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Pedagogies of Digital Composing through a Translingual Approach

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Abstract: This article provides pedagogical frameworks for teaching digital composing through a translingual orientation. The authors offer two pedagogical models (a Cultural Historical Activity Theory (CHAT)-based model and a translingual remix model) to illustrate how instructors navigate a wide range of institutional contexts to teach digital translingual pedagogies with linguistically and ethnically diverse students. The diverse approaches to translingual practices and digital literacies presented in this article reflect the distinct orientations of four writing teacher-scholars enacting these pedagogies at different institutions.

Vitae:

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1. Preamble

The impetus for this article began with our collaboration on a series of blog posts published on the Sweetland Digital Rhetoric Collaborative. The “Blog Carnival,” “Beyond A Single Language/Single Modality Approach to Writing,” included contributions from scholars and teachers working with students from diverse ethnic and linguistic backgrounds in various academic institutions across the U.S. In their blog posts, contributors showcased different frameworks through which writing teachers practice translingual pedagogies that leverage fluid conceptions of languages and digital composing practices. Through our early conversations as contributors, consultants, and organizers of this Blog Carnival, we began noting how our own institutional, cultural, linguistic, and disciplinary backgrounds influenced our digital translingual pedagogies, both constraining and extending the ways in which we could engage or incorporate digital composing into our writing classrooms. Through these conversations, we also noted how our students’ linguistic, cultural, and educational backgrounds intertwined with their own orientations to our pedagogies, and how our institutional contexts mitigated these interactions. This collaboration prompted us to continue working as a research team, contributing a diverse range of backgrounds, approaches, and experiences with digital composing as we built and practiced digital translingual pedagogies in our own contexts. As a team, we wanted to exchange and develop potential strategies for integrating translingual and digital pedagogies within and across our institutions.

Over the course of three years, our research team engaged in conversations about how our approaches to teaching writing continued to shift given changes in disciplinary conversations around translingualism, in the nature of digital composing, and in our own institutional affiliations. The four members of our team met regularly to discuss, document, and trace how we

were fostering digital translingual pedagogies in our classrooms. Our conversations traced commonalities and differences in our teaching and research practices and gave us the opportunity to reflect on how these matched the demands of our individual institutional settings. A translingual orientation prompted us, as writing teachers, to view communicative practices as constantly fluid and evolving. As such, a translingual orientation informed the pedagogical strategies that we present in this article, as well as the methods by which these strategies were co-constructed and implemented in our classrooms. Stemming from this work, in this article, we share our pedagogical reflections to illustrate what digital translingual pedagogies entail in practice and how these pedagogies continuously shift based on various institutional factors.

2. Introduction

Writing scholars and instructors agree that we should design rich assignments that value students' dynamic languaging and composing experiences (Lee, 2016; Leonard Lorimer, 2014). A growing body of literature has consistently encouraged us to move in this direction, providing opportunities for students to embrace writing practices that leverage digital composing while also honoring the fluid and constantly evolving nature of language (e.g., Fraiberg, 2010; Gonzales, 2015; Shipka, 2015). Yet, college writing classes designed for linguistically and ethnically diverse students¹ do not always fully engage the language, writing, and digital composing practices and lived experiences of our students. Writing instructors who attempt to implement translingual approaches in their classes do not always feel fully equipped to do so. Pedagogical

¹ We are turning our attention towards the groups of students we have worked with before whom, for the purposes of this article, we will identify as linguistically and ethnically diverse students. While we often refuse to engage in student labeling practices that silo our students in a set of assumptions about language and identity, we are confronted in our teaching with many situations where institutional naming practices are still in place and need to be addressed. Translingualism has taken on this mission by arguing that all students continuously engage in translingual practices and therefore defy any attempt at categorization (Canagarajah 2013b; Horner et al., 2011). Yet, cautionary notes from scholars (e.g., Jerry Won Lee; 2016) remind us that leveling out complex experiences can easily lead to “making uncritical generalized assumptions about specific types of students” (p.191). For these reasons, we describe institutional contexts in depth and propose pedagogical models not because we want to make specific claims about certain groups of students, but because we strongly believe that a translingual approach can guide and welcome all students in a variety of contexts and enhance their composing practices. When we do use specific terms to refer to our students (e.g., international multilingual students), we do it to situate the context in which we work and the terms that are being used at different institutions. The use of such terms may resonate with some of our readers in similar contexts, thus we invite writing instructors and scholars to problematize and reflect on their own terms and teaching contexts.

decisions are situated (and sometimes constrained) by a wide range of institutional ideologies and practices that influence writing programs and pedagogies, which may be at odds with translingual orientations to writing pedagogies (Horner and Tetreault, 2017).

Recent work has proposed frameworks to develop new teaching approaches that address some of these practical concerns. Particular attention has been given to understanding students' practices and meeting their needs in different contexts. However, in this article, we argue that we ought to pay close attention to the writing instructors as well, specifically to the ways in which writing instructors negotiate and work with specific institutional and ideological contexts to embrace dynamic writing pedagogies. Instructors' responses to a wide range of institutional expectations and student population demographics are important, as these oftentimes occur at the crossroads of multiple theories, cultural knowledges, practical implications, and contextual possibilities.

In this article, we draw upon our pedagogical practices and share experiences that helped us navigate teaching contexts where we worked with linguistically and ethnically diverse students. Scholarly work in composition studies (particularly in translingualism and digital composing) has already equipped writing instructors with a wide range of tools and practices that can be applied with different groups of writers. Our intervention then is not so much to propose new models of teaching composition; instead, we hope to demonstrate the rhetorical navigation that writing teachers engage in as they integrate pedagogical and theoretical principles that create dynamic and inclusive writing spaces in different teaching contexts.

By bringing together translingual practices and digital composing, we make visible our experiences as translingual-oriented writing instructors, and we hope to encourage others to see the potential of similar practices in their own contexts. We argue that we can further our goals as

writing instructors when we pay close and critical attention to the classrooms we inhabit, while allowing ourselves to be surprised and challenged by our students' rich cultural, digital, and language practices. Additionally, by looking at these contexts and our students' rich practices, as writing instructors we may offer our students with more opportunities to explore the multifaceted nature of their composing practices. In this way, instead of trying to (re)invent our teaching for each new learning context, we can draw on established teaching practices and resources to foster digital translingual classrooms.

2.1 Moving towards translingual digital classrooms

Before we share our experiences, it is important to clarify why we emphasize the role of translingual practices and digital composing in our classrooms. In the last decade, translingualism has emerged as an orientation that can inform pedagogical approaches and concerns related to students' diverse language practices and academic experiences with writing (Alvarez et al., 2017; Canagarajah, 2013a; Horner et al., 2011). As a theoretical approach, translingualism offers a rich, and at times contentious (see Canagarajah, 2015; Gilyard, 2016; Matsuda, 2014), set of principles to demonstrate that we can and should engage students' multiple meaning-making strategies. More importantly, in today's transnational contexts, translingualism seems to provide an appropriate response to rapidly changing "social, cultural, economic, and technological conditions" (Kumagai and López-Sánchez, 2016, p.6). To be effective communicators, students must be able to navigate and deploy a wide range of digital composing practices² that allow them to negotiate the affordances and constraints of multiple spaces, ranging from social media platforms to academic multimodal assignments.

² In this article, we include in digital composing practices any type of composing practice that involves the use of digital devices, processes, modalities and media to convey meaning in a specific context. When we refer to assignments, these can include a combination of digital and non-digital practices, as we recognize that digital composing is not always practiced in computer-mediated contexts.

Translingualism views all components of students' composing practices as interconnected and integrated, mediated through one another, and continuously emergent. These practices involve dynamic and fluid movement between linguistic knowledge, alphabetic writing, and virtual-material modalities (Horner, Selfe, and Lockridge, 2015).

Yet, writing instructors who embrace a translingual orientation often face multiple challenges. First, they must navigate strongly established institutional designations for both their students and in their own capacities as faculty members in specific contexts. Institutional designations may place writing instructors in the position of facing deep-seated assumptions about student needs. For instance, writing instructors may find that their students have arrived at their classes with institutionally assigned labels, such as English as a Second Language (ESL), Second Language Writers (L2), international and/or the all-encompassing term "multilingual" (Horner, NeCamp, and Donahue, 2011); labels that writing instructors may not always be able to contest or negotiate, and in many cases can do more damage than service (García, 2009; Flores, Kleyn, Menken, 2015).

Second, practices in digital composing are not widely integrated in the curricula designed for linguistically and ethnically diverse students. Instructors aiming to incorporate digital composing through a translingual orientation in their writing courses may face institutional and programmatic resistances that influence pedagogical choices. Students continue to be assigned to writing courses that can differ in content, goals, and outcomes from those designed for "mainstream" composition (i.e., courses designed under the ideology of English monolingualism). Such courses tend to operate on a hierarchy of needs whereby student learning outcomes are directly related to what is seen as students' language "competences" (e.g., sentence structure and style), and to certain genres of alphabetic writing (e.g., personal narrative, literature

review, argumentative essay). By moving in this direction, the curricula behind these dedicated classes often channel students' writing towards practices that may fail to engage all of their meaning-making strategies.

It is important to note that we focus here on digital composing within a translingual framework for a number of reasons. We recognize that all our students engage in digital practices, yet not all of them across writing sections have the opportunity to explore the richness of digital composing. Assignments that tap into a wide range of digital meaning-making practices (e.g., composing and circulating videos, podcasts, websites, applications) are often believed to require "advanced composing skills" (Takayoshi and Selfe, 2007). Therefore, students institutionally placed in courses focusing on "language acquisition" and "writing for multilinguals" may be presented with fewer opportunities to explore the multifaceted and dynamic nature of their linguistic and composing practices. While from a theoretical standpoint, translingualism provides the appropriate approach to address these issues, we believe that writing instructors benefit from translingual-oriented pedagogical experiences that allow them to integrate digital composing in their writing classrooms. However, negotiating how these teaching practices can be taken up in specific institutional contexts becomes its own challenge.

Our call for implementing digital composing in writing classes for linguistically and ethnically diverse students is certainly not new. In fact, a growing number of writing instructors have successfully integrated digital assignments in their contexts (Fraiberg, 2010; Gonzales, 2015; Hafner, 2015). However, an orientation towards language that incorporates digital practices as part of composing, such as the one forwarded in Suresh Canagarajah's "Translingual Writing and Teacher Development in Composition," has not been widely embraced (2016, p.268) and, as our experiences show, is not always easy to implement. A review of current

scholarship (see Horner, Selfe, and Lockridge, 2015) reveals that translanguaging stands on a strong theoretical ground, but its full pedagogical potential in relation to students' digital practices is yet to be fully developed. Linguistically and ethnically diverse students can often get institutionally caught in monolingualist writing ideologies that ask them to focus on what is viewed as *their linguistic challenges*.³ This assumed problem translates into an overemphasis on *language needs*, and the assumption that a composition classroom *for multilingual students* is meant to help students improve their English language practices alone.

Yet, students have much to teach us about how to expand our pedagogies and adapt our teaching to their expectations and needs. As our experiences will show, writing instructors need to address the cultural and linguistic diversity of students without overestimating nor downplaying their composing abilities in various rhetorical situations. That is, the writing classroom in many ways affords us the privilege to work with our students to attune our digital and non-digital practices through a process of collaborative engagement (cf. Lorimer Leonard, 2014).

Drawing on our own experiences as ethnically and linguistically diverse writing instructors who work at four different institutions, we present teaching experiences and strategies for enacting writing pedagogies that encourage digital composing with a translanguaging orientation. We contextualize these pedagogical strategies with(in) cultural, institutional, and demographic factors that constantly influence the work of our classrooms. This illustrates our effort to highlight the possibilities for embedding digital translanguaging pedagogies in writing classrooms and to emphasize the importance of situating these pedagogies in specific cultural-rhetorical contexts. In this sense, our intervention is not only to join various debates on how to make the

³ By this very principle, students assumed to be monolingual then are seen as in no need to interrogate the varieties and complexities of the English language(s).

most of our students' practices, but to share our processes of navigating multiple dimensions in which composing takes place. We bring together our own histories, personal diverse linguistic backgrounds, as well as our mobile and contingent pedagogies.⁴

In our own teaching experiences, we have openly adopted a translingual orientation that embraces digital composing because this is where we situate our identities and practices. For us, digital and non-digital composing practices are part of what we do and who we are as teachers. Grounded in NCTE's Definition of 21st Century Literacies, we define digital composing as the managing, analysis, and synthesis of multiple streams of information through the use of digital technologies including videos, websites, applications, visual designs, and other media. We recognize that our students, ourselves included, as "participants in this 21st century global society [,] must be able to develop proficiency and fluency with the tools of technology; [...] design and share information for global communities to meet a variety of purposes" (NCTE, 2013). We understand the importance of digital practices in contexts where our students need to use *language*, broadly conceived, to achieve different goals and communicative purposes. We approach digital composing through a translingual orientation as a way to purposely situate language practices as critical components of students' "full quiver" of rhetorical potential (Selfe, 2009). Yet, here we want to clarify that in doing this work we move beyond meeting students' needs. It is important to make visible instructors' stances and positions within various educational spaces and the very meaning-making practices in which they themselves participate. For this reason, as we share classroom experiences in the following sections, we want to bring forward our own experiences and dynamic relationships with writing in various contexts.

⁴ Since the beginning of this project, all of the authors have already changed the institutions where we worked before and are currently teaching in new contexts with different student bodies. We believe that this mobility of writing instructors is a significant dimension which determines how we plan and implement pedagogical models in different teaching contexts.

3. Methodology: Building digital translingual pedagogies through collaboration

It is important to note that practicing the potential of digital composing from a translingual orientation is not something that teachers should *do* but rather something that we can foster collaboratively, together with our students and other writing instructors. As Bawarshi notes, “If all language use is translingual...then, it is not a question of whether or not to allow translingualism, but how and to what extent to perform, acknowledge, and address it” (p. 245). Despite working in different institutional contexts, we have shared experiences where the teaching environment in which we worked seemed in line with a monolingual orientation to the teaching of writing. Our students were institutionally marked as “different” and/or “outsiders” to “mainstream” composition, while being assigned to dedicated ESL, L2, language classes or multilingual sections of first-year composition courses (Gonzales, 2018). However, these students have oftentimes taught us about their experiences beyond these labels and we had much to learn from exchanging our own experiences among colleagues. For this reason, in this article we share pedagogical reflections to illustrate how students’, teachers’, and institutional expectations can be negotiated.

Through our experiences, we hope to offer instructors an opportunity to see innovative approaches that help them navigate institutional contexts and support the great potential of students’ practices. To answer Shipka’s (2016) call, we aim to “occasion changes in both disposition *and* practice” (p. 252), by encouraging instructors and students to engage with difference (be it linguistic, visual, aural, kinetic, etc.) via creative and multi-layered assignments. In forwarding these pedagogical reflections, we hope to address criticisms of translingualism that view this approach as often met with “the frustration of not fully understanding what it looks like

and how it works” (Matsuda, 2014, p. 480)⁵. If translingualism supports flexibility and dynamic relations between the practices involved in creating meaning for multiple audiences, through our reflections we stimulate ways of *doing composition*, which foster students’ rich writing experiences and can expose them to new communicative possibilities.

Drawing on our experiences, we share pedagogical reflections⁶ that aim to illustrate how we navigated various institutional contexts to embed attention to digital composing in translingual pedagogies. Our pedagogical reflections are grounded in Jacqueline Jones Royster and Gesa Kirsch’s (2012) method of “strategic contemplation”— a tool of feminist inquiry that highlights “the critical and creative ways that researchers, scholars, and teachers are using narrative, essayistic, critical reflection to focus intellectual energy during the process of generating complex analyses in order to intensify even more the capacity to bring intellectual abilities to bear” (p. 1837-38). After engaging in three years of collaborative pedagogical building through strategic contemplation and collaborative pedagogical design, we frame our experience in terms of *pedagogical reflections* which focus on specific ways of *doing composition* in sociocultural and rhetorical contexts. Stemming from this work, starting in section 3.1, we present translingual pedagogical practices that build on a P-CHAT approach and translingual remix theory, including brief theoretical framing along with classroom examples. These examples illustrate how writing curricula can encourage students to work with new digital practices in contexts ranging from first-year composition to English-Language programs. Given that they represent different teaching contexts, these pedagogical reflections reveal examples of

⁵ We are not suggesting that our classroom approaches and experiences are the only ways in which a translingual orientation can be taken up. As mentioned, there is rich and emergent scholarship that aims at supporting writing instructors across a variety of contexts (see Horner and Tetreault, 2017).

⁶ We use the term “pedagogical reflections” to indicate a feminist methodological approach that we used to analyze, organize and understand our teaching experiences. In line with Jacqueline Jones Royster and Gesa E Kirsch’s notion of “strategic contemplation,” feminist pedagogical reflections refer to the process of self-reflection as well as the methodological approach to our teaching contexts.

teaching only insofar as they demonstrate practical possibilities among many that other writing teachers can practice in their own institutional, programmatic, and course contexts. However, we do not view these reflections or the experiences we share as prescriptive, determined or finite.

Moreover, our pedagogical reflections do not capture completely new approaches to teaching as they build on different theoretical strands of digital composing which we see as complementary and generative of classroom practices. The important lesson that translanguaging offers us is that working across boundaries (be they practical, methodological, theoretical, or experiential) is negotiable, context-sensitive, and emergent. In many ways, what we are showing is that we are already equipped to work with our students creatively to incorporate digital translanguaging pedagogies in our classrooms. We don't need to search for specific activities to enact translanguaging or define one pedagogical agenda for translanguaging practices (cf. Mangelsdorf, 2017). Instead, writing instructors will need to cultivate and develop negotiation strategies that allow them to create inclusive spaces which, in turn, will help students share, expand and try out new digital and non-digital practices. Nowadays, it becomes harder to anticipate the experiences and backgrounds of our students as these change from one institution to another and even within the same institution, from one academic year to the next. For this reason, it may be difficult to articulate and rely on a single pedagogy or a set of writing strategies. Instead of a new stable pedagogy, we argue that writing instructors need to develop a flexible approach that addresses composing in all its rich forms. Such flexibility requires making space for digital writing while also continuing to honor the fluidity of language that contemporary students practice both in and beyond our classrooms.

3.1. Translanguaging Practice through Pedagogical Cultural-Historical Activity Theory (P-CHAT): Cristina

As an international graduate writing instructor in the English Department at a public research-oriented university in the Midwest, I was introduced to Cultural Historical Activity Theory (CHAT) as a major component of the program's infrastructure to teach writing in First Year Composition (FYC) and in Writing in the Disciplines (WID). For almost a decade, Joyce Walker's administrative work has involved building a writing program through the practical implementation of CHAT into writing instruction, which she refers to as Pedagogical Cultural Historical Activity Theory (P-CHAT). Through this approach, students are tasked to investigate the intricacies of their own literate activities across multiple settings in and beyond academic contexts, in the hopes that they become more introspective of their writing researcher identities and practices (Walker, 2017).

Theoretically, CHAT positions human activity as being as relevant as the tools, ideas, processes, etc. in specific situations. In *Cross-Cultural Technology Design*, Huatong Sun explains, "(a)s a cultural-historical approach, activity theory claims that people's activities are an object-oriented and tool-mediated process in which actions are mediated through the use of artifacts (including tools and languages) to achieve a transformative objective" (2012, p. 57). In this sense, CHAT does not establish the speaker or writer as the center of the activity (Walker, 2016, p. 159); instead, it "focuses on the moment when individuals begin (even really tentatively) to see themselves as working inside situations where texts are produced and distributed and taken up" (p. 161). A person's literate activities are situated in specific sociocultural moments in which "historically-provided tools and practices" such as "languages, genres, iconographies" and technologies are negotiated and transformed to accomplish a purpose (Prior et al., 2007, p. 17). From a CHAT perspective, any type of writing is an activity in which meaning is mediated and constructed through ecological and sociocultural factors. While CHAT

is a framework that helps humans situate themselves in the activities they are embedded and to trace the factors that impact those activities at a particular time (Walker, 2017), P-CHAT, the pedagogical applied framework of CHAT, is designed to guide students to identify all the activities, tools, people, involved in their writing. The student is thus, at the center of her learning through P-CHAT, mapping the complexities of her own literate activity.⁷ Therefore, as Prior, Walker, and Riggert-Keiffer explain from a P-CHAT perspective, the pedagogical applied framework of CHAT,

(...) the instructor is not understood as the *subject* acting upon the student (*object*), nor is the student the *subject* acting upon the text (*object*). Instead, PCHAT encourages a more rhizomatic, networked making, where interrelated actors (people, semiotic tools, texts, knowledges, goals) form and re-form a dynamic field upon which (and within which) the writer writes. (“Languaging the Rhetorical Tradition,” Forthcoming).

CHAT also closely reflects one of the tenets of translanguaging whereby language has a performative dimension: it is “not something we have but something we do” (Lu and Horner, 2016, p. 208). Engaging in translanguaging composition through P-CHAT can allow students to see the factors that inform specific meaning-making practices in a given context. As a networking framework, CHAT places an emphasis on the sociocultural and ecological situations of people’s dynamic literate activities. Correspondingly, from the point of view of translanguaging, an individual’s linguistic repertoire fluctuates in accordance with the sociocultural context where the practices take place.

⁷ Drawing on the distinction above-mentioned, in the remaining of this section, I will refer to CHAT as the conceptual framework I use to make sense of some of the activities I am embedded in, including writing and researching. P-CHAT is specifically utilized to refer to classroom examples and students’ own learning of writing.

In my teaching and research of writing, I used the various dimensions of CHAT to bring together translingualism and digital composing and align with my writing program's philosophies. Specifically, as a U.S. writing instructor from Spain, I resorted to CHAT to better understand how to map out activity systems involved in composing any sort of genre as across transnational spaces. For example, for the seemingly simple activity of writing out a course syllabus, I took into consideration that my computer has a Spanish keyboard and that the default settings in Word are also set to Spanish. That is, my open and *negotiative* orientation toward language and literacies allowed me to consider the production of the syllabus as an activity which was digitally attuned to my linguistic resources. To compose the syllabus for a course in the U.S., I had to carefully strategize with and around writing and to work with the digital tools available. In addition, I thought about the type of language that freshmen students expected in a syllabus, as well as the linguistic and multimodal components that would make it more compelling to them based on the different factors involved in the activity of syllabus-writing. In other words, this dynamic orientation to writing (and language(s)) gave me the possibility to consider the flow of my practices by focusing on the contextual factors that informed my activities. A similar approach could help my students re-focus their attention away from grammatical proficiency or mastery of specific forms in "final" written products, and more on the multiple ways of composing successfully in specific genres. Digital environments provide us with the opportunity to observe and trace such complex literate and linguistic practices.

Although P-CHAT has not been widely implemented in the curricula deemed for L2/multilingual writing courses, research shows that theoretically CHAT works to provide writers with the opportunity to examine the intersections between "writing, social interaction, and cross-language relations" in L2 writing (Seloni, 2014, p.81). As Seloni argues

a CHAT approach to second language writing also enables us to transcend beyond an instrumental purpose to learning the academic values of the center, and emphasizes the importance of multilingual writers' creative attempts to incorporate their local knowledge and vernacular languages into the mainstream discourse. (p.82)

In order for students to be able to extrapolate their learning of writing beyond the classroom, linguistically and ethnically diverse students need a dynamic analytic framework to explore the complexities involved in their writing activity systems (Walker, 2017). To address this issue, the CHAT approach proposed by Prior et al. (2007) provides a robust yet flexible analytical and learning model for writers to capture the idiosyncrasies of each unique and situated literate activity. I used P-CHAT, Walker's pedagogical application of Prior et al.'s CHAT framework, to provide my students with a method to break down literate activity into seven factors, namely, production, representation, reception, distribution, socialization, activity, and ecology (Prior et al. 2007). In so doing, I posed questions like the ones listed below for students to map out personal and context-specific aspects in their composing activities:

- Production: What tools do I need in this composing activity? How do I use them?
- Representation: What is my audience expecting? What do they know? What don't they know? Which of those expectations am I going to prioritize, if any?
- Reception: How does my audience respond? Is their uptake on my activities of what I was anticipating? Have I accomplished my goal?
- Distribution: Does the medium of distribution have an impact on my composing activities and how do these circulate and are taken up?

- Socialization: What interactions emerge as part of my composing activities? How do they impact my activities?
- Activity: What else am I doing as I am composing? How do those activities overlap? What is the impact of those activities in my composing practices?
- Ecology: Where am I? What ideologies and systems of beliefs shape my composing practices in this context? What effect does the environment have on my activities?

Identifying the roles these factors play in writers' composing activities can help them gain a stronger understanding of the complexities and contradictions of the activities and enables them to be more conscious of their decision-making processes. By pinpointing the wide range of elements employed in situated meaning-making practices, students gain a broader understanding of what contributes to the effectiveness of their compositions.

Having taught writing from a genre-based and P-CHAT perspective for several years and after receiving positive student feedback, it felt natural for me to tailor a similar approach to digital translingual pedagogies in an integrated reading and writing course for advanced international students at the English Language Institute (ELI) at the same institution, where students have been traditionally referred to as ESL learners.⁸ While my previous teaching responsibilities have mostly targeted students deemed as “mainstream” users of English, my educational and research interests in the fields of applied linguistics, cross-cultural and transnational writing, and translation studies made me consider and test the viability of P-CHAT for linguistically and ethnically diverse students. Teaching this course was my choice for the PhD internship, a graduation requirement. While teaching outside of the English Department,

⁸ Institutionally, the ELI responds to the International Office, but it has connections with the English Department through the TESOL program. Although not required by the university, most students at the ELI enroll in an intensive English program before applying for a college degree in the U.S. at the same or a different institution. Aside from the integrated reading and writing class, all students at the ELI take other classes, such as grammar, listening and speaking, and U.S. classroom culture.

where I was completing my degree, was not a common practice among graduate students, as mentioned earlier, my own research proclivities led me to pursue the opportunity of teaching at the English Language Institute which was undergoing administrative transitions at that time. The circumstances of this unexpected situation made it possible for me, to a certain extent, to transform my previous pedagogical practices (informed by P-CHAT) into a new context and for a different student body.

The course plan I had originally designed for the class targeted Panamanian English teachers who were participating in an eight-week long educative experience at the ELI called “Panamá Bilingüe Program,” established by the Republic of Panama Ministry of Education. When designing the class for these English teachers, I considered their expectations and expertise in cross-cultural writing and language learning pedagogies. However, after student placement, other students were assigned to take my class. The final student population for the course consisted of seven Panamanian English teachers and four students pursuing graduate education in the U.S., from China, Thailand, South Korea and Vietnam. While the Panamanian students would be in class for eight-weeks, the rest of the students continued the course for a whole semester.

This unique situation gave me the opportunity to experiment with and adapt my teaching in order to work with this changing student body. During the first weeks of the semester, students worked, discussed and engaged in writing through a genre studies perspective. Students became familiarized with genres by researching and analyzing their conventions. For example, during the first weeks of the course, we read Sandra Cisneros’ *The House on Mango Street*, a short story with explicit translingual practices as part of the narrative. Oriented by my previous teaching, I asked students to recreate a vignette (a brief chapter from the short-story) based on their personal

experiences, and encouraged them to enact their possible meaning-making practices in their genres. This activity was meant to help students understand how to map out their literate activities and to give me the opportunity to find out what potential composing practices they could engage in.

Once students started to feel more comfortable with the dynamics of the class, they completed a weeklong project that included a P-CHAT analysis aimed to guide them in making more transparent the ecological and sociocultural contexts in which translingual practices emerge through the questions previously mentioned. Through this project, they were given the opportunity to learn how language(s) appeared in relation to other factors, like the participants' uptakes (responses to the text), the medium of distribution (digital or print) and the ecological contexts in which the text was produced and circulated. The use of P-CHAT in this context allowed students to move beyond merely thinking about and doing writing as "acting upon the text" (Prior, Walker and Riggert-Keiffer, forthcoming).

Students were first asked to read and analyze a *Humans of New York (HONY)* Facebook post portraying the story of a Syrian refugee. By utilizing a P-CHAT approach, students analyzed the use of pictures, emoticons, diverse forms of languages and registers, and they discussed how the post moved across different contexts and audiences. They also looked at the distribution of the post, the interactions it had prompted, and the languages in which those interactions materialized, visible in the comments made on the post. Next, students interviewed a class peer in order to compose their own HONY-like posts, including the use of multiple languages and registers, responses in the comments section, the use of visual elements, etc. While presenting the last component of the activity to the students (creating their own posts), and considering students reactions, I realized that I haven't given them a single option as to how to distribute the

post. Because they shared their preferences, I told them that they could distribute their work through Facebook pages, create the post on a word document, or on their paper notebooks. This was an opportunity for me to see how much students were comfortable with exploring new composing territories (digital posts vs. more traditional text-based posts). The results were varied, ranging from a handwritten post on a paper notebook to an actual Facebook post. Finally, they peer-assessed their work and discussed how their posts had been created and taken up in different ways depending on the tools and media of distribution employed.

As we all discovered in class, the comments students received to their online posts exhibited more textual complexity than those written on paper. These comments included a combination of registers with different levels of language writing attunement, such as the expression “in spite of the difficulties” versus the more digitally-driven and casual “congratz!” Because several people commented on the post, the comments revealed grammatical variation: one commentator wrote “most of people” and another one “most of the people.” These comments indicated that some students were comfortable deploying diverse linguistic repertoires dynamically as participants in a digital composing activity, and were not so heavily focused on surface level syntactic aspects of their language usage. For instance, instead of directly thinking about constructing paragraphs and following grammatical rules, students had to consider the interactions with their peers, the general messages that were communicated to them and were willing to take more risks in composing against rules of grammatical correctness. In other words, they seemed to view their linguistic practices not as predetermined or isolated systems in practice, but rather as rich forms of knowledge and semiotic composing attuned to the medium, modalities, audience and technologies which seemed to allow more freedom in language use.

P-CHAT was helpful in opening up opportunities for linguistically and ethnically diverse students to become more cognizant of the contextual factors informing the emergence of unique forms of communication in different media of distribution, along with the sociocultural and historical contexts in which they take place. In this sense, P-CHAT proved a productive approach to the mapping of the “ecological orientation” in translingual practice (Canagarajah, 2016, p. 265). The multiplicity of ecological sociocultural contexts in digital genres like Facebook posts allowed for explicit and more diverse translingual interactions⁹ among various languages, linguistic varieties, registers and modalities of communication.

However, it is important to point out that students engaged in discussions about the P-CHAT components, but they did not learn explicitly about the theory and its terminology. While my previous students in FYC and WID courses explicitly learned about P-CHAT as a framework to approach writing, my students at the ELI were not directly instructed on its terminology. At the beginning of the course, I was able to gauge my students’ beliefs and expectations about writing, which exclusively related to writing as textual, consisting of sentence and paragraph construction. Most of my students had never taken “a writing class” *per se*; their limited exposure to explicit writing instruction in the U.S. had always been part of their English language training. Therefore, to trigger their background knowledge of writing and help them expand on it through P-CHAT, I had to employ the vocabulary they were more familiar with and illustrate, rather than define, concepts like production and circulation. In other words, students managed to move towards an understanding of writing as a complex cultural historical activity, but they did not develop a vocabulary to explain this broader understanding of writing.

⁹ We use the term “interaction” here to indicate synergies among meaning-making practices rather than dividing lines between languages, registers, modalities, etc.

Implementing a P-CHAT model via digital translingual pedagogies in classes for student writers commonly labeled ESL/L2 students is not without its own obstacles. Working with and against ingrained ideologies on what constitutes “good” English writing and writing pedagogies among administrators, instructors and even students takes time. For example, while discussing the representation factor and the role of modalities and diverse linguistic practices in the HONY Facebook post, some of my students merely relied on what they saw in the textual component of the post, referring to quotes in the text as the “most meaningful elements in the post.” Despite these challenges, engaging in literate practices by paying attention to the seven CHAT factors can allow students to become more agentive in their composing processes. They can begin to make more conscious decisions on language choices based on their knowledge of the sociocultural contexts where they are participating. Students can also become more aware of the complex digital practices sometimes taken for granted (e.g., responses to a simple Facebook post), and of the ways in which they may enact new possibilities for using language(s) creatively.

As their instructor, I noticed that this class project was unexpected for some of my students for several reasons. Some students had to make their own choices in how to produce and distribute a piece of writing, the piece itself required them to engage in smaller meaning-making activities through different media and across space-time with their peers. These activities in a classroom context were unfamiliar to them; however, students managed to navigate them by strategically resorting to previous knowledge as writers in digital spaces and across languages. In this sense, students helped me see how performing in new writing situations requires not just attention to the final choices made in a specific genre, but to the paths that took them there and the practices in dealing with contradictions inherent to composing practices.

From this and previous teaching experiences, and through my own translingual orientation to writing pedagogy, I have learned to value students' "backstories" rather than the idealized reproductions of a specific genre. For instance, when composing a vignette about a personal anecdote, a student noticed that one of the genre conventions was rhymes. To decide on adapting or not that specific convention, a student asked me if instead of "ceiling" she should say "roof" to specifically refer to the upper surface in the interior of a room (ceiling) because "roof" rhymed with the last word in her paragraph. In that case, she prioritized genre convention over meaning, sacrificing the latter. As we talked about it, she decided to add a footnote explaining her choice (something that was not a genre convention). In this case, the student was thinking about the "representation" factor since she was considering the best possible way for her to accomplish her goals while operating around a set of expectations as to what her vignette should look like. While I prompted students to make use of languages and modalities to compose specific genres and to challenge language ideologies, at the end of the day, they were most importantly encouraged to accomplish their own goals. This experience helped me conceptualize better ways to shift my attention, as an instructor, from what I see in students' writing, to how they document their negotiations on language and modalities as a composing practice.

3.2 Pedagogical Reflections on Translingual Remix: Laura

As a writing instructor who identifies as a South-American emergent bilingual (García and Wei, 2014), I have used remix assignments to work with students who identify as emergent bilinguals, international students, and students who move in and out multiple variations of Englishes at three different institutions. These include a large state university in Florida, where I worked with first and second generation immigrant student populations predominantly from Central and South America and the Caribbean, and who identified as emergent bilinguals speaking Englishes and

Spanishes; a large Midwestern University where I most often worked with both white non-Latinx American students who spoke Englishes and a growing population of Chinese international students who spoke Englishes and Chinese languages (e.g., Mandarin Chinese), as well as a University situated on the Mexico/U.S. border with a student population comprised almost entirely of Mexican American students who translanguage across Spanishes and Englishes in their daily interactions. In all three contexts, I found it useful to incorporate remix assignments as a way to foster a translingual approach to digital composing that emphasizes rhetorical dexterity, cultural sustainability (Paris, 2012) and language fluidity over correctness and standardization in writing.

Remix assignments expand static conceptions of writing and language by asking students to “show the rhetorical potential of transforming already-existing materials into new texts for new audiences” (Edwards, 2016, p. 42). Likewise, digital remix assignments in composition encourage students to repurpose texts, images, and media to make new arguments in digital contexts (Arola, Sheppard, and Ball, 2014; Halbritter, 2012). Stemming from these models, translingual remix projects encourage students to recognize and consider their linguistic practices as integral components of digital composing processes, encouraging them to creatively adapt and repurpose material into various languages, modalities, and digital platforms based on specific rhetorical situations. Thus, translingual remix projects, similar to the P-CHAT approach, ask students and instructors to move away from a goal of achieving “correct” and standardized writing toward a (re)focus on rhetorically effective communication.

In my work with linguistically and ethnically diverse students (e.g., Gonzales, 2015; Gonzales, 2018), I have found that students who have been socialized to identify or have been institutionally categorized as Second Language Learners or L2 writers sometimes experience a

hesitance toward writing traditional alphabetic texts because, to complete such assignments, students might feel institutionalized pressure to start by writing down words in English. Rather than starting with visuals, sounds, or words in languages other than English, students in my particular study felt pressured to begin their print alphabetic projects with words in English, leading them to have trouble translating their ideas “from their heads to their papers” (Gonzales, 2015). While none of the participants in my previous study identified any issues coming up with ideas for their projects, writing struggles were most visible for students when participants attempted to share ideas through words in what we may broadly characterize as “Standardized” Written English (SWE) or American Edited English (AEE). Students explained that weaving images, colors, or the beats of a song to represent their thoughts allowed them to develop and remix their arguments more effectively and creatively. Indeed, communication practices that decentralize alphabetic writing have long histories in non-Western contexts, and many students identify a hesitance toward alphabetic composition in standardized English due to the U.S.’s institutionalized focus on alphabetic communication. Yet, as Gabriela Raquel Ríos (and many other Indigenous rhetoric and Indigenous language scholars remind us), “Indigenous peoples have historically used music, dance, theater, and other types of nontextual practices to make meaning, and we still do” (p. 89). Thus, as we continue building pedagogical practices that leverage the non-alphabetic capabilities of linguistically and ethnically diverse students, it’s important that we pay attention to both the contemporary practices and the historical underpinnings of our students’ orientation to this work.

As I continue working with different groups of students who may also hesitate when asked to begin their projects by writing words in English, I have found it useful to use digital remix assignments that encourage students to start their projects from already-created digital

materials that de-center SWE or AEE while also honoring students' histories and lived experiences. For example, in the composition courses I teach, all assignment sheets explain that students can use any composing resources to successfully demonstrate their understanding of specific course concepts or ideas. That is, for *any* assignment, students are given the option of submitting written alphabetic projects, digital projects, or a blend of the two to reach a specific audience or user-base, with the understanding that students may then be asked to revise and/or remix these initial submissions into other genres. The goal of all course assignments becomes less about finding ways of communicating ideas through standardized English, and more about finding the appropriate practices to demonstrate learning and effective engagement with their audience based on students' own communicative histories and strategies.

In my experience, instructors can reorient their pedagogies away from simply using remix projects to supplement or enhance traditional, alphabetic, academic texts by opening up spaces that facilitate students' composing flexibility and by intentionally decentering White, Western standardized academic writing as the norm in their classrooms (Banks, 2010). As Adam Banks (2010) explains, it's important for writing teachers to "build theories, pedagogies, and practices of multimedia writing that honor the traditions and thus the people who are still too often not present in our classrooms, on our faculties, [and] in our scholarship" (p. 14). A digital translingual approach to composition, as I see it in my classrooms, suggests that all practices are fluid and valuable, and it is up to the students to decide when these practices are most effective in their assignments. For students who are still negotiating their relationship and ideologies towards SWE or AEE, remix assignments that encourage rhetorical decision-making in a variety of practices allow more space for the transferring of ideas "from their heads" to their intended

audience(s), often in ways that students are already successful in doing outside of our classrooms.

In the digital remix assignments that I assign, students also have the opportunity to transform a project they had previously submitted into a new composition. I ask students to identify what type of audience will be reading their work and to then research which practices might be most effective for reaching those audiences. In these projects, students submit a video, website, or visual project proposals that illustrate their remix idea. Those who do not wish to communicate their project ideas through alphabetic writing can leverage digital practices to illustrate their project proposals. For example, in a writing class at a Midwestern institution, a student submitted a video project proposal that incorporated spoken words in Englishes and Spanishes to explain how she will remix a written alphabetic project memo into a digital flyer designed for Mexican-American community members in her city. Other students remixed research papers into social media campaigns for international audiences where they incorporated Chinese and English languages and opted to use the WeChat interface (a highly dynamic and interwoven social media app from China) instead of U.S.-based Twitter. Several students developed raps or songs to pitch their project plans to their peers (and not just to me as their instructor), illustrating the communicative practices that students had already gained expertise in outside of traditional academic spaces. In the context of such complex projects, linguistic diversity becomes an integral part of the remix process, embedded in multilayered communicative practices that focus on meaning-making rather than the simple mixing of discrete parts.

As an emergent bilingual writing instructor myself with experience in navigating digital technologies in various languages, I find it useful to use remix projects as a way to encourage

students to reflect on their linguistic strengths and histories. As students discuss the potential audiences of their work, they have to make decisions not only about which language(s) might be most appropriate to their users, but also about which technologies and platforms might make the most sense for their target communities. I often ask students to consider the words that will be most accessible to their audiences (including Englishes, Spanishes, and/or Chinese for example), while also considering the platforms through which these words might be delivered (e.g., mobile applications; open-access digital platforms; social media sites with international access capabilities). When words prove insufficient, remix processes allow students to find alternative and innovative ways of composing, and new language(s) that will carry out their messages, and in many cases enhance them. Thus, remix projects help students rhetorically situate their work, leverage their strengths, and enact their roles as composers in contemporary translingual, digitally-mediated contexts.

It is important to note that even writing instructors who intentionally take a translingual approach to teaching and instructors who seek to build digital writing pedagogies that foster students' fluid linguistic and cultural practices are not free from making unintentional assumptions and mistakes about students and their contexts. Indeed, some of the greatest lessons I have learned about digital translingual pedagogies and technological remixing stem directly from mistakes and assumptions I made when applying these pedagogies in contexts that were new to me. For example, when I had the privilege of teaching an upper-level undergraduate writing course at a state university located on the Mexico/US borderland, I was initially faced with, and perhaps persuaded by, some institutional assumptions about my students' digital literacies. These assumptions positioned students within this institution as having limited access

to contemporary technologies and presumably drawing upon a narrow range of capabilities in digital composing.

For their digital remix projects in the same course, I asked students in this class to first write a review (i.e., a usability report) of a digital platform and then remix this review in digital form. In this assignment, students readily engaged with numerous digital platforms. These platforms ranged from common social media apps, like Facebook and Twitter, to other messaging platforms that allowed them to engage with users outside of the U.S. For instance, several students in the course reviewed Whatsapp, a free messaging application that allows for fast and reliable international texting, voice, and video calls. In their remixed reviews, students used video clips to illustrate how they use Whatsapp to communicate quickly with family members in both El Paso and Ciudad Juarez, explaining that they liked how the Whatsapp platform allows them to create and maintain specific group messaging clusters. Unlike iMessage or other U.S.-centered platforms, students explained that Whatsapp was an easy and accessible way for families to form group messages, regardless of their cell phone providers, phone plans, preferred languages, and geophysical location. That is, in selecting apps like Whatsapp, students were mindful of geopolitical differences, and were able to sustain transnational relationships that were mindful of economic and digital access differences.

Students in this course also exhibited a strong disposition toward learning about new software and technologies to complete their course assignments. For their remix projects, several students chose to explore a new digital platform that they had not had experiences with before. One student taught herself Adobe Photoshop and InDesign, claiming that she had been meaning to learn these platforms but had not had the time to devote to practice with them. Similarly, several other students decided to experiment with web design through new platforms like

Weebly and Squarespace. While these students explained that they hadn't created websites before this class, they were more than open to the opportunity of working with a new platform, and even expressed gratitude for the chance to learn to use a new digital tool. I learned that although students in my course may not have had previous access to what may be deemed "traditional" digital tools, their readiness and willingness to experiment with new technologies resulted in various moments of technological innovation and creativity. As class progressed, and I got to know more about my students and their borderlands lived experiences, I learned that students at this institution already held jobs outside of school (at restaurants, banks, and schools in the borderland area), they were already in the practice of having to learn new technologies for work. Therefore, introducing and learning a new technology in the classroom was not necessarily a new activity, as students were already used to learn new platforms to accomplish tasks.

Teaching digital remix projects to this class in this particular context meant that I also had to adjust my expectations to issues of technological literacy. Making space for students' skills with technologies and composing practices through a translingual orientation means that I also have to continue working to let go of my own assumptions and preconceived notions as I learn to teach in a new context. Embracing the possibilities of digital composing through a translingual orientation, as I have come to find, requires flexibility, understanding, and innovation not only from students, but perhaps most emphatically from teachers who also bring their own assumptions and orientations to the most fluid and student-centered pedagogical practices. Leveraging the potential of digital translingual pedagogies, then, relies on a collaborative awareness and attunement (Lorimer Leonard, 2014) to students' communicative practices and technological skills. This attunement, I argue, should be fostered by students, teachers, administrators, and other stakeholders who influence the ways writing pedagogies are

taken up and (re)applied across contexts. The notion of remix in itself has a long history in communities of color, can be applied broadly by students from a wide range of linguistic, ethnic, and cultural backgrounds, and thus should be recognized as a practice that linguistically and ethnically diverse students and researchers bring to our academic contexts (and not just vice-versa).

4. Digital Practices for Translingual Contexts

Our pedagogical reflections presented in Section 3 introduce contextualized stories of how digital translingual pedagogies were enacted by two linguistically and ethnically diverse instructors as they taught writing with linguistically and ethnically diverse students. The reflections are not meant to be taken as transferable models that can be extracted from their contexts and applied in new settings. The point of these classroom experiences and pedagogical approaches (informed by P-CHAT and translingual remix) showcase how digital translingual orientations function within, outside, and through different institutional contexts. For us, sustaining our commitment to our students' diverse histories and composing practices means both continuing to embrace translingual orientations and adapting what these orientations look like at each of our universities, in each of our classrooms, and with each new class meeting. In this way, as we illustrate in our pedagogical reflections, digital translingual pedagogies from the instructor's perspective require the same flexibility and attention to context and ecologies of practice that we require from the students in our translingual classrooms.

Although Cristina may not have had experience with the P-CHAT model as a pedagogical approach in relation to courses for students labeled as ESL or multilingual, embracing a digital translingual orientation to teaching writing for those students meant that she had to both adapt and incorporate her pedagogical goals with those of her program and

institution. For Laura, practicing digital translingual pedagogies through digital remix assignments required flexibility and a willingness to extend and reshape both her own expectations and those of her students in each new teaching context. As we have pointed out, the benefits of embracing translingualism with linguistically and ethnically diverse students in these contexts are multiple. Students generally gain more confidence in using their language(s) among other forms, modalities and channels of communication; they move away from trying to achieving “correct” and idealized “standard” writing toward a (re)focus on rhetorically effective communication; they have the opportunity to exercise their rhetorical dexterity in reaching specific audiences, and they begin to resituate the role of language within an ecology of forms, platforms, and networks of meaning-production. Even in cases where students may not necessarily learn a new set of terms, as in the P-CHAT model, the practices of composing alone begin to reorient students’ attention toward a more expansive understanding of meaning-making practices and the contradictions that these involve. More importantly, as our pedagogical reflections demonstrate, the ecological orientation of translingual practices is in line with the scope of the two digital composing frameworks: with P-CHAT which aims to explore the multiple factors of literate acts, and with the remix model that requires a deep understanding of the rhetorical situations in order to reshape an argument in a new genre, mode, or language. Both P-CHAT and remix theories provide the methodology for supporting students see their practices in depth in situated contexts of use.

A translingual framework pushes researchers and teachers to conceptualize writing not as the combination of distinct, static tools and technologies, but rather as a practice-driven rhetorical act that changes in each interaction within specific rhetorical situations. The instructors who asked students to engage with P-CHAT and digital remix demonstrate how they navigated

their own rhetorical contexts to teach writing through a digital translingual framework. In sharing these experiences, we provided examples of how instructors can embrace digital translingual pedagogies in conjunction with already established theories of digital composing in their respective institutional contexts in an effort to continue fostering pedagogical practices that leverage the dynamic composing capabilities of linguistically and ethnically diverse students. Based on our reflections, we have made an effort to see the potential of translingual practices via digital assignments. We have done so because, as writing instructors, we wanted to build a flexible pedagogical repertoire that we could adapt and work with in a wide range of teaching contexts. In cases where the student population may change in the middle of the term (as in the case of the P-CHAT example), or in situations where we need to move from one institution to another (as in the example of digital remix classes), we need to develop capacious, yet flexible, approaches that productively and ethically support composing processes. As instructors, we need to give students the option to choose which aspects they want to enhance to communicate their ideas effectively and raise their awareness of the possibilities of composing in many forms, available to them.

We anticipate that the increasingly diverse and contingent nature of our work (see the teaching context in the translingual remix reflections) will drive instructors to seek flexible pedagogical approaches suitable for shifting and oftentimes unstable contexts. Preparing for these contexts does not require only one new model that would match translingual principles, but the ability to explore connections and points of compatibility between theories and practices, communicative needs and complex literacy backgrounds.

Bringing together a translingual orientation with pedagogical approaches such as P-CHAT and translingual remix was important for what it taught us about digital composing as

well. Many of our students in both contexts discussed above showed a readiness to take risks and a curiosity for trying out new forms of meaning-making. These attitudes were indicative of past “backstories” of using digital composing in other spaces and for different purposes. Because our students had to be creative and use all their resources in the past in order to communicate successfully (see the pedagogical reflections on digital remix and students’ response), they did not seem to shy away from exploring new practices and learning to work with new technologies. Obviously, not all our students had this disposition (see the example of the student in the P-CHAT section), but, from teaching in different classroom settings, we have noticed that linguistically and ethnically diverse students tend to bring to the classroom an understanding for the need of rhetorical flexibility and an openness to experiment with new practices of meaning-making. We argue that such a disposition towards composing in digital and non-digital environments is symptomatic of current and future practices that all our students should develop. In contexts of super-diversity and mobility (see Vertovec, 2007), the openness towards learning quickly how to compose creatively with new tools can prepare our students for rhetorical flexibility in situations that we cannot yet predict or anticipate.

A translingual orientation in our classrooms also made evident major fluctuations and differences within students’ digital and non-digital repertoires. As we mentioned in Section 3, we were surprised by our students’ wide range of past experiences and abilities in using certain technologies. Due to our students’ rich experiences, we realized that digital and non-digital composing theories need to continue and expand their boundaries in order to support our students’ histories of composing. Accounting for language fluidity, dynamic and shifting uses of languages, modalities, technologies in contexts of changing relations with different audiences continues to call for a wide range of strategies adaptable to many contexts. Our students’

experiences of rhetorical production are the most complex, yet the most fascinating and productive places where we can start rethinking the possibilities of composing.

Yet, the benefits of our pedagogical choices can only be weighed against the context in which they were made. When choosing a pedagogical approach, instructors should consider carefully the profile of their students: their language(s) knowledge, their digital choices, familiarity, access, and the practices in which students engage in and outside of the classroom. Moreover, the selection of a pedagogical approach does not automatically exclude the possibility of engaging with another one. Such pedagogical decisions are often met with institutional barriers, and programmatic goals may not always create favorable conditions for the development of flexible composing practices. Nevertheless, we believe that translanguaging offers an orientation to meaning-making that balances, utilizes, and expands students' knowledge of effective composition. As we have found, translanguaging practices that engage students in digital production create rich contexts where they learn valuable lessons about rhetorical awareness, audience, media-oriented invention, language resources, digital and linguistic dexterity, and distribution, among others.

The work of negotiating contexts (be they institutional, theoretical, and pedagogical) requires a delicate balance between what is posed as *students' needs*, as seen at institutional and programmatic level, and their *expressed expectations*. As Lee (2016) remarks, these needs and expectations can often be tributary of monolingualism and other constraining views of language and writing (p. 177-178). Different approaches to digital composing give students the opportunity to explore what they can do with a wide range of meaning-making practices, and students need to know why this work is important and how it fits with their needs. In this sense, students can work alongside instructors and share their views of language and writing in

expanding contexts of practice. Following the principles of translanguaging, students need flexibility in choosing the types of practices that they want to engage in. This may even include the option to make an informed decision and return to alphabetic forms of writing after students have had the chance to explore different digital meaning-making practices. For example, students who engaged in P-CHAT activities performed genres considered “non-traditional” (like a HONY-like Facebook post) during the first half of the semester; yet, the students who wanted to pursue a graduate degree in the U.S. expressed their interest in more traditional genres like statements of purpose for their applications, argumentative essays and reports. With students’ guidance, we can take digital composing as the starting point for larger conversations about language assumptions, writing goals, and meaning-making boundaries.

The work that awaits us is not just the work of exploring boundaries and negotiating affordances and constraints. All four authors of this article carry a deep commitment to engaging *all* students with digital and non-digital practices in multilingual contexts that allow students to cultivate their capacities and grow as effective composers. In places where linguistically and ethnically diverse students are part of the “mainstream” writing classes, the examples we have shared will bring to the forefront rich and innovative contexts of composing. In addition, we argue that to avoid flattening differences among students (see Gilyard’s cautionary note cited earlier) or the tokenization of student experience (see Lee’s critique, 2016, p. 187), instructors should encourage them to reflect carefully on what composing in any modality, language, media, or technological platform can entail. A translanguaging orientation does not simply acknowledge diversity in practice; instead, it calls for a critical analysis of the differential distribution of practices. In our courses, students often discuss the values attached to digital assignments, the place of such work in the academic context and beyond, and its impact on students’ future

commitments to their language and alphabetic-writing development. Through our pedagogical reflections, and through the broader work of tracing our pedagogical practices across contexts for this project, we have taken up the work of negotiating and confronting assumptions of value behind students' work. These discussions need to continue and address not only issues related to our students' positionality, but also to potential negative stereotypes associated with what our students can or cannot do as they engage in both digital and non-digital practices.

Notes

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