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Developing Translingual Language Representations: Implications for Writing Pedagogy

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This chapter explores how three FYW students in Beirut, Lebanon reconcile perduring institutional monolingual and conventional multilingual ideologies and representations of language guiding academic writing instruction and curriculum design, on one hand, with their personal translingual orientation toward fluidly moving across multiple language and semiotic resources in various academic situations on another hand. Drawing on interview and textual data, this study demonstrates that the conflicting nature of such institutional and non-institutional language representations complicate student participants' abilities to capitalize on their translingual academic literacies at all times. As I demonstrate in this chapter, participants in this study are forced to come to terms with coexisting yet competing monolingual, multilingual, and translingual ideological orientations and representations of language and language relations in literacy education. With an eye toward these participants' felt tensions in their workings with language in academic literacies, I argue that our current and future disciplinary efforts to imagine the design and principles of translingual writing pedagogies require attention not only to writers' immediate language and meaning-making practices but also their representations of these, which play an influential role in complicating, often hindering, their paths toward sustained translingual academic literacies.

Keywords: Translingualism; monolingualism; multilingualism; language representations; language-ideological tensions; academic literacies

A translingual orientation with a social practice-based conceptualization of language(s) and literacy/ies is beginning to gain prominence in U.S. college

composition studies. This orientation was first put forward in relation to the global enterprise of English language teaching by critical applied linguist Alastair Pennycook (2008b), was taken up and applied to mainstream writing instruction in Horner et al.'s (2011) *College English* opinion statement, and has been further extended in both Suresh Canagarajah's (2013a, 2013b) monograph and edited collection. An incipient translanguaging approach, which this collection builds on and develops, contests a dominant monolingual English-only ideology, which propagates problematic representations and treatments of language as stable, internally uniform, and having status outside and beyond the cultural, political, economic, and ideological forces that bring about its practice. As Canagarajah (2013b) argues, viewing language along traditional monolingual lines as a "self-standing product," pre-existing its performances, and isolated from other vibrant semiotic resources—cultural icons, visuals, typographic designs, etc.—"distorts meaning-making practices" and disrupts their "ecological embeddedness and interconnection" (p. 7). Central to this translanguaging rethinking of language is a move away from a longstanding monolingualist tradition of constructing language, specifically the standard variety, as a clearly demarcated and tightly sealed system to be used, taught, and learned only in its own presence and in isolation from the bodies, identities, contexts, power relations, and histories which have shaped and reshaped it and continue to do so. Stretching the limits of such myopic views of language, a translanguaging orientation to language foregrounds the mutable, performed, and emergent nature of language and insists on the agency of its users and learners.

In its ongoing critique of hegemonic ideology of monolingualism, a translanguaging language ideology has also cast suspicion on the ways in which language(s) and language relations have been described and treated under forms of conventional multilingualism¹ proposed as alternatives to the homogenizing effects of monolingualism. Though multilingual orientations to language and language use have some degree of distance from monolingualist views of language, they do not automatically carry critical or altering potential in so far as they project a quantitative rather than a qualitative understanding of language and its diversity. Despite accounting for and promoting the actual heterogeneity and hybridity of languages, particularly English(es), this sense of multilingualism reproduces precisely the same monolingual epistemolog-

1 This notion of multilingualism conflicts with what Horner & Lu (2007) in earlier work term as "multilingual" approaches to language difference in student writing, Canagarajah (2006) refers to as a "multilingual rhetorical orientation," and Horner et al. (2011) call "translanguaging multilingualism."

ical framework of language it seeks to disrupt and escape. That is to say, conventional multilingualism still sustains residual monolingualist assumptions about language and language relations through approaching the wide array of learners' language resources as separate, uniform, and autonomous entities, that can be possessed, named, classified, and counted (along with their users'/ learners' social identity), hence becoming at best "little more than a pluralization" of monolingualism (Pennycook, 2010, p. 132).

Alongside a growing translingual-affiliated movement in language and literacy scholarship,² a monolingual mindset with its disguised multilingual variation still persists to this day and largely prevails in writing instruction in the U.S. and elsewhere (Horner & Trimbur, 2002; Horner & Lu, 2007) despite its emergence from the context of eighteenth century European-based thinking about language (Canagarajah, 2013b, pp. 19-20; Yildiz, 2012, pp. 6-7), and its failure to attend to drastic changes in the sociocultural realities and linguistic constellations of the twenty-first century. As I demonstrate in this chapter, student participants in the geographic location of Lebanon and the specific institution I study here are caught in a tug-of-war between these coexisting yet competing ideological orientations and representations of language and language relations in literacy education: the "mono-," the "multi-," and the "trans." With an eye toward these participants' felt tensions in their workings with language in academic literacies, I argue that our current and future disciplinary efforts to imagine the design and principles of translingual writing pedagogies require attention not only to writers' immediate language and meaning-making practices but also the descriptive and analytical terms in which they think and talk about these practices, i.e., the language representations that complicate, and often hinder, their paths toward sustained translingual academic literacies.

My own scholarly interest in vexed issues of language difference in writing, translingual literacies, and language ideologies in literacy education—issues which lie at the heart of explorations in this chapter and other contributions to this collection—has grown out of a sense of personal and professional responsibility. Being a U.S.-based scholar who enjoys membership in Lebanese society and who continuously writes, teaches, and researches within and across colloquial Lebanese Arabic, Modern Standard Arabic, English, and French affords me a strong sense of the need for the field of writing studies

2 To name a few in critical applied linguistics (Canagarajah, 2013a, 2013b; Hawkins & Mori, 2018; Kramsch, 2006; Makoni & Pennycook, 2007; Pennycook 2005, 2008a, 2008b, 2010); new literacy studies (Ellis et al., 2007; Leung & Street, 2012); and writing studies (Bawarshi et al., 2016; Fraiberg et al., 2017).

to productively cross borders of language, nation, and culture, a growing need that this chapter as well as the entire collection aims to address. Like my student participants, given the effectuality of monolingualism in global academic knowledge production, consumption, and reception, I am constantly grappling with the simultaneity of fluidity and fixity in language use and I am forced to continually weigh the risks and rewards of the kinds of language choices and negotiations I deliberately make in my own writing and scholarly practices. These ongoing felt tensions, which can have detrimental material effects on various language and literacy laborers, myself included, are a powerful reminder that this chapter's overarching theme of language negotiations amid complex and conflicting ideological orientations and representational practices deserves more of our scholarly and pedagogical attention.

Tensions between “Mono-,” “Multi-,” and “Trans-” Lingual Ideologies and Representations in Lebanon

The particular case of Lebanon I present in this chapter brings to light complex language-ideological tensions in a linguistically and culturally diverse context, one which is ostensibly more conducive to a translingual orientation to language endorsed in national language policy and sociolinguistic landscapes, but that is simultaneously pervaded with monolingualist representations in educational landscapes. Boasting strong ties to other Arab countries and its ex-colonizer, France, while still participating in the worldwide globalization movement, Lebanon has witnessed the vibrant spread of Arabic, English, and French. In fact, popular views of the normalcy and indispensability of this linguistic *mélange* circulate in Lebanese society, and the fluidity and dexterity of language users in daily interactions is widely accepted and expected. The country's iconic greeting of *Hi, Kifak? Ça va?*, in which all three language resources are meshed together, is illustrative of such engagement with translingual language practices in Lebanese sociolinguistic landscapes.³ As I have discussed elsewhere, this “mixed-and matched” greeting is a strong

3 This collection deliberately chooses to not follow APA guidelines that require “foreign words” be italicized. Traditionally, this APA practice marks words that may be unfamiliar to readers; however, as this collection is seated in ideologies of a translingual disposition, which value linguistic difference as the norm, we feel this practice of italicizing counters the spirit of translingualism. By choosing not to italicize, this collection works to recognize writers' agentive and productive communicative resources across languages as equally important, and not as a point of difference marked by font. Translingual practice serves to recognize speakers agentive and productive communicative resources as equally important.

marker of its users' "Lebaneseness" and playfulness, demonstrating ownership of and agency over daily language resources and practices and valued socio-cultural meanings that the English-only greeting "Hi," Arabic-only "Kifak?," or French-only "Ça va?," separately fail to reflect (Bou Ayash, 2013, p. 98). It is, therefore, safe to say that my student participants encounter and experience a translingual understanding and treatment of language and language diversity as a lived sociolinguistic reality in Lebanon outside of school (see also Baalbaki, Fakhreddine, Khoury, & Riman, this collection).

Acknowledging the use value of these language resources in lived realities, the state has strengthened existing linguistic attachments and affiliations in Lebanese culture through advocating Arabic-English-French trilingualism in national language and educational policies⁴ (Bou Ayash, 2015, pp. 119-120). This has given rise to two dominant types of private and public schools: English-medium schools where English is the main medium of instruction for major subject areas (e.g., Mathematics, Natural Sciences, Philosophy, Computer Literacy, etc.) from primary through secondary education and French is formally taught starting from lower primary levels; and French-medium schools, where French is the language of instruction and English is first introduced as a foreign language in grades one to four. Both types of schools offer classes in Arabic language and/or literature and teach social studies in the native Arabic language.⁵

Though part of this culture, where language heterogeneity is clearly the statistical societal norm, the Anglophone university under study is typical for its tacit English-only policy, which has ultimately influenced the writing program where the key to successful language and literacy learning is perfect mastery of Standard Written English (SWE) rules and conventions, and utilization of diverse language resources is generally not tolerated. The first-year writing (FYW) classroom has become a site of complex ideological stances and negotiations where teachers in this particular locale (as in many other parts of the world) are increasingly forced into an unenviable position of maneuvering the mismatch between translingual language representations and practices in students' lived realities, on one hand, and institutionalized monolingualist representations of language and language practices in aca-

4 See Bou Ayash (2015) for a more detailed analysis of past and contemporary language-in-education policies and practices in Lebanon.

5 This is not to dismiss salient differences in the way public and private school systems are structured in the country and in the availability of qualified teachers and instructional materials and resources, which could either facilitate or hinder effective instruction in the mother tongue or both foreign languages.

democratic literacy situations on the other. Though not the main focus of this chapter, a brief description of the prevailing pedagogy of the FYW program is central to a nuanced understanding of the representations of language and language difference in writing, which my student participants are regularly subjected to and, thus, might be maintaining, reproducing, or tinkering with in their academic written work (for more details, see Bou Ayash, 2016).

Semi-structured interviews I conducted with my participants' writing teachers afforded a closer look into some of the local pedagogical decisions taken in response to the inescapable ideological conditions and tensions within which they and their students live and work. For example, one group of teachers I interviewed echoed strong positions toward the stability and immunity of SWE in the face of dynamic translanguaging language practices that circulate widely in Lebanese sociolinguistic landscapes. A monolingualist ideology manifested itself in their writing instruction through an obsession with native-like attainment of SWE as a fortified, reified entity unto itself, attendant with belief in the inherent power of opening up economic and academic opportunities once accessed and mastered fluently. Voicing adherence to an idealized native-English speaker norm, one writing teacher characterized good quality student writing as "something a native speaker can understand." Such an ideological position—which projects practices with language as an abstract, fixed set of pre-given norms and rules, the internalization of which is deemed responsible and sufficient for well-formed language production and its regularity—is justified by references to the commodification of English and the varying instrumental and symbolic values attached to its high-level proficiency by the global linguistic market. As one teacher put it, "you need to have your good language skills to make it."

Under such writing pedagogies guided by a monolingual mode of understanding language and language practices, any traces of socio-linguistically legitimate language practices that deviate from the rules and conventions of SWE are relegated to the status of incompetency, error, and linguistic deficiency and are treated as grave problems to be fixed and wholly obliterated. This pedagogical practice of conveniently refusing to tolerate "nonstandard or broken English" in student writing, as another teacher explained, is a pragmatic choice reflective of the kind of ostensibly strict gatekeeping that "they're [students] going to face in the outside business world unless the world changes."

Unsure about how to properly handle and respond to language differences in student writing, another group of writing teachers felt torn between preparing students for the universal SWE demands and conventions of academic literacy and allowing students to maintain and develop the creativity

and authenticity that their diverse language practices and resources in their repertoires granted them. These teachers chose to create textual spaces for alternative language practices through FYW instruction and curriculum design. These more responsive pedagogies, adopted by a handful of writing teachers, encouraged students to discuss the fluid, hybrid character of English usage evident in assigned readings authored by writers identified with particular sociocultural identities, but prohibited student use of similarly diverse language resources in their own writings. Affiliated with a conventional multilingual take on language, these writing pedagogies, which merely incorporate code-meshed reading texts into their curricula, end up increasing the number of languages and language practices explored in the writing classroom while still maintaining a monolingualist view of the superiority and appropriateness of SWE in all communicative situations and its putative immunity toward any interactive influx with other languages and language practices.

Within such friction-laden teaching and learning conditions, the representations of language and language learning that my FYW student participants carried with them in their daily personal, civic, and academic work and lives were not unitary or homogeneous. The micro- and macro- contexts of their literate lives extensively shaped—in ways of which they had been unaware—how they thought about, conceived, and represented the nature of language, their relation to it, and ultimately their use of language. We will witness in the following sections, how these language representations fluctuated and interacted with the divergent ideas about and treatments of language they were exposed to in their immediate family environments, the academic institution they attended, and the larger society in which they lived.

Studying Language Representations

The data reported in this chapter emerged from transcripts of semi-structured interviews with forty-one participants and sessions of focused “talk around texts” with eight participants chosen through a process of theoretical sampling. Unlike statistical sampling, which is aimed toward achieving a representative sample, theoretical sampling is a complex technique adopted in grounded theory studies to further refine and develop core categories, their properties, and the interrelationships that might occur in the evolving theory (for a full description, see Charmaz, 2006; Clarke, 2005). The one- to two-hour long interviews addressed participants’ language and literacy history and current practices through prompting them to share memories and experiences of language and literacy learning at home and at school. “Talk around texts” is a key methodological tool adopted and further extended in various

academic literacy/ies studies (see in particular Ivanič, 1998; Lillis, 2009; Lillis & Curry, 2010; Martin-Jones et al., 2009) to generate discussion between the researcher and participant about wide-ranging contextual and text-focused issues. In this study, my focus was on establishing what was significant about student participants' representations of language use and language difference in their academic writing from their own analytic lens and in relation to the specificity of their sociocultural and historical writing trajectories. Such writer-centered talk invited an exploration of participants' representations of their varied relations with English and other language resources rooted in their "take" on material locality and the specific experiences, investments, affiliations, and allegiances they brought into acts of reading and writing.

I analyzed data transcripts following the principles and procedures of constructionist grounded theory (Charmaz, 2006; Clarke, 2005). After establishing some firm analytic directions through my initial word-by-word, line-by-line, and segment-by-segment coding, I began separating, sorting, and synthesizing data through more focused coding such as, "investing (materially and/or psychologically) in English as a pre-given commodity," "taking linguistic action against English-only imperatives," "laboring with translation," "grappling with foreign language source-use practices," etc. I specifically chose gerunds with material process codes to capture a sense of fluidity and flow in my participants' ongoing "doing" of and with English specifically, and language more generally, and in their individual and/or collective thinking that shapes such doing. As I aimed toward an investigation of participants' representations in connections with specific contexts of language use and learning, I supplemented basic grounded theory practices of coding and successive memoing with situation-centered maps (see Clarke, 2005), which offered insights into how such representations were shaped by wider cultural and ideological structures of the teaching and learning of writing.

Negotiating Conflicting Language Representations

The present chapter presents three brief accounts of FYW students from Lebanon as they attempt to reconcile in their academic work the influence of monolingual representations and treatments of language with a translingual understanding of language, which offers them the opportunity to use the fluidity and porousness of language in ways they perceive as most valuable to their personal, professional, and intellectual development. For the purposes of this chapter, I selected these three participants, identified in this chapter by their chosen pseudonyms, because they best illuminate how competing institutional and non-institutional language representations complicate students'

abilities to capitalize on their translingual academic literacies. As such they serve as telling cases foregrounding how the language representations that FYW students are exposed to and bring with them to their academic literacies work are inherently multiple and contradictory. I specifically showcase below the stories of participants that best accentuate the experience and practice of negotiating conflicting language representations in the FYW classroom: Naser, who echoed dominant monolingual and residual multilingual representations, which idealize English as a monolithic, hermetic system, ultimately put English first, thereby experiencing familiar ambivalence and frustration from imposed English-only imperatives guiding writing instruction; and Diva and KAPPA whose non-institutionalized translingual representations of English—as indelibly involving and tied to complex relations of hybridity, heterogeneity, and translation—allowed them to destabilize and reconfigure dominant language relations in their academic literacies work in sharp contrast with dominant monolingual English-only demands, which impeded their ability to fully and confidently exercise their writerly agency.

Language(s) as Fortress(es)

A sophomore graphic design student, Naser described a home-life immersed in advanced Arabic academic literacies, thanks to his father, a professor of Arabic language and literature. As his father piqued his interest in developing his Arabic language abilities, Naser started viewing academic writing as “a reflection of the self and others, the discovery of meaning and value.” While Naser was passionate about writing in Arabic and viewed it as a means for developing and maintaining meaningful and authentic relations “not only with the self but the rest of the world,” he hid this passion in the English writing classroom, where he felt compelled to blindly abide by SWE rules and practices, and thereby “separate and isolate” his personal voice and expressiveness. As Naser asserted, “through English, we can’t go back to my previous definition of writing as autobiography, reflection, creativity, and authenticity.” Influenced by a dominant monolingual valuation of native-like correctness and efficiency in the reproduction of standardized usages and conventions, Naser explained that language use in the academic English writing classroom resembled a fixed “set of skills we have to learn for the use of it.”

What disappointed Naser the most was that he found no room for his growing Arabic linguistic and literary expertise in the FYW classroom, which he considered critical not only to his sense of self but also his professional aspirations. When working in his discipline, Naser was constantly encouraged to weave his expertise in Arabic calligraphy and typography into various

projects, such as designing book covers and working with packaging and label designs for new products. He was particularly fond of two projects where his Graphic Design professor created spaces for students to mobilize their expertise in various languages and modalities. Combining his growing disciplinary knowledge of graphic communication arts and design with his Arabic expertise, Naser composed in Arabic a travel narrative describing through watercolor drawings his adventures in the cityscapes of Beirut, and an autobiography about his experiences in the department, which juxtaposed Arabic text with minimalist black and white images.

Presented with opportunities to imagine and experience the dynamics and fluidities of languages and modalities in disciplinary literacies, Naser was able to treat language (and modality) as malleable, involving and requiring design for aesthetic effects, and thereby enact the situated practice of meshing linguistic and graphic resources in disciplinary discourse to his own advantage. The kind of reading and writing that Naser experienced in Graphic Design in ways that were productively networked across his home, university, and future work life sharply contrasted with his view of the static and fixed character of language use in his English writing course. His experiences in the FYW classroom, tainted by an illusion of linguistic rigidity and fortification, have led to his construction of English as a “narrow space” that isolated meaningful and authentic aspects of his relation to self, others, and the world. Institutionalized monolingual representations of English as a pre-given, autonomous, and immobile entity in Naser’s FYW classroom counter his developing view of and engagement with the actual fluidity and flow of his linguistic and graphic resources in his discipline. While Naser realized that the available resources and practices in his repertoire could and did serve as avenues for originality and active meaning-making in Graphic Design, he was unable to make the same connections on his own and purposefully call on and cultivate these resources in his academic literacy practices, the way the next two participants, Diva and KAPPA, did.

Seeing both language and graphic design as unique forms of “communication arts,” Naser lamented that instead of placing premium on making “creative,” “catchy,” and strategic choices in getting a particular message across to diverse audiences “in any language you prefer,” his English teachers constantly emphasized the need to “follow the restrictions and right things to say in English.” Because he and some of his classmates are constantly “exploring the world through Arabic,” the only solution Naser is able to imagine for his dilemma of constantly writing about complex local issues, like “violence against women,” “that don’t happen in English” only in Lebanese society is through adding Arabic to “complement” existing instruction in English writ-

ing. Echoing “multi-”lingual representations of languages and language relations, he sees the act of simply granting students their language rights by introducing languages other than English into written work as in and of itself carrying liberatory power. However, he doesn’t realize that under such a view, languages, in this case Arabic and English, are still perceived in monolingualist terms, as monolithic, fixed, enumerable, and identifiable possessions of literate individuals, or, as Pennycook aptly puts it, “language fortresses,” stripped of any interaction with each other and the world (2008a, p. 38). With FYW pedagogy not affording him the same facilitating contextual possibilities for developing favorable representations as the responsive learning environment in Graphic Design, Naser does not consider the possibility of reworking both Arabic and English, with agency, to achieve specific ends and does not recognize the inevitability of leakage and traffic across seemingly tightened linguistic boundaries in each occasion of reading and writing.

Language(s) as Hybridity

Born and raised in Greece, Diva, a freshman Business student, views English as the link that glues her linguistically and culturally diverse family members together. The Greek language gives Diva a sense of uniqueness and “privacy” with her sister and Greek-speaking mother, which English alone cannot give as “almost everyone nowadays knows English.” Representing “the Arab” side in her, Arabic strongly attaches Diva to her Lebanese father, her relatives, and her new circle of friends and acquaintances in her current home in Beirut.

Acknowledging the dynamic and evolving character of English in the social and educational domains of her life, Diva rejects monolingualist representations that reinforce the very “*one-ness* of English” (Pennycook, 2010, p. 80; emphasis added) as a neutral global commodity with a stable core that can be stripped of any local cultural influences. Instead, she affirms its flexibility, hybridity, and rootedness in changing local ecologies. As Diva explains, “our English is different from the English that other universities in other countries in the world teach. We have different ideas, we come from different worlds, we live in different language worlds.”

Unlike Naser who views the language resources he has at his disposal as discrete, closely guarded fortresses immune to external intrusions, Diva describes how she sees and treats the full multiplicity of her language resources in her communicative repertoire as constantly and inevitably intertwined and co-dependent for her meaning-making even in the FYW classroom: “I cannot communicate in English only. Nor can I communicate in Greek and Arabic alone . . . Right now, I live, think, and write in all: Greek, Arabic and

English.” Representing her language resources as feeding into and out of each other, Diva utilizes them as such in her writings. More specifically, she manages to deliberately shift and intervene with English-only norms by actively seeking to engage in a form of translingual practice, in this case code-meshing, in her academic written work, though at her own peril.

In a short reflection assignment for her FYW class asking her to explore the connections between her linguistic and cultural identity, Diva adopts a transformative negotiation strategy of what Canagarajah describes as “resisting [SWE conventions and expectations] from within” (2013b, p. 113) through demonstrating fluent mastery of SWE norms while simultaneously embedding code-meshing practices in her text for voice and agency: “I could feel detached, *ma ile jledit hada, kai den thelo na kano tipota*. For I don’t want to do anything.” As she introduces non-English codes into the rest of her text in SWE, Diva deliberately provides rhetorical cues to assist her non-Arabic and non-Greek speaking readers. Showing signs of actively accommodating her readers’ lack of knowledge of Arabic or Greek and assisting their co-construction of meaning, Diva makes sure that her English text, “For I don’t want to do anything,” serves as a loose translation of the transliterated Lebanese Arabic phrase *ma ile jledit hada* (ام يلا قدال ج ادح) “I’m not in the mood for anything” and the transliterated Greek phrase *kai den thelo na kano tipota* (και δεν θελω να κανω τιποτα) “I don’t want to do anything.”

Embracing the plurality and hybridity of language and claiming ownership over her language use in literate institutionalized contexts, Diva succeeds in finding ways to nimbly work between the cracks of English-only imperatives by creating spaces for her personal voice in low-stakes writing genres. A tacit policy of English-only dominating academic writing pedagogies and practices, according to Diva, is clearly at odds with the heterogeneity of her and her classmates’ linguistic realities and lived experiences:

It’s really important to write in this style. We shouldn’t be limited by what we should say and how we should say it. We’re in an American university but it’s all based in Lebanon. *yi’ni* [the fact is that] we’ve based our knowledge in Arabic. This is how we live; in both languages, English *and* Arabic (emphasis in transcript).

While Diva seems quite adamant about the legitimacy and meaningfulness of her and her classmates’ diverse translingual literacy practices, she also realizes that the stakes are high, since such counterhegemonic practices have not entirely gained favorable academic uptake in formal literate situations and genres. While she was more prepared to mobilize and personally get

behind her language resources in the descriptive-type essay she composed early on in the semester, Diva felt there was no more room for individual negotiation and maneuver when working on her end of the course research paper assignment as in her mind, English-only, author-evacuated prose was a defining feature of successful argumentative writing. Forced to negotiate her translingual representations of the porous and constructed nature of language with the dominant monolingualist assumptions of language fixity guiding curricular and pedagogical designs in her FYW course, Diva's engagement with translingual literacy practices were largely shaped by the possibilities and constraints of the writing environment. Consequently, she felt compelled to isolate, disqualify, suppress, and mask her language resources when composing her final research paper on anti-domestic violence laws in Lebanon, which constituted a large percentage of her final course grade, using SWE wholesale. As she explained, "I'm doing this for my grade," so "there's no room for taking risks" anymore.

Language(s) as Translation

Prior to residing in his mother's native country, Lebanon, to pursue a degree in Landscape Design, KAPPA lived his whole life in his father's hometown Trieste, a prosperous seaport in northeastern Italy, where he started studying Law. Besides his fluency in the local Triestine dialect and his working knowledge of colloquial Lebanese Arabic, KAPPA takes great pride in his ability to "analyze and understand the various works of renowned authors" in Latin, Italian, English, and French.

KAPPA sees his English academic work in the FYW classroom as always in relation to the rich tapestry of these language resources in his repertoire, which he has come to call his "modo di dire" or his unique "way of saying" things, thereby going against dominant English-only imperatives and the negation of students' meaningful engagements with the actual complexity and dynamism of language(s). As KAPPA explains, "I feel my English writing is enclosed in rigid structures and sometimes it's nice to break the structure through this modo di dire." In illustrating how and why he actively draws on and mobilizes his modo di dire, KAPPA describes how translating and incorporating various primary and secondary Italian academic sources into his English writing across the university has become a sustained meaning-making practice.

Viewing his modo di dire as critical not only to his identity and socio-cultural conditions but also the advancement of his academic literacies, KAPPA rejects common monolingualist assumptions that language difference in

writing is a hindrance to successful language and literacy learning and development: “I can’t accuse this modo di dire of being a problem in my writing. I cannot blame it.” Despite the daunting and time-consuming task of translating foreign texts across different linguistic, cultural, and ideological worlds, KAPPA argues that this intellectually challenging process makes him “feel original and authentic” and “enriches” the complexity and depth of his writing and argumentation.

KAPPA’s path toward translingual academic literacies, however, is not completely without tension. In preparation for his research paper assignment, KAPPA used several academic and popular Italian sources to aid in his close examination of the Mafia’s linguistic and behavioral codes both within and outside the complex principle of silence and secrecy, known as Omertà. Uncovering some of the uncertainties and messiness involved in strategically selecting, reading, interpreting, and translating passages and selections from these foreign sources for his research paper and much of his other writing assignments and projects, KAPPA voiced several concerns about his lack of training in responsibly working with non-English texts in his FYW classroom, where it is a given that, as KAPPA puts it, “all sources have to be in English.” As he grappled with the process of translating various Italian academic sources, he moved beyond questions of whether particular words or phrases in Italian had literal equivalents in English to broader rhetorical concerns about readability and reader response. Kappa showed concern that his teacher’s and classmates’ lack of knowledge of Italian might “disrupt the rhythm and reading flow” and that they might decide to skip non-English excerpts. “I am not sure if it’s okay to include sentences in Italian in my English writing,” and “How do I work with these sources properly?” were among some of the anxieties he echoed. The fact that KAPPA felt unguided and unprepared to pursue his dynamic and evolving engagement with cross-language relations in his academic written work and that he felt he could not do so confidently and comfortably demonstrates the degree to which a global monolingualist valuation of English-only academic knowledge production had placed powerful constraints on his sustained relationship with English, as a language always dependent on translation for the dynamic construction of meaning.

Moving Toward Translingual Language Representations in Writing Pedagogy

Dominant monolingual and residual multilingual ideologies of languages as segregated, countable, and impermeable entities and the metalanguages used

to talk about and describe them, as Makoni and Pennycook (2007) remind us, are all social, cultural, and political “inventions” and abstractions, but their direct material effects on literate individuals in various subject positionalities and subsequently on their concrete language labor are “very real” (also see Calvet, 2006). The case of Lebanon is of particular interest here in bringing to light the ongoing effects of complex ideological tensions in a linguistically and culturally diverse context ostensibly more conducive to a translingual orientation to language endorsed in national language policy and sociolinguistic landscapes, but pervaded with monolingualist representations in educational landscapes. Together, these three portraits of participants’ experiences of negotiating conflicting language ideologies and representations in academic writing point toward these students’ shared concerns that insistence on English-only instruction does not allow them to sustain and expand complex relations with diverse language resources critical to their language and literacy learning experiences both within and outside the FYW classroom. For instance, monolingual ideologies stand as barriers to Naser’s need to learn English in a way that enables him to mobilize and mesh his advanced Arabic literacy and graphic resources; to Diva’s hope for pedagogical opportunities to continuously rework English in light of the specificity of her critical cultural and language resources; and to KAPPA’s need for more guidance in effectively incorporating and referencing non-English medium scholarly texts in order to maximize the kind of intellectual profundity that pursuing cross-language relations might grant his academic written work.

In his ecological theory of language and language relations in the world, Calvet (2006) argues that “our representations determine our practices” (p. 3) and have an influence on the way we come to particular language accommodations and negotiations in various communicative situations, but are also “capable of modifying them” significantly (p. 131). In this sense, these writers’ mediation between the translingual representations experienced in sociolinguistic landscapes and officially inscribed in national language policy and the monolingualist representations of the academy and its institutions is shaped by the nature of their language representations. Most prominently, guided by their views of the mobility, multiplicity, and hybridity of language, both Diva and KAPPA deliberately destabilize and reconfigure dominant language relations under restrictive writing pedagogies, sometimes at their personal risk. Contrastingly, weighed down by the representations of language and language resources as uniform, isolatable, and identifiable entities reinforced and propagated by FYW pedagogy, Naser is not able to entertain possibilities of bringing his language and semiotic resources into being as hybrid and plural the way he does in Graphic Design.

In a multiple-case study investigating changes in first-year college student's representations of English learning, Peng (2011) argues that language representations are responsive to pedagogical affordances, which can either facilitate favorable representations and perceptions or hinder their development. Writing pedagogy can indeed be one possible site for critically intervening in the kind of local tensions at the level of language representations that my chapter brings to light. While our first-year writing pedagogies most often contribute to the construction of language representations as discrete, bounded, enumerable objects having presence outside and beyond the local ecologies of their practice, they can at the same time challenge, considerably transform, and reconstruct such mythical representations. Interestingly, the pedagogical opportunities Naser's Graphic Design professors offered for mobilizing his linguistic and semiotic resources, for example, gave rise to the emergence of translingual representations of language as heterogeneous and multimodal and treatments of his language resources as meaningful and accessible in academic contexts, thereby serving to fuel his affirmative thinking about his language and graphic abilities and agency in the creation of meaning in his discipline.

As accounts from Lebanon demonstrate, there is a need to revise and rethink the ideas and images our students have about language and language relations in their academic written work. We cannot continue propagating myths about the nature of languages in our own pedagogical practices as existing in and of themselves in separation from our students' localities and from each other; instead, we need to provide plenty of opportunities for all students to start seeing and experiencing language generally, and English particularly, as "reinvented, renewed and transformed" (Calvet, 2006, p. 7) in all literate interactions and communications. We need to start "teaching with the flow," movement, and fluidity (Pennycook, 2005, p. 39) of language, semiotic, and cultural resources in the FYW classroom in order to develop more dynamic relations among these resources for all our students' translingual participation in the continued fashioning and refashioning of these, their identities, and ultimately their social futures. In doing so, however, we need to keep in mind that it is an intellectual slippage to assume that a translingual orientation toward language operates under the principle that merely requiring or requesting students to utilize languages other than English is sufficient (Pennycook, 2008a).⁶ In fact, without attending to the particular ways

6 It is worth pointing out here that the same logic also applies to orientations toward multiple modes and modalities (see Horner, Selfe, & Lockridge, 2016; Pennycook, 2007).

of conceiving language and language relations at the core of the problem, we run the danger of unintentionally reproducing the same representations of language territorialization, fortification, and singularity that we are seeking to challenge and rewrite.

Rather than forcing students to search for back-door ways to counter monolingualist English-only representations and sidestep the restrictions these place on students' practices, the way Diva and KAPPA do, tensions between local representations and treatments of language need to be made available for ongoing scrutiny in every reading and writing situations. One way forward would be to open up marginalized, concealed, or forgotten layers of difference and boundary transgression with a focus on translation across and within languages in all its complexities, possibilities, and challenges. Renewing and reinvigorating students' attention to the fuzzy and constructed character of language and its boundaries that they constantly witness and experience in local, translocal, and transnational sociolinguistic landscapes entails making translation a "fundamental player" in our writing pedagogies not only when working with different languages as traditionally perceived but also with the same language against asymmetrical relations of difference and power (Pennycook, 2008a). Far more progress can be made if we and our students took more seriously the productive messiness inherent in the constant and inevitable practices of translating and (re)creating language(s), oneself, and one's written texts. It is precisely the kind of critical explorations I initiated with students like Naser, Diva, and KAPPA in order to unpack the complexity and contestation of their language representations and subsequent practices that are a necessary first step for our pedagogies to serve as avenues for harnessing and developing translingual language representations guided by favorable dispositions of deliberative inquiry, intellectual curiosity, dialogue, and openness to difference and friction.

It is my hope that the recommendations I offer here are not viewed as prescriptions for a specific set of unified and stabilized practices with language as traditionally valued under a monolingual paradigm or even quick fixes to a life-long pursuit of developing translingual representations in educational landscapes. Instead, they constitute what Martin-Jones et al. (2009) call "warrantable understandings" that might conceivably spark more critical pedagogical reflections and inventions requiring the co-collaboration and co-learning of all those laboring across language and cultural difference, i.e., writing students, teachers, administrators, and scholars alike. This is not to suggest that changing local understandings and subsequent doings of language is a simple task or that I can claim to have the final say on how to best do so, but that we can start by first taking representations of language and language rela-

tions more seriously in our continued understandings of translanguaging and, second, by introducing changes into our current and existing institutional representational practices in increments in ways that are within the scope of our own power and material conditions. If we are to imagine new ways of challenging and reinventing the dominant ways in which language has been construed and pursued in our scholarship, teacher-training and professional development programs, classrooms, and societies, it is necessary to start by exploring our as well as our students' local knowledge about language, the kind of knowledge which underpins institutional, programmatic, and individual policies, pedagogies, and practices.

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