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Introduction to “Teaching Writing Across the English Department Curriculum: A Roundtable”

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with Roundtable Participants

TEACHING WRITING NOW: DIVERSITY, INCLUSION, AND SOCIAL JUSTICE IN THE WRITING CLASSROOM

A virtual symposium hosted by the Texas A&M Department of English throughout the spring of 2021 that featured a series of talks and workshops on the topic of how practitioners can better teach writing now by addressing diversity, inclusion, and social justice in the writing classroom. The event was aimed at bringing together scholars doing research in social justice pedagogies, cultural rhetorics, and composition/professional writing in our rapidly changing media landscapes. Events were free and open to the public.

“Teaching Writing Across the English Department Curriculum: A Roundtable”

Marian Eide, “Challenges: The Student’s Voice.”

Regina Marie Mills, “Teaching Writing Now: Creative Close Readings.”

Marcela Fuentes, “Story Shapes.”

Landon Sadler, “Teaching Writing with Care and Closeness”

Matthew McKinney, “Incorporating Diversity and Inclusivity into ENGL 355: Rhetoric of Style.”

Michael Collins, “The Pitfalls of Teaching Poetry Writing.”

Hyunjung Kim, “Literary Translation Project.”

Delivered Thursday, February 11, 2021, from 11:30 am – 1:30 pm.

Our symposium’s roundtable continued exploring the themes of diversity, inclusion, and equity in writing classrooms. Each of the presentations features a composition

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instructor exploring how they have wrestled with these concepts in their general practice and in the context of a particular course they teach. These instructors demonstrate, individually and collectively, that these concepts present unique challenges in different classroom environments, that these challenges must be navigated collaboratively by students, peers, teachers, and colleagues, and that this navigation is an ongoing, evolutionary process.

In her presentation, “Challenges: The Student’s Voice,” **Dr. Marian Eide** shares with us how experiences in senior seminar and non-major courses cultivated her understanding of inclusive pedagogy, specifically in terms of students who prefer to participate silently and how she must find alternate ways of soliciting student feedback. Inclusivity is also a focus in **Dr. Regina Mills’s** “Teaching Writing Now: Creative Close Readings,” where she describes how analyzing and creating choose-your-own adventure games in her gaming literature course promote diverse understandings of narrative construction. Dr. Mills references the work of another presenter, **Dr. Marcela Fuentes**, whose “Story Shapes” presentation details how her students explore diverse forms of narrative construction by applying different structural templates to the same writing prompt.

In “Teaching Writing with Care and Closeness,” **Landon Sadler** applies a feminist pedagogy and feminist ethics of care theory to rhetorical analysis assignments in a first-year writing class, asking students to examine texts proximally and socially close to their own lives on campus. In “Incorporating Diversity and Inclusivity in English 355: Rhetoric of Style,” **Dr. Matt McKinney** discusses how analyzing a variety of textual genres from a diverse array of authors, all of whom have distinct understandings of and relationships with American culture, can expand students’ conceptions of style and identity while drawing on their own experiences of both.

From here, the roundtable closes with two presentations that center on poetry. **Dr. Michael Collins** examines the unique challenges that teaching poetry writing requires as well as the shift in practice that these challenges entail in “The Pitfalls of Teaching Poetry Writing.” Also focusing on poetry pedagogy, **Hyunjung Kim**, in “Literary Translation Project,” details a course project that has students translate poems into another language, a practice that makes them more appreciative of language as a code that has both cultural and social meanings.

Challenges: The Student's Voice

Marian Eide, Ph.D.
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About thirty years into my teaching career, I am still addressing challenges to my pedagogy and still learning a lot from colleagues and students. About five years ago, two specific challenges came to the forefront of my attention.

The first was the silent student. We are all familiar with this figure. While there are students who contribute freely to class discussion, there are even more who hold back. Some would prefer to remain silent for an entire semester and just listen. This dynamic is as endemic as the deep structures that produce it. The habits of articulation tend to map onto privilege and to a sense of belonging within an institution. Think about the times you have posed questions to the class and seen the same few hands raised each meeting. I am grateful to those students for keeping the flow going, but frankly I am more interested in the students who say nothing.

For me, the embodiment of this silent student was Ashley, an English major in a senior seminar upon whom I called one day with an open-ended question. She replied, "I don't want to waste the class's time with my half-formed thoughts." Her comment got me thinking about the importance of the half-formed thought. I was reminded of a story I heard on the radio many years ago. The author described a dream in which she believed she could solve the problem of global violence: war, genocide, oppression. No matter the problem, she had figured it out. So, she woke herself up long enough to write down the dream, and in the morning, she was very excited to find out how to end all violence on earth. The note next to her bed read: "Never wear coats with snakes in the pockets." Excellent advice, but it might not solve the problems of global conflict. I love this story because it makes me think about how the half-formed thought profits from being articulated. First, as absurd as her insight might seem, it also seems wise not to wear coats with snakes in the pockets. Second, the dream might be read as a metaphor. Third, by articulating her thought, she was able to develop or dismiss it.

Since Ashley expressed the problem of the half-formed thought, I have become a much more metacognitive instructor. I talk to students about the motivations and purposes of participation, about their fear of being "wrong," and about the value of practicing articulation. Thus, I make the educational structure and its aims more visible to students. I not only draw on the pedagogy of the oppressed to structure my teaching (Freire, 2000), but also discuss that pedagogy and Walter

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Benjamin's critique of "penny-in-the-slot meaning" with students (1999, p. 208). Salman Rushdie wrote in *The Satanic Verses* (1988): "Language is courage: the ability to conceive a thought, to speak it, and by doing so to make it true" (p. 281). Making something true by giving it voice is also my wish for students; they can bring new truths into the classroom by giving their thoughts voice.

The other challenge I faced came from a much less generous place in my pedagogy. As much as I believe in the cognitive value of essay writing, I have gotten really bored with reading over a hundred short essays from students in large-section, non-major courses. I realized that the boredom was actually a screen covering the emotional tax I experienced providing feedback for essay writers. I was grieved when they had not received equitable training before college; I was ambivalent about providing comments when I was carefully threading a path between rocks, between introducing grammar standards and also recognizing the flexibility and range of the English language across regions, populations, and cultures.

Recognizing the limits of my patience and acting on this insight had the excellent consequence of also making my core curriculum offerings more inclusive for a variety of learning modes. Now I assign what I like to grade: projects that give me insight into students' views and experiences. These projects are responsive to the literature I assign but freed from the perceived constraints of the college essay form. Students in my class on cultural memory have been submitting visual plans for memorials to events that have been neglected. Responding to historical fiction, students produce researched podcasts elucidating literary contexts. Mining literature from previous centuries, students present proposals for museum exhibits that would display the material worlds fictional characters would have inhabited. I am finding that my students are doing more and better writing and research for these projects. More importantly, the reflection and creativity that go into planning their projects engages their imaginations and their critical thinking.

Following a tip from two former graduate students, Karen Davis and Thomas Pfannkoch, I have also started to enjoy grading essays more. Karen and Tommy taught me to ask students what feedback they want. At the top of the submission, students indicate what they are struggling with and what they want to achieve. I have found students are better at diagnosing than I had known, and the feedback I provide is now more honest because I am not worried about inflicting hurt unfairly. I am responding to a request rather than criticizing an effort. Grading is less emotionally exhausting. Because I employ contract grading in my courses for English majors, I can teach writing as revision, and make room for students to imagine and fail, and space for them to experiment and get better.

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Teaching Writing Now: Creative Close Readings

Regina Marie Mills, Ph.D.
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Introduction

What I'm going to talk about is one thing I like to do in most of my classes, and I'm going to offer a representative version here. It is called a "creative close reading," and for me, this approach is the combination or working together of creative writing and literary analysis. For each class I teach it looks different, but I'll focus on my games and literature class. In fact, the storytelling shapes PowerPoint by Dr. Fuentes that also appears in this special issue is the example she gives in my class when we're doing this assignment. Her presentation shows a helpful way of building and scaffolding towards this "creative close reading" project.

In my games-as-literature class, or officially "ENGL 303: Gaming Literature," one of the assignments that students do is a choose-your-own adventure creation and analysis, the idea for which I got from a similar assignment done by Eric Detweiler (Middle Tennessee State University). This assignment has two parts. The first part is to create a choose-your-own adventure (CYOA), similar to the original Choose-Your-Own Adventure series (my favorite of which was called Space Vampire) or the Goosebumps line of choose-your own adventures. There's also, of course, a large and burgeoning choose-your-own adventure community around [Twine](#), which bills itself as an "open-source tool for telling interactive, nonlinear stories." There are some very famous Twine games like *Depression Quest* by Zoë Quinn (2013) as well as *anna anthropy's* creations, like *Queers in Love at the End of the World* (2013) that I show my students as well, as exemplars or models. There is a new book also that I cannot

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wait to incorporate into the next iteration of this course entitled *Twining: Critical and Creative Approaches to Hypertext Narratives* (2021). The book is published by Amherst College Press, whose mission is to publish open-access monographs, so I am particularly excited by its accessibility to both students and instructors.

Creating the Game and Changing How Students Approach Analysis

When building up to the choose-your-own-adventure assignment, my students and I frequently play these choose-your-own adventures and talk about literature and what literary choices the game designers made. What I'm trying to do is put students in the role of being a game designer and a creative writer. I find that after students do this assignment (see Fig. 1), their literary analysis essays look a lot better because they're able to put themselves into the position of being like: "Wow, I hadn't realized that when I was writing a story, I was thinking about questions like: How am I going to characterize this person? What actions are they going to take? What are they going to say in order to show that they're an upright person, or that they're someone who's willing to bend the rules if it gets them what they want?"

Some students also really want to make a hard copy, like a material experience. I had one game where the premise was that a cache of letters was discovered that was supposed to have been burned but weren't, so the student had burned the edges off of letters, even making it so some of the writing was difficult or impossible to read. From there, players had to try to figure out from the letters what choices they were going to make. Another student made a detective story where the player is trying to find subtle clues to determine which envelope to open next. She noted that some clues could only be seen with a blacklight or flashlight.

If a student goes the digital route, they might use Twine. If you haven't played a Twine game, the choices are indicated by hyperlinked words or images that basically tell the reader, "Click on this if you want to go to this branch." And they're great because if you download a Twine story file and open it in the Twine program, you can see how the branches look (see Fig. 2), and sometimes students lay out the branches in meaningful ways, perhaps as a circle or figure-eight to represent a lack of choice or a never-ending feedback loop in the narrative.

Teaching Writing Across the English Department Curriculum

Figure 1: Choose-Your-Own-Adventure (CYOA) and Analysis*

Criteria and Guiding Questions	Professor Comments*
<p>CYOA Creation. Did you create a Choose-Your-Own Adventure game? Remember, the story doesn't need to be great but it should allow for an analysis of the 6 components of a game.</p>	
<p>Characterization. Does the analysis take into account most or all of the following questions (as appropriate to the CYOA they created): What were your goals for characterization? Do you point to specific strategies you use to develop (or not develop) characters in the story? How did you (or did you?) interact with the reader/player as a “character”?</p>	
<p>Interactivity and Audience. Does the analysis take into account most or all of the following questions (as appropriate to the CYOA they crafted): What audience were you aiming for? Who are the readers/players? How did you try to get them to interact with the story and be invested in it? How did player agency and choice play into the game?</p>	
<p>Structure/Organization. Does the analysis take into account most or all of the following questions (as appropriate to the CYOA they created): Why did you choose to structure the piece the way you did? What story shape did you use (Dr. Fuentes' slides may be helpful as would Jenkins' piece). Were there choices that you didn't allow for the reader/player? How did you struggle with the “choice” aspect of the CYOA?</p>	
<p>Worldbuilding. Does the analysis take into account most or all of the following questions (as appropriate to the CYOA they created): What specific strategies did you use to create the world in which the reader/player makes their choices? How "realistic" did you make your world? What is the internal logic of your world?</p>	
<p>Representation. Does the analysis take into account most or all of the following questions (as appropriate to the CYOA they created): In what ways did this piece engage with “representation”? Did it try to simulate something? Did it try to make you empathize with someone? Did it try to represent experiences or people that are otherwise marginalized or misrepresented? Did it depend on realism, abstractionism, or caricaturism?</p>	
<p>Narrative/Storytelling. Does the analysis take into account most or all of the following questions (as appropriate to the CYOA they created): How important was narrative to your story? What kind of story did you want to tell? What topics, themes, and larger questions were you trying to tackle with your CYOA? Did you try to “queer” the narrative?</p>	

*Please note that since this was provided for students who were using a portfolio grading system, I did not provide a points-breakdown by criteria. This was meant to guide students in both the creation and the analysis of their CYOA projects.

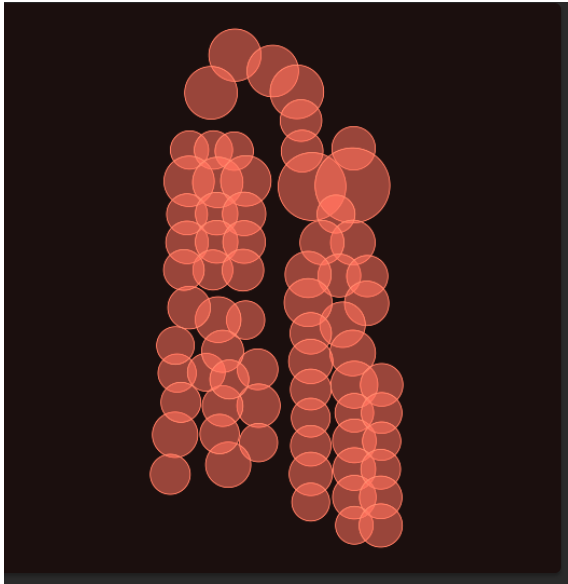


Figure 2: Example of how Twine story branches can look zoomed out

While Twine creators can do a lot more (i.e. hiding choices, allowing past choices to impact future ones, etc.), my students are usually using this as a new tool and go with the basics. I don't give them training in Twine because it's not required that they use it. However, I would say in the pre-pandemic classroom, about 50% did Twine and 50% did hard-copy or some other simple program like PowerPoint. In the pandemic classroom, nearly 80% opted to use Twine.

I've had students talk about these choices after the fact in their final portfolios in class; e.g., "This assignment changed my mindset going into literary analysis essays." I think this assignment is important because close reading games, like analyzing a lot of popular culture, is particularly difficult. People are just like, "Oh well, games, they don't have any meaning, right?" with the idea being that "this medium is too trivial to close read." It's also related to the resistance to analysis in some gaming communities, because analysis reads as politics. The idea that we can and should analyze games rather than just play unquestioningly is itself seen as a political stance (meaning actually "liberal" or "SJW" as it is derogatorily written) to a certain kind of gamer. By creating a game themselves, students realize that they are actually making thoughtful choices when they write, so why wouldn't the people who wrote the games we are studying do the same thing?

Assessing Student Games

Students are invested in making something special, and I get the best projects from this assignment. The best projects of the year are people making choose-your-own adventures, who then provide impressive depth in their analysis it because that's the second part, and it's the part that the grade actually comes from. When it comes to assessment I don't spend a lot of time grading the quality of the choose-your-own adventure. I'm not a creative writing teacher, and that's not really what the assignment is there for. It's an exercise, a way to create a text they are invested in close reading.

Once they've created the choose-your-own adventure (in whatever medium), the central assignment is then to explain to me what literary choices they made. I identify six different literary aspects that I want them to engage with: characterization, representation, world-making, interactivity, structure/organization, and storytelling/thematic choices. Thus, they have to analyze their story in line with these six key concepts that we've been focusing on throughout the semester.

I also craft the rubric to be more focused on what objectives they were hoping to accomplish, instead of "This is what a good choose-your-own adventure would or wouldn't do." We talk about how while every story might have characters, characterization might be more or less developed in certain stories. Or world-making may be more or less important, depending on how familiar the world is to the reader. If it's a world that we all know pretty well, like the present-day United States or the Star Trek universe (if your audience is a Trekkie), the author might not want to spend a lot of time on additional world-building. Thus, I don't tell them that they have to do all the areas with the same depth and intensity, but I do provide a rubric that's more like a set of questions that I'd like the choose-your-own adventure to incorporate and think about.

For example, representation. When I'm saying that, I can mean a number of things: is this game a simulation of an experience? Is it representing marginalized or otherwise underrepresented identities? When we think about narrative structure, how did they choose to structure the story? My colleague, creative writer and scholar Dr. Marcela Fuentes, comes in to talk about narrative structure: What might the shape of the story be? What do you want your choose-your-own adventure to start with? Are we starting from the end and trying to figure out how things got here? Or are we going to have this kind of rock in the pond where we start in the beginning and we're learning about everybody, and then all of a sudden, a big choice has to be made whose effects ripple out to everyone involved? And so, for me, the rubric is more like a set of questions that reflect everything we've learned about structure, characterization,

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representation, world-making, interactivity, and narrative that will help guide them in creating the choose-your-own adventure. More importantly, it will help guide them in thinking about what choices they make in crafting their adventures and how they can represent those choices to me in their analyses. For example, students will say, “I tried to characterize this person this way and these are the choices I gave you in order to do so.” I find students put so much more work into it.

Pedagogical Reflections

I really like this assignment because it makes the literary choices of authors feel more real by making students reflect on the choices they made in the process of creative writing. There can be really creative ways of doing this and I just find that this makes them understand so much better when I'm telling them that authors actually have a purpose in what they're trying to do. Some of their stories don't really work well, but since I'm more concerned with them reflecting on their choices, it's less a focus on what is failing and more on what they tried and why it might not have worked so well.

For me as the instructor, I find this assignment really challenges my own ideas of what kind of stories I am looking for, or what I think games as a medium are capable of making. It's also a really fun way of getting to know what the students care about. They'll explore not only fantasy but other genres or topics. I've had choose-your-own adventures centering immigrants trying to cross the U.S.-Mexico border, and sometimes none of the choices players can make are good, right? And some of these games are very clearly personal, very political, and some of them are really fantastical and really just about letting the student do that fanfiction that they've always wanted.

Ultimately, I think it's really worthwhile for us to think about how even in a class like English 303, a foundations-of-English class, a learn-how-to-be-an-English-major class, we can still give these creative assignments that really provide students with the ability to move beyond thinking of the genre of literary analysis in a very narrow way, as only the "traditional" essay. We can still teach them a lot of those skills but with more creative components.

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Story Shapes

Marcela Fuentes, Ph.D.
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Introduction

I'm going to talk about story shapes. I am primarily a fiction writer, and so I thought I would share a fiction activity, a story writing activity. I usually work with students who sometimes have a hard time understanding the difference between the story they want to tell and what the best form is to tell that particular story. Sometimes, the struggle is between what they want to do and the purposefulness of the writing.

Typically, this shape exercise requires that students have already been given some scaffolding in terms of the “life” aspect of the story” (emotionality, character motivation, narrative threads) and the “artifice” of the story” (the shape or form of that story). They should be aware that both are needed to successfully write a story.

For this exercise, what I do is tell the students, “Okay, we're going to arm ourselves with one line from a published story. Everybody is going to start with this same first line, and everyone is going to start with a prompt.” I love to use the prompt, “A Historical Figure is in Love With You.” So, everyone starts with those two things. Then we talk about story shapes. The students, all having the same first line and prompt, must decide what shape their story will take. Today I will illustrate how one may start with the same elements but still arrive at very different stories.

Story Shape Classifications

It's really important that students see form as a structural craft element. I give students a list of story shapes; it's not an exhaustive list, but it does highlight the most typical narrative forms.

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The first shape is the linear, A to B, or reverse A to B story form. In this shape, a group of young people, our characters if you will, travel in a car down the highway. The linear story happens very prosaically, so we enter the story and the narrative follows chronologically from there. This is a simple structure, organized, usually, in terms of time. This form can be told as it happens or retrospectively. Most “coming of age” stories are told chronologically. Some examples include *The Devil Wears Prada* (2003), *Harry Potter* (1997–2007), and *To Kill a Mockingbird* (1960).

The next shape is a braided narrative, where the storyline alternates between two or more narrative threads, or points in time, or perhaps points of view. To illustrate, I use an image of a young woman from behind, and the focus is on her long red braid. In this case, the braided hair symbolizes the alternating plot, time, or point of view sequences. *Love Medicine*, by Louise Erdrich (1984), is a prime example of a narrative told through various points of view. Perhaps a more contemporary example is the HBO series, *Game of Thrones* (2011–2019), which has at least five different narrative arcs and sets of characters. Most soap operas can also be considered braided narratives.

Another narrative shape is what I call “Rock in the Water.” Imagine a large rock plunging into a pool of water. The rock is interrupting that space, and there are concentric rings emanating from that interruption. In terms of fictive forms, a central event or inciting incident happens, and then the narrative reverberates from that event. There are many examples of that form. For example, the Julia Roberts film, *August: Osage County* (2014), where the funeral of the family patriarch brings together the whole family and then some unresolved drama from twenty years ago comes up during these few days.

Related to the “Rock in the Water” is the “Spiral.” The spiral is a point unfurling or developing into something larger. Instead of the inciting event causing everything else in the narrative, the central event is partially obscured. The narrative arc reveals pieces of the event over the course of the story. This form is very popular for the classic police procedural. Someone is murdered, and the entire storyline is based on an attempt to solve the crime.

Another shape is the “Bathtub” or “Frame” story. Picture an old-fashioned, clawfoot bathtub. The tub represents the foreground of the story. It is static, because it is a container of the actual narrative. This type of story takes place entirely in the past or is perhaps a story within a less-realized story. A well-known example of a frame story is the movie, *Titanic* (1997), wherein the foreground plot is simply researchers trying to find a jewel supposedly lost in the famous shipwreck. This on its own is too thin to sustain an actual narrative. The real story takes place entirely in the past. Rose,

now an elderly woman, recounts how she came to possess the jewel, her ill-fated love, and how this experience made her an independent person. Another good example is the cult classic film, *The Princess Bride* (1987). In this case, the frame is not two different time periods but one “realistic” setting—an American suburban home, where a grandfather reads a fairytale book to his sick grandson—and one “fantasy” setting, the story in the book. The action arises completely from the fairytale. Although the “realistic” narrative has moments of interjection, it is not a braided narrative because the thread of the grandfather reading to his grandson does not have developed story elements. These characters simply function as a built-in audience for the adventure-love story of Princess Buttercup and her Wesley.

The opposite of the bathtub or frame story is the “Iceberg.” For this story, imagine an iceberg floating in water. Although some of it rises above the water, most of the iceberg is submerged. The iceberg story has minimal details on the page, with most of the emotional context and even the action of the narrative implied rather than overtly stated. Probably the most famous example of this form is Ernest Hemmingway’s short story “Hills Like White Elephants” (1927). On the surface, the story is simply a conversation between two lovers waiting for a train to Madrid. Although the lovers are not having an argument, there is obvious contention between the two, seen in the man’s irritation and the woman’s attempts to appease him, as they have drinks and look at the landscape. Mid-story, the man says, apropos of nothing apparent on the page, “it’s an awfully simple operation, Jig...Not really an operation at all.” The effect is that the reader realizes this is an ongoing issue, submerged beneath their commonplace talk of the environment and their drinks. The word “operation” is the only specific statement made about the crux of their disagreement. As the story progresses, entirely in dialogue, it becomes clear that the man wants the woman to have an abortion. The woman clearly does not want to have one but is insecure about the man continuing to love her if she does not. Hemmingway conveys the entire conflict of the story and the emotions of the characters without either of them ever saying what the operation is or openly stating their feelings, only via context clues. This is a very challenging form.

Finally, picture a Rubix Cube. This is the “Experimental Form” short story. In Creative Nonfiction, it is called a “Hermit Crab” shape. This is where the writer mimics a different genre of writing to tell a story. Experimental forms may be a story that looks like a dictionary entry, a memo, or even a divorce decree. It still tells a story, but the narrative arc may be connected through atypical elements. For example, Meg Pokrass’s story “Recent Rejection Letters” (2011) takes the form of a series of boilerplate literary magazine rejections: “Dear X, Thank you for allowing us to

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consider your story. Unfortunately, this is not for us, but we wish you the best placing your work elsewhere.” The content, however, is really a series of romantic rejections from men this character has gone on dates with. The effect is humorous as well as sad. Also, because the topic of romantic rejection is often covered in conventional ways, the appeal for readers is that the form itself brings a fresh take to this subject via stylistic elements.

Conclusion

Having covered these story shapes, I will now return to the exercise. Remember that the students all have the same first line from a published story and the same writing prompt, “A Historical Figure is in Love with You.” They are then assigned to select a shape, or form, in which to write that story.

My rationale is that selecting shape highlights critical thinking and intentionality. Asking students to place events in a certain order, or intentionally enter a story in a certain way, is asking them to really think about structure as a writing tool. Playing with shape and form helps them become better writers because they're able to see writing as craft, a separate thing from what they want to write, if that makes sense. This is one of my main objectives when I'm teaching fiction. I want them to come away knowing that you can tell the same story five different ways and it will be a different story every time.

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Teaching Writing with Care and Closeness

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Introduction & Theoretical Background

My pedagogy exists at the nexus of activism and research. The literature and scholarship I read are grounded in lived experiences, which I use to “activate” my students, that is, to help them make sense of their experiences and translate their knowledge into actionable change. One theoretical text I draw from is *No Angel in the Classroom* by Berenice Fisher (2001). In *No Angel*, Fisher reflects on classroom anecdotes and feminist scholarship to offer a rigorous and personalized account of feminist pedagogy. Critical to Fisher’s thinking is feminist ethics of care: a moral theory that was first explicitly argued by Carol Gilligan (1982) in *In a Different Voice: Psychological Theory and Women's Development*. Feminist ethics of care draws from the experiences of women and others who have been conditioned to care. This moral theory values interconnectedness and nurturing, and holds that care is vital to issues of politics, justice, and everyday life.

For Fisher (2001), care and education are intertwined: to care is to educate and vice versa. She writes, “Teaching through a feminist discourse creates a context in which the interplay among experience, feelings, thinking, and action evokes certain needs. . . . As someone committed to a pedagogy revolving around feminist discourse, I cannot avoid asking whether, when, where, or how these needs should be met and what, in this context, is the role of care” (pp. 112–113). Fisher has three principles to demarcate care and help identify this “role of care” in the classroom. These principles are dependency, attention, and protection. Because one student’s needs may differ from another’s and because similar needs may be met differently, Fisher finds no perfect formula for giving care. However, she recognizes that students have diverse needs that affect their learning, needs that often oblige recognition and response from educators.

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Practicing Ethics of Care

As a fellow care ethicist and a queer and feminist instructor, I consider Fisher's teachings foundational to my pedagogy. That said, care is a touchy subject for my students and me because discourses of care can easily become paternalistic and/or pigeonholing. For instance, according to the so-called "white man's burden," colonization was justifiable because it was supposedly in the best interest of the colonized; colonizing, in other words, was seen as an act of care. Today, responsibilities of care still fall unequally along lines of race, class, and gender. For example, women of color faculty are unfairly expected to perform unpaid emotional labor for their students and other faculty (Garcia, 2019). However, even though care cannot fix every problem, and it has sometimes created problems, care has proven to be valuable for my pedagogy. I contend that careful and critical uses of care can empower, heal, and unite learners, and I have crafted two major assignments using feminist ethics of care to great success.

Broadly speaking, I use feminist ethics of care to understand that classrooms are communal spaces: that is, classrooms are made up of specific individuals with various concrete needs. Care ethics reminds me of the omnipresence of affect and its potential uses in the classroom along with the responsibilities that I have to my students, myself, and others who have constructed and helped maintain the classroom. Through care ethics, I navigate power imbalances, humanize my students, and become humanized, remembering that we exist in larger networks of care and that care is always already gendered, raced, and classed.

One principle that I have applied from feminist ethics of care to my teaching is closeness. Early care ethicists privileged physically and emotionally close relationships since care tends to be easier to recognize and measure in physically and emotionally close relationships. One example of this is the "identifiable victim effect" (Jenni & Lowenstein, 1997), which states that people are more likely to give help to their neighbors than to strangers. Although this psychological preference for the near and familiar may lead to tribalism, nationalism, and xenophobia, I believe it has some positive applications. For example, one text that I have students rhetorically analyze in my Composition and Rhetoric class is the web page for The 12th Can, a student-run food pantry at my university that serves faculty, staff, and other students. Working in small groups, the students analyze the web page's formatting, diction, syntax, and accompanying pictures to articulate its strategies and gauge The 12th Can's effectiveness at presenting itself as a legitimate and worthwhile cause. The students consider logos, pathos, and ethos to discern how food insecurity—which affected one

in seven Americans in 2020 —is represented close to home (“The Impact of the Corona Virus on Food Insecurity,” 2021). By placing food insecurity and rhetoric in the context of their local community, my students’ preconceptions about their university are challenged, and they are confronted with the question: how should a communal problem be solved?

Similarly, I offer another assignment for my same class that resonates with the emphasis feminist ethics of care places on closeness. In this assignment, students rhetorically analyze the bronze monument of Lawrence Sullivan Ross, a Confederate States Army general, in terms of posture, size, materiality, and color. This rhetorical analysis also focuses on placement: the statue stands in the middle of our campus at Texas A&M University. Students answer a myriad of questions. What does it mean for A&M to center the statue, for it to be placed at the heart of campus? How is the statue standing: gallantly, triumphantly, welcomingly, and to whom? Ultimately, when I bring in texts that are quite close to students, they are generally more engaged due to how the texts more clearly relate to their lives, and there are often personal stakes involved.

Conclusion

Inspired by feminist ethics of care, I hope to see the students make connections among themselves, history, the local community, and society more broadly. These close types of assignments are productive for at least a couple reasons. First, they help students grasp the practicality of humanities and the English major, which is as relevant as ever due to how COVID-19 has forced budget cuts to liberal arts programs (Dennon, 2021). Second, assignments that illuminate closeness can lead students to create changes in their communities. A couple of my students went on to volunteer at The 12th Can, and several of my former students have been involved in efforts to protest the Confederate monument. Moreover, whenever I assign these texts, there are always several students who report that they did not know of The 12th Can or of the history of the Sullivan Ross statue before the activity. These assignments thus allow for a candid and grounded discussion of privilege, accessibility, and historical forgetting. Convincing students to care about what they study can be challenging, but one way I show that I care about them is by assigning texts close to their proximities. At the very least, it has made me feel closer to them, and that matters.

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Incorporating Diversity and Inclusivity into ENGL 355: Rhetoric of Style

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Since the second half of the twentieth century, rhetoric and composition has emphasized diversity and inclusivity as important pedagogical values. How well these values are reflected in instructional practice, however, has long been a point of contention. Additionally, the exigence for creating diverse, inclusive curricula has only intensified due to changing student and national demographics, as well as the resurgence of fascism in US sociopolitical discourse. In my presentation, I will discuss my response to that exigence with my pedagogy, focusing in particular on an upper level course taught at Texas A&M: English 355 - Rhetoric of Style. Specifically, I will review how my practice and curriculum for English 355 incorporates themes of US history and cultural identities in our exploration of style.

Teaching Writing Across the English Department Curriculum

In order to understand how I have adapted English 355's curriculum towards exploring issues of diversity and inclusion, an understanding of the course's traditional structure is needed. The general design of this course helps students to develop an understanding of stylistic analysis, from the grammatical and syntactical rules of English to larger social contexts. We look at writing from a wide array of genres, from social media to news articles to poetry, just so we can see how these stylistic concepts manifest in these contexts. When instructors assign readings for a typical week, we put them in pairs. This is because contrasting texts makes stylistic analysis easier for students. Lastly, sections of this class are focused on a central theme to provide a sense of cohesion as we navigate all of these different texts and genres. Out of all the traditional design elements of English 355, the theme is where I have made most of my adjustments.

For my section of English 355: Rhetoric of Style, I look at the theme of American culture and different aspects of American identity. I find that this theme pairs nicely with style because it goes along with the emphasis in generic diversity, tying that to different voices and experiences. It allows students to draw on their own understanding of how they identify with being American or with American culture. Further still, it gives me a way of talking about a range of current events while also applying historical context to them. My experiences in teaching other courses has been that current events that might be more contentious otherwise can be supplemented with history. This supplementary context enhances students' abilities to recognize and evaluate recursive patterns in historical and contemporary events, and what makes current events significant.

On the first day of class, my primary pedagogical objective is to set the tone for in-class discussions and prompt students to engage with central course concepts. Some of the opening questions I ask include:

- What traits or values do you ascribe to American culture?
- What are some different ways American culture can be defined?
- Does America only apply to people in the United States or people from North, Central, and South America regardless of country?
- How do you identify with being an American or American culture?
- What are some contradictions in American culture that you notice?

Student observations that typically emerge include the idea that Americans really value being an individual and going against the grain. Past classes have linked

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those qualities with a contentious social issue, such as gender conformity, identifying contradictions between these values and how they apply (or don't) to these issues.

As a practical demonstration of my pedagogical approach, I will review the first pair of readings we covered in the Spring 2021 section of my English 355 course. We began with looking at the United States and Haitian Declarations of Independence. This is because the United States and Haiti were the first two colonies to declare independence from a European power. One colony was led by slave owners, the other by enslaved Africans, so they have an interesting legacy together. To analyze these texts, we looked at stylistic concepts called the "arenas" which are basically layers of context. We begin the textual arena, or the context of how the English language is structured, such as grammar and syntax. From there, we progress to the social arena, or the ways the writers are trying to cultivate identities for themselves, how they use those identities to engage with their audiences, and even sometimes the identities they try to cultivate for their audiences. Lastly, we examine the cultural arena, which looks at a text and the writer's connection to historical and larger cultural contexts and collective experiences.

When the students applied these concepts to these pieces, we were also looking at connections between both countries. Even though the two countries are linked geographically and historically, most of the students don't know much about Haiti, so we think about why that might be. We also looked at how each country characterized their oppressors in the document, so we can see the kind of cultural relationship they had and were supposed to have later. We also look at contextual connections between the two countries at the time of the Haitian Revolution. For example, Jefferson obviously wrote our Declaration of Independence, but he was President when Haiti declared their independence, and did not support it.

Another pair of texts we analyzed in the class were Amanda Gorman's poem, "The Hill We Climb," when she spoke at President Joseph Biden's inauguration, and a criminal complaint that the FBI filed against someone who was part of the January 6th insurrection at the Capitol. The latter event was a much more ominous beginning to the course and its themes than I anticipated, but I did my best to incorporate it effectively. For these readings, the main stylistic concept we review comes from Cicero: levels of style. In other words, I ask: what is the purpose of the document, how does the document's style convey that purpose? For low style, the purpose is just to inform or teach; for middle style, it is to entertain or engage; and the purpose high style is to move. Obviously, conceptions of rhetorical situations and textual genres were simpler in Cicero's time, so we also wrestle with questions like, "How do we

unpack these distinctions in the modern age? How has rhetoric evolved since then?" In terms of how we apply themes of diversity and inclusion to these concepts, we look at how writers construct themselves in alignment with American values. I ask: how did the FBI try to embody the sense of unbiased justice that America claims to value? How is Gorman framing our collective experience and national ethos in her poem? We also look at how conventions of language connect with historical context, how these conventions are followed in each text, when these texts deviate from those conventions, and how those deviations illustrate the American character. For example, an FBI criminal report is trying to look as unbiased as possible. It is very difficult to tell who wrote it individually, because the document is representing an organization, whereas Gorman talks about her own experience in this country and her experience speaking at the inauguration of a Black female Vice President. Consequently, she puts herself in the text while simultaneously using the third person to describe herself. This implies that her story is not the only one like hers, and it also deviates from the typical use of first person.

I want to end my presentation with a couple of challenges that arose with my latest section, and that I want to address in the future. The biggest challenge is just keeping it from turning into a history class. When we examine how larger social and cultural contexts shape style, you have to provide that information for students to have a fair chance to analyze texts. For example, last semester we looked at a text by Russell Means, who is a Lakota activist, and I had a student ask me "why he's so angry." That is an enormous question, and it is difficult to unpack those centuries of history in a short time, so I had to briefly address it and then follow up in the next class, while maintaining a focus on style

The other major challenge is just crafting a really comprehensively diverse reading list. Balancing diversity in genre with diversity in perspective can be really difficult. Beyond doing my own research, it is a question I have also put to my students. Regardless, I change up my reading list every time I teach the course, but I am still working towards further improvement.

Thank you all for your time and thank you again for listening.

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The Pitfalls of Teaching Poetry Writing

Michael Collins, Ph.D.

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So—what are the pitfalls of teaching poetry writing? The first pitfall opens underfoot as one chooses texts for a poetry writing class. I usually assign a “how to” book that explains techniques, forms, and approaches to solving the problems involved in bringing forms and techniques to life. I also assign a “what's out there” book. This is an anthology of contemporary poetry that the students can use as models for their own work or use as examples of styles to resist. But in choosing the “how to” and “what's out there” books, I run up against a problem that I always talk about on the first day. The problem is that of grading poetry—something akin to trying to grade a life form.

This life form status of poetry is one of the reasons why I hesitated to accept a seat on this particular panel. After all, I'm not in the Writing in the Disciplines field, and I have always thought of teaching poetry writing as different from teaching the writing of critical essays. I have always taken it for granted that student essays should be graded with the idea of prodding class members to work hard to write well-structured, persuasive, grammatically unimpeachable arguments.

But then, listening to the presentations so far in this symposium, I've come to realize (with the help of encouragement from Dr. David McWhirter) that I might have something to contribute. The questions that guided me while preparing this presentation are the following: How much should teaching academic essay writing resemble teaching poetry writing? What should the balance be between giving free reign to student creativity and enforcing standard structure, diction, syntax, tone, decorum, citation, and the rest?

In my poetry writing classes, I allow and encourage complete freedom in terms of the students' experiments with structure, diction, syntax, curse words, raw emotion, sudden confessions, blank space, appropriated lines, length, and more. In grading academic essays, on the other hand, I point out errors in syntax, diction, argumentation, paragraph and thesis construction, depth of insight, use and citation of sources, and, sometimes, conformity to an assigned topic. In short, I think of teaching academic essays as teaching a craft—no insult to anyone who thinks otherwise—while teaching poetry is teaching an art, and teaching an art is like teaching somebody how to make a tiger.

On the slide I am showing now, I have the image of the tiger painted by William Blake to illustrate his great poem “The Tyger.” I do this as a way of elaborating on the aforementioned differences between critical essays and poetry. It is important to remember here that Blake was dismissed at the time of his death as “an unfortunate lunatic” by one writer (Hunt, 1809, as cited in Homes, 2015). Even the opium-addicted poet Samuel Taylor Coleridge (1818) confessed, “I am in the very mire of commonplace common sense compared to Mr. Blake” (as cited in Holmes, 2015).

So, I would say that in teaching poetry, I try to get people to escape the mire of common sense, while in teaching essay writing I try to teach them how to put common sense in the form of standard sentence structure and rules of argument to work to make convincing claims about their subjects. The difference is the one between Blake’s “The Tyger,” which goes way beyond common sense, and the essay about Blake that includes the Coleridge quotation—an essay that makes marvelous use of common sense.

I can explain this a little more precisely—and touch on the surprising political implications of these aesthetic and pragmatic issues—by explaining the lesson contained in my decision to choose a book I regularly use in the poetry class. This book is Rita Dove’s *The Penguin Anthology of Twentieth-Century American Poetry* (2011)—the “what’s out there” book. In her introduction, Rita Dove explains that, as she chose poets for the anthology, she asked herself, “Is this a voice that will be remembered?” (2011, p. xxix).

She goes on to emphasize her break with traditional ideas of what a voice worth hearing or worth remembering might be, and she contrasts her approach with that of previous anthologists. In the early 20th century, she explains, “four men emerged as monoliths: Robert Frost, Wallace Stevens, William Carlos Williams, and Ezra Pound....these...poets were all Caucasian males, but so was then, by design, membership in the cultural elite; female and nonwhite poets had little choice but to emulate or, if temperamentally suited, argue with the rulers of mainstream perception” (Dove, 2011b, p. xxiii).

One of the things I find striking about this is the fact that, by editing the Penguin anthology, Dove herself became a kind of ruler, or possible ruler at least, of mainstream perception. This is especially striking when one considers the background she brought to her suzerainty: Dove was tapped to edit the anthology in the first place because she has a very exalted reputation as a poet. She won the Pulitzer Prize in 1987, becoming the first African American to do so in 37 years, and she served as U.S. Poet Laureate from 1993 to 1995. She was the tip of the spear in the entry of African American poets into the American poetry mainstream. I could give a whole lecture

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about the evolving relationship between Black poetry and the mainstream. But for present purposes, I want to discuss the relationship between Dove and a mainstream doyen, the famous poetry critic Helen Vendler.

In 1997, the New York Times described Vendler as

arguably the most powerful poetry critic in America. For two generations, she and Yale professor Harold Bloom...have to some extent decreed which poets will enter the pantheon. Beyond her influential views, she is a member of the Pulitzer board, has been a nominator for the MacArthur Foundation “genius” awards and is a member of the grant panel for the Guggenheim Foundation. During the early years, she helped select poets to be reviewed by The New York Times Book Review....[S]he has given her favorites celebrity and jobs....Outside the charmed circle of her proteges, however, Ms. Vendler is so feared that many refuse to speak publicly about her....So who is on the Vendler wavelength? Rita Dove, whose lean verse is embedded with complex forms, is one. (Smith, 1997, p. B7)

And so, my point is that she, Vendler, helped Rita Dove gain the prominence that led to Dove’s editorship of the Penguin anthology. But in the end there was a consequential and much remarked-upon break between them caused by that very anthology, and so I’ll briefly discuss this break, and its implications for teaching writing.

In her review of Dove’s anthology, Vendler (2011) wrote:

Multicultural inclusiveness prevails: some 175 poets are represented. No century in the evolution of poetry in English ever had 175 poets worth reading, so why are we being asked to sample so many poets of so little lasting value? Anthologists may now be extending a too general welcome. Selectivity has been condemned as “elitism”...People who wouldn’t be able to take on the long-term commitment of a novel find longed-for release in writing a poem...[Dove] decides (except in certain obligatory moments) for the more “accessible” portions of modern lyric...But a poem can communicate while it is still imperfectly understood (said Coleridge), and Dove trusts her readers less than she might...Perhaps Dove is envisaging an audience that would be put off by a complex text...The school anthologies of the past, knowing their young pupils’ limits, offered many “accessible” poems...But it was assumed that adult readers of poetry could progress...to works attaining varieties of

diction, overlapping intellectual structures, and complex moral reference. (n.p.)

Dove (2011a) angrily responded:

I supposed Ms. Vendler would rather I declare a Top Ten, or perhaps just five, as she herself did in a recent study...Assuredly, many acclaimed poets are no match for Shakespeare—probably not a one...[But my anthology] is a gathering of poems its editor finds outstanding for a variety of reasons, and by no means all of them in adherence to my own aesthetic taste buds...Vendler—no slouch when it comes to lumping poets together by race—makes quick work of...Gwendolyn Brooks, dismissing my description of Brooks' "richly innovative" early poems as "hyperbole," perhaps because I dared to compare those poems to "the best male poets of any race"...[Vendler further complains that] ("From [Dove's] choices no selection principle emerges.")

There is enough going on in this exchange to merit its own essay (and a number of essays have been written about the Dove-Vendler cage match). But for present purposes what counts is the way the exchange highlights the difficulty of judging a poem. In other words, I ask: what is an "A" poem? What is a "C" poem? What poems should be in an anthology? Which poems should be excluded? What aesthetic principles must you use? These hard-to-answer questions are among the reasons why I'm uncomfortable with giving grades to poems, although I feel I have to because of the academic system we're in.

But who knows? Maybe in the future, I'll consider using a grading contract in the poetry class. But I still have to process the idea of whether I should use grading contracts in a class where people write essays. So, I'm hoping some of the Writing in the Disciplines people here can enlighten me about that.

A final quick point: One of Vendler's criticisms of Dove is that Dove is a poet and not an essayist and, as a consequence, Dove's introduction to the anthology is weak. And, of course, Dove once again responded sharply and took Vendler down. I guess the questions it all raises are: What are the minimum essay writing standards that must be taught, and how much flexibility and room for poetic adventures should be accommodated by those minimum standards?

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Afterword, August 19, 2021

During the Q&A after my panel, Dr. Valerie Balester asked me an interesting question: Do I believe academic essays are just workmanlike pedestrian things while poetry is a high art?¹ I was very grateful for the question because it gave me a chance to seem not so full of myself. My answer was that the five-minute limit for panel member presentations allowed little room for nuance—little space to ask obvious rhetorical questions like how many poets can write as well as Walter Benjamin? Indeed, there are many great essayists like Benjamin who are just fearless as writers. Jacques Derrida comes to mind. (Some lines—for instance, “I will speak, therefore, of a letter. Of the first letter, if the alphabet and most of the speculations which have entered into it, are to be believed”—arguably helped launch a whole school of poetry).

It is true that, in a class that assigns academic essays, my focus is on telling students, “You have to create something that can communicate your thoughts effectively and pass muster if you need to submit a writing sample when you apply for a job or graduate school.” But there is of course a lot of room for art in essay writing. I have gotten some great, beautiful student essays. Because sometimes, when someone tries to write with great precision, essay writing starts to converge with poetry writing. Focusing with real intensity on the elements of essay writing forces a person to become creative in order, for instance, to convey a complicated reality in 1,000 words or whatever the requirement is. At the limit, language starts to superconduct, just as it does in poetry (Collins, 2006, 935–936).

Finally, I have to say a word about Frantz Fanon, another who doubled as scholar and great writer, because something else I could not explain due to the five-minute limit is why I chose the title “The Pitfalls of Poetry Writing.” The title is an allusion to Fanon’s famous chapter on “The Pitfalls of National Consciousness” in *The Wretched of the Earth*. In that chapter (as translated by Constance Farrington), Fanon asserts that the

National bourgeoisie will be greatly helped on its way toward decadence by the Western bourgeoisies, who come to it as tourists avid for the exotic, for big game hunting, and for casinos. The national bourgeoisie organizes centers of rest and relaxation and pleasure resorts to meet the wishes of the Western bourgeoisie. (Fanon, 153)

¹ These are not her exact words, but this is the gist of her question.

This passage makes me wonder if the Dove-Vendler relationship in particular—and, more generally, the relationship between nonwhite intellectuals and white critics, editors, universities, classrooms, prize committees and the like—isn't a little like the relationship between the national bourgeoisie and the western bourgeoisie: a relationship in which the national bourgeois/poet is judged, even in his, her or their rebellion—even in the assertion of his, her or their editorial taste—by a Western bourgeoisie that wants the nonwhite intellectual to show an independence that caters to the West's desire for exotic pleasures and “big game”—for tigers, if you will.

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Literary Translation Project

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Introduction

In this article, I want to share one of the projects that I assign in my literature class focused on writing about literary texts, particularly writing about poetry. It's called a "literary translation project." Basically, I ask my students to choose one of the poems that we read in class and translate it into any language of their preference. The reason why I started integrating translation practice into a literary writing course is because, as a poetry researcher myself, I always think about, or struggle with, a better way to teach how to read and write about poetry. And a few years ago, I was at a conference where we were discussing over a dinner some of the pedagogical concerns that we share in teaching poetry. As always, I was introducing these amazing Korean poets to other scholars present, and I ended up with the huge idea: "Why not integrate translation into poetry teaching?" So that's where this all started, and I'll briefly review the introduction that I give out to my students.

Project Design

First, I let the students know some of the terminology that translators usually use, such as "source text," which is the text that the translator is given to translate into another language, and "target text," which is the translation of the source text. It doesn't really matter whether the students remember these terms, but having these concepts in mind makes the students really feel like they're on an official translation publishing project. More importantly, this knowledge gives them the sense of awareness that they're in between two different languages and cultures, so that they need to keep in mind that they need to take equal consideration of the two languages in the process of producing their own version of the poem.

Next, I tell my students to do some research if needed in the process of translating, and to make use of the dictionary—any dictionary, including Google—as much as possible. This is because understanding a language inevitably entails the need to look into specific cultural and sociopolitical conditions that affected the formation of that language, and thus, I emphasize that the translator is always "in between" and that the positionality of the translator is a crucial thing to consider.

The most important part of this project is the third step. Here, I ask my students to attach a thorough analysis, which I call a “translator's note,” to their final work. This note needs to provide a detailed explanation of the choices that the student, as a translator, made throughout the process of translating. This includes what they considered or the priorities they kept in mind in the process of translating, or even the struggles they encountered. Some of the points that could be addressed in this note are the reason for choosing a certain word over another word, or the change of the order or arrangements of words or lines from the source text, or the reasoning behind why some words or nuances were excluded in the target text, or why they chose not to go with word-for-word translation.

I require students to provide at least seven explanations on different points in their translated work. This is particularly important because I don't know all of the target languages they choose. But more importantly, I require this note because in writing it, students practice how to write about poetry in general, since they learn what to look at in more detail and what needs to be considered further.

Conclusion

Making students become translators gives them the experience of the difficulty and struggles of learning about or accessing another language and culture. But at the same time, it also gives them some sense of agency in that they can produce a new version of the poem in their own sentences and words, and also a written analysis of it through which they learn how to write about literature. Personally, as a translator myself working between two different languages, Korean and English, I always feel like the best way to put myself into a position where I have to be extra attentive and careful in dealing with each word or grammatical element in a literary text is to translate the word into another language. This is because in the process of translating literature, you really become the closest reader you can be.

Thus, using translation not only helps the students to find the right allusions of certain words in the poem (you can obviously always Google it now), it also offers them an opportunity to use a more attentive and broader perspective in looking at the poem. Translating provides them with experience making choices in between the definitions and implications of each word and sentence on both semantic and syntactic levels in order to structure their own sentences in the target language. And more fundamentally, assigning a translation project makes the students linger longer in front of the text than they usually do when they read the assigned text for the class.

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Because we all are familiar with the experience of being exposed to a new poem, the encounter itself can be frustrating for a lot of students. The major issue that I noticed since I started teaching poetry is that many of the students don't spend enough time struggling with a poem, which makes it harder for them to even write about it. But by translating the poem, they are, in a way, forced to contemplate all of the different nuances that come from cultural differences and then figure out the best way to deliver the source text into the target text, which is a huge task. I always try to do this project for the experience of being between two different languages. Finding a way to work in between those two cultures can be a great way to naturally incorporate the issues of diversity and inclusion into a writing course, extending the overall focus and discussion of the class to access and community.

About the Roundtable Participants

Matt McKinney is an Instructional Assistant Professor of English at Texas A&M University, and the Coordinator of the Small Course Initiative for English 210. He has taught a variety of courses at A&M over the last five years, from first-year writing to upper division courses on rhetorical theory. He has also been part of the A&M English Department's initiative to create and edit OERs for English courses, serving as first editor for the technical and professional writing OER. His research interests include pop culture analysis, writing in the disciplines, technical and professional writing, and critical pedagogy.

Marian Eide is Associate Professor of English and Women's and Gender Studies at Texas A&M University. She is the author of *Ethical Joyce* (Cambridge 2002), *After Combat: True War Stories from Iraq and Afghanistan* (Potomac 2018—co-authored with Michael Gibler), and the *Terrible Beauty: The Violent Aesthetic and Twentieth-Century Literature* (University of Virginia Press, 2019), as well as more than a dozen articles on twentieth-century literature and culture. Her research concerns ethics, aesthetics, and violence.

Regina Marie Mills is Assistant Professor of Latinx and U.S. Multi-Ethnic Literature at Texas A&M University in the Department of English. Her work in AfroLatinx literary studies, U.S.-Central American literature, and games studies have appeared in *Latino Studies*, *The Black Scholar*, *Chiricú Journal: Latina/o Literatures, Arts, and Cultures*, *Latinx Talk*, and *Black Perspectives*. She has publications forthcoming in *Teaching Games*

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and Games Studies in the Literature Classroom (Bloomsbury) and *The Routledge Handbook of Refugee Narratives*.

Marcela Fuentes is an Assistant Professor of Creative Writing and Latinx Literature at Texas A&M University. She is a graduate of the Iowa Writers' Workshop, and was the 2016-2017 James C. McCreight Fellow in Fiction at the Wisconsin Institute for Creative Writing. Her work appears in the *Indiana Review*, *Kenyon Review*, *Ploughshares*, and the State of Texas ELA Curriculum Grade 7.

Landon Sadler is a PhD student in the Department of English at Texas A&M University. His academic interests include American literature, queer theory, care ethics, and popular culture studies. His dissertation, "Time Will Tell: Dystopian Cultural Production and Queer Ethics of Care," examines contemporary dystopian works by queer artists and writers and the themes of futurity and care that they express. He believes that literature and pedagogy can be healing and empowering.

Michael Collins is a Professor of English at Texas A & M University. His poem, "**Tight Like This,**" recorded 1928, Chicago, Illinois, was a finalist for the 2020 Best of the Net Anthology.

Hyunjung Kim is a Ph.D. candidate in the English Department at Texas A&M University. Her research centers on poetry and poetics and the intersections of race, disability, aesthetics, gender, and sexuality. She also writes about translation, lesbian cinema, and the work of sound in literature.

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