6 Mapping Translingual Literacies: Encouraging and Enacting Translingual Perspectives of Literate Life

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Understanding translingual practice is not just relevant for those who physically immigrate across national borders and fluently speak multiple languages, but for everyone whose literate life is shaped by and contributes to the translingual flow of literate activity. This chapter traces one writer's continual re-use of languages, images, texts, and textual practices across multiple textual engagements including playing a Japanese video game, creating and maintaining a wiki site, teaching herself Japanese, crafting fan-fiction and fan-art, and illustrating a biology lab manual. Ultimately, the chapter argues that the writer's case illustrates the wisdom of Bruce Horner's call for attention to the translingual dispositions of so-called monolinguals. Further, for students, engaging such mappings makes visible the concrete ways their literate lives are informed by and contribute to the translingual flow of literacy, a crucial step toward understanding translinguality as the norm rather than the rare exception.

Keywords: translingualism, monolinguals, transnationalism, literate activity, literacy.

What has come to be recognized as the "translingual approach" to language use has been deeply invested in making more readily visible the ways that all people's communicative acts are implicated in the flow of language and literacy across the presumed borders of languages, cultures, and nations (Canagarajah, 2013; Horner et al., 2011; Jordan, 2012; Lee & Jenks, 2016). The abiding attention to the translingual character of all language practice, along with the fact that the communicative action we all participate in is shaped by and contributes to translingual and transnational networks, has been present since the earliest scholarship on translingualism. In outlining the central tenets of translingual-

ism, for example, Horner et al. (2011) assert that, at its very heart, "a translingual approach argues for (1) honoring the power of all language users to shape language to specific ends; (2) recognizing the linguistic heterogeneity of all users of language both within the United States and globally" (p. 305).

The emphasis on the translingual nature of all language practice is echoed by Jordan (2012), who reminds us that "multilingualism is a daily reality for *all* students—all language users—whether they themselves use more than one language or whether they interact with others in settings of multiple language contact" (p. 1, italics in original). Jordan (2015) reiterates this point in a later publication when he defines a translingual approach as "an orientation to the ways in which all language users are capable of purposeful deliberation across codes, regardless of traditional attributions of nativity or competence" (p. 369). More recently, Lee and Jenks (2016) have argued that what they term "translingual dispositions," "are essential for all users of English in a globalized society, regardless of whether they are 'native' or 'nonnative' speakers of English" (p. 319).

But while the translinguality of all language users is routinely asserted in the scholarship, it does not tend to be reflected in Writing Studies' dominant accounts of translingual language practice. As Bruce Horner points out in his afterword to this collection, research focused on translingual practice has demonstrated a "persistent association, if not conflation, of translinguality with transnationality and translanguaging," leading to what he describes as a "seeming neglect, if not exclusion, of translinguality among ostensible U.S. English monolinguals [and] their linguistic or civic counterparts elsewhere" (p. 297 , this collection). As a result, the accounts of translingualism and translingual writing that dominate our scholarship tend to depict people moving across linguistic, cultural, and national borders (Lorimer Leonard, 2013, 2014, 2015; Vieria, 2011). Despite a wealth of scholarship illuminating the ways that Web 2.0 technologies make it possible for people to participate in the global flow of language and literacy without leaving their own homes (Daniel-Wariya, 2016; Fraiberg, 2017, 2010; Monty, 2015), our common notions of translingual languaging and literacy remain grounded in accounts of people moving physically across the globe.

However fine-grained such accounts may be, coupling translinguality tightly to transnationalism creates potential problems. As Horner asserts, focusing our analytic attention solely on non-English speaking multilinguals serves only to reinforce "monolingualism's definition of language difference as deviation from a norm of sameness in linguistic form" (p. 298, this collection). The consequence, Horner asserts, is that translinguality

> risks being understood merely as a distinctive and distinguish-
> ing feature of the language practices of "multilinguals," and

> hence something that "mainstream" (a.k.a English monolingual) teachers, students, and, well, people can dismiss as irrelevant to normal life—at best a curious, exotic feature of "others": transnationals, non-native English speakers. In short, it can contribute to monolingualism's domestication of translinguality through its exoticization. (p. 298, this collection)

Ultimately, Horner argues, the exoticization of translinguality only reinforces an "ideology of monolingualism" (this collection), the notion that monolingualism is the clear norm and that translingual practice remains a rare and limited exception. To address this gap, Horner calls for increased attention to the translinguality that textures the language and literacy of people who are presumed to be monolingual (this collection).

As one response to Horner's call, in this chapter I examine the textual activities of one writer whose language and literacies do not immediately signal the transnationalism that has characterized our dominant accounts of translingual writing, but that are indeed densely entangled in the translingual flow of meaning-making. Using sample texts and excerpts from text-based interviews collected during an extended case study of a young woman named Susanna and her literate activities, in this chapter I trace her translingual textualities of over a span of ten years, focusing especially on her weaving of Japanese language into a variety of literate activities including playing a Japanese video game, creating and maintaining a wiki site, teaching herself Japanese, crafting fan-art and fan-fiction, and, oddly enough, illustrating a biology lab manual.

According to Horner, one challenge of adequately rendering more readily visible the heterogeneity of all language use is the tendency to examine language as existing "outside material social practices" (pp. 295-296, this collection), as occurring on some abstracted terrain rather than as people's actual, concrete actings in the world. Elaborating, Horner states,

> For the removal of language from practice renders language a matter of timeless, immaterial forms (abstracted from the full ecology of communicative practice). It is the treatment of languages as immaterial forms that renders sameness in language the norm, since that sameness depends on the evacuation of the crucial elements of time and space from communicative practice—all that inheres in the notion of "utterance.". . . It is at the point of utterance that translinguality enters as an insurgent view of language positing difference in language as itself the norm rather than a deviation from the norm. (p. 296)

For Horner, studying language as abstracted from the messiness and complexity of people's concrete uses in the world tends to foreground homogeneity and sameness, and thus tends to obscure the array of heterogeneous elements that texture actual language use. Horner's insistence on examining people's concrete, material practices echoes Blommaert's (2010) claim that the proper focus of language use "should be the actual linguistic, communicative, semiotic resources that people have, not abstracted and idealized (or ideologized) representations of such resources. Our focus should, therefore, be on repertoires, on the complexes of resources people actually possess and deploy" (p. 102). Without close, careful attention to people's concrete, material practices in the world, it can be easy to overlook the heterogeneity that textures their language and literacy, particularly when those elements might be relatively unmarked.

In order to ground the inquiry into Susanna's languaging and literacy in her material social practices and in the full ecology of communicative practice, data collection for this case study involved developing a detailed sense of Susanna's richly literate lifeworld and the concrete texts and textual practices that mediate her engagements. The initial data collection (e.g., interviews, collection of sample texts, and observations) focused on the reading, writing, and other textual activities she was involved in for her fan activities. Our early interviews discussed her fan activities in broad, general terms, including her history of engagement with those activities. Initial data collection also included a literacy history interview intended to illuminate Susanna's various other literate activities.

Subsequent interviews addressing Susanna's fan activities and any other literate activities she mentioned during the literacy history interview led to more focused interviews about those textual engagements, and included collection of sample texts in whatever representational media were appropriate (e.g., hard copy and digital inscriptions, drawings, illustrations). Sample texts were crucial for text-based interviews that focused on Susanna acting with specific texts and textual activities rather than on her involvement with literate activities more generally. Our text-based interviews were often process- and practice-based in order to make visible the processes and practices Susanna employed in creating and acting with various texts. This ongoing series of interviews provided opportunities for the kinds of "longer conversations" and "cyclical dialogue around texts over a period of time" that Lillis (2008, p. 362) identifies as crucial for understanding practice within the context of a participant's history. They also allowed for what Stornaiuolo et al. (2017) describe as "the unprecedented, surprising, and meaningful to emerge in observations of human activity without predetermined and text-centric endpoints of explanations" (p. 78).

To map Susanna's translingual practice across time, space, and multiple representational media, these data were analyzed interpretively and holistically (Miller et al., 2003). I first arranged data inscriptions (i.e., sample texts, sections of interview transcripts, interpretive notes, copies of texts and images, etc.) chronologically in the order in which Susanna engaged with them. This analysis of the data generated a large number of histories reaching across seemingly different literate activities. Based on those analyses, I constructed brief initial narratives of Susanna's histories with practice across multiple engagements. Those initial narratives were reviewed and modified by checking and re-checking those constructions against the data inscriptions (to ensure accuracy and seek counter instances) and by submitting them to Susanna for her examination. At these times I often requested additional texts from Susanna, and frequently she volunteered to provide additional materials and insights that she thought might be useful in further detailing the re-use and resemiotization of discursive practices across different sites of engagement.

To represent Susanna's translingual practice, and also to make my own analytic practices more visible, I present the results of the analysis as a documented narrative (Prior, 1998) rather than as a structuralist analysis. Doing so allows me to present the history of Susanna's translingual practice in a coherent fashion without flattening out the richness, complexity, and dynamics of how this practice is semiotically remediated and continually reassembled across engagements. If attention to concrete, material practice stands to unpack the dense heterogeneities of languages and literacies tangled, untangled, and re-tangled together into what can seem like stable, autonomous homogeneities, the documented narrative functions as a way of following particular heterogeneous elements while also gathering them up into a somewhat coherent account of communicative practice. It is a way of discursively re-assembling heterogeneous elements in a way that identifies particularly salient ones and makes visible how and why they have become tangled together and to what effect. The documented narrative, in other words, offers a discursive way of fashioning accounts that make visible what Lee and Jenks (2016) refer to as "the multilayered and unpredictable ways in which translingual dispositions can manifest themselves" in people's literate activities (p. 318).

In the following pages, I first introduce Susanna and elaborate the mapping of her translingual practice. In the latter portion of the chapter, I briefly outline my efforts to invite learners to use the account of Susanna's experiences to examine their own translingual engagements, and then discuss the benefits that engaging with these types of mappings hold for learners and teachers.

Examining a Richly Translingual Life

At first impression, there is nothing about Susanna that immediately suggests what Lee and Jenks (2016) characterize as "an inherent plurality of language resources" (p. 318). A white female now in her mid-thirties, Susanna speaks with a soft, gentle drawl associated with the part of the southeastern United States where she was born and raised and where three generations of her family have lived, a region many refer to as "the deep south." While she did travel away from her hometown to pursue an undergraduate degree in English and then a master's degree in Rhetoric and Composition, both of those institutions were only a few miles away, and still located in very rural areas of the state. The same is true of the institutions where she taught college classes after completing her master's degree and then where she enrolled to pursue her doctoral work.

According to Susanna, she had only rarely traveled beyond the southeastern US, and even then not for extended visits. Talking about her travels outside of the region, Susanna stated that "[o]ther than going somewhere to conferences, the only trips I've taken to other parts of the country were to Tucson and Mt. Rushmore." Despite her deep and extensive engagement with Japanese, Susanna had never traveled to Japan. Her only travels outside of the United States consisted of three trips to Europe: twice to travel to England and France for undergraduate study-abroad programs and once to Italy to visit a friend.

Susanna's initial engagements with Japanese language and culture centered around a series of video games called Aero Fighters, an English version of the Sonic Wings series of games originally released in Japan, that she played during her adolescent and early teenage years. The various versions of the game involve a series of heroes piloting different types of aircraft as they battle villains who are attacking sites around the globe, including major cities such as London and Tokyo and prominent locales including the Panama Canal, the North African desert, and the Grand Canyon. From the first time she played the game, Susanna was immediately taken by the action, the characters, and even the soundtrack.

As her interest and engagement with Sonic Wings grew, Susanna started collecting and playing the original Japanese versions of the games, and also started collecting advertisements and player manuals associated with the games. The games, and the materials she collected, quickly became more than a source of entertainment. They also served as a focal engagement for Susanna's interest in Japanese culture and language. In the sections that follow, I elaborate a number of instances in which Susanna's involvement with Japanese via Sonic Wings is woven into her literate engagements.

Assembling a Wiki: "I decided to base
my practice wiki on Sonic Wings"

Ten years after her initial encounters with the game, Sonic Wings became the focus of a wiki Susanna created. At the time, Susanna was a graduate student teaching first-year composition, and she and some of the graduate students in her program had started toying with the possibility of having students create their own wikis as a writing assignment for the class. As Susanna explained, she and some of her fellow graduate students,

> had been talking about the possibility of using wikis in a comp[osition] class as a way of having an online portfolio where students could post and edit their own work. I didn't know wiki code very well, so I decided to try making a wiki as a way of learning it and of figuring out if it would actually work for a portfolio.

Susanna decided to use Sonic Wings as a focus for her wiki because, as she stated,

> Around the same time, I was listening to the Sonic Wings 2 soundtrack even though I hadn't been really interested in Sonic Wings in a few years, and it got me excited about the series again. I used to have a Sonic Wings web site years ago that attempted to do some of what the wiki does, like catalog the characters, mostly, so I decided to base my practice wiki on Sonic Wings and post the information I had from my old website.

Once Susanna's application to Wikia received approval, she immediately started mining her old Sonic Wings website for useful materials. According to Susanna,

> I started by adding the information from my old site, but a lot of it was incomplete or inaccurate, so I ended up playing through each game and recording all the characters, enemies, and aircraft as I went.

As she re-played the games, she also researched Sonic Wings online as a way of gathering as much information as she could about the game and other games related to the series. Since initially creating it in 2008, Susanna has worked steadily worked on the wiki over the past nine years. To date, her wiki consists of 255 pages offering information about the five different versions of the game,

the game's main characters, soundtracks, codes and strategies for gameplay, and external links to publications about the games and other relevant information.

The wiki, available at http://sonicwings.wikia.com/wiki/Sonic_Wings_ Wiki, is a rich mix of prose and images, in both English and Japanese, from a wide variety of genres. Although much of the wiki is in English, Japanese is featured prominently in ways small and large. Throughout the wiki, for example, Susanna has included both the Japanese and English names for the game's major heroes and villains.

Japanese is featured much more prominently on the wiki in the many game-related materials Susanna collected and decided to include for her viewers. According to Susanna,

> Most of the materials I've collected are in Japanese, and there's a lot of them that were never officially put into English, like book-length strategy guides, soundtrack booklets, and screenshots from games that were either not released in English at all, or where the text was either left out or changed for the English version.

Susanna is particularly proud of the Japanese versions of the many player manuals she has incorporated in the wiki. Elaborating on her decision to include the Japanese versions of the player manuals, even though the wiki was in English, Susanna stated,

> I wanted to include them because some of them are hard to find, so it's a good resource for the wiki to have; it gives people a reason to keep coming back to the site. Also, I like showing off my collection.

The page on the wiki devoted to Blaster Keaton, Susanna's favorite hero character in the Sonic Wings series, offers an example of the ways Japanese is woven throughout the site. Explaining her affinity for Keaton, Susanna stated,

> He was one of my first favorite Sonic Wings characters. I guess part of it is that he's better developed than many of the other characters. . . . So basically, I guess just because he's a funny, nice guy with a well-developed history. Plus, he's cute, and I've always liked robots anyway.

Viewers of Keaton's page on the wiki are greeted with an image and some basic information about his character set in a call-out box with a blue background (see Figure 6.1). Beneath an image she grabbed from a version of the game, Susanna provides readers with the names Keaton goes by in both the

human and robotic forms of his character (Blaster Keaton when he appears in his human body, and Robo-Keaton or Mecha-Keaton when he occupies his robot body) using both English and Japanese katagana. In another portion of Keaton's page, Susanna includes a series of additional screen grabs featuring Keaton, some which include brief phrases in English language, and some which include brief phrases in Japanese language.

Keaton, Blaster

| Japanese Name | ブラスター　キートン (Blaster Keaton - human), メカキートン (Mecha-Keaton - robot) |
| English Name | Blaster Keaton (human), Robo-Keaton (robot) |

Figure 6.1. Image and basic information about Keaton's character from the Sonic Wings wiki.

Japanese appears much more substantially in the many game-related documents Susanna includes on Keaton's wiki page. The page from the player manual for Sonic Wings 3 (see Figure 6.2), for example, provides Keaton's name (which on this page is indicated as "Bluster Keaton," a play on "Blaster Keaton") in large katagana script vertically down the left-hand side of the page. The smaller script along the top lists one of the lines Keaton's character utters throughout the game. The smaller script, which consists of katagana, hiragana, and kanji, offers players information about Keaton's character's airplane. The three neat rows of script on the right side of the page offer specifications of some of the weapons at Keaton's disposal.

*Figure 6.2. Page from the player manual for Sonic Wings 3
showing an image of Keaton's character and Japanese script.*

In assembling her wiki, Susanna wove together text from multiple languages—including English and the three Japanese alphabets—multiple genres, and multiple representational media—including images, sounds, and her embodied experience of playing the video game.

The Sonic Wings wiki Susanna created, and her engagement with the video game upon which the wiki is based, are certainly intersections of language contact. Susanna's efforts at assembling the wiki are a fitting example of what Horner et al. (2011) describe as "shap[ing] language to specific ends" (p. 305). The images are also translinguistic and transnational in the sense that they too have been drawn from a Japanese video game and incorporated in Susanna's Sonic Wings wiki.

Translating Texts: "I've just about learned two of the Japanese alphabets"

Through her initial encounters with Japanese when she was young, including playing and learning about the Sonic Wings video games and watching a great deal of anime during her high school years, Susanna developed an interest in learning to read and write in Japanese. As a way of pursuing that interest during her undergraduate years, Susanna enrolled in an entry-level course at college, but she wound up dropping it early in the semester. As she stated,

> I started taking Japanese as an undergrad but the beginning-level class was too advanced for me. Most of the other students had had Japanese in high school. So, I dropped it after a couple of weeks.

Susanna's work on the wiki renewed her interest in learning Japanese, and she decided to teach herself Japanese by translating chunks of Japanese language. Initially, Susanna indicated that "I don't know Japanese beyond . . . a few words I've picked up from Sonic Wings." She quickly discovered that translating Japanese demanded a great deal of time, so to make it more manageable she focused on very short passages of Japanese prose. She started with translating panels of Japanese manga she had been reading, and found that the overall story and the visual images offered in each panel helped her to better understand the language. When she felt like she was ready for slightly longer, more complex passages, she gravitated toward the materials related to Sonic Wings she had collected and included on her wiki. The relatively brief sections of text accompanied by images were well suited for translating as a way of learning the language.


Figure 6.3. Page from the player manual for Sonic Wings Special offering, an image of Keaton's character and brief descriptions of his key features in Japanese script.

One of the documents Susanna translated was a page from the player manual for the Sonic Wings Special version of the game (see Figure 6.3).

The page features a colorful, detailed image of Keaton's character from the game. Brief passages of katakana, hiragana, and kanji offer descriptions of his production specifications, weapons, technologies, means of locomotion, and other special features.

To translate the prose descriptions from Japanese to English, Susanna would type a phrase from the manual into an online translation service called Babelfish using Microsoft Japanese IME software which allowed her to type in the three Japanese alphabets. She had begun to memorize some hiragana and katakana, and relied on a print Japanese-English dictionary when needed. For the kanji, Susanna use jisho.org, an online Japanese dictionary. Once Babelfish offered the translated version, which was typically somewhat "garbled," Susanna would return to Babelfish and Jisho to clarify the meaning. Then she rewrote the phrase in "fairly standard English."

The translated version Susanna generated appears as Figure 6.4. Susanna translated all of the Japanese script in the original. She translated the large script at the top and the right-hand side of the page. She also translated the small script at the very bottom of the page. After inserting the descriptions she translated into the original document, Susanna also indicated that she Photoshopped the image so that the background portions of the translated portions blended into the original image.
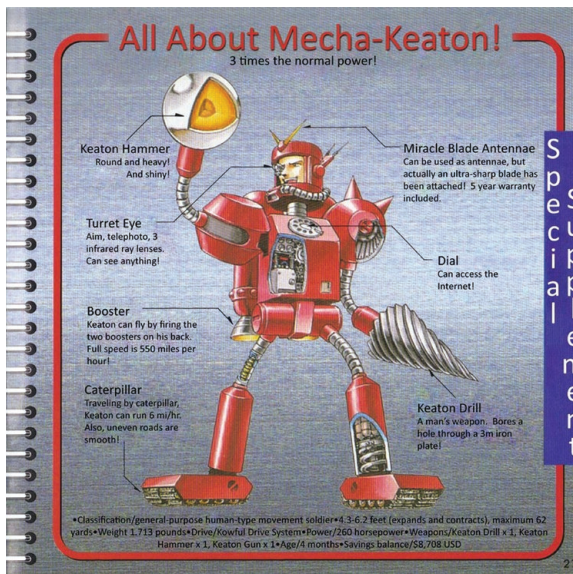
6.4. The translated version of the page from the player manual Kate created.

Susanna indicated that even though the translations took an enormous

amount of time and attention, she found doing these kinds of translations very helpful. Prior to her engagement with translation, Susanna indicated that she only knew the few words of Japanese she had picked up from playing the video games and putting together the wiki. After doing several of these translations, Susanna indicated the she felt like she knew a great deal more:

> I've just about learned two of the Japanese alphabets, hirigana and katakana, from having to look up so many characters, which makes typing them in to translate a lot quicker. . . . I've also learned a bit about airplanes and Japanese culture.

Susanna's translating work immerses her in the interplay of multiple languages, including the three Japanese alphabets and multiple versions of English, as well as images and multiple texts, both print and digital. With her translating, Susanna is also working at the intersection of multiple languages with a variety of technologies (print and digital). As they did in her wiki, (transnational) images play a key role in her translating work.

When she completed the work of translating the prose and Photoshopping the translations back in the original image, Susanna posted the finished version on the Keaton page (in the "artwork" section) of the Sonic Wings wiki. According to Susanna, she wanted to make it available to other Sonic Wings fans, who, like herself, are "obsessive enough to want to know the *real* story behind the plot and characters" but who could not read the Japanese versions of the documents or did not know anyone who could translate them into English.

Drawing and Writing Fan-fiction: "I liked the idea of using all of my favorite hero characters"

While working on the wiki and immersing herself in her translations as a means of learning Japanese, Susanna decided that she would write a fan-fiction novel sequel to the Sonic Wings series for National Novel Writing Month (NaNoWriMo). As it did with her wiki and her translating, her work on her novel included blending Japanese and English in a variety of ways. Susanna had written a few brief fan-fiction stories based on Sonic Wings, and she felt that writing a novel would provide her with the opportunity to explore her favorite characters from the game in more detail and extend the plot in some interesting directions. As she stated "I also liked the idea of using all of my favorite hero characters, rather than just a couple at a time like I had to do in stories."

Susanna's first step toward writing the novel involved creating profiles for the main characters she planned to include. These "character profiles," as Susanna referred to them, offered an image of each character, some basic information about them, and a brief version of their backstory that Susanna created from information available from the game and information that she made up.

Figure 6.5. The character profile Susanna created for Keaton's character in her fan fiction novel.

Intent on including Keaton's character in her novel, Susanna assembled a profile sheet (see Figure 6.5) using a wide array of the resources she had at her disposal from her extensive translingual history of engagement with Sonic Wings and with Keaton's character in particular. At the top of the sheet, Susanna included Keaton's name in both English and Japanese katagana. Commenting on her decision to list the Japanese version, Susanna stated that,

> For Keaton's [name] it's all katakana, and it just says "Keaton," not "Blaster Keaton." I can't remember why I didn't put his whole name. I put the Japanese on there to make it more official-like and tie it back into the Japanese original.

On the left-hand side of the sheet, Susanna included a digital image she had created of Keaton in his robotic body. Her drawing prominently foregrounds features she had encountered in the images she had seen and the descriptions she had read (and sometimes navigated simultaneously) while playing the game, creating and maintaining the wiki, and doing her translations, including his bright red, box-shaped robotic body, his detailed helmet, his drill arm and the spikes on his shoulder, and his electronic right eye. At the bottom of the sheet, Susanna included a brief paragraph that outlines Keaton's backstory. Like the digital image she drew, the information in Keaton's backstory material is laminated with Susanna's history of engagement with the character while playing and re-playing the game, working on the wiki, and teaching

herself Japanese. As she stated while talking about developing the backstories for her hero characters, "Backstories and subplots for the good guys have come to me, too, the more I plan, play the games, translate, and so on." Susanna incorporated other representational media into Keaton's profile as well. The last item in the list of information beneath Keaton's names, for example, is a song by Daft Punk titled "Harder, Better, Faster, Stronger" that Susanna associated with his character in the novel because the title and lyrics indexed the robotic body his fellow heroes built for him.

Susanna also planned to include one of her favorite villains from the Sonic Wings series in her novel. According to her, Daio Ika, "is one of my favorite villains. It has an interesting backstory about being part fallen angel in humanoid form and part giant squid. And, it appears in a couple of different forms in the game."
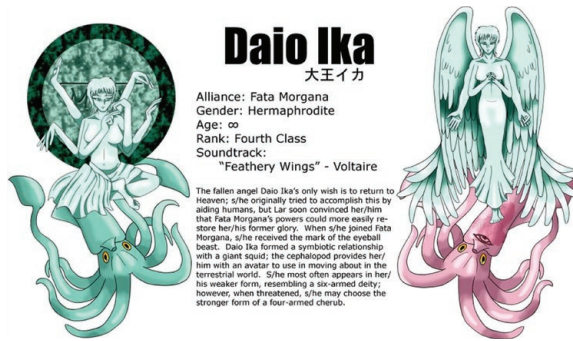

Figure 6.6. The character profile Susanna created for Daio Ika's character in her fan fiction novel.

As she did with her profile for Keaton's character, Susanna assembled a sheet for Daio Ika (see Figure 6.6) by weaving together a wealth of resources from her richly translingual history with Sonic Wings and Daio Ika's character in particular. At the top of the sheet, Susanna listed the character's names in both English and Japanese. In Daio Ika's name in Japanese, the first two characters are kanji and the second two are katakana. The sheet features two different images of Daio Ika that Susanna created using her digital drawing tablet. The image on the left-hand side of the sheet is a representation of Daio Ika's weaker form, which consists of a teal-colored giant squid and a humanoid figure with six arms reminiscent of a Hindu deity. The image on the right-hand side of the sheet features Susanna's drawing of Daio Ika in its stronger form, which consists of a pink-colored squid accompanied by a humanoid figure of an angel with large feathered wings and two pairs of arms, one thin and one more prominently muscled. Like the

digital images she drew for the character, the descriptive backstory information Susanna included at the bottom of the sheet is textured by Susanna's history of engagement with the character while playing and re-playing the game and working on the wiki. According to Susanna, coming up with the backstory information about the game's villain characters was much more challenging than for the heroes, largely because the villains "have no backstory in the canon games." To generate the backstory information for Daio Ika's character in her novel, Susanna indicated that she viewed and read as much information about the character as she could, and then made sure that she was "careful not to contradict anything that is said in the games" or in any of the materials she had collected. As she had with Keaton's sheet, Susanna also incorporated music into Daio Ika's profile. The last item in the list of information beneath Daio Ika's names indicated a song by Voltaire titled "Feathery Wings" that Susanna associated with the angelic humanoid that was part of the character's stronger form.

Although not as readily visible as her translations, the translingual nature of the profile sheets Susanna created while planning her fan-fiction novel is apparent in the way she provided the characters' names in both English and Japanese. The images Susanna created are also translingual in the sense that they are based on representations of Keaton and Daio Ika she had seen while playing the video game, while working on the wiki, and, again in the case of the image of Keaton, while doing her translating. Perhaps not as readily evident, the character profiles are also translingual in the sense that the information that Susanna offers in the "backstory" information on the character sheet, even though it is written in English, is deeply informed by what she had read and seen while assembling the wiki and, especially in the case of Keaton's backstory information, while doing her translating.

By the end of NaNoWriMo, Susanna had finished 13 chapters of the novel, which she titled *Sonic Wings Crusade*. The novel would eventually stretch to 18 chapters by the time she stopped working on it and posted it to an online fanfiction site. But where Japanese and English had been blended together in her wiki, in her translating activities, and in the character profiles she created, Japanese is entirely absent from the prose of her novel, even passages that specifically feature Keaton and Daio Ika. And where Susanna had deployed images associated with the video game in her wiki, her translations, and in the character profiles, those were entirely absent from the novel as well.

The novel's ninth chapter, for example, features a fierce battle between Keaton and his partner, Anjera, and Daio Ika at Stonehenge. The extended passages below, excerpted from that chapter, describe the moments when the heroes identify the villain:

By the time the first visitors were beginning to file up through the underpass leading from Stonehenge's parking lot to the monument, Blaster and Anjera were already making fly-bys in their planes. Blaster was now wearing his fully robotic body as opposed to his humanoid one, just in case a battle did ensue. Keaton was quite proud of the shiny red body with its boxy chassis, powerful weapons, and titanium-enforced helmet to protect his human head.

"There is the angel image!" Anjera called now over the radio. Blaster looked down from his F-117 Seahawk, zooming in with his mechanical right eye to examine the image as he wheeled past it. There was no doubt now that it was the same angel as the one which appeared on Daio Ika: a short-haired, humanoid figure with large feathery wings, breasts, and four arms. One pair of arms, the set positioned slightly lower and to the front, was delicate, but the other pair was oddly muscular. All this was imprinted in the grass with painstaking detail.

From reading these passages, it is tempting to think that Susanna's translingual blending of Japanese and English does not extend into the prose of her novel. But even in the absence of visible traces of Japanese script and images associated with the Japanese version of the video game, I would argue that Susanna's novel is still richly translingual. In one sense, the translingual character of the novel is signaled by the theme and content of the novel, which, after all, is based on the video game. But it goes deeper than that. The translingual nature of the novel is also apparent in the way that the specific details Susanna employs in describing Keaton and Daio Ika are the very ones featured in, and that she herself has featured, in the images she created and in prose descriptions she crafted of these two characters.

Susanna's mention of the "boxy chasis" of Keaton's "shiny red" and "fully robotic body" in the first paragraph of the excerpt, for example, has been prominently featured in the Japanese game, in the many descriptions and images she assembled into the wiki, in the page from the player manual she translated, and in her character profile. The same is true of Susanna's later references to Keaton's "mechanical right eye" and his "large, sphere shaped hammer weapon," which have also been featured in those earlier engagements.

The same can be said of Susanna's detailed description of Daio Ika's character that appears in the third paragraph of the excerpt, in which the angel is

characterized as a "short-haired, humanoid figure with large feathery wings, breasts, and four arms," with "[o]ne pair of arms, the set positioned slightly lower and to the front, was delicate, but the other pair was oddly muscular." These descriptive details have been prominently featured in images of the character in the video game, in the materials that Susanna assembled into the wiki, and that she represented in her drawing and in the prose of Daio Ika's character profile sheet. In short, even though Japanese script is absent, the prose of Susanna's novel is profoundly informed by Susanna's translingual encounters with documents and images from the original Japanese versions of the game.

Doing Scientific Illustration: "there were only two animal drawings I had available"

Susanna's engagement with the Japanese video game did not just texture her fan activities (the wiki, her translating, and her fan-fiction novel and fan-art), it also extended into her work illustrating organisms for the university's biology lab program. Susanna was one of four respondents to a flyer posted on a campus bulletin board seeking people to do scientific illustrations for the university's biology lab manual. Posted by the Lab Coordinator of the Principles of Biology Lab I, the laboratory component to the first in a sequence of two required introductory Biology courses offered at the university, the flyer sought people interested in doing some illustrations for the manual students used to accomplish the activities.
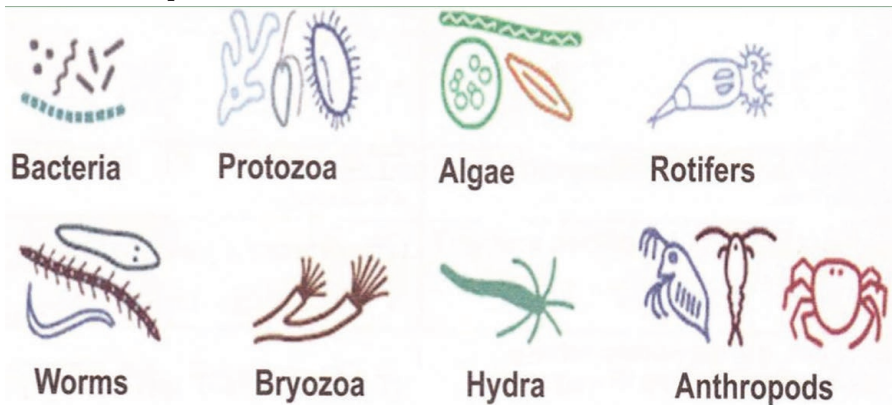

Figure 6.7. Selected illustrations from the previous edition of the lab manual.

According to the Lab Coordinator, the illustrations in the existing edition of the manual (see Figure 6.7) were not helpful in terms of allowing students to accurately identify the organisms they encountered in a particular lab activity

that asked students to identify and draw organisms found in a drop of pond water. Commenting on the existing illustrations, The Lab Coordinator stated,

> You can see that they are really crude and they're very simple and they don't give you specifically what much of anything is. They're just not real helpful if the student wants to know what they are looking at.

Susanna had never done professional scientific illustrations, but she felt as if she had a good deal of experience illustrating characters or scenes from the fanfiction stories and novels that she had been writing regularly since her early childhood. Responding to the phone message she left, the Lab Coordinator contacted her and asked her if she had any samples of her drawing she could send him.

Figure 6.8. Susanna's pegasus frog image.

According to Susanna "There were only two animal drawings I had available to send for samples." One of the drawings (see Figure 6.8) Susanna selected was a winged frog she referred to as a "pegasus frog." As she explained,

> The pegasus frog is from an old educational DOS game named *Challenge of the Ancient Empires*. I adored it to the point of making a book of fan art from it and writing a really stupid fan-fiction. The pegasus frogs were my favorite monsters, so when I replayed the game some months ago, I wanted to draw one.
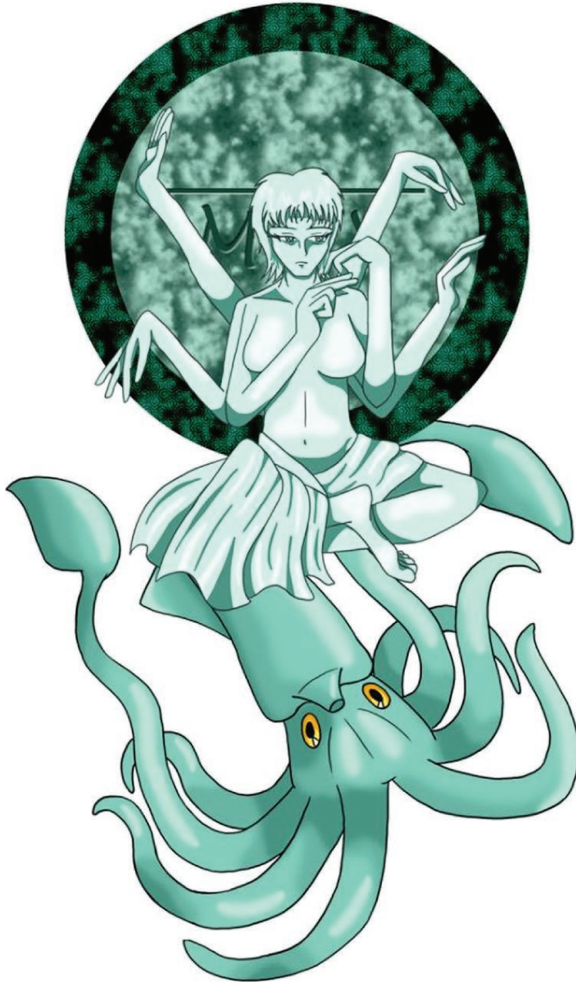
Figure 6.9. Susanna's image of Daio Ika from the character
profile sheet she created for her fan fiction novel.

The second picture Susanna chose (see Figure 6.9) was one of the images of Daio Ika from the character profile sheet she created while planning her fan fiction novel. Elaborating, Susanna stated, "The squid and deity picture is from my . . . fan art; it's one form of an enemy named Daio Ika, the Japanese name for Giant Squid. This particular picture was drawn to go on a Daio Ika's profile picture for my fan novel."

Susanna's drawing depicts a large teal-colored squid with six flowing arms and two longer tentacles. It also provides detailed rendering of the eye and the funnel, or siphon.

To the Lab Coordinator, the drawings Susanna submitted, which he said reminded him of "cartoon animals, like a cartoon squid and a cartoon frog," suggested that she possessed the abilities to illustrate the organisms for the pond water activity: "I just wanted some samples to see how well she could draw, and I liked them, so I thought she could do a good job with the pond animals." Based on those drawings, the Lab Coordinator selected Susanna from among the four other applicants to create some new illustrations for the lab manual.

When he was satisfied with Susanna's illustrations, the Lab Coordinator pasted them, along with their Latin names for genus and phylum, into a document that would eventually be published in the revised edition of the lab manual (see Figure 6.10).
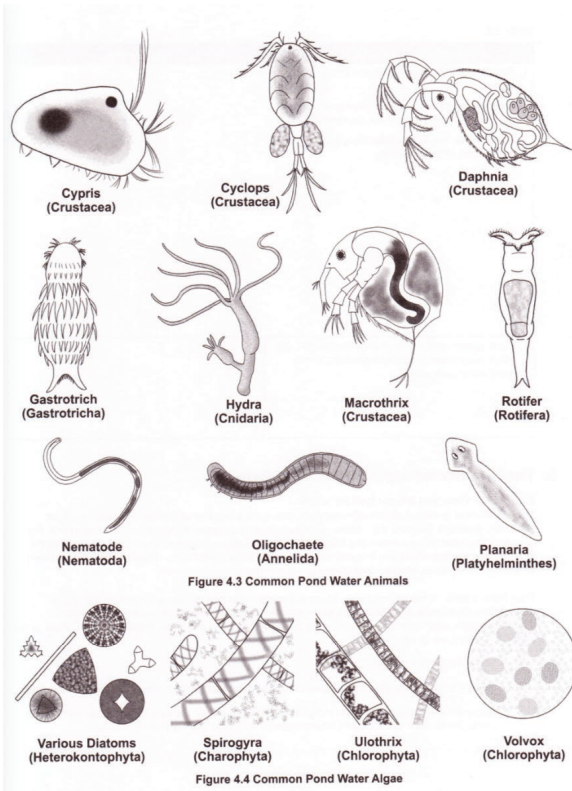

Figure 6.10. Page from the updated biology lab manual with Susanna's illustrations.

From the Lab Coordinator's perspective, Susanna's illustrations worked much more effectively in helping students to identify the organisms they encoun-

tered in the pond water. Reflecting on how the students in recent lab sessions performed on the pond water activity, he recalled that,

> [s]tudents were able to find and identify examples of cyclops, hydra, rotifers, nematodes, and we found some diatoms. So we were able to find about a third of them. The students had a really good time.

The Coordinator's comments suggest that Susanna's illustrations allowed lab students to more readily identify organisms that students using the representations in the lab manual had struggled to name. His comments also suggest that using Susanna's illustrations made the pond water activity much more engaging and enjoyable.

The page of illustrations bears no overt traces of Susanna's translingual work. And yet, her engagement with illustrations for the lab manual is translingual in a number of ways. First, it is Susanna's drawing from the character profile she created for Daio Ika that convinced the Lab Coordinator of her ability to draw the pond water organisms for the lab manual. In this sense, the drawing of Daio Ika, which is heavily informed by her encounters with images of Diao Ika in the video game and her own drawings of Diao Ika for the fan-fiction novel, paved the way for her work in scientific illustration. In other words, an image that had mediated Susanna's engagement with the Sonic Wings video game, her creation of the Sonic Wings wiki, and writing her fan-fiction novel came to pave the way for her engagement with scientific illustration.

Second, I would argue that Susanna's style for drawing the pond water animals—the conventions she uses—are also translingual in the sense that they are also heavily informed by her encounters with images of Diao Ika in the video game and her own drawings of Diao Ika for the fan-fiction novel. Consider, for example, the close similarity between how Susanna drew the flowing arms and tentacles of the squid in the Daio Ika image and the waving arms of the hydra she drew for the lab manual. Consider as well the similarity between Susanna's rendering of the squid's arms and tentacles and the body of the nematode and oligochaete as well as some of the interior features of the daphnia and macrothrix she drew for the lab manual. In other words, Susanna's representational practices themselves are translingual, and point to what Lee and Jenks refer to as "the multilayered and unpredictable ways on which translingual dispositions can manifest themselves" in people's literate activities (2016, p. 318).

Susanna has not traveled across the geographic borders of the United States and Japan, and thus her life's traversals do not follow the transnational

migrations that dominate Writing Studies' accounts of translingualism and translingual writing. And yet, as this detailed mapping of Susanna's material texts and textual practices has illuminated, her literate activities are deeply and densely textured with translinguality. In assembling the wiki, doing her translations, creating fan art and fan fiction, and even illustrating organisms for the lab manual, Susanna displays the kinds of abilities that scholars have come to identify with a translingual disposition. For Horner et al. (2011), such a disposition demonstrates an "openness to linguistic differences and the ability to construct useful meanings from perspectives of them" (p. 308) and a "deftness in deploying a broad and diverse repertoire of language resources, and responsiveness to the diverse range of readers' social positions and ideological perspectives" (p. 308). For Canagarajah (2013), a translingual sensibility is evidenced by "an understanding of the production, circulation, and reception of texts that are always mobile" and that reach across languages, cultures, ethnicities, and nations (p. 41). Susanna's wiki, her translations, her fan art and fan fiction, and her work on the lab manual signal her openness to and facility with deploying a wide array of linguistic and semiotic resources and her responsiveness to a diversity of readers/viewers. Those texts, and the textual activities from which they emerge, likewise index Susanna's attunement to the far-flung networks across which they circulate.

Pedagogical Implications

For students in the classes I teach, this detailed tracing of Susanna's texts and practices functions as a kind of model for us to closely examine the various texts that we create and act with across our academic, professional, and everyday lives. After walking students through Susanna's multiple encounters with translingual practice from playing Sonic Wings, to creating and maintaining a wiki site, teaching herself Japanese, crafting fan-fiction and fan-art, and illustrating a biology lab manual, I invite students to use this mapping of Susanna's translinguality to look carefully at our own concrete, material engagements with language and literacy in "the messy, complex, and rather unpredictable . . . sociolinguistic world in which we live" (Blommaert, 2010, p. 27). As a way to keep our examinations grounded in the material conditions of our linguistic practice, we collect specific texts that animate our textual lives and consider the specific processes and practices from which those texts emerge, always with an eye toward identifying instances of language difference, however small or fleeting they might seem. In keeping with this mapping of Susanna's literacies, we trace our uses of particular heterogeneous elements across the full ecologies of our communicative practices, always with

an eye toward following those elements as fully as we can across time, space, and representational media.

The mappings we generate, which tend to identify and trace our own rich histories with a wide variety of engagements with translingualism, continually remind me of all that can be obscured or rendered completely invisible, subordinated, or entirely ignored, when we do not pay close attention to people's concrete, everyday encounters with language difference. They also continually serve as a reminder that we need to continually interrogate what Vershawn Young (2004) describes as the faulty assumption that some languages "are so radically different" as to be "incompatible and unmixable" (p. 706), which he argues is a crucial step toward democratizing attitudes regarding people and the linguistic resources they employ.

Based on their own mappings and those of their classmates, students are frequently surprised at the dense translinguality they can see in their own lives. One of the things students are surprised to find is the variety of different languages they routinely act with, even though they do not consider themselves to be fluent in those languages. Like Susanna's initial encounters with Japanese in playing Sonic Wings and creating the wiki, students' mappings make visible the wide array of languages that animate their textual lives. One student, for example, while closely examining the sheet music she used to practice the flute, was surprised to find multiple Italian terms on every page, and even more surprised that she had a fairly confident sense of what those terms indicated, even though she would not claim to "know" Italian. Another student, while studying images of the various tattoos adorning his and has classmates' bodies, was surprised to find characters from a wide array of languages.

While these kinds of findings initially prompt some insightful discussions about what it means to truly "know" and "be able to use" a language, those conversations tend to quickly give way to insights about the very concrete ways we are all actively and agentively shaping language to our own ends rather than just using the language already presented to us, that in our actual blendings and mixings and transformations of language, we are not just acting with language as we encounter it, but rather acting upon it by refashioning it for our own purposes, investing it with our own intentions, reusing it for our own needs.

In addition to making visible the multiple ways that language contact comes to be woven into our lives, or to quote Bakhtin (1986), the multiple avenues through which "language enters life through concrete utterances . . . and life enters language through concrete utterances as well" (p. 63), engaging with these kinds of mappings helps reinforce and enhance our understanding

that "translingualism" is, at its heart, "not about the number of languages, or language varieties, one can claim to know. Rather, it is about the disposition of openness and inquiry that people take toward language and language difference" (Horner et al., 2011, p. 311).

Another thing that students find somewhat surprised to see in their mappings is the wealth and variety of translingual semiotic resources they act with in addition to spoken or written language. In talking through why they find this somewhat surprising, students commonly mention that the term "translingual" tends to orients them toward attending to spoken or written language so much so that they tend to overlook the various other modes they use in their meaning making. Like Susanna's use of the images and music that originated in the Japanese versions of the game, students' mappings make visible a host of semiotic resources from across the globe that animate their everyday meaning making. One student, while examining some of the images of her own favorite video game characters, was surprised that she could discern subtle details in the images that signaled intertextual connections not only to previous versions of the game, but also to manga and anime publications. Another student, while listening closely to the music on her playlist, was surprised to encounter not only lyrics from other languages that she had not previously noticed but also various musical stylings, tempos, and rhythms associated with cultures and ethnicities from across the globe. In this sense, engaging with detailed mappings of our actual communicative practices can provide us with more realistic, and more accurate, conceptions of how people actually language, which is crucial for recognizing that issues of translingualism are relevant to each of us.

In his afterword, Horner notes that "propulsion toward translingual orientations requires pushing against monolinguist tenets: friction is both necessary to and an inevitable product of movement" (this collection). The discussions that emerge as students and I talk about Susanna's translingual practices and our own mappings of our translinguality are not infrequently textured by such frictions. Like all classrooms, mine are populated by students who readily value their exposure and engagement with language contact and those who, as Lee and Jenks (2016) describe, are more "guided by ideological assumptions that privilege ethnocentric or monolingual standards of English" (p. 328). And, just because people recognize the translinguality that textures their lives does not mean that they immediately regard it as a valuable resource for making meaning in the world. Ultimately, though, my sense is that careful attention to people's material engagements with translingual writing, making, and doing—their being and becoming across embodied languages and literacies in the world—can help us challenge representations of lan-

guage grounded in the ideology of monolingualism, a key first step toward fashioning language and literacy instruction increasingly relevant to the production of people and practices in and for the twenty-first century.

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