's- I tried to translate it.. 59 like <the way to be more understandable.> 60 because if I translate it as the a:pp,	<b>Creativity</b> <b>Criticality</b> <b>Socio-historical</b> <b>Cultural</b> <b>Translation</b>

	61 there's some, some, something gonna be missing.	
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While first noting that he attempted “not to add anything,” Khalid then quickly said, “I had to,” and proceeded to build an argument in defense of his addition, interrupting my attempts to offer input several times in a row. He returned to the source text and read the line in question: “they do have to make a cut, but not across my stomach as I had feared.” While the source text indicates “as I had feared,” Khalid felt it was necessary to change the wording to reflect “as I had thought.” Even though I pointed out to him that in the source text, the use of “feared” was intended to show that the person was afraid, Khalid argued, “but it’s what she was *thinking*.” This particular scenario is reminiscent of Canagarajah’s (2011) singular student participant, Buthainah, and her embedded use of “cues” to aid readers in their understanding of her writing; in the same way that Buthainah employed “the ecological resources of the context to aid in intelligibility and interpretation” (p. 405), Khalid also delved deeper into the context of the source text to more closely relate what he surmised was happening, although perhaps compromising the original meaning of the passage. Just as Buthainah “subtly reshapes the context” (Canagarajah, 2011, p. 405), so too does Khalid, displacing the sentiment of “fear” with the more cognitive process of “thinking,” and simultaneously exercising a high degree of creativity and criticality in his linguistic choices.

Toward the end of the above-mentioned excerpt, Khalid traverses multiple dimensions of Li’s (2011) notion of translanguaging space in further contextualizing the decision-making that went into his written translation. He continues to apply creativity and criticality in crafting his linguistic choices, but he also briefly occupies the socio-historical realm when he starts to say “Arabic,” and interrupts himself to instead say “my country.” Although he doesn’t provide an explanation as to *why* it is important to mention what the narrator was thinking, he immediately

follows up this remark with a comment about his language and origin, insinuating that his word choice may be linked to social and cultural factors. Finally, Khalid also exhibits the hybridity that is characteristic of the cultural translation dimension of Li’s translanguaging space by assuming the point-of-view of a prospective reader; focusing his attention on both the context and the word level of the source text, he adjusts his perspective, and wonders about “the way to be more understandable to the reader.” In addition, Khalid notes a difference in quality between his style of translation, and one that could be rendered with the use of an electronic “app;” he believes an app-produced translation will leave details “missing,” and for this reason, he elects not to translate “as the app.” This final remark helps to clarify his rationale for altering the original meaning of the source text, besides shedding light on his conceptualization of the process of translation in general.

Khalid continued to exercise creativity and criticality during our time together in the translanguaging space, so much so that it was often difficult for me to get a word in edgewise, to either respond to his questions, or to challenge his decisions. In the excerpt below, his patterns of latched talk underscore his penchant for talking on and on, even when asking me to explain something unfamiliar to him in the source text; drawing inspiration from his own speech style, I eventually interrupt him to affirm the translation choices he has made.

Khalid:	62 okay so here, here it says	<div style="text-align: center;"> <span style="background-color: cyan; padding: 2px;">Creativity</span>  <span style="background-color: magenta; padding: 2px;">Criticality</span> </div>
	63 ((reads the passage))	
	64 <I checked the body from the head to the toe, the color of sunset.>	
	65 and I, I translated it ((laughter)) I don't kno:w.. what?	
	66 so <I don't know where the color of the sunset came fro:m.>	
	67 >is it, is it the color of< the bo:dy?	
	68 or is it- like she said something like a po:em or something?	
	69 I don't know. Is it a co:de?	
Alexis:	70 I think it's very interesting what you say.	
	71 how you weren't sure if what you read is like a po:em or a co:de.	
Khalid:	72 of course.	



Alexis:	73 so the color of a sunset sky, meaning that=	
Khalid:	74 =she sees the color of her so:n like that,	Creativity Criticality
	75 like she's like ima:gining something.	
	76 yes. but I translate it as IS.	
Alexis:	77 so you translate it as the co:lor.	
Khalid:	78 yeah, no. I translate it as it is in the sentence.	Creativity Criticality Cultural Translation
	79 because i didn't kno:w.	
	80 so the color of sunset, so if it's, if she's talking about hi:s color,	
	81 I have to say <as the sun- as the color of the sunset.>	
	82 but I- I translate it o:nly as <the sunset color.> that's what I said.	
	83 >so what do you think.< ke:ep it like that, or=	
Alexis:	84 =I think that's fi:ne.	Affirming
	85 because.. what I'm getting at with this exercise is you know,	
	86 how yo:u interpret the passage.	
	87 tha:t's what's most important to me.	

Here, Khalid is creatively and critically engaging with the expression “the color of sunset,” and at first, it seems that he may be confused by the language of the source text; he reads from the passage, and then laughs, as if to express a sense of incredulousness over how to translate this expression. But as he continues to explore the underlying meaning of these words, he wonders aloud if the narrator “said something like a poem,” or if the language might represent “a code.” Khalid’s observations reflect his understanding of the author’s sophisticated use of imagery, to create a specific atmosphere through the use of poetic language. However, as I tried to respond to his line of questioning, he cut me off to address his own inquiries, noting that the narrator “sees the color of her son like that,” as if his flesh were “the color of sunset.” Khalid continued to argue the reasons for his linguistic choices, until finally asking me, “so what do you think?” This was one of the few instances where he directly sought my perspective toward his languaging moves, embracing an atypical, but nonetheless hybrid stance, within the cultural translation dimension of Li’s (2011) translanguaging space. Sensing a point of entry into the conversation, I interrupted him to say, “I think that’s fine.” With my response, I wanted to affirm his decision-

making, and remind him that ultimately, the point of the exercise was to give participants the freedom to interpret the passage as they deemed fit.

### Conclusions about Co-Constructing a Translanguaging Space with Khalid

From the very beginning of our meeting, it was clear to me that Khalid came to the translanguaging space with a willingness to learn, and perhaps an even stronger desire to show me what he already knew. Table 8 below includes the skills, beliefs, and familiar language practices that he brought with him to the space, along with the translanguaging pedagogies that I used to help him leverage these funds during our time together.

**Table 14.** Connecting Khalid’s Funds of Knowledge to the Translanguaging Space

Skills, Beliefs, & Familiar Language Practices	Dimensions of Translanguaging Space	Translanguaging Pedagogies
Perspective-taking in writing; openness to incorporating other perspectives in writing	Cultural Translation Dimension	Affirming
Knowledge of syntactic and pragmatic features of language	Cognitive Dimension	Affirming & Extending
Connections between language and culture/origin	Socio-Historical Dimension	
Critical evaluation of word choice and subsequent outcomes	Cultural Dimension (creativity/criticality)	

Unlike my interactions with the other focal participants, it was a bit of a challenge for me to enact the same translanguaging pedagogies with Khalid, as I wrestled with him to secure points of entry into his explanations of the source text and accompanying translation. He genuinely seemed keen on arguing his points-of-view, which precluded me from more fully assuming the role of a co-learner, as I had done with both Dinh and Liliya. The majority of my co-learning took place during the initial poetry lesson that he gave me, when we first sat down to

meet; although Khalid's instruction was not related to the source text, it was still invaluable in terms of learning a bit about Arabic, as well as gaining insight into the type of writing that most appealed to him. In spite of my difficulties with managing Khalid's linguistic output, I was still able to negotiate some pedagogical moves, namely, in affirming and extending his existing skills and familiar language practices. He demonstrated a clear understanding of perspective-taking in writing, slightly modifying the language of the source text for the sake of understandability. Khalid was adamant about making his translation clear enough for someone else to read, prioritizing the reader's comprehension ahead of all other concerns. He also engaged in metatalk to compare and contrast structural differences and similarities between Arabic and English, pointing out common syntax markers, and noting the pragmatic features of language that facilitated his understanding of unfamiliar words. For Khalid, the social and historical factors contributing to his languaging practices were not as overtly present as I had experienced with the other participants. However, he still seemed to implicate both his home culture and national origin in defending his choices at the word level. Lastly, Khalid excelled at demonstrating creativity and criticality in the translanguaging space, undertaking a sophisticated method of argumentation to defend his translation moves, while still remaining open-minded to my feedback concerning his decisions.

## Conclusion

The primary goal of this chapter was to generate a set of substantive details for each of the five focal participants, enumerating the specific skills, beliefs, and familiar language practices that each person leveraged during the semi-structured interviews. Likewise, I also aimed to show how my collaborative efforts with participants facilitated their performances within the translanguaging space, arguing that my dialogical contributions influenced the ways in which participants leveraged their funds of knowledge during the semi-structured interviews. All of the participants exercised varying degrees of creativity and criticality in the translanguaging space, particularly with regard to evaluating word choice and subsequent outcomes. All but Liliya exhibited perspective-taking in writing, although she showed flexibility and self-regulation with regard to language and content learning. Across the board, participants engaged in metatalk to demonstrate their knowledge of the phonological, orthographic, semantic, syntactic, and pragmatic features of language, linking this knowledge to their beliefs in general toward different language systems. At times, participants linked their language beliefs and practices to their identities, cultures, and national origins, depending upon their nature of the interview questions and participants' individual perspectives.

Moving from substantive details to more formal approximations (Glaser, 2002), a broader vision of participants' funds' of knowledge takes more fully into consideration the impact of my dialogical contributions on the co-construction of the translanguaging space. In my interactions with each of the Spanish speaking participants, I did not assume the role of co-learner to nearly the same degree that I did with the other three participants; because I was able to utilize my knowledge of Spanish to read directly from these participants' translations, we were able to converse with one another without my having to first establish a basic understanding of their

writing. With Dinh, Liliya, and Khalid, I had to rely on their willingness and ability to share their language knowledge with me, so that I could eventually determine their comprehension of the source text. Through my own careful enactment of specific translanguaging pedagogies, each participant demonstrated a variety of skills, beliefs, and familiar language practices, regardless of my incoming knowledge of their linguistic repertoires. In the end, it didn't matter that I couldn't speak Vietnamese, Ukrainian, Russian, or Arabic; all five participants were highly creative and critical, regardless of my linguistic knowledge. What stands out as instrumental to my interactions with participants was my willingness to embrace the unknown. García and Li (2014) discuss having "trust and open exchange of different language practices" in educators' use of translanguaging with students; this chapter's findings showed how productive translanguaging spaces were co-created between speakers of different language backgrounds, when aided by risk-taking, flexible boundaries, and an assortment of translanguaging pedagogies.

## CHAPTER 5

### TRANSLANGUAGING AS AN APPROACH TO REMEDIAL WRITING INSTRUCTION AND A MEANS OF FACILITATING TEXTUAL ANALYSIS

This chapter addresses the following research questions: *What are the affordances of a translanguaging approach to remedial writing instruction? How can translation assist LM learners with identifying the complexities, unifying features, and supporting details of a text (Lynn, 2001)?* These questions are designed with the goal of more clearly articulating how LM learners in remedial writing classes can benefit from translanguaging pedagogies, both on the whole, and also, more specifically, by translating written texts. To answer the first question, I return to the student participants' semi-structured interviews, focusing on the different translanguaging pedagogies that I enacted with them, and locating common themes related to the process of writing. While the first research question in this chapter seeks to broadly identify the affordances of a translanguaging approach to remedial writing instruction, the second question specifically targets a single translanguaging pedagogy: written translation. To answer this second question, I narrow my focus to examine the affordances of the translation exercise, with respect to facilitating textual analysis, or what Lynn (2001) describes as identifying “the complexities, unifying features, and supporting details of a text” (pp. 41-42); focusing on participants' written translations, I integrate my earlier observations with feedback from outside translators to more thoroughly investigate how participants conveyed each of these textual attributes in their writing. In an effort to triangulate the data sources corresponding to this research question, I also integrate feedback from the student participants themselves, making use of their open-ended responses to the exit survey questions. I conclude this chapter by comparing broadly across the

five participant-produced written translations, raising implications for the evaluation of translingual writing.

### **Affordances of a Translanguaging Approach to Remedial Writing Instruction**

In the previous chapter, I elaborated on the specific skills, beliefs, and familiar language practices that each of the five focal participants leveraged while we met individually and co-constructed translanguaging spaces. I also argued that my dialogical contributions were instrumental to the ways in which participants revealed their funds of knowledge, shedding light on some important instructional implications for enacting translanguaging pedagogies with bi/multilingual learners. In brief, I divided these translanguaging pedagogies into four distinct categories: affirming participants' existing knowledge/practices related to the source text/translation; affirming participants' existing knowledge/practices related to the source text/translation, and seeking to extend capabilities for meaning-making; bridging participants' out-of-school literacy practices with the source text/translation; adopting the position of co-earner to transfer greater agency to the participant.

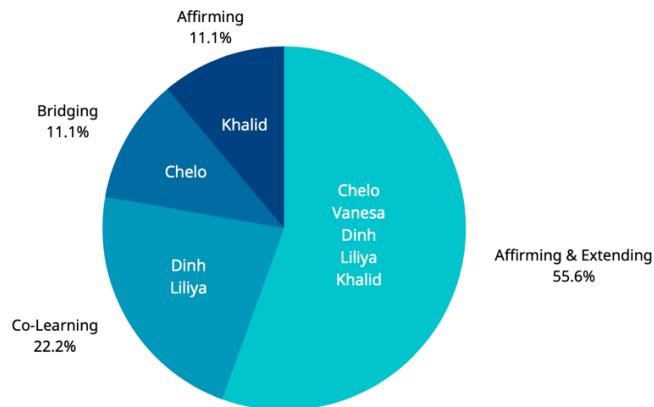
In the following paragraphs, I examine more closely the dialogical exchanges that were taking place as I enacted each one of the abovementioned translanguaging pedagogies with the five focal participants. With the purpose of locating the broader affordances of these different approaches, I suggest connections between each pedagogical practice and key tenets of writing remediation. Grounding my suggestions in social cognitive understandings of the writing process, Table 16 below provides a summary of the translanguaging pedagogies utilized in this study and the general objectives of remedial writing instruction.

**Table 15.** Connecting Translanguaging Pedagogies to Remedial Writing Instruction

Translanguaging Pedagogies	Affordances in Remedial Writing Instruction
Affirming	Promoting self-efficacy
Affirming & Extending	Extending lines of enquiry
Bridging Out of School Literacies	Invoking self-regulation
Co-Learning	Considering readers' perspectives

Finally, to summarize the specific translanguaging pedagogies that I enacted with individual participants, Figure 5 below illustrates the overall frequency of occurrence for each one of the four pedagogical categories in the coded semi-structured interview transcripts.

**Figure 5.** Translanguaging Pedagogies Enacted with the 5 Focal Participants



As Figure 5 demonstrates, more than half of my dialogical contributions were characterized by affirming and extending participants' thinking about the source text; to an extent, I believe it is also fair to say that my typical pedagogical stance looks very similar, even when I am not enacting translanguaging pedagogies with my own college students. Nonetheless, compared to the other translanguaging pedagogies, this was the only category that I enacted with



all five of the participants. Taking a closer look at what was taking place each time that I sought to affirm and extend participants' thinking, I was simultaneously walking them through specific lines of the source text, re-reading to check for comprehension, filling in details that they may have overlooked, and questioning their understanding by asking them to explain how they interpreted the source text. At times, I was also incorporating physical gestures to bolster their comprehension; for example, while speaking to Vanesa, I grabbed a pen between my thumb and index finger and drew my hand in a downward motion to imitate the manner in which "the doctor draws his scalpel down" (line 2) in the source text. In other words, by using physical gestures and direct questioning, I attempted to stimulate closer interaction between participants and the source text, which ultimately extended new lines of enquiry for them to explore along with me.

In terms of linking the practice of affirming and extending participants' thinking to the aims of remedial writing, I argue there is a connection between extending new lines of enquiry and the editing process in writing. According to Myhill (2011), the metalinguistic nature of writing lends itself to considerable periods of reflection and revision. As a means of facilitating students' development as writers, researchers emphasize the important role of metatalk (Swain, 1995, 1998) in designing instructional supports to increase discussion surrounding the reflective and revising stages of the writing process (Alexander, 2002, 2008; Myhill, 2011; Myhill & Newman, 2016). One way that metatalk can serve as a productive form of discussion about writing involves isolating key components of a text, and taking a closer look at how a given combination of linguistic structures might be associated with certain meanings. Myhill and Newman (2016) caution against urging students to simply "replicate pre-determined linguistic structures or forms in their composition," where exercising linguistic choice lies at the heart of

developing writing skills, and is “always a matter of exploration and interpretation, not a matter of fact” (p. 179). While co-constructing translanguaging spaces with the participants in this study, metatalk, linguistic choice, exploration, and interpretation became some of the defining features of our dialogical exchanges; and by extending new lines of enquiry for participants to explore along with me, they also had the opportunity to make verbal edits to their writing processes, reflecting and revising aloud as we reviewed their written translations.

After affirming and extending, co-learning was the second most prevalent translanguaging pedagogy that I enacted with participants. Together with Dinh and Liliya, I assumed the role of co-learner, in an effort to transfer greater agency to each of them as we co-constructed translanguaging spaces. Although, to be fair, I extended agency to Khalid as well, as he took the teaching reins at the very beginning of our translanguaging session, and he proceeded to deliver a mini lesson on Arabic poetics; during this instance, my role was decidedly more “learner” than “co-learner” oriented. With all three of these participants, I inherited the most vulnerability in terms of not knowing anything about their language varieties; during our time together, I had to rely on their ability to connect their languages to their interpretations of the source text, and to communicate these associations to me to the best of their abilities. But even though my experiences with Dinh, Liliya, and Khalid were not privy to the same level of intersubjectivity that I shared with Chelo and Vanesa, I managed to navigate my linguistic limitations by demanding more from them as a co-learner. For example, Liliya revealed to me that she used a mix of Ukrainian and Russian in her translation, but, at least initially, she did not elaborate on her rationale, much less where the mixing took place. I first asked her to circle the words or phrases where she codemeshed, and then I asked her to show me where they were located in the source text. Next, I wanted to know more about Liliya’s word choices, so I

continued to ask her questions about the differences between Ukrainian and Russian, and how the concept of “sunset” might be represented in each language. By adopting the perspective of a highly inquisitive co-learner, I was also pushing Liliya to more clearly articulate her decision-making, which in turn helped me to understand her concerns for potential readers. In this way, my co-learner strategies also helped attune participants’ sensibilities toward readers’ perspectives, in addition to their own comprehension of the source text.

Connecting the practice of co-learning to the aims of remedial writing, there are close ties between adopting readers’ perspectives and critically reflecting on one’s own writing process. Flower (1994) suggests “collaborative planning” as one strategy to support college students’ critical thinking about writing, arguing that this type of engagement “hands the process, the prompts, and the responsibility” to students themselves to consider “purpose, audience, and text” (p.146). The social aspect of this type of planning provides a dedicated space for reflection to occur, where, typically, students would be left to think about their process of writing on their own. Flower’s social cognitive model of writing aligns with both the social and cognitive spheres of Li’s (2011) translanguaging space, and her descriptions of collaborative planning also run parallel to my pedagogical objectives as a co-learner with this study’s participants; by suspending my authority in the translanguaging space, participants enjoyed greater opportunities for elaborating on their writing processes, and more time to consider the perspectives of potential readers.

There were two additional translanguaging pedagogies that I enacted with just two of the participants; one of these was bridging out-of-school literacies. During my time with Chelo, I had the opportunity to bridge her out-of-school literacies with her translation of the source text. Unlike the other participants, Chelo performed written translation work on a regular basis as part

of her full-time job with a local food pantry. Even though she had the benefit of this experience, she did not readily recognize her capacity for written translation as one of her strengths in writing; most likely due to the disconnect between her typical writing coursework and the everyday language practices of bi/multilinguals, she did not make this connection until she was afforded the opportunity to engage in the written translation of a literary text. Going back to our conversation about the significance of her work as a translator, she began to consider the nuanced ways in which Spanish speakers might “visualize” what she had just read in the source text. Beyond making a connection to her intended audience, she also engaged in a process of self-regulation, taking stock of the specific steps she could take to deliver a more vivid reading experience for potential readers. By bridging together Chelo’s professional and academic pursuits, she demonstrated a more systematic method of self-regulating her writing process, incorporating her impressions of the source text with concrete goals for achieving a written translation of the highest caliber.

According to Zimmerman and Risemberg (1997), self-regulation of writing describes “self-initiated thoughts, feelings, and actions that writers use to attain various literary goals;” these goals can range from fine-tuning one’s written skills, to improving upon a specific piece of writing (p. 76). They also point out that one’s “self-regulatory expertise” is closely linked to their “general learning and development,” and that self-regulation typically improves with “increasing age and experience” (p. 78). These generalizations come with a caveat, however, in that they fail to address specific consequences for bi/multilingual writers. What happens when LM learners seek to attain literary goals in English, or in other languages that are less familiar to them? Does self-regulatory expertise increase with age and experience, regardless of linguistic variation? Perhaps these questions warrant investigation outside the scope of this research study. But at the

same time, returning to my experience with co-constructing a translanguaging space with Chelo, it is worth highlighting the ways that she self-regulated her writing process on her own volition. By bridging her out-of-school literacies with the literary translation task, Chelo demonstrated her capacity to self-initiate an introspective gaze at her own writing process.

Finally, one additional way that I enacted translanguaging pedagogies was by simply affirming participants' existing knowledge/practices related to the source text/translation; I did this exclusively with Khalid, when he seemed anxious about whether or not he had made the "right" choices in his written translation of "the color of a sunset sky" (line 5). To be clear, this particular moment stood apart from our other dialogical exchanges, where he did not directly seek validation from me at any other point in the conversation; Khalid was otherwise exuberant to take the lead throughout our time together, and he was keen to argue the reasons behind his linguistic choices. Still, not all LM learners will be as willing as Khalid to open themselves up to criticism, even when translanguaging spaces are intentionally designed for students to freely express themselves. With Khalid, or any LM learner who might be more reticent, a simple affirmation of their decision-making can go a long way in terms of restating the purpose of the translanguaging space for linguistic experimentation. Moreover, by affirming what students have already accomplished in their written translations, they can more confidently render their decision-making, and also make strides toward increasing their self-efficacy in writing.

Viewed from a writing perspective, self-efficacy refers to a writer's own sense of their capacity to effectively perform a writing task (Pajares & Johnson, 1994; Zimmerman & Bandura, 1994; Zimmerman & Risemberg, 1997). In line with Bandura's (1986) contention that people's beliefs about their capabilities are inextricably bound to the outcome of their efforts, I argue that by affirming students' translanguaging practices, their self-efficacy in writing can be similarly

impacted in positive ways. Pajares and Johnson (1994), borrowing from social cognitive theory, assert the connection between an individual's capabilities and their self-efficacy beliefs, where "beliefs in part determine the expectations" (p. 314). Applying this same line of thinking to LM learners, when afforded the opportunity to push beyond the traditional boundaries of monolingual writing classrooms, their capacity for expression is no longer inhibited by the use of a singular linguistic code; however, the integration of translanguaging spaces into these classrooms remains a novel concept, and even where students have unrestricted access to their languages, their self-efficacy beliefs have already been shaped by the overarching linguistic hierarchies that surround them. Language inequities abound, whether in school settings, or in communities at large. In response to these inequities, translanguaging pedagogies centered in constructive and affirming dialogical exchanges offer one way to reinforce LM learners' beliefs in themselves to successfully carry out written tasks, and to potentially do so with greater ease.

### **Conclusion: Affordances of a Translanguaging Approach to Remedial Writing Instruction**

In the previous section, the primary goal was to articulate the affordances of a translanguaging approach to remedial writing instruction. I addressed this goal by first taking stock of the four different translanguaging pedagogies that I enacted with each of the five focal participants. By more closely examining the ongoing dialogical exchanges that sustained these pedagogies, I identified broader themes related to the aims of writing remediation that corresponded to participants' accomplishments in co-constructing translanguaging spaces. Connecting the study's translanguaging pedagogies to remedial writing instruction, I suggested the following potential affordances: (1) promoting self-efficacy; (2) extending lines of enquiry; (3) invoking self-regulation; (4) considering readers' perspectives. A close analysis of the semi-structured interview data revealed that each of these affordances could be linked to participants'

talk about their written translations, albeit in varying degrees.

### **Translation and Textual Analysis**

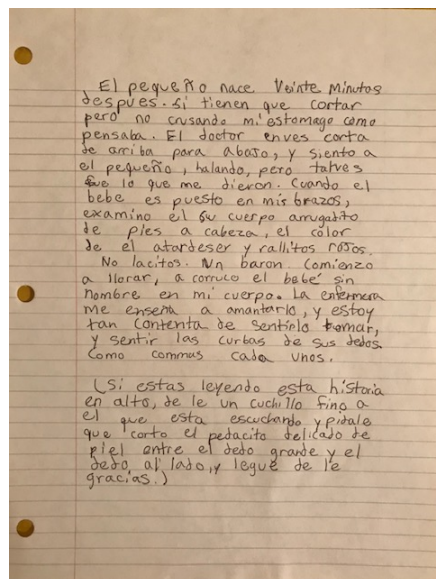
Shifting the focus of this study's data analysis toward the written artifacts that student participants produced during the translanguaging sessions, in this section I explore a combination of the written translations and open-ended survey responses for each of the five focal participants. Similar to the findings section in chapter 4, a case study design (Merriam, 1998) is utilized to account for individual differences in student participants' approaches to the translation exercise, and as such, each case is defined at the participant level. Accordingly, there are five cases presented, with each one exploring the rhetorical strategies that focal participants employed within the pre-set boundaries of a translanguaging space. Likewise, each case study also reflects student participants' own feedback regarding their experiences in the translanguaging space, in an effort to more fully integrate their perspectives toward their writing processes.

As a means of connecting the written translations to a New Critical reading of the source text, I investigate how translation assisted student participants with identifying "the complexities, unifying features, and supporting details of a text" (Lynn, 2001, pp. 41-42); furthermore, I also consider the ways that student participants demonstrate their understanding of the ironic complexities of the source text in their written translations. Relying on feedback from outside translators and my experiences with participants in co-constructing translanguaging spaces, I assess participants' "rhetorical effectiveness" (Canagarajah, 2011, pp. 402-403), in an effort to contribute new insights to the process-oriented aspects of translingual writing studies.

## Case Study 1: Chelo's Written Artifacts

In my discussions with each of this study's professional translators, I initially asked them to describe to me their impressions of what makes a good translation; I relied on this input from the translators to help determine their evaluation criteria for the rhetorical effectiveness of student participants' written translations. The translator who reviewed both Chelo's and Vanesa's translations indicated that a good translation conveys the original message, even if changes in syntax or grammar are necessary; moreover, she also stressed the importance of clarifying meanings that might otherwise become obscured when translated into the target language. In addition, this translator also emphasized the importance of reproducing "an aesthetic or style similar to that of the original," particularly in light of the source text being a literary text. Knowing that the translator placed a high value on the artistic elements of the source text, I was curious to see how both Chelo and Vanesa might have rendered these elements in each of their respective translations. Figure 6 below corresponds to Chelo's written translation.

Figure 6. Chelo's Written Translation





The translator's overall impression of Chelo's written translation was that some aspects were better than others, but as a whole, the writing was mostly rhetorically effective. While the translator pointed out a series of mechanical errors involving spelling, diacritical marks, and subject-verb agreement, she still believed that these errors did not impede comprehensibility of the passage. Noting the similarity between Chelo's written translation and oral speech, the translator suggested that confusion between written and spoken Spanish likely accounts for each of the following misspelled words<sup>13</sup>: *atardecer*, *rallitos*, *crusando*, *baron*, *curbas*. In terms of diacritical marks, the only accented word is *bebé*, and only once does Chelo include the accent, even though it is used several times throughout her translation. In the last paragraph, she begins with informal speech, invoking familiarity via the informal Spanish *tú*<sup>14</sup> form of the present progressive: "*si estas leyendo*" ("if you are reading," line 9). But, she is inconsistent with her verb conjugation, and within the same paragraph, she switches to a more formal register via the unfamiliar *Usted* command: "*de le*" ("give them," line 9). Again, oral speech is also imitated in these lines, where accents are omitted from "*si estás leyendo*" and "*déle*," which should also be written as one word, instead of two. Nonetheless, the translator did not believe these mechanical errors signaled a lack of comprehension on Chelo's part.

On the other hand, the translator pointed out one subject-verb error indicating that Chelo might have misunderstood what is said in lines 2 and 3: "the doctor draws his scalpel down instead, and I feel little, just tugging." When the narrator describes feeling a little tug, Chelo translates this action as if the baby were the one tugging, and not the doctor performing the C-section. This is an interesting mix-up, since the passage opens with "Little One is born twenty

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<sup>13</sup> The "c" in *atardecer* is pronounced as the voiceless alveolar sound /s/, the "y" in *rayitos* is pronounced as the voiced palatal /j/, the "z" in *crusando* is pronounced as the voiceless alveolar sound /s/, and the "v" in *varón* and *curvas* is pronounced as the bilabial voiced sound /b/ in most Spanish dialects.

<sup>14</sup> In Spanish, both of the words *tú* and *Usted* mean "you," where the former is used informally, and the latter is reserved for formal communication.

minutes later,” (line 1) and here, the word “little” is repeated again, just two lines later; Chelo might be inadvertently connecting the “tugging” with the first use of “little one,” within the very same paragraph. I agree with the translator, that Chelo might have confused who was “tugging,” especially since the word “little” appears so closely, and if read quickly, she might have mistakenly inserted “little *one*” into her conjugation of the verb.

Beyond Chelo’s potential misunderstanding of the “tugging” source, she also made choices that demonstrate a solid grasp of the main events taking place, in spite of omitting several words in her portrayal of these events. For example, Chelo doesn’t translate “scalpel” (line 2), or “index finger” (line 10), or “thumb” (line 10), yet she is still able to convey the actions that are occurring in relation to each one of these nouns, and the gist of the text is not lost without the use of more specific vocabulary. For example, Chelo translates “the doctor draws his scalpel down instead” (lines 2-3) as “*el doctor en ves corta de arriba para abajo,*” obviating “his scalpel,” but still approximating the action taking place, via the description “cuts from top to bottom.” The translator surmised that Chelo likely did not know the word equivalents in Spanish, but perhaps due to the context and the narrator’s descriptions, she is still aware of what is happening. Furthermore, based on my own experience with co-constructing a translanguaging space with Chelo, I agree that these omissions are indicative of lexical gaps, and not a misunderstanding of the main details of the passage.

Returning to what the translator shared with me initially regarding her take on translation, as well as the importance of maintaining the aesthetic components of the source text, it was interesting to hear her describe Chelo’s repeated use of several diminutive word forms in her written translation. In Spanish, the addition of the suffixes *-ito/a/os/as* can be used to create diminutive forms of a noun or adjective. Chelo elected to include several diminutives in her

written translation that are not actually present in the source text. The translator detected these words as part of a stylistic, or literary strategy to help develop a more endearing, almost motherly tone. For example, for “wrinkled body” (line 4), Chelo uses the diminutive suffix *-ito* to form “*cuerpo arrugadito*,” or “little wrinkled body;” she follows the same pattern with her use of “*rallitos*” (“little streaks,” line 5), “*lacitos*” (“little ribbons,” line 6), and “*pedacito*” (“little flap,” line 10). Chelo’s repetition of these diminutives creates an effect that mirrors the author’s use of “Little One” in line 1, exuding a maternal-like quality in her rendering of the scene. From a translanguaging standpoint, her word choice embodies the transformational aspects of dynamic language usage, and from a reader-focused perspective toward translation (Hall, Smith, Wickasono, 2017), Chelo’s semantic moves signal an intentional effort to communicate the author’s representation of childbirth.

In the final paragraph of Chelo’s written translation, the translator and I both agreed that she was successful in translating the ironic language in lines 9-11, “if you are reading this story... afterward, thank them.” Chelo’s translation is very close to the original text, and in that sense, the message is clear enough, in spite of the aforementioned inconsistencies regarding formal and informal verb conjugations. The translator believed that a thorough understanding of the ironic context also depends on the reader in question, but she also admitted that Chelo’s translation could lead most readers toward an ironic interpretation of the text.

### **Conclusions about Chelo’s Written Artifacts**

Chelo produced a written translation that was both rhetorically effective and creatively constructed, in spite of a number of mechanical errors. Table 17 below summarizes the ways that Chelo negotiated the complexities, unifying features, and supporting details of the source text in her written translation.

**Table 16.** Connecting Chelo’s Written Translation to Textual Analysis

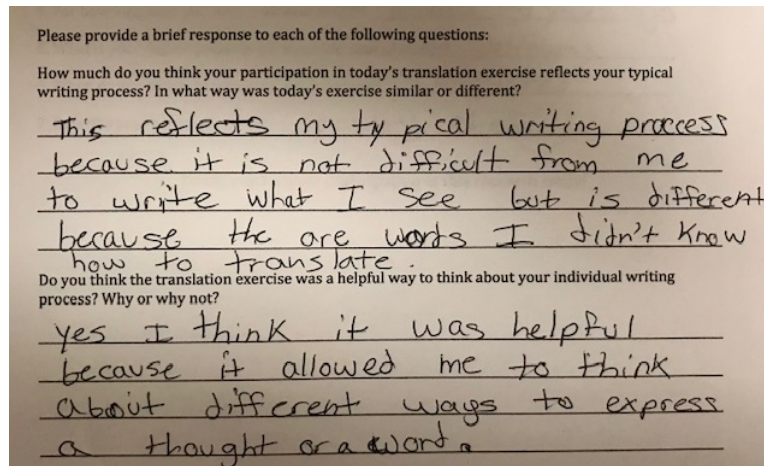
Complexities	Unifying Features	Supporting Details
Ironic elements of lines 9-11 are clearly communicated; minor inconsistency with formal and informal directives	Circumvents unknown vocabulary (scalpel, line 2; index finger, line 10; thumb, line 10) while sustaining the graphic nature of both the surgical scene and the narrator’s final directives  Incorporates diminutive forms of nouns (eg., “ <b>little</b> wrinkled body, line 4) that enhance the maternal qualities of the text	Misattributes the “tugging” source in line 3

Chelo clearly communicates the ironic language of lines 9-11, even though her framing of the narrator’s voice contained mechanical errors related to verb tense and number; she was inconsistent with her use of formal and informal directives, which detracted somewhat from the tone of the source text. Perhaps her most skillful asset was her ability to circumvent unknown vocabulary in ways that maintained the cohesiveness of both the surgical scene and the narrator’s final directives. Chelo also incorporated diminutive forms of words that enhanced the maternal qualities of the source text. She was largely successful at relating supporting details, in spite of misattributing the “tugging” source in line 3.

Chelo brought the most relatable experiences with her to the translation activity, having translated newsletters into Spanish for her work at the local food pantry. Even with these experiences behind her, she still recounted new ways that her participation in this research study opened her eyes to her skillfulness at written translation. Figure 7 below includes her open-ended

responses to the exit survey that she completed after our time together in the translanguaging space.

**Figure 7.** Chelo's open-ended survey responses

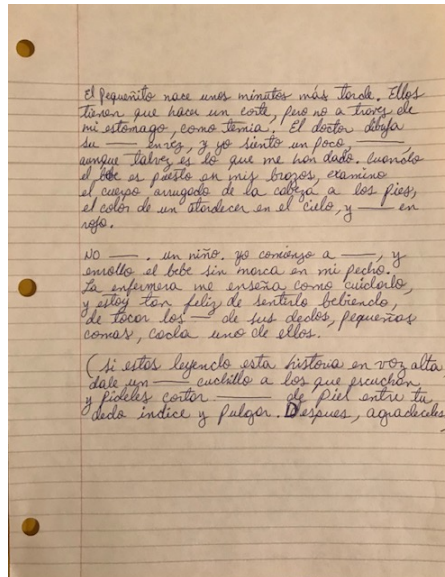


In her first response, Chelo points out there are similarities between the translation exercise and her typical writing process, and that she doesn't struggle "to write what I see." Based on what she said immediately afterwards, I interpreted what she "sees" to mean her ability to locate the words or concepts needed to describe her surroundings; the source text, on the other hand, contained unfamiliar language, so she had to adjust her typical approach to translation in order to describe what was happening with the vocabulary within her reach. In spite of the challenges presented by this task, Chelo believed the exercise was helpful to thinking about her individual writing process, especially because it pushed her to think more critically about semantic concerns in translation.

### **Case Study 2: Vanesa's Written Artifacts**

Compared to Chelo's written translation, the translator felt that Vanesa's written translation was less rhetorically effective, largely based on the quantity of blank spaces that she inserted to account for lexical gaps. Figure 8 below corresponds to Vanesa's written translation.

Figure 8. Vanesa's Written Translation



Where Chelo circumvented unknown words and phrases by means of careful description, Vanesa instead omitted entire portions of the source text in her translation. This led the translator to believe that Vanesa might not have known a sufficient amount of vocabulary to perform the task, and that potentially, the context provided was not substantial enough for her to fully comprehend the events taking place. For example, in the source text, where the doctor “draws his scalpel” (line 2), Vanesa not only avoids translating “scalpel,” but she also seems unable to consider the act of “drawing” as a movement unrelated to producing an actual drawing. Rather than translating “draw” to characterize the movement of the scalpel, she opts for “*dibuja*,” which, in Spanish, only refers to “drawing” as in pictorial representations. While I agree with the translator’s judgment concerning Vanesa’s incorrect translation of “drawing,” I am less certain that she did not know the Spanish word for scalpel, based on what she communicated to me in the translanguaging space. Vanesa started to produce the word “*escalpelo*,” but then self-regulated her own speech, and cut herself off from expressing the word in its entirety. Still, even if she was guessing at the existence of a cognate equivalent, it was clear enough that she did not

comprehend the physical act of moving a cutting instrument across the narrator's abdomen, based on both her written translation, and her verbal exchange with me during the semi-structured interview.

Another similar instance involving a potential lack of comprehension occurs with respect to lines 7-8, where "the nurse shows me how to nurse him." Vanesa translates the verb "to nurse" as "*cuidarlo*," which means "to take care of him." In spite of this phrase being followed by the image of a nursing newborn (line 8), Vanesa's portrayal of the scene lacks the intimacy and maternal connection associated with the act of breastfeeding. The translator pointed out several options in Spanish to translate the verb "to nurse," including "*lactar*," "*mamar*," and "*amamantar*," but none appear in Vanesa's translation. As with the act of "drawing," the translator believed that Vanesa constrained her representation of the scene by producing a text-focused, literal translation that might also signal confusion over the details of the scene. Yet another example highlighting Vanesa's inclination toward literalness occurs where the narrator describes "the color of a sunset sky" (line 5); she translates this description as "*el color de un atardecer en el cielo*," or, "the color of a sunset in the sky." Even though this example is more subtle than the previous ones, it still suggests a literal interpretation of the text. In this case, however, Vanesa seems to comprehend the imagery of the source text, albeit her rendering lacks the creative impact of the original.

Beyond Vanesa's leanings toward literal translation, and the number of missing, untranslated words, what she produced is largely spelled correctly, and her use of syntax is highly functional. Like Chelo, her writing is missing a substantial quantity of diacritical marks. Yet overall, her translation communicates a basic level understanding of the main details of the source text, despite lacking specific vocabulary to capture the essence of the scene. The

translator suggested that perhaps her most successful lines correspond to the metaphorical language employed in line 8, “the curls of his fingers, little commas, each of them.” This particular line is a bit challenging, where it presents a series of gender and number agreement decisions that must be made on the part of the translator. Even though Vanesa does not translate “curls,” the translator believed the rest of the line worked really well, due to a small addition that she makes at the end of the sentence. Vanesa’s translation, “*pequeñas comas, cada uno de ellos*,” which, while remaining close to the original structure, also includes “*cada uno de ellos*” or “each one of them.” The translator felt it was significant that Vanesa added “one” to this phrasing, since it came across as a clarifying point for the reader, and a shift from her more text-focused translations. My observations in the translanguaging space were consistent with the translator’s observations, in that Vanesa physically curled up each one of her fingers on each hand to make little “c’s,” providing evidence that she did in fact clearly understand what was taking place in the source text.

Both the translator and I agreed that Vanesa was successful in translating the ironic language in lines 9-11, “if you are reading this story... afterward, thank them,” even though she inserted blank spaces to account for the words “paring” and “tender flap.” Consistent with her strategy of literal interpretation, Vanesa moved through the final lines of the excerpt by focusing on the text she knew, and ignoring the parts that were unfamiliar to her. Unlike Chelo’s translation, Vanesa was actually much more effective at maintaining a consistent rendering of the verb conjugations in these three lines, where she did not waiver between formal and informal registers; she begins with the informal Spanish *tú* form of the present progressive: “*si estas leyendo*” (“if you are reading,” line 9), and maintains the same informal voice in “*dale un \_\_\_ cuchillo*” (“give a \_\_\_ knife,” line 9), “*pideles cortar*” (“ask them to cut,” line 10), and



“*agradecerles*” (“thank them,” line 11). Though she is missing several words and accent marks, Vanesa pays much closer attention to the specific details of the text with regard to the familiar tone she recreates in these final lines of her translation. While the translator believed that both Chelo’s and Vanesa’s translations could equally lead most readers toward an ironic interpretation of the text, I still find Vanesa’s translation to be more convincing, based on the clarity she achieves through a more careful maintenance of the informal register.

### Conclusions about Vanesa’s Written Artifacts

The translation activity presented some challenges for Vanesa, and compared to Chelo, her writing was less rhetorically effective. Nonetheless, her written translation still contained several strengths worth noting. Table 18 below summarizes the ways that Vanesa negotiated the complexities, unifying features, and supporting details of the source text in her written translation.

**Table 17.** Connecting Vanesa’s Written Translation to Textual Analysis

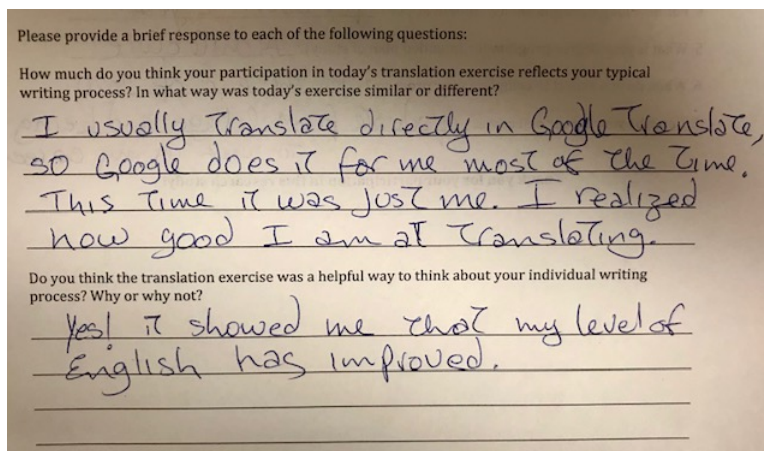
Complexities	Unifying Features	Supporting Details
Ironic elements of lines 9-11 are clearly communicated, in spite of several missing words; consistently maintains informal directives	Confuses “draws his scalpel” (line 2) with a pictorial representation, compromising the graphic description of the surgical scene  Incorporates a creative undertaking of line 8, adding “little commas, each <b>one</b> of them” that enhance the maternal qualities of the text	Changes “to nurse him” (line 7) to instead read “to take care of him”

Unlike Chelo, Vanesa’s rendering of lines 9-11 did not contain any mechanical errors related to

verb tense and number; she maintained the same informal directives as conveyed by the narrator in the source text. Arguably, Vanesa also conveyed the irony of these lines with greater success, since she avoids confusing the reader with multiple verb forms. Unfortunately, she omitted so many unknown words that her written translation felt incomplete. She also had difficulty with representing the surgical scene, due to her limited understanding of the verb “to draw.” Still, she made attempts to incorporate what she was able to communicate in writing, making creative additions that enhanced the maternal qualities of the text, and relating the supporting details to the best of her ability.

In spite of her struggles with the translation activity, Vanesa believed that her participation in this research study was a worthwhile endeavor. Figure 9 below includes her open-ended responses to the exit survey that she completed after our time together in the translanguaging space.

**Figure 9.** Vanesa’s open-ended survey responses



In her first response, Vanesa points out that, typically, she relies on Google Translate to perform written translation tasks. Even though she made some mistakes, the activity helped her to realize her own writing capabilities; in the end, Vanesa discovered that she is competent enough to draft a written translation without relying exclusively on electronic resources. Likewise, she also

gained valuable insight into her reading comprehension skills in English; in order to produce an effective translation, she also had to understand what was taking place in the source text. In her second response, she indicated that she learned that her “level of English has improved,” a realization that may have also bolstered her self-confidence, going into her second semester of postsecondary studies.

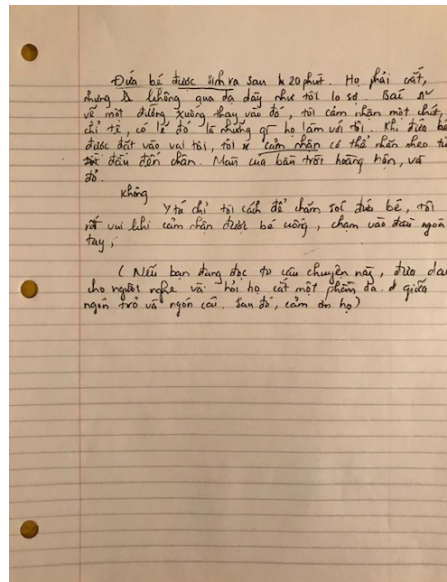
### **Case Study 3: Dinh’s Written Artifacts**

Unlike Chelo’s and Vanesa’s written translations, with Dinh, Liliya, and Khalid, I had to rely much more heavily on input from professional translators in order to gauge the rhetorical effectiveness of their writing; while I was able to draw insights from the semi-structured interviews with each of the student participants, I had no prior knowledge of Vietnamese, Ukrainian, Russian, or Arabic to guide my understanding of the decisions behind their corresponding linguistic strategies. To compensate for my lack of familiarity with these languages, I exchanged more written and verbal communications with the translators working with Dinh’s, Liliya’s, and Khalid’s written translations.

Beginning with the translator who assisted me with Dinh’s written translation, I asked her the same initial question regarding translation in general, to be consistent with my conversations with the Spanish language translator. The Vietnamese translator described a comprehensive process that is grounded in a solid understanding of the original text’s main idea. For her, a good translation stems from knowledge of grammar rules, combined with a reasonable grasp of the vocabularies for each language. To be clear, the translator emphasized that she does not consider a word-for-word translation to be effective, but instead, she looks for the main idea, and the transfer of structural elements within individual sentences. While she described the need for appropriate and equivalent vocabulary, she also stated that a good translation should not be too

rigid in its representation of the source text, lest there be a risk of obscuring the intended meaning of the original language. Like the Spanish translator, the Vietnamese translator also held the creative components of translation in high esteem, and I was interested in learning to what extent Dinh’s written translation might have demonstrated his capacity for creativity in translation. Figure 10 below corresponds to Dinh’s written translation.

Figure 10. Dinh’s Written Translation



In addition to her regard for creativity, the Vietnamese translator also indicated her strong belief that proper nouns, such as the names of persons, locations, or holidays, should be kept in their original forms; and in some cases, these proper nouns might be accompanied by brief explanations at the end of a translation, to provide added commentary about the meanings of these words. For this reason, she firmly argued in favor of codemeshing in order to translate line 1 of the text excerpt, treating “Little One” as a proper noun that ought maintain its original form when combined with the other translated elements of the sentence. Though I do not feel that it was imperative to codemesh here, I agree that, stylistically speaking, the use of “Little One” would infuse a stronger taste of the narrator’s original phrasing; particularly where both words

are capitalized in the source text, when read together, “Little One” comes across as the given name and surname of the newborn baby, at least temporarily, while the mother is still in delivery. Dinh elected to translate “Little One” as *Đứa bé* or “Little baby,” capitalizing the first letter of the Vietnamese word for “Little,” but using all lowercase for “baby.” I found it surprising that Dinh did not capitalize the “b” in “*bé*” since he mentioned the importance of proper punctuation in translation during our time together in the translanguaging space. Still, he demonstrated a creative interpretation of the source text by changing “one” to “baby,” and it is apparent that he understood the overall context of the birthing scene, particularly in successive lines of his written translation.

The translator pointed out a few instances where she disagreed with Dinh’s word choices, but in general, she believed his translation provided strong evidence of comprehension and rhetorical effectiveness. Interestingly, she voiced her most significant disagreement over Dinh’s translation of the word “examine” in line 4: “I examine the wrinkled body from head to toe.” During our time together in the translanguaging space, Dinh and I discussed this particular line at length, and he told me that he found it difficult to translate; he seemed stuck on associating the word “examine” with a research connotation, and consequently, he opted to change the wording slightly to express “feel,” or “*cảm nhận*” instead. While this change represents a modest adjustment to the original text, it nonetheless reduces the intensity of the narrator’s first physical interaction with her newborn son, where “examine” suggests a more thorough, even scrutinizing level of observation. In retrospect, having thought more about this experience with Dinh, I now find similarities with Vanesa’s use of the word “*dibujar*” to describe the doctor “drawing” his scalpel; both Dinh and Vanesa were limited by their singular understandings of the verbs “examine” and “draw,” and for this reason, they struggled to characterize the events taking place.

Having the opportunity to participate in a translanguaging space, and tasked with producing a written translation, they both drew attention to these stumbling blocks in comprehension in ways that might have otherwise gone unnoticed in a traditional, monolingual writing classroom. And although the translator would have preferred that Dinh had used “*xem-xét*” instead of “*cảm nhận*,” what appears most relevant here, at least from a translanguaging standpoint, is the transformational potential of providing students like Dinh and Vanesa with the space to explore their underlying negotiation strategies as bilingual writers.

With regard to the metaphorical language employed in line 8, “to touch the curls of his fingers, little commas, each of them,” the translator believed that Dinh relied a bit too heavily on a literal translation, and for this reason, she was not certain that he fully comprehended the imagery of the scene. Instead of describing “the curls of his fingers,” or “*những ngón tay cong cong đó*,” Dinh’s translation refers to “the tips of fingers,” or “*đầu ngón tay*.” I wonder whether or not his decision to change “curls” to “tips” reflects a misunderstanding of the image, or perhaps he was moving toward simplification, not knowing how to translate the word “curl” in Vietnamese. During the semi-structured interview, we discussed this part of the text, and Dinh initially indicated uncertainty regarding the exact meaning of narrator’s description of the baby. As I explained to him the metaphorical context, he interrupted me to voice his understanding that the “curls” indicated that the baby’s fingers were “curved like a shape.” This leads me to believe that Dinh may have lacked clarity while drafting his translation, but the talk through strategies that I employed in the translanguaging space both affirmed and extended his conceptualization of the metaphorical language.

In the final paragraph of Dinh’s written translation, the translator felt that he was quite successful in translating the ironic language in lines 9-11, “if you are reading this story...

afterward, thank them.” She noted that Dinh managed to convey a similar tempo to the original text, with his use of commas and periods in close position to the Vietnamese equivalents within his translation. The translator also noted that Dinh maintained the same parenthetical notation in his last three lines, which she believed was an essential aspect of conveying the irony of the narrator’s commands; I am in agreement with her, especially since the use of parentheses helps contribute to the sense that the narrator is speaking to the reader as an aside, breaking from the third person description of the childbirth scene, and adopting an entirely different tone from the first eight lines. Dinh’s attention to these seemingly minor punctuation details allows him to mirror the narrator’s changing perspective, which could in turn lead readers toward an ironic interpretation of the text.

### Conclusions about Dinh’s Written Artifacts

From a mechanical perspective, Dinh produced a written translation that was structurally sound, and from the perspective of a potential reader, his writing was also rhetorically effective. Table 19 below summarizes the ways that Dinh negotiated the complexities, unifying features, and supporting details of the source text in his written translation.

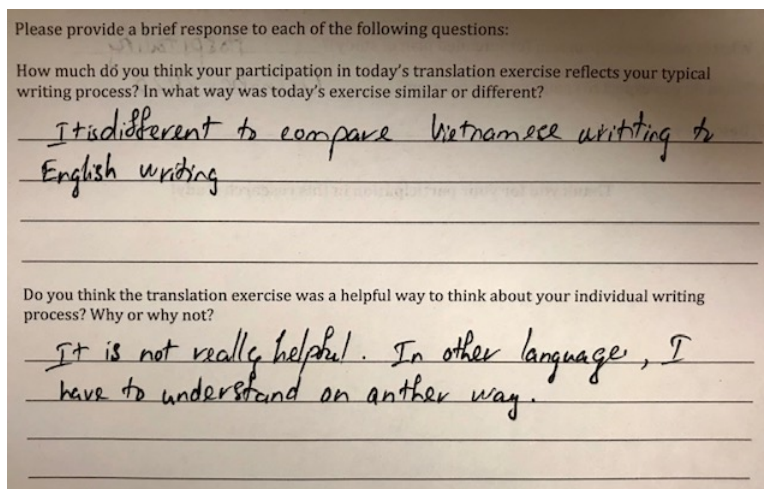
**Table 18.** Connecting Dinh’s Written Translation to Textual Analysis

Complexities	Unifying Features	Supporting Details
Ironic elements of lines 9-11 are clearly communicated; maintains the tempo of the source text with the aid of complementary punctuation marks	Confuses “examine” (line 4) with a research connotation, and instead uses “feel,” slightly altering the intensity with which the narrator inspects her newborn son	Changes “Little One” (line 1) to instead read “Little baby”  Changes “curls of his fingers” (line 8) to “tips of his fingers”

In terms of transmitting the complexities of lines 9-11, Dinh was highly successful at recreating the same ironic sentiments, thanks in part to the way he mirrored the tempo of the source text with similar punctuation. He was somewhat less successful at rendering one of the unifying features of the selected passage, due to a verb substitution that reduced the intensity of the narrator's first interaction with her newborn son. Nevertheless, Dinh made other substitutions to the supporting details of the source text that were still in line with the original style of narration; one such change, arguably, helped introduce the theme of birthing scene with the initial words "Little baby."

Unlike the other focal participants in the study, Dinh was not convinced that his participation in the translation activity was a helpful way to think about his individual writing process. Figure 11 below includes his open-ended responses to the exit survey that he completed after our time together in the translanguaging space.

**Figure 11.** Dinh's open-ended survey responses



Please provide a brief response to each of the following questions:

How much do you think your participation in today's translation exercise reflects your typical writing process? In what way was today's exercise similar or different?

*It is different to compare Vietnamese writing to English writing*

Do you think the translation exercise was a helpful way to think about your individual writing process? Why or why not?

*It is not really helpful. In other language, I have to understand on another way.*

In his first response, Dinh indicates that he sees Vietnamese writing differently from English writing; this is interesting, since the point of the exercise was in fact to highlight these differences, so I wonder if his response accurately reflected his experience, or if he lacked the



ability to convey in writing a more nuanced explanation of his impressions. Even his response to the second question seems to demonstrate his recognition of the differences in understanding that are required of different forms of writing. It is significant to note that Dinh, unlike the other four focal participants, had the least amount of experience in monolingual English language classrooms in the US; he was only in his first semester of postsecondary studies, and had arrived on campus less than a year before we met for the first time. Much more than the other students, Dinh was anxious about quickly adapting to his new surroundings, and on several occasions, he mentioned his desire to improve his written and spoken English. To an extent, I believe he was fearful that dynamic language usage might impede his goals; my experiences with Dinh helped me to realize the need for transparency when enacting translanguaging pedagogies with bi/multilingual learners, so that students do not perceive the benefits of these language practices as being mutually exclusive.

#### **Case Study 4: Liliya’s Written Artifacts**

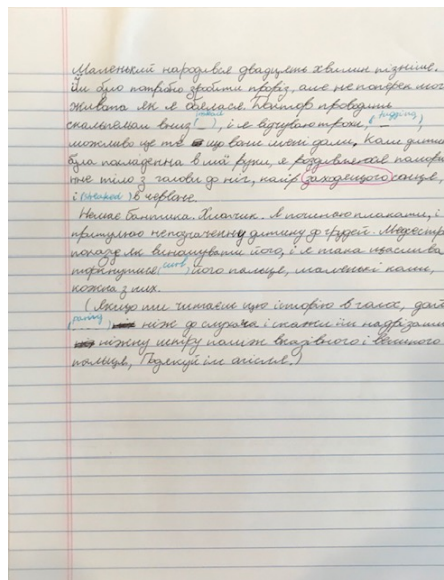
After working with Dinh’s written translation, I had a heightened sensitivity toward the capitalization of “Little One” in the source text, and I was curious to see if there were any similarities between the Vietnamese and Ukrainian translators’ perspectives. Having familiarized myself with rudimentary knowledge of Cyrillic<sup>15</sup> script, I was able to detect that the Ukrainian translator capitalized both “Little” and “One” in her written exchanges with me, using “*Маленький Народився*” to describe the first two words of the source text. Consistent with her belief that translation has to reflect the author’s original intentions, the Ukrainian translator felt that the capitalization of these words appealed to the emotional dimensions of the narrator’s

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<sup>15</sup> Dating back to the 10<sup>th</sup> century, the Cyrillic alphabet is one of the oldest and most widely used in the world; it may be represented in both printed and handwritten forms, and each form contains both capital and lowercase letters (Илев, 2013). “Little One,” or “Маленький Народився,” appears as “маленький народився,” when the first two letters of each word are written in lowercase script.

voice, and that the use of capital letters here evoked the tenderness of the mother and her child. While she emphasized the importance of minding the mechanical details of a text, she was not as adamant as the Vietnamese translator about maintaining capitalization in order to convey the same sentiments as the original. For this reason, she was not concerned that Liliya only capitalized “*Маленький*,” and instead used all lowercase script for “*народився*.” From my own perspective, I was more interested by the discovery that both the translator and Liliya chose the same wording to represent “Little One,” in spite of the minor difference in capitalization. Figure 12 below corresponds to Liliya’s written translation.

Figure 12. Liliya’s Written Translation



For the Ukrainian translator, her impression of a good translation revolved around transmitting “the whole picture of what is going on in one piece,” as well as providing the reader with an adaptation of the source text in a way that a “native speaker would sound natural.” Whereas the Spanish and Vietnamese translators were more insistent on connecting readers to the essence of the original text, the Ukrainian translator also incorporated considerations involving the languaging styles of readers themselves. To an extent, the Ukrainian translator

hinted at what Hall, Smith, and Wickasono (2017) deem the “domestication” of a text, where a translator may decide to “implement shifts of a higher order” than semantics alone, merging the “predominant ideologies and moral attitudes of the target language readership” (p. 236). Her general view toward translation, then, combined a focus on both the text and the reader, and I wanted to see how she weighed each of these aspects in her evaluation of the rhetorical effectiveness of Liliya’s written translation.

Overall, the translator believed that Liliya’s translation was rhetorically effective, especially in recounting the primary details of the source text. She largely agreed with Liliya’s word choices, but she also noticed the omission of at least one significant detail in the first paragraph of the source text; in line 3, the narrator exclaims, “I feel little, just tugging,” and this detail is missing altogether from Liliya’s written translation. I agree with the translator that the absence of this supporting detail comes with a cost, since the “tugging” imagery attunes the reader to the graphic circumstances of the surgical delivery of the baby. Then, with regard to line 4 of the source text, the translator challenged the way that Liliya conveyed “when the baby is placed in my arms;” she argued that, in Ukrainian, a speaker would never state “in my arms,” but instead would say “on my chest.” Where Liliya writes “*дитина була покладена в мої руки,*” or “the baby was placed in my arms,” the translator believed that this interpretation was far too literal and lacked creativity in its delivery. She suggested that by remaining too rigid in adapting the source text, a potential reader might find Liliya’s written translation much “drier” than the original. I had to rely on the translator’s intuition here, given my unfamiliarity with Ukrainian, but I also believe that in spite of its hypothetical “dryness,” the gist of the birthing scene was still made clear, thanks to other elements that Liliya more artfully recreated.

Perhaps the most valuable assistance I received from the translator was in aiding my

understanding of the codemeshing that Liliya employed, and the effect that she created by intermingling Russian words with Ukrainian. While together with Liliya in the translanguaging space, I asked her to show me an example of a Russian word in her written translation; she selected “*заходящего*,” and pointed to “sunset” in line 5 of the source text to indicate its equivalent. The translator confirmed that “*заходящего*” is indeed a Russian word, but that she struggled to locate a Ukrainian counterpart; she explained that “*заходящего*” translates to “going down sun,” which is slightly different from “sunset” in Ukrainian, or “*захід сонця*.” She also pointed out that in Russian, “sunset” sounds almost identical in Ukrainian, since there is a difference of just one letter in the first word: “*заход сонця*.” As a potential explanation for Liliya’s creative use of codemeshing, instead of using either the Ukrainian or Russian forms for “sunset,” the translator suggested that Liliya appeared to adapt the source text to a dialect that is common to northeastern Ukraine, where a fluid mixture of both languages are widely spoken. She used the word “*русизми*,” or “russism” to describe words in Russian that have been taken up by Ukrainian speakers, often without their being aware of their own dynamic language usage; as another “*русизми*” example, the translator also pointed out that “*Доктор*” in Liliya’s written translation actually corresponds to the Russian word for “doctor.” Liliya didn’t mention this to me, even after I prompted her for more evidence of her codemeshing practices, which leads me to believe she might not have realized her use of Russian here. Beyond the evidence confirming Liliya’s localization (Hall, Smith, & Wickasono, 2017) of the source text for readers like herself, her written translation also speaks loud and clear to the singular linguistic repertoire of multilinguals who do not neatly differentiate among named languages in their writing, thereby highlighting the potential value of merging a translingual approach with traditional forms of writing instruction.

Apart from Liliya's success at localizing her writing for a specific target audience, the translator pointed out just two additional areas of disagreement. In line 8, where the narrator refers to the baby's fingers as "little commas," Liliya uses the word "*кома*," which, in Ukrainian, can only be used to designate a punctuation sign, at least, according to the translator. I went back and forth with her regarding this interpretation, especially since the meaning behind "little commas" is metaphorical, and not a typical metonym for fingers, regardless of the linguistic code. The translator would have preferred the use of "*зморшкки*," or "curves" here, to help the reader understand that the narrator is describing every curve of the baby's fingers. Ultimately, we agreed to disagree over Liliya's handling of figurative language with regard to this specific use of imagery.

The final area of disagreement between Liliya and the translator involved the pluralization of the word "listeners" in line 9; Liliya uses the singular "*слухач*" for "listener," instead of correctly using the plural form, "*слухачів*." Nonetheless, in spite of this minor mechanical error, the translator still believed that Liliya was quite successful in translating the ironic language in lines 9-11, "if you are reading this story... afterward, thank them." She noted that Liliya omitted "paring" from the description of the "paring knife," but she still felt that the intended irony of the scene was not sacrificed by this omission. I agree with the translator, and that thanks to the domesticated language interspersed throughout Liliya's written translation, she may have also strengthened her chances of leading readers toward an ironic interpretation of the closing scene, drawing them closer to the complexities of the source text with the aid of codemeshing.

### **Conclusions about Liliya's Written Artifacts**

Liliya elevated the translation task to another level by incorporating dynamic language

usage and producing a dialect-specific account of the source text. Table 20 below summarizes the ways that Liliya negotiated the complexities, unifying features, and supporting details of the source text in her written translation.

**Table 19.** Connecting Liliya’s Written Translation to Textual Analysis

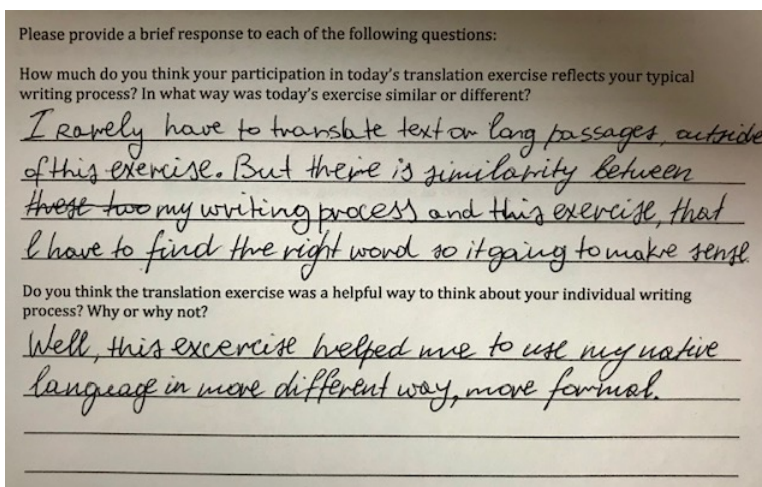
Complexities	Unifying Features	Supporting Details
Ironic elements of lines 9-11 are clearly communicated, in spite of a pluralization error involving “listeners” (line 9)	Omits “I feel little, just tugging” (line 3), reducing the graphic circumstances of the baby’s surgical delivery	Maintains strict adherence to the source text in translating “when the baby is placed in my arms” (line 4) and “little commas” (line 8)
	Engages in localized codemeshing practices centered around “doctor” (line 2) and “sunset” (line 5) that infuse a regional dialect into the childbirth scene	

Liliya navigated the complexities of lines 9-11 with ease, making only one small mechanical error that did not impact the ironic delivery of the scene. In terms of unifying features, while she made a minor omission concerning the graphic circumstances of the baby’s surgical delivery, she also domesticated the source text with language that reflected her regional dialect. Liliya strictly adhered to the manner in which the supporting details in lines 4 and 8 were related in the source text, ultimately choosing to represent the imagery as it was originally described.

Ultimately, Liliya produced a highly rhetorically effective written translation, and compared to the other focal participants, hers was also the most sophisticated writing sample out of the entire group. And while she appeared unaware of how well she had composed her

translation, Liliya nonetheless indicated that her participation in this research study was beneficial to thinking about her individual writing process. Figure 13 below includes her open-ended responses to the exit survey that she completed after our time together in the translanguaging space.

**Figure 13.** Liliya’s open-ended survey responses



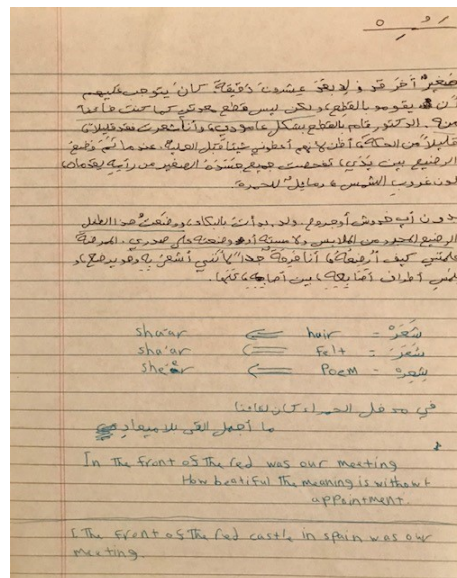
In her first response, Liliya points out the limited opportunities she has had to demonstrate her skill at written translation, much less the translation of a literary text for a college writing course. And yet, she recognizes there are similar circumstances between her typical writing process and the translation task at hand; Liliya points out word choice and sense-making as two areas that link together each of these types of writing. In her second response, she highlights the value of being able to use her native language in a “more different way, more formal,” suggesting a bridge between her home and school literacy capabilities, and a formalized application of her full linguistic repertoire to a written task.

### **Case Study 5: Khalid’s Written Artifacts**

From a comparative perspective, I have thus far pointed out similarities between the translators who assisted me with Chelo’s, Vanesa’s, and Dinh’s written translations; both the

Spanish and Vietnamese translators placed a high value on connecting readers of the translations to the essence of the original text. The Ukrainian translator, on the other hand, stressed the importance of connecting readers to their own familiar languaging styles. After corresponding with the Arabic translator who worked with Khalid’s written translation, I came to realize that her notion of translation aligned most closely with the Ukrainian translator, particularly in the way that she defined a “good translation” as one in which the target language is presented in a “familiar, coherent manner” for potential readers. Like the Ukrainian translator, the Arabic translator favored an approach to translation that incorporated the domestication of the original text. But, like the Spanish translator, she also emphasized the aesthetic qualities of a good translation, and pointed out the challenges of “remaining eloquent and grammatically comprehensible.” I wondered how she might assess the stylistic elements of Khalid’s written translation, and whether or not she might also locate domesticated features in his writing. Figure 14 below corresponds to Khalid’s written translation.

Figure 14. Khalid’s Written Translation





Overall, the Arabic translator believed that Khalid's written translation reflected a solid understanding of the original text, but in some ways, she also felt that his writing choices were not always rhetorically effective. She pointed out that Khalid mirrored the very same ordering of the sentences in the original text; and from an interpretive standpoint, his rigid adherence to English syntactic structures detracted from his ability to recreate the tone of the original text, giving the impression that what he had written actually "felt like a translation." I had to rely largely on the translator's input, insofar as the impact of Khalid's syntax on the tone of his written translation. But I also took into consideration more broadly what it meant to produce a translation of a literary passage that resulted in stilted sounding language. Recalling Spivak's (2004) use of the term "translatese" to describe both the aesthetic shortcomings and abnormal prosodies of poorly translated versions of postcolonial literature, I thought about how Khalid's writing choices might have led to similar circumstances; in conjunction with what the translator had already suggested, it became apparent how an overemphasis on the structural features of the source text could also jeopardize the authenticity of Khalid's written translation. With the aid of the translator, I investigated more closely how the use of unfamiliar language structures might lead to greater distance between the reader and the original piece of literature.

In terms of distancing readers from the source text, as one possible example, the translator drew my attention to the second paragraph, where the narrator exclaims, "I begin to weep" (line 6). Khalid translated this sentence as "بدأت بالبكاء." which means "I started to cry." The translator pointed out that while there is no exact equivalent for the verb "to weep" in Arabic, she also felt there is a distinction to be made between "crying" and "weeping," where the former denotes a strong auditory sentiment, and the latter is more about shedding tears. For this reason, she argued that Khalid's translation was a "watered down" version of the original, and

that he could have stated something like “my tears are falling down,” or “تتهمر دموعي.” I appreciate the distinction that the translator was making between crying and weeping, but at the same time, I am not sure that I would argue that Khalid’s translation was rhetorically ineffective just because he did not specifically mention “tears.” However, I did note that he used a different verb tense from the source text, where the narrator speaks in the present tense, and Khalid describes the act of crying as something that occurred in the past. Placing the narrator’s voice in the past tense creates a temporal distance between the reader and the birthing scene, whereas in the original, the reader is brought right into the delivery room while the baby is being delivered, via the use of the first-person present tense.

Perhaps a stronger example of “translatese” can be identified in Khalid’s translation of line 2, “the doctor draws his scalpel down;” here, he uses the phrase “was doing cuts” or “قام بالقطع” instead of using more specific language to recount the details of the surgical scene. I asked the translator if Khalid might have been unsure about the verb “draws,” and she agreed it was possible. She also stated that, stylistically, it is quite common in Arabic to adopt the past progressive verb tense when describing events in the recent past, but typically, this is done in oral language and not in writing; the translator noted that in writing, this style of narration is considered “less eloquent,” and that Khalid’s rendering of the surgery came across as a haphazard series of incisions, compared to the doctor’s much more precise movements in the original text. Still, while Khalid is ineffective at conveying the doctor’s surgical precision, he is nonetheless able to approximate the cutting action that is taking place; in this way, his writing strategy appears to be similar to Chelo’s translation of the same passage. Both Khalid and Chelo provide evidence of their comprehension of the scene, even if they are unfamiliar with the language equivalents in Arabic and Spanish that are used to express a scalpel being drawn. And

based on my own experience with co-constructing a translanguaging space with Khalid, I believe that his use of past progressive tense was a creative attempt to overcome lexical gaps, and not a misunderstanding of the main details of the source text.

Another aspect of Khalid's written translation that reminded me of one of Chelo's writing strategies can be found in his rendering of the following excerpt from lines 4 through 5: "I examine the wrinkled body from head to toe." The translator noted that Khalid changed "the wrinkled body" to "his whole little body," or "جسده الصغير كله." We both agreed that he was reaching for the linguistic equivalents at his disposal, and that the word "wrinkled" was likely a stumbling block for him. Yet, at the same time, Khalid also shows creativity in the additions he has made to the scene. He adds the possessive pronoun, "his," which bestows both ownership and gender onto the newborn. And he also adds "whole" and "little" to the baby's body, which, to an extent, has the effect of producing a more endearing tone than "the wrinkled body." Just as Chelo repeatedly invoked diminutive word forms that lent a motherly voice to the narrator, here, Khalid has produced similar sentiments in the way that he too has circumvented unfamiliar terms.

In sum, the Arabic translator believed that Khalid produced an effective written translation with no serious mechanical errors, even though she also believed it was aesthetically lacking, and felt like a translation, in some areas. Unfortunately, Khalid did not produce a written translation of lines 9-11, "if you are reading this story... afterward, thank them;" for this reason, I had to rely entirely on my verbal exchanges with him in the translanguaging space to assess his understanding of the ironic language. When I asked Khalid why he hadn't translated these lines, he told me that he misunderstood the parentheses around lines 9-11, and assumed it was separate from the rest of the passage. Interestingly, he did not make the connection that the narrator in

lines 1-8 is the same narrator in lines 9-11; instead, he interpreted these last two lines as part of a “riddle” introduced by a separate character in the story. I asked him to tell me more, and he said “I don’t know why, but I thought he was being rough. Very rough. I know that there’s a point about something behind this, but I didn’t get it.” Although Khalid didn’t provide a written translation of lines 9-11, his comprehension of the brutal imagery is still somewhat on track. And while he needed some help in understanding the narrator’s ironic language, the combination of producing a written translation and participating in a translanguaging space still provided him with the opportunity to more deeply explore the narrative elements of a sophisticated text.

### Conclusions about Khalid’s Written Artifacts

Khalid encountered some difficulties with the translation task, to be sure, but he also demonstrated his ability to overcome unfamiliar vocabulary with somewhat viable alternatives. Table 21 below summarizes the ways that Khalid negotiated the complexities, unifying features, and supporting details of the source text in his written translation.

**Table 20.** Connecting Khalid’s Written Translation to Textual Analysis

Complexities	Unifying Features	Supporting Details
Lines 9-11 are omitted; the ironic language is interpreted as a “riddle” that exists separately from lines 1-8, and is introduced by a different narrator	Circumvents unknown vocabulary (draws, line 2; scalpel, line 2) and renders a haphazard surgical scene that alters the circumstances of the narrator’s childbirth	Adjusts verb tense when translating “I begin to weep” (line 6) to “I <b>started</b> to cry”
	Incorporates additional words (“ <b>whole, little</b> body, line 4) that enhance the maternal qualities of the text	

While Khalid struggled with the complexities of lines 9-11 of the source text, his reasoning for not translating this section also confirms his understanding that there is a change in narrative tone from the beginning to the end of the passage. Still, without written evidence, it remains unclear how well he would have conveyed a similar ironic tone in his own translation. Regarding the unifying features of the source text, he was unable to render the circumstances of the surgical scene in the way that the narrator recounted them. However, with regard to line 4 of the source text, he added language that enhanced the maternal qualities of the source text. As for supporting details, although Khalid exchanged weeping for crying, perhaps more significant was his decision to adjust the narrator's voice to the past tense; this adjustment situates the birthing scene as if it had already taken place, as if it were a memory, shifting the reader's perspective from eyewitness to secondhand observer of the past.

In spite of the difficulties he encountered in completing the translation task, Khalid still indicated that his participation in this research study was beneficial to thinking about his individual writing process. Figure 15 below includes his open-ended responses to the exit survey that he completed after our time together in the translanguaging space.

**Figure 15.** Khalid's open-ended survey responses

Please provide a brief response to each of the following questions:

How much do you think your participation in today's translation exercise reflects your typical writing process? In what way was today's exercise similar or different?

It makes it more impressive, because it shows up that it needs a lot of thinking and knowledge.

Do you think the translation exercise was a helpful way to think about your individual writing process? Why or why not?

Yes it was, because as I mentioned before...

In his first response, Khalid highlights the quantity of thought and knowledge that goes into preparing a written translation. He also notes that “it makes [it] more impressive,” perhaps patting himself on the back a bit, but also signaling the recognition that comes along with being able to produce a written translation in one’s home language; given the dearth of opportunities to write in Arabic in his writing coursework, it is worth noting that Khalid chose to highlight the “impressive” language skillset that he possesses. Finally, in his second response, although he doesn’t go into great detail, he still confirms the value of participating in the translation exercise, once again signaling the impressive achievement of his written translation.

### **Conclusion: Translation and Textual Analysis**

The primary goal of this section was to demonstrate how translation can assist LM learners with identifying “the complexities, unifying features, and supporting details of a text” (Lynn, 2001, pp. 41-42). By carefully reviewing the focal participants’ written translations along with professional translators, I made determinations regarding each of these aspects, along with the overall rhetorical effectiveness (Canagarajah, 2011, pp. 402-403) of each participants’ demonstrated strategies in writing. Beginning with the complexities of the source text, I focused my analysis on participants’ comprehension of the ironic language in lines 9-11, perhaps the most linguistically sophisticated lines within the entire selection. All of the participants, with the exception of Khalid, clearly communicated these lines in their written translations, with slight differences in quality, largely attributed to lexical gaps. In terms of unifying features, Liliya and Chelo embraced the boldest moves in rendering the maternal features of the source text, injecting codemeshed phrases and diminutive expressions into their interpretations of the narrator’s descriptive language. Although Vanesa, Dinh, and Khalid were not quite as bold in their written translations, they nonetheless enhanced some of the same maternal features of the source text,

albeit with some difficulty in recreating the childbirth scene. Across the board, all five participants were able to substantiate their comprehension of the supporting details, either by adhering to text-focused translation decisions, or by inserting modifications that aligned with more reader-focused decision making.

Taking a closer look at the differences between the text-focused and reader-focused translations, participants' decision making appears to have centered around their interpretations of the end goals of the translation exercise. At one end of the spectrum, both Liliya and Chelo produced written translations from highly reader-focused perspectives, incorporating either dialect-specific language or other word choices that signaled each of them had an intended audience in mind. Dinh and Vanesa were somewhere in the middle, not quite focusing as heavily on future readers, but also not strictly bound to a rigid interpretation of the source text. Dinh's written translation, however, came across more rhetorically effective, where Vanesa left numerous gaps in her writing. Khalid, on the other hand, was highly text-focused in his approach to the translation task, and with the aid of the translator, I learned that his sentence structures mirrored the original ones, at the expense of delivering a more authentic interpretation of the source text. Nonetheless, all five participants demonstrated their capacity for sense-making in writing in a way that also helped frame their reading comprehension.

Connecting the participants' written translations to their open-ended exit survey responses, Only Dinh reported feeling that the translation activity was not helpful to thinking about his individual writing process. Based on our experience together in co-constructing a translanguaging space, I believe his response mostly reflected his fears about not learning English quickly enough to succeed in his coursework. Contemplating Dinh's response more deeply, I also see a connection to what I described earlier in this chapter regarding self-efficacy

in writing. The impact of linguistic hierarchies will continue to be felt, even when unrestricted language access is encouraged. The scourge of language inequity runs far too deeply throughout LM learners' lived experiences. Translanguaging pedagogies such as written translation can be enacted with more thorough consideration of these lived experiences by clearly advocating the benefits of including bi/multilingual language practices in writing. I trace additional implications of this chapter's findings, together with findings from Chapter 4, in the final chapter of this dissertation.



## CHAPTER 6

### DISCUSSION

**Liliya:** sometimes even when I go back to my country  
and I just want to say something to somebody in English,  
but they wouldn't understand.  
and like, okay. they don't like, they don't really use it.  
the word *okay*...  
so I just end up saying *okay*  
if I want to communicate that idea.

This dissertation study began with the words of one of the focal participants, and in writing this final chapter, I return to the words of another participant to contextualize the study's essential findings and contributions to research on translanguaging in postsecondary settings. In Chapter 1, I introduced Vanesa's perspectives toward translation, and the regularity with which translanguaging characterized her life as a new college student. My intention was to set the stage for identifying LM learners' everyday practices that align with the aims of writing remediation coursework, and to also make a case for the inclusion of nondominant languages in traditional monolingual classrooms. Here, I set a different stage to draw attention to the multidirectional implications of dynamic language usage; that is to say, the fluid exchange of ideas across languages is not limited to a single direction, much less a fixed geographic location. While in her native Ukraine, Liliya's desire to express the idea for "okay" highlights this multidirectional capacity for meaning-making. Moreover, her insistence upon using language that could be deemed unfamiliar to those around her also suggests a communicative strategy that requires a fair amount of negotiation between individual speakers; such flexibility is quite similar to my own interactions with each of the participants in co-constructing translanguaging spaces. Ultimately, the plasticity of our verbal interactions gave rise to new opportunities for meaning-

making, as well as enriched comprehension of the textual features that the participants represented in their written translations.

In order to deepen students' understanding of texts, and to further support their written analytical skills, this dissertation study has framed translation as a model activity for developing a translanguaging approach to remedial writing instruction. Accordingly, this study was guided by the following research questions:

1. *What skills, beliefs, and familiar language practices do LM learners bring with them, when given the opportunity to participate in a translanguaging space (Li, 2011)?*
2. *What are the potential affordances of a translanguaging approach to remedial writing instruction? How can translation assist LM learners with identifying the complexities, unifying features, and supporting details of a text (Lynn, 2001)?*

In order to respond to these questions, I analyzed both written and audio data that I collected from a single community college research site, over the span of two academic semesters. In the following section, I summarize the findings of my analyses.

**RQ1: What Skills, Beliefs, and Familiar Language Practices do LM Learners Bring with Them, When Given the Opportunity to Participate in a Translanguaging Space?**

Analysis of the semi-structured interview data revealed a wide variety of skills, beliefs, and familiar language practices that were observable in the translanguaging spaces that I co-constructed with individual participants. Table 21 below is a frequency distribution table that shows each of the 13 categorical variables and the corresponding number of participants who demonstrated these particular skills, beliefs, and familiar language practices during the semi-structured interviews.

**Table 21.** Frequency of Categorical Variables Identified in Participants' Semi-Structured Interviews

Skills, Beliefs, & Familiar Language Practices	Number of Participants
Critical evaluation of word choice	5
Perspective taking in writing	4
Flexibility and self-regulation	3
Knowledge of pragmatic, semantic, and syntactic features of language	3
Translation	3
Knowledge of orthographic features of language	2
Connections between language and identity	2
Attitudes, values, and ideologies associated with the language community	1
Cognate awareness	1
Connections between language and culture/origin	1
Context and word order	1
Habitual language practices	1
Knowledge of phonological features of language	1

As the frequency distribution table illustrates, the critical evaluation of word choice was the most commonly employed language practice. All five of the focal participants engaged in thorough, and at times, belabored decision-making over word choice. As a potential explanation for this phenomenon, I suggest that one side effect of New Critical readings of texts is the heavy emphasis placed on formal features such as vocabulary. In fact, New Critical methods for close reading intentionally require readers to narrowly focus their attention on structure in order to develop their interpretations of texts (Murray, 1991). Bearing in mind what my initial classroom observations confirmed at the research site, that writing faculty relied primarily on New Critical

interpretations and methods of textual analysis in their courses, I am not entirely surprised that participants might have extended these same interpretive lenses when tasked with reading the source text, a literary piece, that I assigned to them. Nonetheless, each participant still had the opportunity to extend their comprehension of the source text beyond its formal features by discussing their processes of translation as we co-constructed translanguaging spaces with one another. And, arguably, the talk through strategies that I implemented with participants served to counter the troublesome “depersonalized nature of New Critical close reading” (Brewer, 2019, p. 636), by offering them explicit occasions for inserting their personal understandings of the source text.

Perspective-taking in writing was the second most common language practice among the participants. Perhaps one of the most valuable practices with respect to anticipating a potential reader’s point of view, the participants were largely open to considering an array of perspectives when preparing their written translations and discussing possible interpretations among different readers. With regard to the close reading texts, student writers are frequently tasked with discerning an author’s point of view, and then relating their understandings through a written assignment. In defining close reading for practitioners, Shanahan (2014) underscores the practice of perspective-taking, stating that “close readers not only grasp an author’s message... they try to recognize the author’s tone or perspective, the implications of the author’s word choices, and why a text is structured or organized as it is” (p. 29). Seeing the multitude of ways in which participants readily took up perspective-taking in the translanguaging space, this study demonstrates the rich potential for exploring the many different messages that texts communicate, not only to individual readers, but to wider audiences as well. Moreover, the translanguaging pedagogies that I enacted with participants to facilitate their perspective-taking

also offer practitioners a range of options for equipping LM learners with the necessary skills to unpack the meanings of texts.

After perspective-taking, participants demonstrated their next most common skills, beliefs, and familiar language practices in three main areas: flexibility and self-regulation; knowledge of pragmatic, semantic, and syntactic features of language; translation. With regard to flexibility and self-regulation, talking through participants' written translations provided them with an opportunity to clarify and improve upon their understandings of the source text, in the context of a writing assignment; having the time and space to receive individualized feedback on their work was an essential factor to their self-regulating processes, especially as a means of stimulating higher levels of reading comprehension. As for the pragmatic, semantic, and syntactic features of language, the participants showed great skill at considering what the source text communicated to them in terms of its context, meaning, and sentence-level structuring; this metalinguistic knowledge is a valuable asset to writing tasks in general, where it enables writers to think more deeply about the implications of their rhetorical moves in writing. Finally, with respect to translation, when participants considered the types of translation that they typically practiced, they made comparisons to the task they were assigned in the translanguaging space; having the opportunity to produce a written translation of a literary text proved to be a validating experience for these participants, where they saw their everyday languaging practices elevated to an academic writing goal.

Although they appeared less frequently than the aforementioned skills, beliefs, and language practices, the participants also brought additional metalinguistic and language awareness skills with them to the translanguaging space. Besides pragmatics, semantics, and syntax, participants also considered orthographic and phonological features of language. Some

drew on their knowledge of cognates and word order, while others considered the relationship between language, identity and culture. From a language awareness perspective, participants thought about language in terms of its usage among specific populations, reflecting on habitual practices, as well as the attitudes, values, and ideologies associated with their home language communities. Together with what was more frequently observed during my time with participants in the translanguaging space, all of these skills, beliefs, and language practices can be leveraged by instructors to develop more authentic and meaningful forms of textual analysis in writing remediation classrooms.

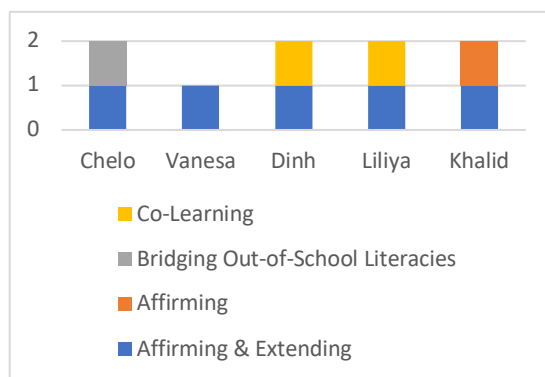
**RQ2: What Are the Potential Affordances of a Translanguaging Approach to Remedial Writing Instruction? How Can Translation Assist LM Learners with Identifying the Complexities, Unifying Features, and Supporting Details of a Text?**

In response to the first part of this research question, analysis of the semi-structured interview data revealed a range of potential affordances that were closely linked to the specific translanguaging pedagogies that I enacted with individual participants. Grounded in social cognitive understandings of the writing process, these affordances in remedial writing instruction included: promoting self-efficacy; extending lines of enquiry; invoking self-regulation; considering readers' perspectives.

Where each of the abovementioned affordances were so intimately tied to my role as a co-constructor of the translanguaging space, I also considered the differences across my dialogical exchanges with each of the participants. And while I consistently engaged in practices of affirming and extending participants' thinking, I was less consistent in my application of the other three translanguaging pedagogies. For example, I primarily assumed the role of co-learner with Dinh and Liliya, and not the other participants. Figure 16 below illustrates the frequency

with which I enacted all four pedagogical practices with the study's participants.

**Figure 16.** Frequency of Translanguaging Pedagogies Enacted with the 5 Focal Participants



This visual representation of the translanguaging pedagogies I enacted with participants draws attention to the fact that I only practiced affirming and extending with Vanesa, whereas with the other participants, I combined different strategies. Vanesa was also the first participant that completed the translation activity, and admittedly, I was still honing my own thought processes around how to effectively engage participants in the translanguaging space. This realization is important to bear in mind when designing future protocols that integrate translanguaging pedagogies to further the aims of writing remediation; due to the unpredictable nature of dialogical exchanges in the translanguaging space, along with the high degree of linguistic variability across LM learners, instructors would be well served by building in time to evaluate these exchanges. Perhaps prior to ending one-on-one sessions, both instructors and students could review their shared impressions of their time spent together, either by replaying the session recording, or by less formally reviewing a checklist outlining specific features of the text under consideration. For instructors especially, having time to review these experiences could potentially safeguard against producing inconsistencies from one student to the next.

Along with building in measures to ensure more consistent results, knowing the linguistic backgrounds and academic experiences of LM learners is something that cannot be

underestimated. Compared to the other four participants, Dinh had the least amount of experience with US based schooling; and even though he had been studying English for a longer period of time than Liliya and Khalid, he struggled more than any of the participants to verbally express himself during our time together in the translanguaging space. And despite the fact that both Chelo and Vanesa attended school in Spanish-speaking contexts, their experience levels were markedly different; Chelo completed primary school and part of middle school in the Dominican Republic before moving to the US, whereas Vanesa went back and forth between the US and Puerto Rico up until her high school years. All of this information highlights the degree of nuance that is required of integrating a translanguaging approach to remedial writing instruction. By first determining these differences across LM learners, instructors can more directly target specific areas for writing improvement that coincide with the affordances of individual translanguaging pedagogies.

In response to the second part of research question 2, analysis of the participants' written translations and open-ended survey responses revealed that the translation activity assisted them with identifying some of "the complexities, unifying features, and supporting details" of the source text (Lynn, 2001, pp. 41-42), with varying degrees of success. Narrowing my analysis of the source text's complexities to lines 9-11, I focused on participants' representation of the ironic language contained within the narrator's commands to the reader. Although Khalid was the only participant who omitted these lines in his written translation, his interpretation of the final two lines of the source text still provided evidence of his sophisticated level of comprehension; remarking that these lines appeared to be part of a "riddle," Khalid noted a change in tone requiring ingenuity on the part of the reader to comprehend its meaning. His awareness of this change suggests an ability to identify a shift in genre (Biber & Conrad, 2009), where Khalid



successfully detected the structural differences between lines 1-8 and 9-11 that gave way to changes in the situational context. To this end, the translation activity also afforded an unintended opportunity to practice genre analysis, in addition to deepening participants' understanding of the source text's ironic language.

In terms of unifying features, I focused my analysis on participants' rendering of the maternal features of lines 1-8 of the source text. Previously, in Chapter 5, I noted that Liliya and Chelo embraced the boldest moves in their representation of these features, thanks to their use of codemeshed phrases and diminutive expressions. Interpreting these findings a step further, both Liliya and Chelo also demonstrated a keen awareness of register differences; in their efforts to include specific elements corresponding to their home language communities, they also revealed their conceptualizations of a target audience, and the steps needed to tailor their written work accordingly. Heralding the importance of "helping students to develop an awareness of register differences," Biber and Conrad (2009) signal an instructional imperative that transcends disciplinary boundaries, "even for instructors of a general composition course" (p. 268); this study's translation activity afforded participants with an opportunity to increase their knowledge of both register and genre differences, by inviting them to contrast these differences across linguistic codes.

Finally, I continued to focus my analysis on lines 1-8 of the source text in order to evaluate the participants' representation of the source text's supporting details. While all five participants were able to recreate at least some of these details, their portrayals of the narrator's childbirth and first interactions with her newborn son were impacted by their styles of translation; either by adhering to text-focused translation decisions, or by inserting modifications that aligned with more reader-focused decision-making, the participants demonstrated a range of

approaches to the translation task. In many ways, these differences are owed to the selection of a literary text for translation; Hall, Smith, and Wickasono (2017) note that literary translation grants the translator a high degree of agency in the decision-making process, “providing almost unlimited scope for creativity, inventiveness, and imagination” (p. 234). This study’s selection of a literary text was not only essential to creating an opportunity for New Critical methods of analysis, but also to maximizing participants’ capacity for meaning-making in writing.

### **Contributions**

A major contribution of this study is the introduction of a novel approach to applying translanguaging pedagogies to further the aims of writing remediation; as such, this investigation contributes to the development of new methodological approaches to writing instruction at the postsecondary level. With any new approach comes trial and error, and this study was not immune to such shortcomings. Nonetheless, I embraced the unknown, and I also sought to more fully consider how Li’s (2011) notion of translanguaging space might offer insights into the ways that LM learners come equipped to leverage their skills, beliefs, and language practices in writing classrooms. While other postsecondary translanguaging studies set out to explore similar research questions regarding participants’ funds of knowledge (Carroll & Mazak, 2017; Marshall, Hayashi, & Yeung, 2012; Marshall & Moore, 2013), this research study is unique in its integration of Li’s dimensions of translanguaging space as a way to interpret participants’ talk during the semi-structured interviews. These dimensions proved to be a productive way to more thoroughly consider the complexities of participants’ rhetorical strategies.

Along with Li’s (2011) notion of translanguaging space, this study also implemented novel methodological thinking via its second research question. Although other postsecondary translanguaging studies have explored the relationship between translation and writing

(Canagarajah, 2011; Pujol-Ferran, DiSanto, Núñez Rodríguez, & Morales, 2016), this study specifically employed translation tasks in order to deepen participants' understanding of texts; moreover, this study is unique in drawing upon New Critical orientations to textual analysis to gauge participants' comprehension of a literary text. Bearing in mind the novelty of these translation tasks at the study's research site, participants' experiences were atypical of their everyday classroom activities; the transformational learning opportunities that were afforded to them provide insights into the dispositions and new language practices that are borne from dynamic language usage.

Lastly, this study also contributes to narrowing a significant gap in the literature concerning "rhetorical effectiveness" (Canagarajah, 2011, pp. 402-403), translanguaging pedagogies, and writing. Very little research exists regarding the relationship between these three entities, despite the potential for garnering added support for translingual approaches to writing instruction; it would seem to be an important step forward if there were more studies investigating how effectively participants write when they enlarge their linguistic repertoires to include languages other than English. One potential caveat to this endeavor is the ability to measure rhetorical effectiveness, particularly when unfamiliar languages are involved. In this study, professional translators were recruited to facilitate this process of evaluation, and their feedback was invaluable to my ability to understand the participants' written translations. And while the translators possessed training and experiences that may have cast them in a privileged position relative to participants' backgrounds in written translation, I worked with them closely to extrapolate their interpretations, and to develop my own conclusions regarding the participants' accomplishments. Together with this study's contributions to theory development on translanguaging space and translanguaging pedagogies, insights gained from the professional

translators also contributed to more robust understandings of the relationship between translation and textual analysis.

### **Limitations**

This qualitative dissertation study, largely informed by grounded theory development (Charmaz, 2006) and methods of constant comparison (Corbin & Strauss, 2008), yielded findings that are significant to the expansion of translanguaging pedagogies in postsecondary writing research; nonetheless, these findings are not generalizable across all contexts. In describing the limitations of a qualitative lens, Bryant and Charmaz (2007) argue that researchers should be viewed “as *an* interpreter of the scene, not as the ultimate authority defining it” (p. 52), calling to mind the impossibility of determining all facets of reality, much less in absolute terms. Viewing my role as *an* interpreter of all that transpired as I co-constructed translanguaging spaces with the participants, my perspective is limited by my own ability to comprehend the extent of our dialogical exchanges with one another, as well as the nature of participants’ written artifacts.

Having explored translanguaging pedagogies with five focal participants at a single community college, I likewise cannot assume that these participants are representative of all LM learners across similar postsecondary settings. While I invested time and effort into recruiting a diverse range of participants for this study, I do not insinuate that this study’s findings would be entirely replicable at another institution. However, I do affirm that these findings can serve to inform future studies, particularly with attention given to understanding the language backgrounds and experiences of participants.

In an effort to establish trustworthiness, I utilized a variety of methods to corroborate this study’s findings, including member-checking and triangulating across data sources. I also view

the role of the professional translators as an additional way to achieve trustworthy findings, particularly where I had no prior knowledge of Arabic, Russian, Ukrainian, or Vietnamese; and, although I am a Spanish speaker, I wanted to account for intersubjectivity between myself, Chelo, and Vanesa that might have impacted my interpretation of their written translations. Without the input of the translators, then, I could not have made viable, impartial determinations concerning the rhetorical effectiveness of the participants' written translations. Still, my conclusions are neither definitive nor completely unbiased, given the inherent limitations of naturalistic inquiry.

### **Directions for Future Research**

In designing this study, I actively sought to find ways to complement existing writing instruction at the research site. Consequently, one of the study's primary research questions was formulated in response to New Critical orientations to textual analysis. While analysis of the data sources yielded findings that corresponded to these orientations, there were also significant discoveries made with respect to participants' understanding of register and genre in writing. These unintended results offer new directions for future research involving the implementation of translanguaging pedagogies and writing remediation. Knowing the skills, beliefs, and language practices that LM learners brought with them to the translation activity, it would be interesting to investigate more specifically how they detect shifts in register and genre in different literary texts. And from a metalinguistic skills perspective, it would also be interesting to identify the criteria that LM learners use for determining register and genre markers (Biber & Conrad, 2009) in texts, or the specific words and phrases that signal shifts in meaning. Knowing this information can provide clearer connections to the meaning-making pathways that bi/multilinguals navigate to comprehend written texts.

As for improving upon the novel methodologies for data collection that have been outlined in this study, another direction for future research concerns the selection of texts for translation activities. In this investigation, participants were only required to work with a single source text; if given the opportunity to analyze multiple text excerpts, participants could compare and contrast features that denote more specific contexts and usages. From a genre analysis perspective, Brewer (2018) argues that by providing instruction on “formal and rhetorical structures,” college instructors can better prepare their students “to succeed in the discourse communities in which they practice” (p. 639). Ultimately, one of the goals of improving remedial writing coursework is to break down the barriers that have prevented LM learners from advancing toward more advanced level coursework. More research is needed on identifying the types of texts that will assist college instructors in connecting their students to the academic discourse communities associated with their general education and disciplinary major requirements.

Finally, the translanguaging sessions associated with this study were implemented outside of regular class time in accordance with the directives of the English department at the research site. To honor the agreement that I had originally made with the department chairperson, I agreed to meet with students and instructors during times that did not conflict with their scheduled classes. While this arrangement was not ideal, I pushed forward with my data collection process with relatively few challenges. In fact, by the end of the collection period, I had gotten familiar enough with several instructors that they approached me to learn more about integrating translanguaging pedagogies into their writing classes. I continue to remain in close contact with these instructors, to relay the progress of this study, as well as to potentially extend our work together, after the pandemic. Moving forward with future research on translanguaging

approaches to writing remediation, collaborative partnerships between researchers and writing instructors that offer mutually beneficial incentives could increase the likelihood of participation among institutions that are less familiar with translingual writing. Particularly where many community college writing classes are staffed by adjunct instructors balancing multiple teaching appointments, flexibility and guidance are key to negotiating the terms of these partnerships. By offering professional development training and customizing sessions to accommodate the specific needs of departments, institutions are more likely to welcome research involving translanguaging pedagogies within their writing classes.

### **Conclusion**

Research on postsecondary writing asserts that the call for translingual approaches to instruction is long overdue. Community college campuses in particular reflect an increasingly multilingual profile, especially in writing remediation classrooms. This dissertation study shines a light on this important work, and firmly resists entrenched notions of monolingual writing instruction. Now is the time to finally embrace the strengths that LM learners bring to institutions of higher learning, and this study shows just how much five undergraduate writing students could achieve when given the opportunity to access their full linguistic repertoires. Moreover, this study also demonstrates how the affordances of translanguaging pedagogies align with some of the same concerns of traditional writing instruction; promoting self-efficacy, extending lines of enquiry, invoking self-regulation, and considering readers' perspectives are beneficial objectives for all students of writing.

In conclusion, this study underscores the sophisticated languaging resources that LM learners possess, along with potential avenues for inviting their unhindered participation in postsecondary writing classrooms. Participants leveraged their meaning-making skills across

languages, and their analyses of a literary text demonstrated a richness imparted by their perspectives as bi/multilinguals. It is in this way that a translanguaging approach to writing remediation offers LM learners a more level playing field, and a much-needed democratizing force in US higher education.



## Appendix A

Table A1: Post-Secondary Translanguaging Studies

<b>Study</b>	<b>Participants</b>	<b>Methods</b>	<b>Data Sources</b>	<b>Primary Research Question(s)</b>
Adamson & Coulson (2015)	Japanese undergraduates enrolled in a required English language preparation course in Japan (n=475)	Mixed methods	Questionnaires (closed and open-ended questions); Students' written work over a 3-year period (n=271)	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>1. How do students translanguague in report writing?</li> <li>2. How do students perceive L1 usage in class?</li> <li>3. Is this approach transferrable across the curriculum?</li> </ol>
Canagarajah (2011)	A Saudi Arabian Applied Linguistics graduate student enrolled in a course on the teaching of second language writing at Penn State University (n=1)	Qualitative methods	Student written work; Semi-structured interviews with students; Classroom ethnographic data (drawn from the larger study)	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>1. How did the student engage in codemeshing practices? What explicit strategies can be identified?</li> <li>2. What is the translanguaging proficiency of the student?</li> <li>3. What pedagogical implications can be drawn from this student's usage of codemeshing?</li> </ol>
Carroll & Mazak (2017)	Undergraduates enrolled in an abnormal psychology class at the University of Puerto Rico at Mayagüez (n=N/A)	Mixed methods	Questionnaires (closed and open-ended questions); Students' written work over a single semester; Semi-structured interviews with instructors; Classroom ethnographic data	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>1. When an instructor has the power to determine language policy, how is language used in her classroom?</li> <li>2. What language ideologies do the students hold?</li> </ol>
Carroll & Sambolin Morales (2016)	Undergraduates enrolled in a Basic English I course at the University of Puerto Rico at Mayagüez (n=29)	Qualitative methods	Students' written work over a month-long course unit; Semi-structured interviews with students; Classroom ethnographic data	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>1. What happens when an ESL instructor of a Basic English course uses translanguaging as a resource for understanding a culturally relevant novel?</li> </ol>
Esquinca (2011)	Bilingual (Spanish/English) undergraduates enrolled in a mathematics teacher education course at the University of Texas at El Paso (n=3)	Qualitative methods	Students' written work over a single semester; Semi-structured interviews with students; Classroom ethnographic data (drawn from the larger study)	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>1. How is biliteracy development promoted when students draw on different points on the continua of biliteracy in collaboratively writing word problems?</li> </ol>

Marshall, Hayashi, & Yeung (2012)	Multilingual undergraduates enrolled in a required academic literacy course in Vancouver, Canada (n=8)	Qualitative methods	Students' written work over a single semester; Semi-structured interviews with students	1. How do multilingual students in higher education negotiate the multi in their multilingualism and multiliteracies?
Marshall & Moore (2013)	Transnational undergraduates enrolled in a required introductory academic literacy course in Vancouver, Canada (n=45)	Qualitative methods	Students' written work over a 3-year longitudinal study; Semi-structured interviews with students; Classroom ethnographic data (drawn from the larger study)	1. How do transnational students in an introductory academic literacy course exercise their plurilingual competence?
Parmegiani (2014)	Latin@ ESL students enrolled in an ESL class and a Spanish composition course at Bronx Community College of the City University of New York (n=N/A)	Qualitative methods	Students' written work over a single semester; Semi-structured interviews with students; Classroom ethnographic data	1. What is the impact of learning community clusters on students' success indicators in a community college?
Pujol-Ferran, DiSanto, Núñez Rodríguez, & Morales (2016)	Multilingual students enrolled in introductory courses across multiple disciplines at a small community college in the northeastern US (n=N/A)	Qualitative methods	Students' written work over a single semester; Semi-structured interviews with students; Classroom ethnographic data	1. How can we integrate dynamic translanguaging practices to complete assignments in multilingual classrooms?
Wei (2011)	Chinese Math majors enrolled at the University of London (n=3)	Qualitative methods	Semi-structured interviews with students	1. How can translanguaging aid in capturing the creative and critical moments in multilinguals' daily lives?

## Appendix B

Table B1: Post-Secondary Translanguaging Studies: Conceptualizations of Language

<b>Studies</b>	<b>Characterization of Participants' Linguaging Processes</b>
Adamson & Coulson (2015); Pujol-Ferran, DiSanto, Núñez, Rodríguez, & Morales (2016)	Linguaging involves explicit L1/L2 distinctions
Esquinca (2011); Marshall, Hayashi, & Yeung (2012); Marshall & Moore (2013)	Linguaging takes place along a broad literacy continuum, tied to an individual's identity
Canagarajah (2011); Carroll & Mazak (2017); Carroll & Sambolin Morales (2016); Parmegiani (2014); Wei (2011)	Linguaging involves the activation/restriction of an individual's spectrum of bi/pluri-/multilingualism

## Appendix C

Table C1: Post-Secondary Translanguaging Studies: Enactment of Translanguaging Practice

<b>Studies</b>	<b>Positioning the Act of Translanguaging</b>
Carroll & Sambolin Morales (2016); Parmegiani (2014); Pujol-Ferran, DiSanto, Núñez Rodríguez, & Morales (2016)	Instructor-Centered
Adamson & Coulson (2015) Canagarajah (2011) Carroll & Mazak (2017) Marshall & Moore (2013)	Student-Centered
Esquinca (2011); Marshall, Hayashi, & Yeung (2012); Wei (2011)	Language-Centered

## Appendix D

### Sample Analytic Memorandum

**To:** Dissertation File  
**From:** Alexis McBride  
**Date:** July 24, 2019 (Wednesday), 11:20 - 12:50 pm  
**Re:** WRIT 101 w/ Professor Becker

Attendance: 9/11 students present  
Technology: All students use the desktop computers at each workstation  
Classroom: Computer lab is equipped with 16 desktop computers; 1 large wipe board;  
6 television screens for projection; 1 central computer station for instructor

Today I walked with Prof. Becker on his way to his WRIT 101 class, since this was the first time I was attending a session being held in a computer lab, and I was not sure where to go. Normally the class meets in a regular classroom similar to the one where WRIT 003 takes place. But today, Prof. Becker wanted his students to have access to a computer, since their first major assignment for WRIT 101 was scheduled to be due later that evening.

I could tell Prof. Becker was eager to talk about what I had observed earlier during his WRIT 003 class. He marveled at the number of students who indicated that they spoke a language other than English at home. Multiple times, he thanked me for “opening his eyes to new possibilities” with his students, and for pushing his thinking in different directions than he had previously considered. It was exciting to see him embrace a fresh perspective toward the LM learners in his class, and even more encouraging to witness how several of the students responded positively to the opportunity to write in a language other than English.

Prior to today, I knew that Prof. Becker’s WRIT 101 class had both monolingual English and bi/multilingual speakers, but I did not know the number of students corresponding to each of these categories; I discovered there were at least 5 bi/multilingual students enrolled in the course. (There were two students absent from Prof. Becker’s WRIT 101 class that day and I was not immediately able to determine if they spoke languages other than English.)

As students filed into today’s class, they immediately logged onto the desktop computers at each workstation and began working on their WRIT 101 assignments that were due later that evening. I filtered around the room to see what students were doing and each one had pulled up a Microsoft Word document; five students had already begun this assignment, while the remaining four were staring at blank pages in front of them. I also noticed multiple students logging into Canvas to retrieve the Kimmerer (2013) text for reference. No one had printed copies of the reading, but there were two students that had notebooks open, and they appeared to be jotting down ideas for the writing assignment. Compared to the atmosphere from earlier this morning in WRIT 003, students were silent, neither checking their cell phones nor making small talk. This group of students was on task, and their expressions conveyed a discernible sense of purpose.

Class began in the typical fashion that I had become accustomed to witnessing, with Prof. Becker

taking the roll call. Although today, I noted that he made markings on his attendance sheet when he called upon students who were not present. Perhaps he was recording this information because an assignment was due later that day?

Prof. Becker asked for a show of hands regarding the status of each student's draft: "how many of you have a few sentences? How many of you have a paragraph? How many of you have more than one paragraph? How many of you haven't started yet?" He fired off these questions one by one. Most students were in the beginning stages of the assignment, somewhere between a few sentences and a paragraph. Two were still deciding which prompt to follow, while another two had some semblance of a draft ready to share with their instructor for feedback.

Having gauged the preparedness of the class for a workshop activity, Prof. Becker determined that students should first devote 30 minutes to work on, or begin to work on, their drafts. As a reminder of the parameters of the assignment, he projected a slide with the following information:

Choose ONE of the following questions to answer in regards to Robin Wall Kimmerer's (2013) "Goldenrod and Asters," and write a 250-300 word response.

1. In paragraph 11, Kimmerer writes, "In moving from a childhood in the woods to the university I had unknowingly shifted between worldviews." Write an essay about what this shift in worldview means, and what kinds of "knowledge" are found in each domain. How does Kimmerer synthesize these different forms of knowledge?
2. How does Kimmerer reconcile "scientific" and "indigenous" knowledge for herself, and what role does the artistic study of "beauty" play? What does she mean when she asks, "might science and traditional knowledge be purple and yellow to one another" (paragraph 22)?

*Interpretive Stance:* Each of these questions frame Kimmerer's (2013) text from a New Critical perspective, where students are tasked with identifying complexities (re: shifting worldviews; scientific versus indigenous knowledge); unifying features (re: the representation of knowledge; the artistic study of beauty); supporting details (re: evidence that supports the development of these complexities and details). The academic language load is high (re: *synthesizing* forms of knowledge; *reconciling* indigenous and scientific knowledge), and I wonder if all of the students fully comprehend what they are being asked to locate in this text.

As the students began to work on their drafts, Prof. Becker filtered around the room, first visiting the two students who were still trying to narrow down their topics. He spent about 6 minutes with each of these students, asking them what details they remembered about the reading. Based on their responses, he directed one student to choose the first prompt, and the other student to work on the second prompt.

I also filtered around the computer lab to see what the students were doing at their workstations, and I noticed that some of the students with blank screens did indeed have drafts, but they were handwritten in notebooks, or on loose leaf paper. As noted previously, I get the impression that most students in the WRIT 101 and WRIT 003 classes do not have access to computers at home, and for this reason, they write their drafts by hand. Having spoken to students and faculty alike, they too have confirmed my impressions, noting that most members of the SCC student body rely on the computer labs for their word processing needs.

I was curious to see if there would be any explicit connections made to the previous class on Monday, July 22. All of the students in today's class had already worked on a 10-minute free write exercise involving the Kimmerer (2013) text; they had been previously tasked with answering two questions: (1) what "worlds" have you lived in; (2) what kinds of "knowledge" are found in these worlds? Interestingly, Prof. Becker did not draw from this exercise in assigning students to work on their drafts during today's class. Nor did he invite students to codemesh in their drafts, as he had done earlier in the week. Despite his willingness to embrace translanguaging pedagogy, I sensed an imperative to keep informal writing practices separate from formal ones; since the drafts would eventually be turned in for grading, English was the de facto language for formal writing.

After about 15 minutes, Prof. Becker interrupted his students' draft writing to remind them about the importance of including a works cited list at the end of their assignments. He instructed students to pull up the Kimmerer (2013) text, and to get ready to construct the citation in their documents. In previous classes, he has shown them a website called *EasyBib* that automatically generates citations in MLA formatting. He didn't mention this website today, but several students automatically retrieved it on their internet browsers.

Prior to the start of class, Prof. Becker had asked me if I would help him during the workshopping exercise by giving feedback to students on their first major writing assignment. I agreed to assist him, and when he called on students to begin working on their works cited lists, he signaled that I should go around the room to see whether or not students were correctly adhering to MLA style guidelines. I visited each student's workstation and encountered a variety of different interactions.

Perhaps the most stunning realization I made was the wide range of comfort levels with regard to basic computer literacy. About half of the students navigated their way through the Canvas course site and *EasyBib* with relative ease. The other half, however, faced steeper challenges with copying and pasting the URL of "Goldenrod and Asters" into the citation generator; I found myself pointing at these students' computer screens to indicate where they needed to select the necessary text, and then leaning over and taking control of the mouse, I demonstrated how to insert the same text into the appropriate fields on *EasyBib*. This whole process took maybe twice as long as I had expected, especially since there was only one citation to include in each student's works cited list.

Kimmerer, Robin Wall. "Goldenrod and Asters: My Life With Plants." *Commons: A Gathering of Stories and Culture*, Blue Mountain Center, 2020, [commons.bluemountaincenter.org/goldenrod-and-asters-my-life-with-plants/](https://commons.bluemountaincenter.org/goldenrod-and-asters-my-life-with-plants/).

After transitioning from working on their works cited lists, Prof. Becker revisited some of the ideas he had students write about during Monday's class. He asked students to describe some of the worlds they had lived in. 6 students raised their hands, eager to share their responses. The first student, Arturo, talked about his time growing up in Honduras, telling the class, "I used a lot more slang in my tiny town. But then I used more formal language when I moved into a big city - probably because I went to school there.

Another student, Rochelle, shared the difficulties of balancing work/family/student obligations. "I live in at least two worlds, being a mom/wife and a student. But I also work part-time, and I'll tell you, this shit is HARD!" Her voice started to tremble, and she asked Prof. Becker if it was okay for her to vent some frustration. He nodded sympathetically. "This morning my baby woke up with a bad rash.. I spent half the day at the Penn ER yesterday because my mom broke her wrist.. I mean, how do you DO all of this.. in my house there are 2 teenagers, 2 pre-teens, and 3 toddlers.. I am TIRED!"

A third student, Khalid, talked about the difficulty of living in one world, and being "uprooted" to go and live in another world. "I was born in the US, but I left here when I was only 4 years old to go live in Palestine. I knew how to speak with my parents, but like, there's 17 million words or something in Arabic.. and then there are no jobs in Palestine. Finding a job is really, really difficult, so I returned to the US when I turned 18. But I still feel like I'm on my own."

"What about here, at school," asked Prof. Becker, "do you feel like here you're on your own?" Almost every student replied "yes," some nodding more emphatically than others.

*Interpretive Stance:* Kimmerer (2013) uses the construct of two worlds to contrast her experiences as both an indigenous woman and a scientist. Prof. Becker could have stated this outright, to draw students more closely into the text, instead of remaining on the sidelines, looking in as observers. The text is a culturally relevant choice for community college students who feel like they are being sidelined, or worse yet, excluded from the Academy. Kimmerer narrates her experiences by challenging the ways she was mistreated as an undergraduate. Prof. Becker attempted to illuminate the author's lived experiences, but he could have used clearer examples and much more direct language to help students bridge these connections to their own lives.

The class momentum eventually shifts back toward the day's lesson, and Prof. Becker goes through the details of the assignment due later that evening. The task is a formal writing assignment in which students will compare and contrast their own experiences with the one described by Kimmerer (2013) in "Goldenrod and Asters: My Life with Plants."

"Now does that mean you're gonna have a works cited list? I keep saying it over and over again.. academic uniform.. APA, header, works cited at the end." Prof. Becker manages to not sound annoyed while reminding his students how they are supposed to turn in their assignments for grading.

The next activity is a small group exercise involving the Kimmerer (2013) text. In groups of three, students are tasked with reading the remainder of the essay, and each group member is



given a specific task: scribe, spokesperson, timekeeper. Each group is given a question list involving a combination of vocabulary, short-answer questions, and quotations.

At the beginning of the activity, there was some discussion between students in each of the groups, but then things got quiet very quickly. Perhaps this is because they were trying to read the text for answers? There was also general confusion over the individual tasks that were assigned. Prof. Becker filtered around the room, visiting each group at least twice, attempting to answer students' questions.

This classroom is equipped with 6 large television screens for projection. Prof. Becker used 3 of these screens to review the answers given by each of the student groups. He listed the questions that each group had received so that everyone could access the same information, regardless of their group assignment. The class energy was noticeably low during the question-and-answer review session; one student had put his head down on his desk to sleep, while several others seemed to stop paying attention. Prof. Becker appeared to notice the lack of enthusiasm and called for a 5-minute break, after having given each group an opportunity to report their answers to the class.

Upon resuming the class, Prof. Becker engaged his students with a lively discussion about the nature of human comfort, asking them to consider whether or not it can be explained by science.

PROF. Becker:       What is comfort?... can't SCIENCE explain it?

Carla:                Maybe.. like HOW it happens but not what it FEELS like -

Arturo:              it's not NATURAL it's in the MOMENT -

Marcus:             you're at PEACE.. it's a state of MIND

PROF. Becker:       so there's SOME science behind the experience

STUDENTS:         [nodding] Yes

PROF. Becker:       Can you MEASURE this? What do you think?

Dante:               You can OBSERVE it.. but not put it on a scale -

Carla:                I'm not sure how you could MEASURE it.. but you could see how you feel at different times -

PROF. Becker:       ..see what the stimulus is -

Khalid:              You CAN'T measure it because you have to define what is NORMAL and HOW can you really define THAT

PROF. Becker:       Another HUGE question - what is NORMAL

Marcus: It's all in a state of mind -

Khalid: Normal is whatever the masses does -

Arturo: It's all part of a routine.. what is it you're used to

PROF. Becker: Okay so there is a scientific element to consider..

*Interpretive Stance:* this class discussion was a great build up to understanding comfort, and whether or not there is a scientific element to be considered. In the Kimmerer (2013) text, the author discusses beauty as being larger than science. She also makes a strong statement about academia and its incapacity to address the types of questions she poses. This discussion was a missed opportunity to connect the students' observations to the author's thesis. More scaffolding with explicit links to the text could have been provided.

The class discussion segued into a close reading of "Goldenrod and Asters," reflecting a combination of reading comprehension and vocabulary questions from Prof. Becker to the students. For example, he asked students to explain the different functions served by cones and rods in the eye. And he also asked students to identify examples of indigenous language used within the text.

With just a few minutes left in the class, Prof. Becker changed his tone somewhat, and proceeded to more seriously address his students regarding future reading assignments. "Here is what I wanted you to get out of the reading.. I know some of you thought that it was boring.. it was hard.. this story gets into some concepts.. it asks you to think about some difficult ideas like how do we conceptualize beauty.. I hate to end the class on a bad note but the readings are gonna get harder from here onward.. The readings are gonna be more boring and it's gonna get more difficult.. but we will continue to work together, in small groups, as a class, and do work like this to help build your understanding."

*Interpretive Stance:* I was surprised to hear Prof. Becker tell the students that the assigned reading is boring. How is this information going to support their motivation to keep reading? Also, if presented differently, the Kimmerer (2013) text is one that could resonate with many first-generation college students struggling to find their place in higher education. I am perplexed as to why he framed the text in this way.

BELL RINGS.

Prof. Becker dismisses the class and reminds the students to submit their homework assignment on time.

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