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Multilingual Literature in Writing Classes: Bringing out Students' Authentic Voices

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Abstract

In this paper, I argue for using the texts written by multilingual writers in second language writing courses. Grounded in the ideas of translanguaging, this instructional approach supports students in using various linguistic resources for different purposes, thus allowing them both to develop positive multilingual and multicultural identities and experience a sense of belonging in the U.S. Moreover, the discussions around the texts were based on a flipped classroom model and were facilitated through an online literature discussion forum. Students' papers and responses in an end-of-semester survey were analyzed using content analysis. The article highlights students' reactions to this instructional practice and suggests possible explanations for some variation. Based on the students' responses, the article suggests a modification for using multilingual literature with this group of students. The paper ends with pedagogical implications for language teachers and researchers and features the instructional materials developed for this study.

Keywords: translanguaging; multilingual literature; materials' development; students' authentic voices

Introduction

Responding to the recent calls (Bernardo, 2017; Lee & Canagarajah, 2019; Manan, 2016) to incorporate and to investigate the use of students' full linguistic repertoire in the classroom, this paper offers both a conceptual framework and pedagogical ideas about how to use multilingual literature with second language writers. This innovative instructional strategy used in an academic writing course is grounded in the ideas of translanguaging (Canagarajah, 2013), interpretive practice with texts (Kramsch, 1995), computer-mediated communication, and a flipped-classroom approach (J. Chen, personal communication, March 24th, 2019). The study is also informed by the latest research on using expressive and creative forms of writing with second language writers (Avramenko, Davydova, & Burikova, 2018; Bilton & Sivasubramaniam, 2009).

While the benefits of using multilingual students' voices in instruction have been well established in the research (e.g., Vandrick, 1997; Vyas, 2004), instructional materials involving the voices of multilingual subjects are only beginning to emerge. This article demonstrates a way to use students' real-life experiences and personal reactions to the texts written by expert multilingual writers (e.g., Sandra Cisneros) and facilitated through an online literature discussion forum to enrich international and immigrant students' learning experiences in a writing course in a U.S. university. In line with the previous research (Lee & Canagarajah, 2019; Rowe, 2018), this paper presents examples of students' creative use of their various

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languages in a writing assignment, thus bringing students' authentic voices to the ongoing academic discussion.

The study aims to add more engaging reading and writing activities to an academic writing course; to utilize students' funds of knowledge (Moll, 2005); to promote and support intercultural learning, and facilitate bi/multilingual identity development.

The paper also sought to answer the following questions:

1. How do the students in an academic writing course in a U.S. university use their full linguistic repertoire in a specialized creative writing assignment?
2. How do they perceive the intentional use of translanguaging in the academic writing course?

Theoretical Framework

Translanguaging

Translanguaging has been defined as "an emerging instructional theory" which "encourages educators to rethink their understanding of bilingualism" (Hamman-Ortiz, 2019/2020, p. 64). More specifically, García (as cited in Rivera & Mazak, 2017) refers to translanguaging as "multiple discursive practices in which bilinguals engage to make sense of their bilingual worlds," highlighting that it is "the discursive norm in bilingual families and communities" (p. 124).

While multilingual students rely on a meaning-making repertoire (García & Otheguy, 2020; Li, 2018) to achieve different communicative purposes outside the classroom, language teachers incorporate the ideas related to translanguaging into the classroom may seem a daunting task to undertake (Galante, 2020). In this case, both teachers and students need to navigate and to negotiate the process of using translanguaging in the classroom on their own (Paterson, 2020), and it also requires the teachers to "give up" some of their "power" and let their students' voices be heard in various ways and languages. Some educators working with multilingual students have already adopted this approach and are very successful at bringing out the best in their students in that way. For instance, Rowe (2018) lists specific ideas about what translanguaging may look like when applied to a real classroom. First, rather than imposing the English-only rule in the English language classroom, teachers adopting translanguaging practices allow students to use their full and diverse meaning-making repertoire, including "bodies, gestures, lives, etc." (García & Otheguy, 2020, p. 24). Some of the challenges of this approach are that some students may be resistant to the idea of using their native language in the English language classroom since they are here only to speak (and practice) English; yet at the same time, this arrangement offers them the opportunity of, for example, understanding difficult concepts in their home language first and then in English, which can be a very helpful tool for their learning. Second, Rowe (2018) suggests teachers' modeling, translanguaging, and expressing appreciation and interest in the languages students use outside the classroom. Third, Rowe (2018) recommends seeking translating opportunities for students. While many students are already translating in their communities, it may also be worthwhile to highlight their efforts to help their families and friends adjust to the new language and culture. Among other ways, Rowe (2018) suggests creating multilingual books and connecting students with multilingual audiences, e.g., inviting heritage language speakers to the classroom. Rowe (2018) concludes that although "this can be challenging, it is also an

exciting opportunity to draw upon the translanguaging abilities that these emergent bilingual students bring to the classroom" (p. 37).

An important aspect of using translanguaging in the classroom is related to students' perceptions of translanguaging itself. Rivera and Mazak (2017) reported that the students in a university in Puerto Rico were predominantly neutral or positive towards translanguaging practices in the classroom, possibly due to the fact that they are "conditioned to work within a context where code-switching and translanguaging happen frequently" (p. 122). Rivera and Mazak (2017) also highlight that the students' attitudes towards languages "may affect how students learn" (p. 125). In contrast, in a recent study by Lee and Canagarajah (2019), the majority of the undergraduate students enrolled in an academic writing course in a large public U.S. university were not interested in the ideas related to translanguaging. Lee and Canagarajah (2019) explain that a person's transcultural dispositions and translanguaging practices can be mediated by his/her life experiences. In this study, unlike his other classmates, a Czech student (Koky) expressed a positive attitude towards translanguaging in the classroom and a desire to engage in translanguaging practices in writing due to his early experiences with learning Russian as a foreign language and to being exposed to various dialects and languages in a multilingual work environment.

Building on this emergent body of research, this paper also intends to investigate how translanguaging practices can be adopted in a college classroom and how students respond to these instructional ideas.

A Flipped Classroom Model

A flipped classroom model was proposed in 2007 by the science teachers Jonathan Bergmann and Aaron Sams, who replaced face-to-face classroom lectures with online videos, while in-class meetings became devoted to discussions and student-centered activities (Morgan, 2014, as cited in Al-Sudais, 2019). In this model, students learn the material before a class meeting and actively engage with applying the course material to solve problems during class meetings, while the instructor's role is seen as that of a helper or a facilitator rather than a deliverer of knowledge. In their own words, Bergmann and Sams (as cited in Teo & Sathappan, 2018) explain this approach in the following way: "... the class is centered around the students and not the teacher. ... The students are responsible for completing and sharing their work. ... The role of the teacher in the classroom is to help ..., not to deliver information." (pp. 16-17) The authors of this approach highlight that students take greater responsibility for their learning within this framework than in a more traditional classroom.

This approach has been used in various disciplines and has been shown to have many positive effects while also featuring some challenges in its implementation. As research suggests, most instructors and students find this approach very effective. The flipped classroom model can "fulfill students' needs of competence, autonomy, and relatedness" (Ha, O'Reilly, Ng, & Zhang, 2019, p. 10). However, some students may prefer more traditional approaches because of their previous educational experiences and a desire to receive high grades (Ha et al., 2019). Some students may also lack the necessary self-discipline to study course material independently (Teo & Sathappan, 2018).

Nevertheless, the flipped classroom approach can positively affect most students' motivation and achievement (Al-Sudais, 2019; Teo & Sathappan, 2018). For example, Teo and

Sathappan (2018) reported that the experimental group of students (assigned to the flipped classroom model) achieved better results in learning English adjectives than the control group (a traditional teaching model) in the K-12 context. The students particularly stressed the importance of the increased opportunities for teacher-student interaction in allowing them to learn more effectively in the flipped classroom model.

Given the potential that the flipped classroom approach holds for language instruction, this model was applied to the English as a second language (ESL) classroom using an online literature discussion forum.

Intercultural Learning

An intercultural mind has been defined as "a mindset capable of understanding from within and from without both one's own and other cultures" (Bennett, Bennett, & Allen, 2003, p. 252). Through the process of intercultural learning, individuals experience a shift from ethnocentric (where one's own culture is seen as a norm) to ethnorelative attitudes (greater acceptance of differences) (Jackson, 2012). Further, the field has seen a turn away from the word *intercultural competence* to the term *intercultural learning* since the process is endless and life-long (Smolcic & Arends, 2017). The process of intercultural learning has also been described as "a process that lasts a whole lifetime" and "is often informal and incidental" (Jokikokko, 2010, p. 14).

Other terms that have been recently used in the context of contact between cultures are *translingual* and *transcultural*. Lee and Canagarajah (2019) explain this turn in the following passage:

Translingual, on the other hand, treats the notion of pure, standardized, or autonomous languages as an ideological construct (Makoni & Pennycook, 2006). This way, *translingual* problematizes the concept of ownership of language and culture as well as its territorialization, challenging the traditional dichotomy of 'native' and 'non-native speakers', and its connection to a particular nation-state. Instead, *translingual* considers the languages in synergy, generating new forms and meanings in contact, and treats communication as constituted by mobile verbal resources that are appropriated and fluidly used beyond separate labels (Blommaert, 2010). (p. 17)

The words *translingual* and *transcultural* help us conceptualize languages and cultures as a process rather than a finished product (Lee & Canagarajah, 2019). Li (2018) similarly underscores the idea of "multiple ownerships and ... complex interweaving of languages and language varieties" and that "boundaries between languages ... and other communicative means, and the relationship between language and the nation-state are being constantly reassessed, broken, or adjusted by speakers on the ground." (p. 15) Lee and Canagarajah (2019, pp. 25-26) further explain that these terms also help us to create a space which asks us "to understand all parties, rather than minoritized ones, to be responsible for the negotiation, and therefore, social interaction and order as negotiable and dynamic." Besides, "transcultural and translingual approaches urge us to remain open-minded to the possibility of a new social order to emerge from such interaction and see the ability to negotiate as important competence" (Lee & Canagarajah, 2019, pp. 25-26).

In line with the emergent terminology and research on translanguaging, this paper utilizes these ideas to design and analyze this study.

Literature Review

Use of Literature in Language Classrooms

Literature has been widely used in language classrooms. Previously, literature was mainly used for esthetic appreciation (Kramersch & Kramersch, 2000), vocabulary acquisition, and reading fluency. Recently, it has also been employed as a way to discuss students' home languages and identities (Kramersch, 1995; Slocum, 2019). Slocum (2019, p. 294) underlines an increased interest to use texts in order "to engage in critical discussions of sociolinguistic variations, power, and identity" in language classrooms. Using literature in language classes can allow students to utilize their linguistic creativity and create "a third space" to look at both native and the target cultures (Kramersch, 1993, p. 223).

Both teachers and students generally see literature use as a positive addition in language classrooms (Zengin, Bařal, & Yũkselir, 2019). Among other benefits, incorporating literature in language courses can result in "enhancing vocabulary knowledge, increasing cultural awareness, and developing students' language skills, particularly reading and writing" (Zengin et al., 2019, p. 162). One of the more effective ways to introduce the idea of reading for pleasure to students is the use of literature circles (Daniels, 1994). Groups (or circles) are formed based on the students' book choices and are student-led. In literature circles, each student is assigned a specific role (e.g., the discussion director, an illustrator, etc.) in their group. The evaluation is carried out by teacher observation and students themselves. In a research study on the use of literature circles with ESL college students, Morales and Carroll (2015) found that the use of this strategy "offered students the environment they needed to feel secure when participating in the classroom by coupling a text that facilitated class discussion with a strategy that required collaboration" (p. 205). Moreover, the book was chosen for the literature circles that dealt with issues of identity, race, and class provided "a topic of common interest ... helped increase the already established communication between peers, since most students felt that they had something to contribute to the conversation" (Morales & Carroll, 2015, p. 205).

Book discussions can become "critical and transformative spaces" for students struggling to learn to trust their voices while promoting students' ability to respond to and connect to various texts to construct more positive multicultural identities (Polleck & Epstein, 2015, p. 79). In a similar vein, Vyas (2004) highlights the importance of offering "extended support in the form of literacy forums (either within or outside of school settings) to understand better the identity experiences of all students seeking guidance and support amid participation in multiple worlds" (p. 22). Vandrick (1997) explains the ambiguities of multilingual students' and writers' intercultural experiences by stating that tension can be both positive and negative. While the writers can access the knowledge and beauty of various languages and cultures, they may also experience a sense of not belonging anywhere in particular, which can be a disorienting experience.

To summarize, multilingual authors' use of literature has been found to serve as a "mirror" for this group of students (Vandrick, 1997). In particular, these texts helped create a safe space inside and outside the classroom wherein the students could discuss possible

tensions between the home and school cultures and even find solutions (Vandrick, 1997; Vyas, 2004).

Given the benefits that the use of literature offers to second language learners, several texts by multilingual writers were incorporated into a second language writing course to enhance students' experiences in the course in this study.

Expressive and Creative Writing and Second Language Learners

The use of expressive and creative forms of writing has been controversial in the field of teaching college-level writing (Seo & Kim, 2020). Yet, ESL teachers and researchers have found that using journals, diaries, and blogs with ESL writers regularly can improve the quality of student writing (McDonald, Rosselli, & Clifford, 1997). Besides, instructors' responding to the content of students' writing rather than focusing on their grammatical and other errors can "minimize fear, nervousness, and self-consciousness" (Leki, 1992, p. 17) on the part of the novice writers. Spack and Sadow (1983) also mention that this kind of writing opportunity can help more reserved students better connect to the instructor and peers and express themselves more freely in the classroom. Expressive writing, in a way, frees them (Spack & Sadow, 1983).

Creative writing has been defined as "a playful engagement with language, stretching and testing its rules to the limit in a guilt-free atmosphere, where risk is encouraged" (Maley, 2015, p. 9). Avramenko et al. (2018, p. 55) highlight that creative writing can be taught "in the language classroom utilizing different techniques and heuristics." The authors explain that "creative writing has a long-term perspective since it helps develop creative personalities characterized by flexible thinking, independence of views, high productivity, and originality. These are the skills needed in every occupation" (Avramenko et al., p. 65). Using works of fiction with language students can "encourage them to think creatively and to write what they thought focusing on the content rather than on correctness of form and grammar" (Seo & Kim, 2020, p. 124). In selecting the works of fiction for a literacy class, Seo and Kim (2020) highlight the importance of matching the readings towards students' language proficiency levels as well as choosing interesting topics. For example, the topic of first love can be very appealing to an adolescent audience.

In her autoethnographic essay, Hancı-Azizoğlu (2018) lists many benefits that creative writing can offer to second language students. Among these benefits, she mentions enriching vocabulary choices, gaining metacognitive awareness, and "feeling encouraged to use her second language in more advanced and sophisticated styles" (Hancı-Azizoğlu, 2018, p. 1). Furthermore, Hancı-Azizoğlu (2018) reflects on the pedagogical implications of non-native speakers' use of English in classrooms where monolingualism is considered the norm. She notes that "multilingually diverse students bring their unconventional use of linguistic structures to classrooms, and often, their culturally determined, different writing styles are perceived as interference rather than a source" (Hancı-Azizoğlu, 2018, p. 7). She further suggests that one of the ways "of creating more democratic learning spaces for these students is allowing them to use their home culture genres along with personal writing experiences" (Hancı-Azizoğlu, 2018, p. 7). Hancı-Azizoğlu (2018) thus summarizes the pedagogical imperative of using creative writing with second language students: "... cookie-cutter education that transmits readily available transformation is not the answer... It is the power of imagination and creativity along with critical thinking skills that would give students their writers' voices to change the world for the better. (p. 13)

Following these recent developments in the field and to help students engage their linguistic creativity and imagination, the college-level writing course content was enriched through the addition of a creative writing assignment in this study.

Computer-Mediated Communication in Language Teaching

Recent advancements in technology have dramatically changed the ways instructors and students communicate and learn in college classrooms. The use of blogs, videos, social media, and other instructional technologies for language learning has been shown to increase student motivation, enjoyment, learning, and collaboration both inside and outside the classroom. For example, Lee (2012) found that low-achieving English learners were more motivated and engaged in the online learning environment. Besides posting the required writing assignments, many of these students even submitted additional creative writing posts. The students also highlighted the collaborative nature of the online environment facilitated through an online reading-response journal. Moreover, as Sun and Chang (2012) mention, writing in virtual environments can give students "a sense of authorship as the writers of blog entries and, at the same time, provide a space for them to sort out what being an author entails, their purposes of writing, and their authority in writing." (p. 43)

One of such technologies is a relatively new IText technology called Classroom Salon (Kaufer, Gunawardena, Tan, & Cheek, 2011). Kaufer et al. (2011, p. 1) explain their main goals with this instructional technology as the expression of personal identity and the creation of a writing community.

For example, Classroom Salon allows instructors to share reading materials with their students and highlight certain passages and words from selected texts that are important for class discussions before they come to class. During this process, students address the vocabulary issues and perform necessary research about certain text passages at home, while class meetings are used for more in-depth discussions and learning (J. Chen, personal communication, March 24th, 2019). In this way, the use of Classroom Salon helps both teachers and students have more in-depth conversations about the texts during the class meetings. For this study, Classroom Salon was used to share several selected texts written by expert multilingual writers with students before class meetings. In this way, students could annotate texts and communicate with each other online while exchanging their opinions about the texts. The texts also contained highlighted (by the teacher/researcher) words that could be crucial for understanding.

The Study

Instructional Context

The study took place at a large public U.S. university in an advanced-level academic writing course involving eight international and immigrant students. The students hailed from various cultural backgrounds (Japan, Cote D'Ivoire, Peru, the Dominican Republic, and Saudi Arabia), and three of the participating students were non-traditional students. At the time of the data collection, all the students were enrolled at the university intensive English program and took the writing course as a part of the required curriculum.

The course's main goals were the following: 1. to introduce students to the main academic writing genres (e.g., a summary, a critique), 2. to facilitate academic vocabulary development, and 3. to learn to utilize the university library and other databases to perform scholarly research. The course also introduced students to the process and genre approaches to writing.

In addition to helping students develop intercultural awareness and increase their motivation to write in English, the creative writing assignment was added to help build students' confidence in writing since they could rely on their personal experience in this particular assignment. It can be argued that using one's personal experience to express one's thoughts can help students feel empowered.

Mode of Inquiry

The data collected for this study included: 1. participating students' creative essays 2. the participating students' responses in an end-of-semester open-ended survey about their attitudes towards the use of translanguaging in an academic writing course.

The project is grounded in the qualitative methodology approach (Strauss & Corbin, 1998), and it utilized content analysis techniques (Miles & Huberman, 1994). The essays were read and re-read multiple times by the researcher (also, the instructor) with a focus on the use of translanguaging as *an a priori category* in students' writing. While the researcher (also, the instructor) undertook the analysis by herself, the shared experiences that she had had with the students both inside and outside the classroom allowed her to gain an *insider* perspective on students' engagement with the course.

The papers were read repeatedly by the researcher throughout and upon the completion of the data collection period, and excerpts with the use of translanguaging (or lack of thereof) were marked and set aside. The students' engagement with translanguaging in their essays (or lack of thereof) was then linked to the students' responses in the end-of-semester survey that had also been collected and analyzed by the researcher. These responses allowed the researcher to further to "understand the nature of the meaning of the experience" of the students (Strauss & Corbin, 1998, p. 11) and "to offer insight, enhance understanding, and provide a meaningful guide for action" (Strauss & Corbin, 1998, p. 12) in the context of college-level writing instruction.

Pedagogical Materials

For this project, shorter (compared to Arshavskaya, 2018), yet culturally rich readings were selected. The text genres also varied. The texts featured a student essay and several works of fiction, including the *Only Daughter* by Sandra Cisneros and *Rice* by Jhumpa Lahiri. Before the class, the students were asked to carefully read a text and to pay attention to certain passages highlighted by the instructor (myself) for class discussions. The students were also required to look up new words and carry out some background research on each writer. Before the class meeting, the students also shared a personal reflection on each reading and responded to a peer's reflection via Classroom Salon. Upon reading all the selected texts, the students were required to choose a reading that could serve as a model for their creative writing assignment. In their essay, they were required to address cultural, language, and identity topics using their

own intercultural experience and/or imagination. They were also encouraged to be linguistically creative by using their other language/s and/or home culture genres in this essay.

Students' Translanguaging Practices. While some of the participating students were able to use translanguaging in their writing skillfully, other students restrained themselves from engaging in translanguaging.

In the excerpt below, Carolina¹ inserted certain words (in bold)² from her native Spanish language in her essay titled *Green Soup*. She also translated whole phrases from Spanish into English ("donkey belly", "like at home, you do not eat anywhere"), thus showing her awareness of the English-speaking audience's needs. She as well creates certain poetic images by using both translations from her native language ("donkey belly") and English (e.g., "being underwater," "magic hands of our mothers," "a taste of glory").

Sample 1

It is the month of April in Lima, when summer refuses to leave but is almost gone, and winter is coming, and it is the time when everything changes. First of all, the sky in Lima is shifting to a grey sky or how it is commonly called "**donkey belly**." It also starts with the thick fog that does not let you see anything, such as streets and houses, and if this were not enough, the intense humidity comes too, which you do not know where it comes from, but it is similar to being underwater. In the same way, there is the moment to change clothes, for some warmer, and how we all know there does not exist a better way to warm up than eating hot food. And as excellent food lovers, it is time for saying welcome to soups, especially in the mornings, with hot bread, roasted corn, and of course, there is no soup without the inevitable chili peppers ("**ajies**" in Peru). But what kind of soups? There is a universe all of them, with different flavors and colors. And as a good lover, you must savor everything and enjoy it. Generally, soups are plates ("**caseros**"); that means the whole food that is made in the home. ... I think it could be summarized by "**like at home, you do not eat anywhere**", the seasoning, the components and the magic hands of our mothers, all of them, provide food a taste of glory. (Carolina's creative essay)

For Kofi, native-language words seem to help him to not only name certain cultural realia from his native culture but also allow him to express his feelings through the use of his native tongue. Importantly, he chooses to refer to his grandfather and to express his words of gratitude in his native tongue, as the excerpt below illustrates.

Sample 2

In the center part of the country, I have my lovely family. My granddad "**Bah**" was a handsome man, tall and strong. "**Bah**" in my primary language means dad. In fact, due to its generosity, everybody called my grandfather "**Bah**". "**Bah**" loved **attieke**. Family is a big entity in Africa. Although this is reality, he decided to share this food with the entire family. A special day was dedicated to this special meal at a special moment. Every Monday, exactly when the sun was rising, my entire family got together around this blessed meal. The process to make **attieke** is a little complex. ... We shared intensive happiness moments around **attieke** for several years. The whole family was glad to eat together. I

am missing those warm instants. I have a deep feeling toward “**Bah**”, my granddad, and my mother. May they rest in peace. I also want to say “**Barika**” (thank you) in my native language for those moments. (Kofi’s creative essay)

For another student, Marco, translanguaging allows bringing more authenticity towards the scene by using the names of the home-culture dishes in Spanish. He also demonstrated his sense of humor in English (“I am the official tester”).

Sample 3

The **Habichuelas con dulce** that my mom cooks are the best; even my grandmother prefers my mom’s **habichuelas** over the ones she makes. My dad is the seafood expert, my older brother is the juice maker, and my second and third brothers are the pork experts. ... Our Christmas family reunion is crazy. All the members of my family are busy cooking something; roasting chicken and pork, cooking salads, and doing a lot of different traditional dishes **and I have the most important part. I am the official tester. After a dish is done or almost done I get the responsibility to taste it to approve, deciding whether it is good.** (Marco’s creative essay)

At the same time, some students did not choose to engage in translanguaging, as the excerpt by Kyoko illustrates below. Kyoko’s essay relates a cross-cultural misunderstanding that she experienced due to her inability to make a phonological distinction.

Sample 4

“**Silent Start...**” These words aren’t on the official golf rule book. However, now I understand what a silent (**not a “siren”**, as I initially understood) start is. Someone said, “Learn from your mistakes” and “No pain, no gain”. Lack of listening skills causes embarrassing experiences, meanwhile sometimes amusing friends. (Kyoko’s creative essay)

Similarly, another student, Murad, did not engage in translanguaging practices in his creative essay. His writing assignment underscored somewhat negative feelings that he and his peers had had while studying English in his home country and his subsequent realization of the need to be proficient in English in today’s globalized world.

Sample 5

To sum up, there are a lot of people who do not like to learn English, but I hope to tell everyone that is going to make your life difficult. It is a very important language now and many people around the world can speak this language. I think everyone will live a moment that makes him need to speak English. I hope to go back and fix everything, but I cannot, **so I am working hard to learn now.** (Murad’s creative essay)

Students’ Reactions. Overall, in the end-of-semester open-ended survey asking students to share their reactions towards the use of translanguaging practices in a college writing course, several students expressed a positive attitude, as the following quote below illustrates:

It was different and fun. I also learned to write from my personal experience in this way. I liked discussing in class and learning a new technology feature since this is my major (computer science).

At the same time, three out of the eight participating students were less supportive and shared some of the following concerns:

I don't like to share my personal experiences with my classmates.

The purpose of this course is academic writing; so, these texts are a distraction.

While the second quote about the purpose of the course and the texts being "a distraction" seems to be directly related to the creative writing assignment used in this course, the first quote about not wanting to share personal experiences with peers seems less related to translanguaging practices' use in the classroom and thus, may not be as revealing.

Discussion

The study found that similarly to previous research (e.g., Lee & Canagarajah, 2019; Rivera & Mazak, 2017), students' reactions towards translanguaging differed, and based on this, students either chose to engage in or to resist the ideas related to translanguaging in their writing.

While none of the participants could utilize their home-culture genres, many of the students were able to engage in translanguaging practices in other ways. For instance, some students utilized their native tongue to either use the more poetic language (Hancı-Azizoğlu, 2018; Kramersch, 1995) or express personal emotions. The student's ability to mediate his emotions in this context is critical due to the interconnection of learning and the affective dimension (Vygotsky, 1987). Hancı-Azizoğlu (2018, p. 9) recommends "teachers of multilingual writers to accommodate classroom practices that would encourage students to use the creative function of their second language, and liberate their students' writing for achieving a level of social equity (Bizzaro & Baker, 2014)..." Indeed, while the second language writers used their native languages to re-create pictures from their childhood or other periods of their life, this might have allowed them to explore and understand their experiences more fully.

Several other students did not engage in translanguaging. These students' lack of interest in translanguaging may be rooted in personal life experiences, as suggested in previous research (Lee & Canagarajah, 2019). For example, while one of the students (Murad) stated the necessity to learn and use English, the other student (Kyoko) narrated a somewhat embarrassing incident related to her lack of English listening comprehension skills. These negative experiences may explicate these particular students' lack of interest in translanguaging and a desire to adhere to the English-only rule in their writing. Students' linguistic attitudes affect the ways students choose to invest in learning certain languages (Rivera & Mazak, 2017) and therefore, these students' prioritizing English over their native languages due to less successful learning experiences with English may have prevented them from using their native tongue in their creative essays. Similarly, Galante (2020) found that students' engagement with translanguaging practices inside the classroom was less than the same students' engagement in these practices outside the classroom due to the limited number of students sharing the same native language in a certain class.

On the other hand, the students who chose to engage in translanguaging were also able to create for both themselves and their audience a "third space" (Kramersch, 1993) wherein they

could use words from their home languages, while not alienating the English-speaking audience by providing explanations and translations of certain words and phrases in English. The participating students' use of their languages in writing resulted in original and new texts that demonstrate their linguistic creativity (Hancı-Azizoğlu, 2018). This approach to writing as well allows us to see second language writers' contributions "as a resource rather than a problem" (Canagarajah, 2010, as cited in Hancı-Azizoğlu, 2018, p. 9).

Compared to the study by Morales and Carroll (2015) where the use of the students' first language allowed them to better comprehend the text meanings, here, too, the use of the first languages allowed some students to mediate their emotions as well as to bring more authenticity to their writing. Similarly to Morales and Carroll (2015), the students in this study were also encouraged to negotiate meanings and their understandings of the text through the more collaborative environment facilitated through the Classroom Salon. Morales and Carroll (2015) underline the importance of students' collaboration in the context of text interpretation since it promotes self-reflection, negotiation of meaning, and a sense of shared experience in the classroom.

In comparison to the earlier studies by Vandrick (1997) and Vyas (2004) that took place in high school settings, these international and immigrant students did not focus on certain tensions between their and U.S. cultures, perhaps because these students were older and thus, more psychologically mature. Also, while students did not directly use the texts and their writing to navigate their identity options (Slocum, 2019), translanguaging facilitated the ways they chose to portray their multilingual personalities to each other and their instructor. For example, one of the students (Marco) wrote the more humorous part in English (not in Spanish), thus accommodating the English-speaking audience, while at the same time expressing the humorous part of his personality. The use of translanguaging also allowed the students and the instructor to experience the wealth and the richness of experiences and linguistic and non-linguistic expressions (García & Otheguy, 2020; Li, 2018) that multilingual bring with them.

At the same time, the approach used can be modified to better suit a particular student group. For example, allowing students to select a text by a multilingual writer by themselves could allow them to better connect to and enjoy the reading and writing activities in this course more. Seo and Kim (2020) highlight the importance of choosing appealing topics for students to help them connect to the texts they read, e.g., the topic of first love for an adolescent audience. Such stories can help "learners meditate on the meaning of love, what distinguishes adulthood from childhood, and what it means to 'grow'" (Seo & Kim, 2020, p. 126).

Overall, the extent of students' engagement in translanguaging practices and their reactions to them differed. While this supports the claims made in previous studies (Lee & Canagarajah, 2019; Rivera & Mazak, 2017), more research is necessary to understand the potential of translanguaging practices in college writing classrooms. Besides, while the study was able to bring out some of the students' authentic voices to the ongoing academic discussion, the teachers' perspectives were not incorporated in this study (Liu, Lo, & Lin, 2020).

Limitations

As is the case with most investigations, this study has its limitations. First of all, the exploratory character of the study relied on a limited student population. Second, the researcher (also, the

instructor and the author of this article) was the sole coder of the data collected for this study. Yet, it may be argued that due to the shared experiences that the researcher had with the participating students both inside and outside the classroom, she had a deeper (an insider's) understanding of their situations and perspectives. Lastly, more in-depth interviews (rather than a survey) with students and teacher(s) could have provided a more in-depth account of the shared experiences in the course.

Conclusion

The findings of this exploratory study suggest that while some students found translanguaging educational and useful, some other students were resistant to this practice, including resisting discussing personal reactions in an academic classroom setting. These feelings of resistance may be rooted in students' life experiences (Lee & Canagarajah, 2019).

Importantly, the study brought the authentic voices of multilingual students to the ongoing academic discussion, highlighting their linguistic creativity and skillful use of their meaning-making repertoire (García & Otheguy, 2020; Li, 2018) to achieve various goals (e.g., to express emotions, to demonstrate the humorous part of one's personality). The use of texts by multilingual writers and students' engagement in using these texts as models and inspirations "made the learning process deeper, richer, and more effective" (Hancı-Azizoğlu, 2018, p. 13). In this way, this study can be beneficial for teachers interested to adopt translanguaging practices in their classrooms.

As a future research direction, it is necessary to investigate students' reactions further. One of the possible ways is to engage students in one-on-one interviews throughout the course to "see" the reasons for possible resistance to this strategy track the intricacies of their emotions. Similar research has been taken in relation to teachers' perspectives on pedagogical translanguaging (Liu et al., 2020). Also, before the start of the course, it may be beneficial to investigate students' pre-dispositions (Lee & Canagarajah, 2019) towards translanguaging. It may be as well worthwhile to explore the long-term effects of student engagement in translanguaging on college writing overall. Overall, such studies can "explore how a focus on translanguaging dispositions can contribute to discourses on difference and diversity" (Lee & Canagarajah, 2019, p. 26) more generally.

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