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# MEANING MAKING THROUGH NEGOTIATING LANGUAGE DIFFERENCES IN MULTILINGUAL WRITING

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# MEANING MAKING THROUGH NEGOTIATING LANGUAGE DIFFERENCES IN MULTILINGUAL WRITING

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# আপনাকেস্বাগতম

## ĀpanākēShāgatama

## Dedication

I dedicate this dissertation to the language enthusiasts and curious minds like me who are passionate about learning languages, as well as capturing the complex nuances and deep essences intricately embedded in every language. Both as a child and an adult, I always have been fascinated with my multilingual-self as I was empowered to instantaneously enter into the *Bangla* world of Nobel Laureate *Rabindranath Tagore*, or the English kingdom of Shakespeare. To me, multitude of language is immensely powerful in revealing the grandeur of the language of the human mind and its thoughts. In my dissertation, I heard the voices of multilinguals who articulately cross geographical boundaries with the power of language and the awareness of few monolinguals of those voices.

My philosophical thoughts found its affirmation during the journey of my doctoral studies, as I started exploring Suresh Canagarajah's translingualism - the language phenomenon that describes the dynamics of communication between those who speak different languages. Yet, many living in a 21$^{st}$ century world that is closely connected yet still dominated by English still unfairly scrutinize those who speak more than one language, as Yeats did in 1935 to Tagore for his audacity when translating his work into English, "Tagore does not know English, no Indian knows English." With a heart full of *hope,* I dedicate my dissertation to those in the academic community, both monolinguals and multilinguals, who believe that our language differences are assets, and who are willing to explore our unique stories, and to weave such distinctions through the common threads of solidarity.

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I am indebted to my parents for instilling in me at a young age the importance of education. I am fortunate for the love, care, and support from my husband that was absolutely essential to surviving this challenging journey. To Anika, my beloved eldest-your strong but loving words of enthusiasm kept me grounded. To Adiba, my adorable youngest-you, from time to time, reminded me that I am going to earn the honorable title of Doctor at the end of this journey.

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## Abstract

The purpose of this qualitative case study was to gain an understanding of the perceptions of multilingual writing from monolingual and multilingual instructors teaching First-year Composition (FYC) as well as international multilingual students (IMS) whose first language might not be English. Findings of the study identified FYC instructors' instructional practices and pedagogical insights gained from the experiences of teaching writing to IMS and the perspectives of IMS gained from their learning experiences of writing in FYC. In light of these findings, this study has implications for future research in advocating for changes in institutional attitude, and employing diversity in policy, curricular, and pedagogical approaches.



*Keywords*: Multilingual Writing, International Multilingual Students, FYC Instructors, First-year Composition, Translingualism, Negotiations

## Chapter 1: Introduction

### I Want to be Fixed

A Japanese student came to the writing center with his paper and a mindful of anxiety. The tension was easily felt around the table where the mission of the center, at least as I perceived of it, was to "fix" papers to meet institutionalized norms of academic English. The student knew that his tone, accent, rhetorical choices, did not conform to the particular conceptions of standard academic English. The Japanese student wanted to be fixed.

As I worked with the student, I realized that I was simultaneously erasing all traces of his originality and identity to make it compatible with the "tacit language policy of unidirectional English monolingualism" (Horner & Trimbur, 2002, p. 594) and not allowing much space for original tone and voice. Such is the double–edged sword of identity and the implicit pacts made with non-native speakers of English, bilinguals, and multilinguals. After all, when identity is obliterated, stability of the dominant register is no longer threatened by nonconformity (Foucault, 1982). As I worked with the Japanese student, I wondered about the extent to which a writing center could adopt "a more multicultural and multilingual worldview" (Bailey, 2012) by building onto language proclivities and idiosyncrasies rather than erasing them.

From a standpoint of  a multilingual doctoral student, a former writing consultant, and first-year composition instructor, I often wonder about the multiple discourse "resources" that could empower multilingual writers to  become "rhetorically creative"(Canagarajah, 2010, p.175) by making connections across the nuances of language. Embracing a multilingual approach could help legitimize 'differences' as 'resources' rather than "barriers" (Horner, Royster &Trimbur, 2011, p.303)**.**A Japanese student struggling with academic English shares

many attributes with native speakers' experiences in the first-year composition writing classroom, as they both scramble to submit to the strictures of the "gatekeepers of academic literacy" (Geller, Eodice, Condon, Carroll, & Boquet, 2007)**.**

**A Personal Story**

I had been asked to write a personal essay. I wrote an authentic, painful, traumatic, and a remarkable experience of my life. As the English teacher read my essay aloud, she pointed out my errors, I had misused articles "a" and "the," I had some inappropriate uses of clauses. On the positive side, she said a few kind words about my creative use of "vocabulary" and "sophisticated writing." I nodded my head and listened. How else could I respond? Unbeknownst to that English teacher, next day I was going to attend a highly regarded professional conference on second language writing at Arizona State University. Her criticism on the errors in my writing made me think ironically about the paper that I was going to present at that conference to an international audience, a vast mix of both monolingual and multilingual scholars and researchers on second language writing. My paper was about an urgency to re-view the differences in second language writing from a "negotiation" perspective than a long-practiced "correctness" perspective. The personal essay had received red marks that were considered "difficulties" (Fox, 2002, p, 58), from a monolingual perspective, but could also be considered distinctive from a multilingual perspective. The tension between correctness and meaning is intriguing.

I have always been interested in understanding how international multilingual first-year composition students perceive of language. I admit that I am hopeful about an emancipatory pedagogy that could view "differences" in multilingual writing as "resources" not "problems," a

pedagogy that treats the first language of multilinguals as "invaluable" not "interferences," one that co-constructs discourse with students, and values meaning-making over conventions.

The research literature concerning international students attempting to learn academic English often explores questions from monolingualist perspectives (Canagarajah, 2006; 2009; Young, 2009; Horner, Lu, Royster, & Trimbur, 2011; Lee & Marshall; 2012, Hornberger & Link, 2012; Olson, 2013; Bianco, 2014; Guerra, 2016; Bhowmik ,2016 ; Behrens, Johnson, Allard, & Caroli, 2016).

- Why do non-native speakers of English use 'he' instead of 'she' or vice versa in their conversations?
- Why do they compose a sentence with subject-verb agreement that does not conform to the universal English grammar rule?
- Why do they use vocabulary that seems verbose and superficial?
- Why do they get confused when it comes to choosing articles between 'a' and 'the'?
- Why is it difficult to apply appropriate prepositions both in conversation and writing?

In moments of reverie, I have contemplated what would happen if the writing of multilingual speakers whose first language is not English could be examined from a perspective other than a monolingual paradigm (Canagarajah, 2009). Multilinguals' communicative competence (Canagarajah, 2007; Kramsch, 2004; Larsen-Freeman, 2011) develops in the social and cultural space where they are closely connected to an instantaneously "idosyncratic formulation" (Meierkord, 2004). In the current age, when language is no longer strictly affiliated with geographic borders (Baines & Nahar, 2018), what is the precise value of acquiring native-like proficiency in English? Despite the global rise of innumerable Englishes - Spanglish, Chinglish, Frenchlish, Hinglish, World Englishes (WE), English as an International Language

(EIL), and English as a Lingua Franca (ELF), American universities and colleges still label international multilingual student with the generic term 'English Language Learners (ELLs)' (Hornberger & Link, 2012).

## Globalization of English

English is incredibly dynamic and continues to collide and integrate with a variety of language communities. These emerging Englishes have distinctive forms amalgamating with regional, national, and transnational languages. The rapid innovation of 21st century technology has blurred geographical demarcation lines and promoted virtual interactions among diverse constituents in the global community. As this global interaction progresses amidst the distinct different varieties of global English, meaning-making becomes personal, cultural, and ideological. This idea is captured by a term used in contemporary literary theory, "intertextuality" (Allen, 2000; 2011). There are *traces* (Porter, 1986; p.34) or common fibres among various models. Terms such as "glossodiversity" and "semiodiversity" (Halliday, 2002) can help structure discussion around "translingual practice" (Canagarajah, 2013). Glossodiversity recognizes the distinct traits of varieties of English with a focus on specificity of form, while semiodiversity observes, investigates, and discovers that new meaning can be generated from established, static forms. Language is not monolithic, but is in a continuous process of becoming due to its use in a plethora of contexts.

Almost two decades ago Graddol (1999) predicted that English would be used as "a language used mainly in the multilingual contexts as a second language and for communication between non-native speakers" (p. 57). Indeed English is no longer a language associated with English-speaking countries, such as England, America, Australia. English has been transformed

into a powerful medium of communication around the world. The change or *poriborton* (2012) may seem overwhelming, but the renaissance moment is inevitable due to the English language's celebratory status as global capital currency.

According to the learning standards for English language arts (ELA) used for writing assessment at the secondary level in the United States, a writer must be keenly cognizant of audience and purpose, sensibly and cautiously expressive of voice, knowledgeable about tone, and adept at proving the proficiency and competency in English language through appealing and stylistic writing (Oklahoma Standards for ELA, 2018). A challenge of multilingual writers, whose first language (L1) is not English, is to also comprehend the constructs of identity, voice, ideology that are conceptually and philosophically different from their first language. Undeniably, the ability to write well plays a defining role in a student's academic achievement, professional accomplishments, and economic well-being. Yet, it is challenging for non-native speakers of English to showcase sophisticated writing while simultaneously meeting the criteria of flawless standard English (Bigler, 1996; Pavlenko, 2001a; Villenas, 2001).

## International Multilingual Students

Diversities of language and multiplicities of identities are characteristics of international students (Byram & Kramsch, 2008, p.21). Needless to say, the ability to understand others can only be realized by connections with others through language and culture. The concept of translingualism "places value on the multilingual ability to operate between languages. Students learn to reflect on the world and themselves through another language and culture" (Geisler, Kramsch, McGinnis, Patrikis, Pratt, Ryding, & Saussy 2007, p.236). Geisler et al. pointed out the need of reconceptualization of the field of second language writing as "transdisciplinary"

(Matsuda, 2013), as the field is no longer confined to the strictures of Teaching English to Speakers of Other Languages (TESOL) (Ferris & Hedgcock, 2005; Matsuda, 1998). Rather, the field has expanded to students with broad experiences and deep knowledge of diverse language and culture.

Of course, some scholars see linguistic pluralism not as an asset, but a menace. Hirsch (1998) wrote, "Linguistic pluralism enormously increases cultural fragmentation, civil antagonism, illiteracy, and economic-technological ineffectualness" (p. 91). Bernstein (1994) called the teaching of Cherokee in public schools an "act of rebellion against white, Anglo-cultural domination"(p.244) with a "multicultural animus against European culture and its derivatives" (p.245). These harsh critiques or *kothorshomalochona* (see google link to the translation) perceive of multilingualism as a threat to Standard Edited American English (SEAE).

Tension between the diversification of English and dominant model of English stems from the assumption that language must be an either/or proposition. Rationale for the universal norm for writing or Standard Written English (SWE) emphasizes the absence of face-to-face negotiations in written contexts. Street (1984) opined that, texts should contain meanings that can be easily extricated by uninformed readers. From Street's perspective, all writers, native or non-native, should apply standard forms and conventions in written texts to improve clarity. Yet not even native speakers of English speak SWE. No one speaks SWE.

In the process of crafting a message, an interlocutor experiences both commonalities, differences, and a willingness to negotiate differences, which creates space for a shift to pluriversality. Interactions into written words require a mindset of not viewing differences between oral and written language as 'deviations' (Khubchandani, p.94), but normal and

expected. The oral language of native speakers often features ungrammatical structures, unintelligible lexical items, and idiosyncratic syntactic structures.

The statistics generated by the Institute of International Education (ILE) below shows the increase of international students over the last 50 years (See Fig.1) from 1965-2015. Fig shows the rapid increase in the last 17 years (Fig.2).

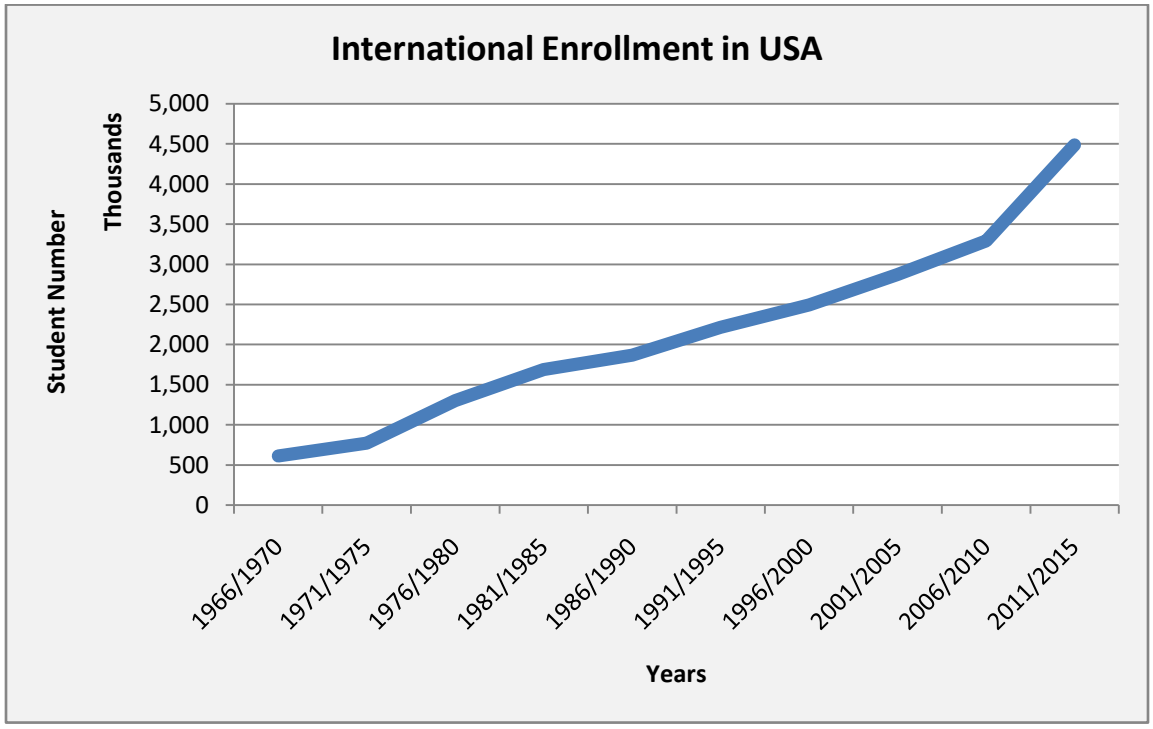


***Figure 1.*** **The trend of international enrollment in last 50 years in USA.**

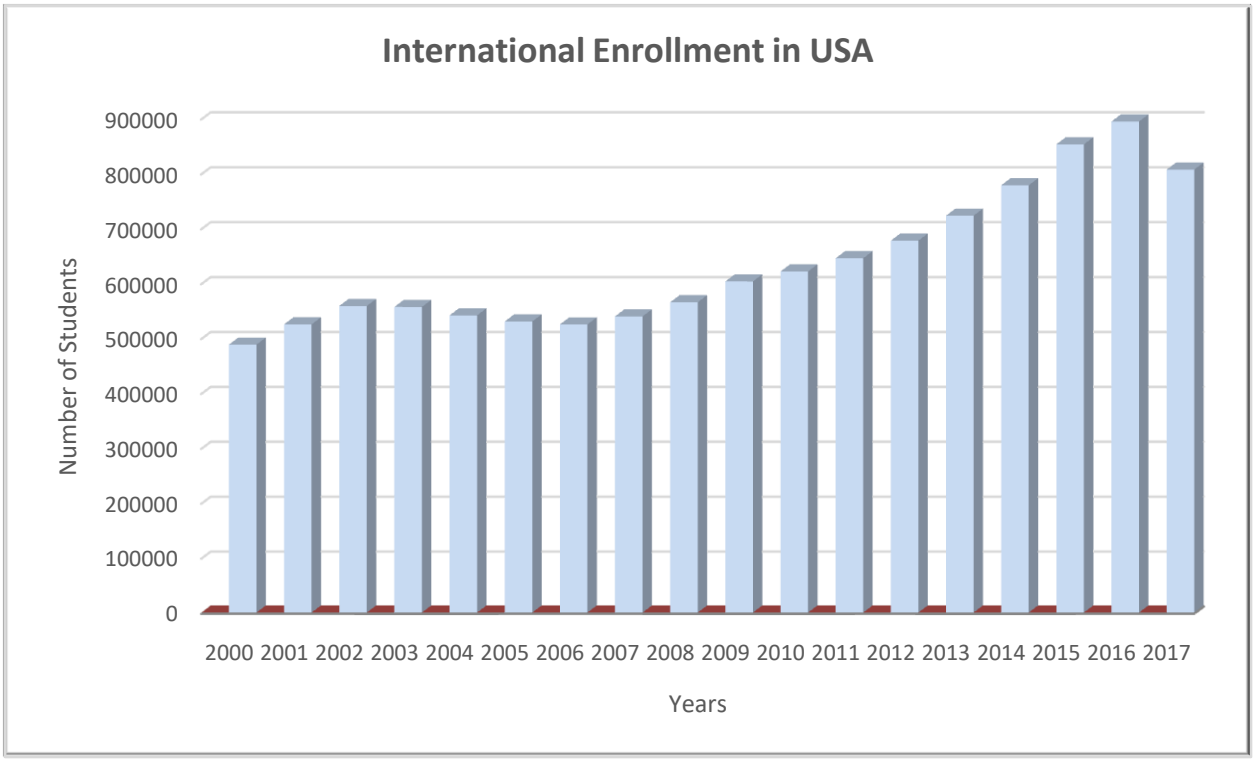


***Figure 2.*** **The trend of international enrollment in 17 years.**

Southwest University, the research site for this dissertation increased enrollments of international students (Fig.3) until 2016. New Federal legislation contributed to a slight drop in 2017.

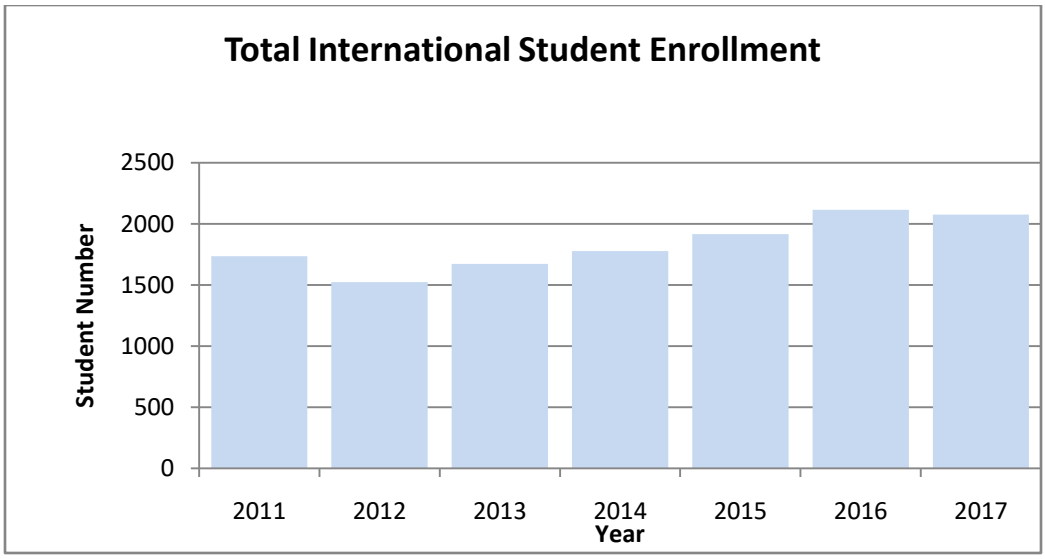


***Figure 2.*** **International student enrollment at Southwest University.**

**Table 1**

***International Undergraduate Student Enrollment Percentage at Southwest University***

| Year | Undergraduate International | Total Undergraduate Enrollment | % of International Undergraduate Students |
|---|---|---|---|
| 2013 | 936 | 18612 | 5.03% |
| 2014 | 1053 | 18410 | 5.72% |
| 2015 | 1077 | 19601 | 5.49% |
| 2016 | 1129 | 19810 | 5.70% |
| 2017 | 1163 | 20192 | 5.76% |

**Table 1. International undergraduate student enrollment percentage at Southwest University.**

**Translingualism**

Translingualism is a paradigm which supports heterogeneity in language (Horner et al., 2011, p.303). Influenced by a multilingual worldview, translingualism does not view variations in language as barriers or "problems," (Olson, 2013, p.3) but as a way of adding new dimension of meaning to writing, speaking, reading, and listening. Bakhtin's (1981) view of the centrifugal force of decentralization and disunification aligns well with translingualism, but such a shift in perspective also requires open acceptance of differences and a refutation of absolute correctness. In order to promote "rhetorical creativity," (p. 159), Canagarajah suggested that language has to be viewed more holistically (Canagarajah, 2010). How might translingualism be used expressively, rhetorically, and communicatively? For whom, under what conditions, and how would translingualism function in the real world (Horner et al., 2011, p.303)?

The diverse demographics of students in American higher academic institutions would seem to favor a policy that is accepting of language differences, one that seeks to view and use differences as strengths, rather than weaknesses that need remediation. From both cultural and linguistic perspectives, the complex dynamics that international students bring require institutions to be cognizant of the way they incorporate expectations for English in their academic writing. Evidently, some studies use Lev Vygotsky's sociocultural theory (Gal' Perin, 1992) to pinpoint and discuss a complex combination of factors these international multilingual students experience concerning transitioning to Western culture, navigating between differences in perceptions of written English, and struggling to find their place in a new educational space. Some scholars consider a re-evaluation of standard English to be urgent (Block, 2003; Seidhoffer, 2004; Canagarajah, 2006; Jenkins, 2006; Casanave, 2012; Matsuda,

2013).Nevertheless, the internationalizing of American higher education (Canagarajah, 2006, Donahue, 2009; Horner & Trimbur, 2002; Horner, Necamp & Donahue, 2011) and the changing face of first-year composition (FYC) would seem to be at odds with standard written English (SWE) (Liu, & Tannacito,2013) and the goals of FYC in most American colleges and universities. The following table is a representation of the diversity of international students at Southwest University.

**Table 2**
***International Enrollment from Top 5 Countries at Southwest University***

| 2013 | | 2014 | | 2015 | | 2016 | | 2017 | |
|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|
| Country | Number & Share (%) | Country | Number & Share (%) | Country | Number & Share (%) | Country | Number & Share (%) | Country | Number & Share (%) |
| China | 544 (32.5%) | China | 610 (34.3%) | China | 609 (31.8%) | China | 611 (28.9%) | China | 583 (28.1%) |
| India | 113 (6.75%) | India | 113 (6.36%) | India | 157 (8.19%) | India | 185 (8.74%) | India | 187 (9.00%) |
| Saudi Arabia | 98 (5.86%) | Saudi Arabia | 106 (5.96%) | Saudi Arabia | 116 (6.05%) | Saudi Arabia | 109 (5.15%) | Saudi Arabia | 99 (4.77%) |
| South Korea | 87 (5.20%) | South Korea | 83 (4.67%) | South Korea | 78 (4.07%) | South Korea | 77 (3.64%) | South Korea | 82 (3.95%) |
| Nigeria | 66 (3.95%) | Iran | 53 (2.98%) | Iran | 51 (2.66%) | Iran | 59 (2.79%) | Iran | 67 (3.23%) |

**Table 2. International Enrollment from Top 5 Countries at Southwest University.**

## First-year Composition

Most colleges and universities across the United States offer First-Year Composition (FYC) as a mandatory, introductory college English course. The course is designed with an underlying assumption that students will gain knowledge and develop skills in writing that can be transferred to other courses and contexts.

Wardle (2007) points out that students experience more differences than similarities in their FYC courses because steps such as careful preparation, detailed research, deep revision, peer review, and longer papers are not necessarily required in other academic courses. Crowley (1991) notes that some institutions use FYC as a gatekeeper course to assure that only those who can "master a highly idealized version of the written dialect of a dominant class" (p.159) are able to pursue their education.

**First-year Composition Instructors**

Just as first-year writers bring their perceptions of writing with them to class, so do instructors. In a longitudinal study, Wardle (2007) found that first-year composition instructors had low expectations for the writing skills of first-year students. Typically, FYC instructors go through a condensed training and a mandatory teaching course offered by the university's English department. The training prepares instructors for delivering the curriculum and for managing class logistics.

Students in U.S. universities, regardless of their disparate first-language backgrounds, bring their distinctive reading, writing, and critical thinking skills to the FYC classroom. These writers also bring perceptions of themselves as writers and variable writing abilities. My own experience as a writing center consultant and first-year composition instructor resonates with Shaughnessy's (1977) observation, made over forty years ago, "By the time he reaches college, the BW (Basic Writing) student both resents and resists his vulnerability as a writer and is focused on the errors he knows he makes that concentrating on anything else is a challenge he can do nothing about" (p. 7). An international student enrolled in an American college or university differs from the native-language speaking freshman in the FYC classroom. When

international students enter the FYC classroom, they encounter the challenge of comprehending and gaining mastery of SWE (Standard Written English) as well as AE (Academic English). The notion that writing in college might be different from writing outside of college also might be a novel concept. The expectations imposed on international students can be problematic. Some FYC instructors may have a no clear sense of "Academic English"(Morita, 2004, p. 585) or Standard Written English (SWE) other than "I know it when I see it(or not see it)" (Behrens, Johnson, Allard, & Caroli, 2016, p. 310). Matsuda (2013) agreed with Hyland that, "academic writing is a second language for everyone" (p.449).

## Theoretical Framework

In my view, meaning just does not exist in isolation, but it is constructed or assigned to the objects through the interactions between human beings and the environment. I believe meanings are constructed from diverse experiences and interpretations and influenced by the worldviews we invoke on an everyday basis. My epistemological stance coheres with Crotty's (1998) view on constructionism in that "the view that all knowledge, and therefore all meaningful reality as such, is contingent upon human practices, being constructed in and out of interaction between human beings and their world, and developed and transmitted within an essentially social context" (p. 42). The link between "essentially social context" and "diverse experiences and interpretations" is embedded in Dewey's pragmatic point of view, "a mode of associated living, of conjoint communicated experience" (Dewey, 1916, p. 87)**.** Meaning and knowledge are not imposed on objects, but developed through investigation, exploration, and meaningful interactions.

In light of these theoretical assumptions, the issues affecting human lives can be addressed through pragmatic solutions. As Gergen (1999) noted, "the primary emphasis is on discourse as the vehicle through which the self and the world are articulated" (p. 60). Similar sentiments can be found in the writings of Bakhtin, Volosinov, Wittgenstein, Foucault, and Garfinkel (Talia, Tuominen, & Savolainen, 2004). I initiated this research because I wanted to gain a deeper understanding of multilingual writing, perceptions of monolingual and multilingual FYC instructors, and how multilingual writers view, interpret, and assess their writing.

Bakhtin's dialogic pedagogy (1984) encourages the investigation of meaning-making and knowledge development in a specific social context. As Freire (2000) noted, "we are not only 'in' the world, but also 'with' the world" (p. 76). Freire rejects both "mechanistic objectivism" (wherein consciousness is considered to be merely a copy of objective reality) and "solipsism" (which reduces the world to a capricious creation of consciousness) (p.31). A balanced approach forces a conscious reflection on individual meaning-making and connections that prompt action, "They constantly and mutually illuminate each other" (Freire, 2000, p.80).

Language is fluid and dynamic as it gets socially constructed, reconstructed, and transformed through ongoing interaction influenced by myriad social, economic, political, geographical factors. I admit to favoring "meaning-making" over "mistakes." I cannot help but ruminate over what might happen if thought processes associated with multilingualism could be viewed as "resources" rather than "problems."

## Problem Statement

Academic institutions in the United States are becoming more diverse, both culturally and linguistically, as international students with multiple language and cultural backgrounds are

enrolling in American colleges and universities. Yet the valuable, multilingual abilities of international students are often seen as deficits. Multilingual students in American colleges and universities are often punished for their inability to adhere to the rudiments of Standard Written English (SWE).The ongoing struggle of orienting multilingual students to conform to the dominant standards of academic English has positioned instructors in classrooms and consultants at writing centers in conflicting situations. This long-practiced notion often diminishes the multilingual students' identity and agency as a writer.

**Significance of Study**

Studies done on translanguaging (Canagarjah, 2011) have urged multilingual scholars to think beyond viewing grammatical deviations or idiomatic novelties as negative interference (Cook, 1999).Canagarajah expressed concern about shifting an emphasis from social negotiations to discursive issues. Previous studies on multilingual writing have largely focused on grammatical aspects of language acquisition, verb conjugation, subject-verb agreement, main and subordinate clauses, conjunctions, prepositions, and vocabulary (Doughty&Williams,1998; Coady&Huckin,1997; Lantolf&Appel,1994; Krashen, 1982; Ellis &Ellis, 1994; Larsen-Freeman & Long, 2014).Current research on the international multilingual student community has focused upon conformity to the dominant language community and the attainment of Standard Academic English (Young, 2010; Canagarajah; 2006;Guerra,2016; Olson, 2013; Horner, NeCamp & Donahue, 2011; Lee & Marshall, 2011). Research on actualizing "translingualism" and shuttling between two or more languages is relatively novel.

## Research Purpose and Research Question

The purpose of this research is to reify a way of thinking that acknowledges multilingual writers' distinct language choices as "resources" rather than "errors." In my research, I focus on international multilingual students as a target audience. The repertoire of knowledge and experience related to the dominant language and culture is different between heterogeneous multilinguals. Their exposure to the dominant culture and discourses, their process of learning English, the duration of practicing English, vary greatly.

Scholars such as Canagarajah, Smitherman, Olson, Horner, Grimm, Matsuda advocate for accepting multilingual writers' language differences, unique rhetorical choices, and negotiation strategies overrequiring them to adhere to the norm and practice of SWE. This dissertation will pursue answers to three questions:

1. How do monolingual instructors perceive of the content and form of multilingual students' writing?
2. How do multilingual instructors perceive of the content and form of multilingual students' writing?
3. How do multilingual students perceive of the content and form of their writing?

## Overview

This chapter offered the rationale for research and discussed the background and significance of the problem. Chapter two reviews a wide array of empirical and conceptual research. Chapter three frames the study into philosophical and theoretical frameworks, and describes methods of collecting and analyzing data. Chapter four presents findings and discusses

themes that emerged through inductive analysis of the data. Chapter five takes a deeper look at the paradigm of translingualism in the context of findings, discusses complexities in teaching composition, implications of future research, and limitations.

## Chapter 2: Review of the Literature

Throughout this chapter, I intend to interweave the related and relevant literature to set the premise of this study. The previous chapter presented enrollment statistics of international students, at both graduate and undergraduate levels, affirming the fast growing diversity in the classrooms of U.S. universities. This chapter reflects on the insights drawn from the paradigm of translingualism, history and research in the field of second language writing, studies and research in multilingual writing. Multilingual students' power, identity, agency, rhetorical creativity, and linguistic turbulence are discussed.

### A Journey of Translingualism: Crossing Boundaries

In 1974, the initiative of the Conference on College Composition and Communication (CCCC) (Horner, 2001) published *"Students' Right to Their Own Language (SRTOL),"* to promote multilingual perspectives in language. The document stated that all students "have the right to write in the dialects of their nurture or whatever linguistic patterns that students bring with them into the classroom" (Perryman-Clark, 2013, p.469). CCCC recently revised *"Guidelines on the National Language Policy"* (Logan, 2016, p. 291) to further encourage transnational activities through collaborative language learning experiences across national boundaries. Programs such as "*Tech Travels: Connecting Writing Classes across Continents"*(p.291) promotes a distinct expansion of transnational writing by bringing writers of diverse language backgrounds together. Writers mobilized on a social-media platform permeating geographical borders is undoubtedly revolutionary but not without constraints and

challenges as Houser (2006) notes, “traditional borders separating educational roles and functions become increasingly blurred, creating new possibilities for school and society” (p. 5). This new context of writing brings reality and revolution to the existing social world, already full of contention and confusion, but collaboration too. Insights that can be gained through highlighting the communicative, cultural, linguistic, pedagogical, and technical differences can be vast and may require a lens of multiple perspectives and a re-evaluation of standard language ideology (Davila, 2016)**.** In many ways, standardized language that Davila signifies as ‘standard edited American English (SEAE)’ (p.128), perpetuates and challenges the validity of language, diversity, and change. SEAE is derived from standard language ideologies and sustains standard language discourse, Davila points to the positioning of standard English that, “this assumption both relies on and perpetuates standard language ideologies that advance beliefs about one, stable, correct language variety that is a superior and, therefore, commonsense dialect for school, business, and public settings” (p.128).

Issues both diverse and debatable in language teaching and learning are reflected in the initiative, “*Transnational Writing Special Interest Group and Blog*” (Logan, 2016, p.290), a telling example of growing interest in language diversity with manifold implications for teaching (Canagarajah, 2016). CCCC maintains the importance of multilingual perspectives in language education. A recent call for proposals for a special issue of *Composition Studies,* focused on “*Composition’s global turn: Writing instruction in multilingual / translingual and transnational Contexts”* (Logan, 2016, p. 291) and in new journal *Transnational Writing Program Administration (TWPA),* promoted to investigate *“*barriers of separation and distance” (Flag#29) (p.291) in efforts to promote language diversity.

Although the terms are used in various forms such as monolingualism, monolingual bias, monolingual ideology, or monolingual orientation – the issues caused by the terms are consequentially unidirectional in the United States. Standard language ideologies tend to perpetuate the belief in one, identifiable and stable language variety that is inherently correct and superior that leads to better communication among the masses (Milroy, 1999). The lack of access to and practice in any other varieties of language hides well the hegemony of standard English (Davila, 2016).According to Horner et al. (2011), "they take as the norm a linguistically homogeneous situation : one where writers, speakers, and readers are expected to use Standard English or Edited American English- imagined ideally as uniform – to the exclusion of other languages and language variations" (p.303). Terms on the other end of the spectrum include "*multilingual,""plurilingual,""translanguaging," and "code-meshing"* (Canagarajah, 2013, p.6; Horner et al., 2011, p. 303). Discussions are often predicated upon binary views of language –native/non-native, mono/multi or uni/pluri (Canagarajah 2013, p.8). Canagarajah argues that even in a monolingual community speakers use multiple registers, dialects, and discourses of a given language and, in doing so; they autonomously adopt diverse codes and employ resources from diverse places. Canagarajah (2009) also notes that multilinguals shuttle between language discourses, and learn adopting strategies, thereby becoming conscious that their audiences include both multilinguals and native speakers of English (NSE).Thought processes of translinguals may mirror the evolution of English language which has freely borrowed from Scandinavian, Latin, French, and other languages.

In clarifying the mechanism involved in adopting strategies by multilinguals, Canagarajah (2013) stated, "while using their own varieties, they adopt strategies to negotiate intelligibility and co-construct situational norms with speakers of other varieties" (p.6). An

expanded vision on “translingualism” might include cross-language relations in global contact zones, such as children’s playful shuttling between languages known as “poly-lingual languaging” **(**Jorgensen, 2008), African literacy developed through a mix of different languages and semiotic systems (Bloommaert, 2008), urban communication developed by the people creating new identities through “metrolingusistics” (Pennycook, 2010).

To gain a better and broader understanding of “translingualism,” two concepts are key. The first emphasizes “mobile resources” (Bloommaert, 2010, p.49), which are introduced by interlocutors for a host of purposes in a myriad of contexts, but solely with a goal of better communicability. The second one involves diverse semiotic resources and ecological affordances when communication begins to take place. As noted by Canagarajah (2013), “Language is only one semiotic resources among many, such as symbols, icons, and images” (p.7). Language is created interdependently in association with other semiotic resources, not in isolation.

From the pedagogical standpoint, English as a lingua franca and a status language around the globe, that makes English a natural incubator for translingual practices that are already engaged in appropriating, adopting, and accommodating English. Languages shuttle between the repertoires of English and diverse languages. In practicality, this translingual orientation accentuates communicative competency by allowing all language users, mainstream or minority, native or foreign, published or unpublished, to become deliberate language users **(**Horner & Lu, 2016). Guerra’s (2016) “translingual sensibility” and Cushman’s (2016) view on the potential of the translingual paradigm in evoking Mignolo’s “splendors of human imagination” ( p.234) cohere as both notions call for active involvement in integrating translingual theory and practice. The historical hegemony associated with the linguistic and social hierarchy points to the

question: “How can teachers and scholars move beyond the presumption that *English* is the only language of knowledge making and learning?” (Cushman, 2016, p. 234).

Clearly, the notion of translingualism evolved in response to the long-practiced concept and power-infused policies known as “true English,” or “Standard English,” or “Edited American English,” or “English without an accent ,” which Horner et al. (2011, p.309) viewed as “language myth” and a “bankrupt concept” (p. 305). Of course, standards of written English are neither uniform nor fixed. Native speakers of English speak with variations and accents and, during oral interactions, changes may spontaneously occur. Similarly, variations in writing are inevitable and fluid. In the context of writing in English, translingualism can empower writers to work with and against, not simply within. Questions are emerging in favor and against translingual practice. Lu and Horner’s (2016**)** views of translingualism parallels Cushman’s understanding that translingualism offers an avenue for “decolonizing monolingualism” (p.216). However translingualism also requires radical rethinking of the notion of unidirectional “Standard Academic English.”

Canagarajah (2013) has shifted his focus from translingual practices in conversational English to practices in written English by drawing attention to the universal norm of “Standard Written English” (SWE) (p.108) by established American Composition Scholars. The scholars keep justify SWE by arguing that it is neutral and above the cacophony of local language differences, which make it comprehensible to the all regardless of language identity (Street, 1984; Elbow, 2002; Barbour, 2002). They stress the stability of SWE as it lacks the face-to-face interaction which situates and promotes the negotiations among the interlocutors of varying languages. Pressing on this notion of viewing language as standardized and neutral, Canagarajah (2013) addresses the evolving questions through proposing the pluralization of academic writing.

In doing so, the multilingual scholar and researcher focuses on “Codemeshing” (pp. 112-113), the possibility of bringing different codes within the same text rather than an exclusionary approach. The new paradigm suggests that it is possible to promote plurality in writing through accepting hybrid texts as it makes possible preservation of the personal voice, the pursuit of meaning, and maintenance of conventions of SWE.

**Translingualism and Codemeshing**

Translingualism and codemeshing are interpreted in a similar light in the literature of multilingual writing as strategies adopted in multilingual writing multilingual writers aimed to create communicate meaningfully through constant negotiation. The negotiation is between the repertoire of languages that are founded with the eclectic worldviews, a conglomeration of societal and cultural values and experiences. This understanding is hinted as Young (2009) opposed the instructional approaches that emphasize the transition from home language to school language. Rather, the scholar suggests promoting meaningful mingling of two language varieties as was done in President Obama’s use of African American English (AAE) in public space, “Nah, we straight” (Henderson, 2009).Generally, this code switching occurs spontaneously during the conversations among multilingual or bilingual speakers, which is also true for Obama, but it could be political code messaging to some measure according to John McWhorter (Henderson, 2009), a linguist at the conservative Manhattan Institute. Obama’s blending of AAE and “so-called standard English” (Young, 2009; p. 50) is viewed by some linguists as “Black Standard English**”** (Hoover, 1978). Codeswitching has become instrumental in promoting linguistic co-existence of AAE and standard English. Spanglish is another example of code

switching featuring a “hybrid language” (p.49) through a simultaneous linguistic production of Spanish and English.

Code-meshing emphasizes the relationship between language and meaning (Stanford, 2011; Horner, NeCamp, & Donahue, 2011; Nettell, 2011; Canagarajah, 2011, Young, 2011) and requires constant negotiations of linguistic knowledge and resources. Davila (2016) urged scholars to promote linguistic diversity through integrating codemeshing in their own scholarship in academic avenues as journals and publications. In addition, writing teachers might code-mesh teaching materials as syllabi, prompts, to encourage multilingual students to incorporate their diversity of languages from their repertoire.

In shifting the approach from code-switching to code-meshing, Young (2009**)** questions the existing definition educators practice in classrooms to teach speaking and writing to African Americans and other “accent-and dialect speakers” (p. 50) of English. Wheeler and Sword (2006) advocate language substitution through employing translation model of code-switching rather than accommodating two language varieties in speech or writing. Graff’s (2003) view of “Linguistic integration is preferable to segregation” (p. 27) resonates with Prendergast’s (1998) caution to not endorse code switching as instructional practice because it ultimately does not promote code meshing, the meaningful integration and understanding of different languages and cultures. Although, Young’s (2009, 2011) logical reasoning and explanation for vetoing code-switching and integrating code meshing stemmed from concerns of race, equality, and justice for African Americans both in society and classrooms, the call is no less important and not exclusionary of the other minority language speakers of English. According to Young(2009), “Code meshing is a better resolution to the minority language debate because it allows the

minoritized to become more effective communicators by doing what we all do best, what comes naturally: blending , merging, meshing dialects" (p.72).

Canagarajah's (2011) perspective echoes that teachers are in a position to model academic writing using codemeshing to encourage their multilingual students to do the same. Most scholars of multilingual writing suggest teachers avoid one-size-fits-all pedagogy as multilingual writers do not come from one single background. Instead, scholars suggest acknowledging that the choices and rationales adopted by translanguagers cannot be presumed (Gonzalez, Moll, & Amanti, 2005). The funds of knowledge that multilinguals bring into the classrooms should be viewed as assets (Gilyard, 2016; Logan, 2016).

At the same time, scholars of multilingual writing with a focus on translingualism (Bawarshi, 2016; Canagarajah, 2009, 2011; Cushman, 2016; Guerra, 2016; Horner & Lu, 2013; Olson, 2013) concur that students need to be exposed to multiple genres of writing and context to expand their repertoire in codemeshing. Codemeshing can vary with tone, purpose, and audience In other words; teachers can create a safe space for students to experiment with translingualism through the avenues of meaningful communication. Authors Geneva Smitherman, Ngugiwa Thiong'o, Chinua Achebe, Ken Sara-Wewo, Derek Wolcott have used translanguaging and codemeshing to varying extents while negotiating dominant conventions critically and creatively (Ahmad, 2007; Wade 2018). Advancing students to meaningful writing requires them to understand the differences of diverse orientation to language and writing to meet the core condition of effective communication.

**Language and National Security**

Compared to the research on how multilinguals negotiate English during face-to-face conversations at the point of contact, less has been done in unfolding negotiation strategies in writing. Defenders of SWE tend to view negotiation strategies as compensatory mechanisms employed to hide incommunicability as noted by Cummins (1986) Regardless of the "deficient" view, study findings strongly indicate multilinguals use of English is qualitatively different but not deficient by any measures (Cummins, 1989; Flores, Cousin, & Diaz, 1991).

Since World War II (WWII), language has been a critical focus from the perspective of national security. As the global environment expands, so does the stress to be linguistically and culturally competent. Enhancing the nation's capacity in multiple languages means that the shift to multilingualism may be actually in the best interests of national security. In fact, that is a focus of the *Center for Advanced Study of Language* (JNCL-NCLIS, 2006). Perhaps "the importance of knowing languages and knowing the world through languages" (Pratt, 2003, p. 112) has been bolstered by the continuing concern of security-related issues since the attack of 9/11. Promoting multilingualism as a national language policy was promoted by President Bush in a speech at the *2006 U.S. University President's Summit on International Education***(**Wible,2009),

> The Secretary of Defense [. . .] wants his young soldiers who are on the front lines of finding these killers to be able to speak their language and be able to listen to the people in the communities in which they live. That makes sense, doesn't it, to have a language-proficient military to have people that go into the far reaches of this world and be able to communicate in the villages and towns and rural areas and urban centers, to protect the American people. We need intelligence officers who, when somebody says something in Arabic or Farsi or Urdu, knows what they're talking about. That's what we need. We need diplomats-when we send them out to help us convince governments that we've got to join together and fight these terrorists who want to destroy life and promote an ideology that is so backwards it's hard to believe. These diplomats need to speak that language. (p.460)

The point that the language learning can be valued and sustained more for communicative purposes rather than solely from the protectionist perspective is also stated throughout President Bush's speech, "learning the languages of other countries and cultures can be a way to reach out to somebody and let that person know that I'm interested in not only how you talk but how you live" (p.461). This post-September 11 national language policy challenges the agenda of official English-Only legislation that requires students regardless of their language backgrounds to learn content materials and to communicate only in English in school (Gershon & Pantoja, 2011)

**English-only Movement**

Historically, it is interesting to note that the forces of the English-Only movement and surge of immigration emerged around the same time. Among various strains of obstacles, language has been used as an instrument in the Americanization campaign for immigrants to be assimilated into American culture. Language has always been political and, "questions of language are basically questions of power" (Chomsky, 1979, p.191). The episodic outcomes of dominant language ideology and discriminatory attitudes toward other languages are supported by legislation, such as English-Only laws, Proposition 227, and English-Only rules (Schmid, 2000) Contextually such hostility to any language but English can be interpreted as for in favor and against multilingualism (Viskova, 2012) America has always been considered as a country of immigrants. The explicit and implicit hegemony of English is not only confined to the U.S. but spread, and stretched worldwide turning the English-Only movement into a sort of neo-colonialism or language imperialism(Pac, 2012).

Regardless of the efforts of policymakers to limit the language of others, the English-speaking United States freely adopts from other cultures, not only language, but also cuisine, pop

culture and holidays. Assimilation invokes differences in political ideologies and philosophical beliefs. The sharp divide in opinions about language directly affects the increasing number of Americans whose first language is not English (Grovum, 2014) while English is known as an official language of the U.S., no such policy is supported by the U.S. Constitution. The fact of the matter is English is the *de facto* national language of the United States of America. The 2016 election and the consequential backlash against immigrants has pushed speaking proficiency in English language (Romero, 2017). To date, 20 states have proclaimed English as the official language, an extension of the 20th century English- only movement as well as affirmation of the results of the 2016 presidential election.

**Historical Development of Second Language Writing**

The development of the field of second language writing (SLW), even with more than three decades may still be in the process of recognition as a new interdisciplinary field (Maliborska, 2015). The interest in second language writing can be traced to the middle of the 20thcentury, a period that Silva (1990) calls, "the beginning of the modern era of second language teaching in the United States" (p.11). The starting point of this new initiative of SLW instruction primarily focused on preparing second language students (L2) for university level writing that was, as Matsuda (1999) noted, prior to the 1940s, merely known as ESL(English as a second language) and not recognized as a profession in the United States. It was not before 1960s that SLW instruction began to be visible in the curriculum of college level ESL programs.

**Understanding Multilingualism in Translinguistic Globalized Spaces**

By illustrating the narratives of the multilingual students in Pacific Coast University (PCU) in Vancouver, Canada, Lee and Marshall (2012) have drawn attention to how definitions of multilingualism are compartmentalized in a host of languages and literacies. Located in Metro Vancouver, PCU's student demographics along with the city's other colleges and universities reflect a rich and notable linguistic diversity represented by Mandarin, Cantonese, Korean, Punjabi, and Farsi among other languages. The linguistic practice of multilingual young adults can be viewed as a complex linguistic tapestry interweaved through multi-layered, context-dependent communication, in both speech and writing, among home, institutions, and social networks. Leung, Harris, and Rampton (1997) note that, depending on the demand of the contexts, many multilinguals "perform monolingually in English as an 'idealised native speaker' (Lee & Marshall, 2012, p.66). Although many studies of bilingualism or multilingualism are concerned with issues triggered by French, Canada's second or other official language, a gap in research is found with regard to everyday interactions with speakers of languages other than English or French (Statistics Canada, 2007). With intent to fill this gap, Lee and Marshall conducted a two-year mixed-method study of multilingualism and multiliteracies with undergraduate students enrolled in an Academic Literacy Course (ALC) at PCU.

This ACU course was a remedial course for students who hadn't met the institution's literacy requirements by obtaining a 75% grade in the English course in their final year of school (p.66). And the equivalent arrangement for international students was to make a score of 6.5 in *IELTS (International English Language Testing System).* The course was mainly focused on developing skills in academic communication in English with an emphasis on critical reading and thinking, organizational patterns, different forms of academic writing, citation styles,

academic vocabulary, and oral presentations. Multilingual literacy was facilitated through free exploratory writing, note-taking, and peer-based learning, communications in a context included email, text messaging, and social network interactions. Researchers developed and analyzed narratives evolved from the interviews with multilingual students on their experiences. Lee and Marshall (2012) found that multilinguals use rich repertoires of knowledge and shuttle between various languages and discourses which in Canagarajah's (2010)view allowed them to become "rhetorically creative" (p. 175) Olson (2013) suggested that adopting a multilingual orientation, would allow "linguistic multitude" as opposed to "linguistic oneness" (Stanton,2005, p.64).

With regard to multilingual students' performance in context-specific situations, it was found that neither language nor identity is fixed (Block, 2007; Norton, 2000) Instead, both are co-constructed dynamically, through multiple forms of discursive practices. Bourdieu's (1977) claims that identity continues to be negotiated through discourses of power and (il) legitimacy that Butler (1993) calls the reproduction of hegemonic constructions of identity 'performavity." Interestingly, power and legitimacy are interpreted by Lee and Marshall (2012) in relation to experience. Speakers are not only constrained as they perform in different social, cultural, and linguistic contexts, their potentials may be triggered to challenge discourses and eventually reconstruct identity.

**Research on First-year Composition**

This section reviews the literature, both conceptual and empirical, of experiences of multilingual writers of English in the required first-year composition (FYC) classrooms in U.S. colleges and universities. The long-held notion of adopting "Standard English" in the U.S. academic institution that is both explicitly and implicitly promoted in writing centers and

composition classrooms may challenge international multilingual students' identity as well as their academic journey For many international, non-native speakers of English students (NNSEs) enrolled in undergraduate studies, who ambitiously invest their hopes, dreams, and energy in the pursuit of learning how to write, the first-year composition(FYC) classroom is one of their first stops.

In the United States, the FYC course is usually mandatory to graduation for both native speakers of English (NSE) and non-native speakers of English (NNSE) students (Goggin & Miller, 2000; Crowley, 1991). Seemingly, from the commonsense standpoint, there is not much to argue in the designs of a writing course that deliberately reflects the "tacit language policy of unidirectional English monolingualism" (Horner & Trimbur, 2002, p. 594) privileging the perpetuation of standard English. This section discusses the experiences of international students in mainstream FYC classes.

Matsuda, Saenkhum, and Accardi (2013) conducted a perception survey to investigate first-year writing teachers' perceptions of the presence and needs of second language (L2) writers in both mainstream and L2 sections of first-year composition courses in a large and comprehensive college program. The study was conducted at a large Southwestern public university in the United States, comprising a large international student population. Data sources included both brief and open-ended responses from 74 first-year writing teachers with a range of questions concerning number of classes taught; number of multilingual students, both international and native; the process of identifying multilingual students; approaches applied to working with multilingual writers; perceptions of the needs of multilingual writers; perceptions of resources and support required to address the needs; experiences in working with multilingual writers; their educational backgrounds; their training experiences; and their preparedness in

teaching multilingual writers. Findings showed a breadth of perspectives, attitudes, and experiences with addressing the needs of multilingual students and their writing. The responses highlighted the positive attitudes of first-year writing teachers in recognizing and addressing multilingual students' distinctive needs. Matsuda et al. (2013) found a need for specific training for interacting with culturally and linguistically diverse students.

They also found that, "the exclusive focus on rhetoric was counterproductive for L2 writers and advocated for more attention to language issues" (p.81) This study pointed out that the key concerns and constraints regarded as roadblocks for multilingual students included cultural differences, institutional policy, curriculum and differences in the expectations for academic performance in their home countries.

Bhowmik's (2016) study investigated multilingual writers' agency, identity, and ideology in a first-year composition writing classroom by interviewing 31 second language (L2) students in a large North American university. Data were collected from interviews, process logs, class materials, and classroom observation notes (p.275). Findings indicated that multilingual writers' agency is manifested as they employ various strategies throughout the development of the writing assignment (p.296). Some writers jotted down ideas and thoughts, to guide them as they wrote. For some, assurance of having enough time to write alleviated anxiety Strategies used by multilingual writers were not static. Rather they evolved and were spontaneously negotiated in response to contextual and situational needs. Strategies that participants reported in this study ranged from composing and revisions to management of time that were navigated throughout the writing task which Bhowmik found time to be the "the most robust evidence of learners' agency" (p.286). In this regard, Bhowmik's perception of agency coheres with Duff's (2012) view of agency as the " ability to make choices, take control, self-regulate, and thereby pursue their goals

as individuals leading, potentially, to personal or social transformation"(p.276). Simultaneously, while developing their writing skills, multilingual writers improve their rhetorical skills and learn the proper use of academic English by being aware of the differences between spoken and written English.

However, when it comes to identity, findings indicated only a few multilingual writers (12.9%) in Bhowmik's study considered themselves to be "writers**."** Block (2015**)** examined agency and identity with a Japanese student whose English language learning occurred in a socioeconomic and sociopolitical environment in Japan that shaped her identity. Block suggested that a multilingual writer's super-structure might include personal, societal, and institutional contexts, all of which could contribute to agentive power.

Other studies by Santos (1992), Benesch (1993), Olivo (2003), De Costa (2011) looked at the ideology that emerged in the context of writers' beliefs and preferences Findings of this sort tended to stress concepts such as positive and negative ideology, which are strongly correlated to cultural and social factors such as goals or perceptions of task. A student who wants to become a better writer and has the goal of becoming successful in life may flourish, while a student who does not care about becoming a better writer and who has no goals may fail.

Davila (2016) noted that the status quo of standard English as linguistically neutral affects the field of writing studies' ongoing effort to promote linguistic equality and promote linguistic diversity. Data were gathered from the interviews with 18 writing instructors at three public research universities, two in the Midwest, and one in the Southwest. Out of the total participants, 10 were female and 8 were males with all being white. Prior to the interview, the instructors read and graded three anonymous student papers, written by incoming freshmen for purposes of placement, randomly selected from a pool of nine collected by the researcher.

Researcher also verified the standard of the selected papers with the directors of the writing center and writing program prior to providing those to the instructors as the focus was also to understand the instructors' perceptions of the standardness of a written paper. The goal was to understand instructors' decision-making with regard to marking (or not unmarking) the text. Instructors were interviewed to understand their strategies, and processes of evaluation. Instructors identified common patterns. Patterns that emerged through coding the transcribed interviews were:

(1) Not a "particular dialect": SEAE as normal

(2) An "innate sense of language": SEAE as natural

(3) SEAE as non-interfering

(4) SEAE as widely accessible

The majority of instructors, 12 out of 18, perceived that students had the basic knowledge of SEAE learned in multiple contexts through schooling, reading, home literacy practices, or simply an 'innate sense of language' ( p.140). The common expectation that students should know grammar and usage rules led instructors to point out the grammatical mistakes that did not meet the criteria of SEAE.

In an earlier study, Trimbur (1990) noted that the perceived accessibility to SEAE for students of all backgrounds is rooted in the expectation and maintenance of standardness, which positioned instructors not just as linguistically neutral but "radically egalitarian"(p.82) in an effort to erase differences. Ideology of language was treated as a container by the instructors that influenced their process of evaluation.

The assumptions of superiority of standard language created binaries of standard and nonstandard language, "Language does not influence meaning or content; language can impede

or enhance access to meaning, but it does not interact with the meaning itself" (Davila, 2016, p. 139). Findings affirmed the assumption that SEAE is linguistically neutral,

Using focus group interviews, Behrens, Johnson, Allard, & Caroli (2016), examined perspectives on academic writing from both undergraduate students and their instructors They found that an instructor's attitude concerning acceptable academic English was captured by the phrase, 'I know it when I see it (or not see it) (p.310). In contrast, for first-year university students, "academic English is a new form of English, different from what they encountered and what was expected in secondary school" (Behrens et al., 2016, p.310). For this qualitative study, researchers analyzed the data collected from the interviews and the journal entries from four focus groups, two each for students and educators, with full-time traditional-college-age students, enrolled from first through fourth year, and both tenured and tenure-track faculty from different educational backgrounds and levels respectively at an U.S. higher academic institution.

Two areas of concern were: (1) Vocabulary; and (2) Texting and technology. In terms of 'vocabulary,' students perceived their writing as less than it should be. Students thought that larger vocabularies were essential to both reading and writing. Most students saw little relation between text lingo and essays In terms of "texting and technology," students considered "text lingo" having little effect on their formal writing In contrast, instructors thought text lingo impeded the development of a formal and well-articulated academic essay.

Behrens et al. (2016), noted the vague conception of academic writing held by both native and non-native speakers of English and instructors. Researchers noted the need for a clearer understanding of expectations. Conversations between instructors and students about the nature of academic writing did not occur.

Canagarajah (2011), a pioneering multilingual scholar, discusses translanguaging strategies used by an advanced level undergraduate student. They include recontextualization strategies, voice strategies, interactional strategies, and textualization strategies (p.401).Canagarajah coded and collected data from texts constructed by a Saudi Arabian student. The procedures involved reconstructing meanings of the text through applying the above mentioned strategies. Canagarajah urged a shift of emphasis from rhetorical to social negotiation for assessment and instruction.

Canagarajah (2006) has also suggested rethinking writing pedagogy in the context of negotiation strategies used by multilingual writers by encouraging them to reflect, to value the agency motivating their writing, to preserve the identities constructed in their writing, and to help transform their writing from "competent" to "critical" (p.603). The multilingual approach of shuttling between multiple discourses allows language learners to adopt a "translingual approach" which Horner, Lu, Royester, & Trimbur (2011) claim offers an opportunity to "see difference in language, not as a barrier to overcome or as a problem to manage, but as a resource for producing meaning in writing, speaking, reading, and listening" (p. 303).Olson (2013) stated that translingualism allowed multilingual students to become "rhetorically creative" as they must draw on resources from their native language as well as the target language(p.2).

Wardle (2007) observed instructors' low expectations for the writing skills of first-year students and found a disconnect between the requirement of writing across disciplines and the transferability of knowledge and skills gained in FYC. Other crucial aspects noted by Behren (2014) and Hyland (2009) are the lack of training for instructors of multilingual learners and the inability to articulate expectations for academic writing. Kutz (2004) also highlighted instructors' failure to unpack expectations of formal academic writing. Instead discourse was "syntactically

dense, with specialized vocabulary" (p.87) and "compressed, densely packed, and distant"(p. 90). Kutz found that students in FYC writing rarely understood that academic writing venture is beyond learning grammar (Gee, 2005) suggested that, in order to decipher the meaning of scholarly writings, students needed to be guided to "try on the discourse of a new setting"(p.80).

## Chapter 3: Methodology

This research pursues understanding of the perceptions of form and content in multilingual writing from the data collected from monolingual and multilingual FYC composition instructors, and international multilingual students. This chapter discusses the research methodology used in the study including, including design and rationale, methods of data collection, data sources, and data analysis. The chapter details the context of the site, describes participants, and discusses the role of a researcher.

### Research Design

This research investigates the unique use of English and distinctive communicative strategies employed in multilingual writing through translingualism (Canagarajah, 2006; 2013; 2016; Horner, NeCamp, & Donahue, 2011; Cushman, 2016; Guerra, 2016; Gllyard, 2016**)** a paradigm, that calls for an approach to meaning making through negotiating differences in language. By analyzing the perspectives collected through semi-structured interviews, this study aims to understand 'form' and 'content' used in multilingual writing and to analyze perspectives and experiences of monolingual instructors, multilingual instructors, and multilingual students with regard to writing and meaning.

This study uses the philosophical influences of constructionism ( Bakhtin, 1981;1986) which views knowledge as being actively produced, constructed in discourses that categorize the world and bring phenomena to light (Talia, Tuominen, & Savolainen, 2005). In this sense, Bakhtin's (1920) dialogic pedagogy develops a conversation space extending the scope of

dialogue between teachers and students, and also among teachers, thus leading to the formation of new experiences, new concepts, new knowledge, and new meaning. I make an effort to understand perspectives and experiences of a diverse group of participants. I try to understand multilingual writers and how their writing is interpreted and viewed by monolingual and multilingual instructors in a First-year Composition course (FYC) at Southwest University (SU).

## Rhetorical Theory

This study uses rhetorical theory as a conceptual framework to illuminate the practices in the 21st century writing composition classroom at SU. In last fifty years, as Berlin (1988) has noted, the notion of social-epistemic rhetoric has been discussed and debated by Burke, Ohmann, Young, Becker, Pike, Bruffee, Winterowd, Berthoff, Lauer, Lefever, Faigle, Bartholomae, Myers, Bizzell, and many others from radically different political stances. Berlin notes that they all, "share a notion of rhetoric as a political act involving a dialectical interaction engaging the material, the social, and the individual writer, with language as the agency of mediation"(p. 488). In a larger sense, rhetoric as a political act is also in line with the epistemological essence of social constructionism and dialogic pedagogy. This study is rooted in dialectical interaction that generates a discourse, knowledge, and experience through language in a specific social and cultural context.

## Research Design Rationale

Case study as described by Creswell (2013) allows a focus on a bounded case to illustrate an issue. In a similar vein, case study analysis, as Lecompte and Preissley (l993) note, allows for

a process of intensive, in-depth examination of one or few aspects of a given phenomenon. Case study offers the opportunity to explore translingualism from a multitude of perspectives (Costa & Kallick, 1993) with diverse participants of First-year Composition (FYC) instructors and students. To explore emerging research questions and to generate deeper understandings of the perceptions of form and content in multilingual writing, case study as a method seems apt as it provides a means of exploring an issue in-depth and discovering emerging themes (Creswell, 2013). Case study offers narrative features for portraying an individual writer's voice and thoughts (Newkirk, 1992). Case study also follows the scientific method through observing, interviewing, recording, and analyzing data by focusing on the individual's unique, detailed, individualized accounts. In this study, the 'content' and 'form' of international multilingual FYC students' writing are not independent, but context-specific. The story of struggles, conflicts, crises, transformations, and resolutions of students and instructors constitute the case.

As the purpose of this dissertation is to investigate the perceptions of monolingual and multilingual FYC instructors and their international multilingual students, multidimensional perspectives have been elicited through interviews, classroom observations, and follow-up interviews.

## Research Site

This research study took place at Southwest University, a large public research university located in the southwestern part of the United States of America. All participants of the study, during the time of the interview, were FYC instructors and international students enrolled in two mainstream FYC courses. The courses, *Principles of Composition I* and *Principles of Composition II*, were offered by the FYC program, a writing program housed in the English

Department in the College of Arts and Sciences. To meet graduation pre-requisites, most undergraduates have to take these two courses. There has been an ongoing debate among language scholars and researchers on FYC as a requirement for graduation for the growing number of linguistically diverse students in higher education (Matsuda, Saenkhum, & Acardi, 2013). The ongoing debate centers around the traditional conception of FYC as a gatekeeping course, whereby students are expected to "master a highly idealized version of the written dialect of a dominant class" (Crowley, 1991, p.159).

Increases in undergraduate international students enrolled in Southwest University (see Fig.3, p. 9) have created an opportunity to study the pedagogical practices of the FYC classroom. First-year composition (FYC) is offered to the linguistically heterogeneous student population including native and non-native speakers of English. Other writing courses offered by the English Department are *Introduction to College Writing*, *English for Exchange Students*, *Writing for the Health Professions*, and *Technical Writing*. By designing a range of writing programs, the English department plays a vital role in addressing academic needs and meeting general education requirements for undergraduate students. Two regular writing courses, *Principles of Comp I-1113*and *Principles of Comp II- 1213* also known as *Freshman Composition*, are offered each year to incoming freshman in two consecutive semesters, Fall and Spring.

**First-year Composition Program**

The goal of the FYC program, delineated on the Southwest University's (SU) website, claims it offers the best possible opportunity for both native speakers of English(NSE) and international multilingual students (IMS) to become proficient writers.

The program emphasizes the following aspects to prepare students to write and speak in the public sphere, whether as a college student or as a citizen, about issues that matter to them:

- Audience Awareness
- Rhetorical Analysis
- Scholarly Research
- Critical Inquiry

**FYC courses.** The goals, objectives, and outcomes of aforementioned regular writing courses offered on FYC website are discussed below:

***Principles of Composition I.*** Comp I is designed to help students develop practices of inquiry that will prepare them, not only for Comp II, but for writing in a diverse set of social, academic, and professional contexts. Students will investigate and write about social and political issues of interest to them with the goal of learning more about the values that inform their own beliefs and the beliefs of the community and people around them.

The semester's writing assignments will teach students how to develop effective research questions, and also expose them to a variety of research methods so they may choose research strategies that best address their lines of inquiry. These methods allow them to lead and engage in productive conversations with specific audiences. Students will also have the opportunity to design and deliver oral speeches, a skill that will be of value to them in Comp II and beyond. In order to accomplish these goals, students will reflect on how their past experiences have shaped their personal values, research how groups in the local community and/or university enact shared values, and analyze the competing value systems that animate the social and political issues in the world around them.

In summary, this course will teach students to use inquiry and writing as tools capable of teaching them more about themselves, the communities around them, and the values that are vital to both.

**Learning outcomes.** When students complete Comp I, they will be able to:

- Use writing for discovery, comprehension, problem solving, and the construction of nuanced arguments
- Contribute, via writing or speech, to conversations mediating important social issues in a manner appropriate for the content and context specific to those issues
- Compose and deliver essays and speeches that demonstrate rhetorical awareness
- Develop flexible and effective strategies for organizing, revising,

practicing/rehearsing, editing, and proofreading (for grammar and mechanics) to improve development and clarity of ideas
- Find, analyze, and correctly cite primary and secondary sources relevant to assignments to support and develop personal points of view and/or explore new lines of inquiry
- Develop considerate and constructive strategies for responding to peer work
- Define and practice revision strategies for essays and speeches that locate areas for improvement and effectively target them

***Principles of Composition II.*** Comp II builds on the writing, research, inquiry, and revision skills developed in Comp I. In Comp II, students will explore an issue of personal interest to them throughout the semester. This inquiry will begin by exploring students' personal investments in their chosen issues. The issue will also become an object of study as students conduct research that considers both the issue's history and various stakeholders. The project culminates in opportunities for the student to construct written and oral arguments designed to persuade specific audiences. Students will be introduced to multiple argumentative options and learn how to choose organizational strategies that support their goals. To support their persuasive arguments, students will also practice and engage in both primary and secondary research, as well as revision and editing strategies that will help them produce polished and effective strategies. By the end of this course, students will be prepared to encounter new academic writing project sand engage in public conversations about issues important to them.

**Learning outcomes.** After completing Comp II, students will be able to:

- Compose in writing and deliver orally one major project grounded in scholarly research that responds to audience needs and expectations
- Pursue a line of inquiry to explore and intervene in an issue of public interest
- Conduct relevant secondary and primary research on a subject, effectively presenting and synthesizing research findings
- Use advanced rhetorical strategies for analyzing arguments and developing ideas
- Identify and apply revision strategies to their own writing, working with classmates, instructors, and others
- Refine speaking, writing, and visual communication skills, focusing on matters of construction, design, and delivery style

Cited from SWU Eng. Department-FYC Website

**Course Arc for English 1113 and English 1213**

**English 1113**

**Assignment 1**: students choose a personal value and explore its origins and development in their lives

**Assignment 2:** students use primary and secondary research to study how shared values motivate a local group's engagement with a social or political issue

**Assignment 3:** students analyze a text that represents a position different from their own to better understand the worldview of the author

**Assignment 4:** students give a 5-7 minute speech on a meaningful experience they had during the course

By the end of the course, students learn key skills, such as rhetorical listening and critical inquiry, that allow them to consider the worldviews that inform public arguments. By examining their own values, the values that inform groups, and the worldviews of those who they disagree with, students actively practice slowing down argumentation. Rather than arguing immediately with the "opposition," our student are taught to spend time listening to gain a better understanding of another's perspective. The emphasis placed on understanding the motivations behind beliefs, opinions, and actions in English 1113 prepares students to continue with the slow argument process in English 1213.

**English 1213**

**Rant:** students give a 1.5- 2 minute informal speech to their classmates in which they discuss a public issue that is important to them

**Assignment 1:** students explore the background and context of their chosen public issue, explaining its current state and how it got there

**Assignment 2:** students research and rhetorically analyze the arguments made by key stakeholders in their chosen public issue

**Assignment 3:** students craft an argument to one of the stakeholders that they analyzed in the second assignment

**Assignment 4:** students give a 6-8 minute formal speech and a 2-minute Q & A in which they attempt to persuade their classmates on an aspect of their selected issue

Building on the skills acquired in English 1113, students continue to practice listening as they work toward intervening in a public issue. They spend time researching the complexity of their selected social or political issue, the move on to analyzing stakeholders in that issue. Using stasis theory as an analytical tool, students examine the arguments being made by stakeholders. Finally, students select a stakeholder that disagrees with them to try to persuade to think differently, relying on stasis theory to help craft their argument. By the end of the two-course sequence, students have completed the process of slow argument by taking the time to research the history and context of an issue as well as to listen to the stakeholders in that issue. Further, students learn to cultivate civic empathy, not by immediately approaching social issues in a combative manner but instead delaying argumentation for the sake of understanding. Students leave English 1213 better equipped to contribute to public discourse, having practiced a process that can lead to respectful communication and productive dialogue.

Cited from SWU Eng. Department-FYC Website

## Participant Profiles

My data collection plan included interviewing monolingual and multilingual first- year composition (FYC) instructors as well as international multilingual student participants, with a diverse range of linguistic, cultural, and academic backgrounds and experiences that were pursuing their undergraduate programs in various academic disciplines. The biographical, and educational, and teaching backgrounds are described in detail**.** Pseudonyms were used in place of participants' real names for protection of confidentiality.

Data were recorded, transcribed, and stored as password protected documents on the researcher's computer. Monolingual and multilingual First-Year Composition (FYC) teachers had varied academic backgrounds and teaching experiences. All were students in graduate programs. Descriptions of FYC instructors are shown in Table 3, 4, & 5 and descriptions of international multilingual students are shown in Table 6.

Table 3

*Monolingual Instructors with Language Experience other than English*

| Instructor | FYC Teaching Experience | Language Experience | Academic Status | Nationality |
|---|---|---|---|---|
| John | 3 Consecutive Semesters<br>Comp I-2 Semester<br>Comp II-2 Semester | Monolingual with intermediate level of proficiency in Spanish and French | Master's Student in World Language Education | American |
| Amy | 2 years<br>Comp I-2 Semester<br>Comp II-2 Semester | Monolingual with very limited experience in Turkish | Final year Master's Student in Composition, Rhetoric and Literacy | American |
| Ruth | 18 years<br>5 years-Comp I & Comp II | Monolingual with limited experience in Cherokee Language | Doctoral candidate in Composition, Rhetoric and Literacy | American |

**Table 3. Monolingual Instructors with Language Experience other than English.**

## Monolingual Instructors with Language Experience other than English

### John

John was pursuing his Master's degree in *World Language Education* while he was interviewed. He practiced Spanish with close family members and had an intermediate level of proficiency in French that he learned during his undergraduate program. He shared his experience with international students from Saudi Arabia, Colombia, and China that he had encountered in six classes during teaching FYC writing courses during three consecutive semesters.

### Amy

Amy had 10 international students altogether in her comp I and II classes over two years of teaching FYC. She also taught Tech Writing for two semesters. She was pursuing her Master's degree in *Composition, Rhetoric, and Literacy*. Amy spoke Turkish during her middle school years while she lived in Turkey.

### Ruth

Ruth had 20 years of experience teaching FYC in both community college and public university. During her teaching career, she encountered many international students in her classes. Other than English, as a Cherokee native, she speaks Cherokee upon occasion in her

community. She was pursuing her Ph.D. in *Composition, Rhetoric, and Literacy* while interviewed.

Table 4

*Monolingual Instructors with No Experience in any other Language other than English*

| Instructor | FYC Teaching Experience | Language Experience | Academic Status | Nationality |
|---|---|---|---|---|
| Mary | 20 years Research Site<br>6 years Comp I &<br>Comp II | English | Doctoral Candidate in Educational Studies | American |
| Paige | 3 Semesters<br>Comp I & Comp II | English | Final year Master's Student in Composition, Rhetoric and Literacy | American |
| David | 1 Semester<br>Comp I | English | Final year Master's Student In Composition, Rhetoric and Literacy | American |

**Table 4. Monolingual Instructors with No Experience in any other Language other than English.**

**Monolingual Instructors with No Experience in any other Language other than English**

## Mary

Mary, a doctoral student in *Educational Studies* and an adjunct teacher with 22 years of teaching experience was teaching Comp II, a mainstream freshman writing course, with two international students in her class while she was interviewed. During her fairly long teaching life, she had experiences with international students from diverse multilingual backgrounds representing East Asian, South American, and Middle Eastern countries. In her experience, there were fewer international students in southwest than in the northeastern part of the country.

Interestingly, her teaching experiences with multilingual writers of English have been more versatile In *'Developmental Writing Class,'* a class she taught at a university in New York, more than half of the students were immigrants from Spanish-speaking countries. In addition to Freshman Composition at SU, Mary also taught an ESL class for students from varied language backgrounds. Without a doubt, as a writing teacher, Mary's experience with students with multiple language backgrounds can be regarded as quite substantive.

**Paige**

Paige taught Comp I & II in FYC. During her 3rd semester of teaching she had three international multilingual students- one from Angola (a native speaker of Portuguese) and two were from Arabic speaking Saudi Arabia Paige was pursuing her Master's degree in *Composition, Rhetoric, and Literacy.*

**David**

David, who was pursuing his Master's degree in Composition, Rhetoric, and Literacy, was teaching FYC for the first time. He had one multilingual student who migrated from Cameron, a Central African country David had experiences teaching regular composition, and he taught international students in the Engineering department during the Summer. Previously, David taught English in China for a year.

Table 5

*Multilingual Instructor Equally Proficient and Competent in Spanish and English*

| Instructor | FYC Teaching Experience | Language Experience | Academic Status | Nationality |
|---|---|---|---|---|
| Maria | 3 years in Comp I & Comp II | Proficient in English and Spanish | Doctoral Candidate in | American |

| | | | | |
|---|---|---|---|---|
| | | | Chicano Literature, Indigenous Literature and Media | |

**Table 5. Multilingual Instructor Equally Proficient and Competent in Spanish and English.**

**Multilingual Instructor**

**Maria**

Maria, a bilingual (English and Spanish) doctoral student in Chicano Literature, Indigenous Literature, and Media, had international students in most of her classes over three years of teaching Comp I &II, she recalled that the population in El Paso, her hometown, constitutes of 85% Hispanic; 7% White; 3% African American. The neighborhood where she was born and grew up has always been heavily populated with Spanish-speaking people. Maria was a third –generation, American born citizen. She recalled when her parents shared the experiences of corporal punishment in school for speaking Spanish. There was awareness of Chicano literature in high school teachers because most students were Hispanic. Maria shared that,

> Chicano works always seemed more accessible, it seemed the way the language, the way that the English was presented I was accustomed to vs. the more formal academic text I read. Compared to George Bernard Shaw, which is still very different than Shakespearean English and Elizabethan English, and I would struggle with that but then Shaw became more accessible, academic.

Table 6

*International Multilingual Students*

| Student | FYC Courses | Language Experience | Academic Status | Nationality |
|---|---|---|---|---|
| Sam | Exempted from Comp I | Proficient in Swazi and English | Sophomore - Chemical Engineering | Swaziland |

| | | | | |
|---|---|---|---|---|
| John | Comp I & Comp II | Swahili, English and French | Freshman - Mechanical Engineering | Kenya |
| Hapa | Comp I & Comp II | Arabic and English | Sophomore - Petroleum Engineering | Saudi Arabia |

**Table 6. International Multilingual Students.**

## International Multilingual Students

### Sam from Swaziland

Born and raised in Swaziland, a landlocked country neighboring Mozambique and South Africa, Sam has been in the United States of America for a year. Once a British protectorate from 1903 until 1967 ("Eswatini,"), Swaziland has adopted English as one of the official languages along with Swati or Swazi, the native and ethnic language. Swazi is used and practiced most often in Swaziland.

As a Chemical Engineering major, Sam started her sophomore year in her undergraduate academic journey. In the second semester of her freshman year, she took Comp II, skipping Comp I, a part of the composition writing course, mandatory for graduation in the undergraduate programs in U.S. academic institutions. Her proficiency in English has earned her placement in a mainstream, First-year Composition course and this advanced level of knowledge in English language, in her opinion, should be attributed to the International Baccalaureate (IB) English program from her high school years. She thinks the IB program is well-structured and the curriculum is well-rounded. Students read poetry, prose, and novels and analyzed and wrote interpretations of texts. During her high school years, she also learned French in which she can communicate "to a fairly reasonable extent."

**John from Kenya**

Born in Western Kenya, close to the border of Uganda, John went to school in Lugari until 8th grade. Then he moved to Nairobi and went to Alliance High School where he earned Secondary School Certificate after four years. Alliance High School has always been ranked within the top ten best schools in Kenya for each year's National Examinations. He was 16, when he graduated from high school. Afterwards, he moved to Norway to attend International Baccalaureate (IB) Program in United World College in Norway. He took Mathematics, Physics, and Chemistry as he wanted to pursue a career in Engineering.The curriculum in IB program is tailored to help students develop strong skills in particular subject areas.

John started his undergraduate program as an engineering major and it was his second semester at Southwest University .He took Comp I the first semester and was taking CompII the second semester John is proficient in English, an official language of Kenya and he also speaks Swahili and Maragoli. In the Kenyan educational system, Swahili and English are taught simultaneously. At the end of 8th grade, students are required to take a mandatory national exam and the proficiency in grammar, sentence structure, tenses, mechanics of language is assessed. Emphasis in high school was on content analysis, the context of culture, analysis of newspaper articles and books, and the use of language. In his opinion, the system is rigorous with regard to knowing the rules of English and being able to use analytical skills in writing. John thinks his Kenyan education was good. In the IB program, he developed a command of vocabulary, analysis, and presentation. John said that, in high school, everything seemed carefully systematized and standardized. English and all subjects areas were taught in English.

### Hapa from Saudi Arabia

Hapa, pursuing an undergraduate degree in petroleum engineering, was from Saudi Arabia and a competent bilingual in both Arabic, his native language, and English, which he had learned since elementary school. His interest and admiration for Korean culture and language drove him to learn Korean through an online program. He believes foreign language is taught more effectively by a non-native speaker because such an individual would have learned through the language acquisition process.

During his high school years, the possibility of pursuing an undergraduate degree in USA started to surface after he was selected for a 10 month study abroad sponsored by Saudi Aramco, a Petroleum company. A significant number of high school graduates all over the country ranging from 1000 -2000 high school students apply to get into this year-long program created by the company. But, each year only about 200-300 students earn the opportunity. Throughout the program that is heavily focused on English, students also are given choices to select subject areas focused on the major that they intend to pursue abroad. With a goal to study petroleum engineering, Hapa took AP Calculus and AP Chemistry along with English classes during the program.

## Participant Sampling

For this project, both chain-referral and criterion sampling methods were applied to select participants (Volz & Heckathorn, 2008)**.** Criterion sampling, a variety of purposeful sampling was employed to choose the monolingual and multilingual first-year composition instructors, and multilingual students as participants (Sandelowski, 2000). This sampling method, as Patton

(1990) asserts, typically enhances understanding, allows for deeper analysis and helps with data triangulation.

## Data Sources and Collection

### Interviews

Over a period of three semesters, data was gathered from semi-structured interviews, notes from classroom observations, and follow-up interview data. The process of recruiting participants began with sending an email to an FYC administrator about the study. Followed by the approval, I applied for and received IRB approval. FYC instructors were contacted via email informing them of the purpose of the study and laying out the purpose and rationale**.** All seven FYC instructors who participated were known to me as former colleagues in FYC, the Writing Center, and as fellow graduate students. The three international multilingual students enrolled in FYC classes were referred to me by their instructors, who also participated in this study. Multilingual students were recruited and contacted via email as was done with the FYC instructors.

The data collection process started with interviewing participants in spring 2016 and continued until Spring 2017. Participants were selected by using both chain –referral and criterion sampling methods. Interviews were recorded using a digital recorder and smart phone, and were subsequently transcribed. Inductive thematic analysis (Shank, 2006) was employed to code and analyze data. All ten interviews were conducted beginning on January 19, 2016, after approval from the Institutional Review Board (IRB) of Southwest University (SU) and after obtaining all signed consent forms. The ten interviews featured six monolingual FYC instructors, one multilingual FYC instructor, and three international multilingual students. The process of

participant recruitment continued throughout data collection. The three research questions are as follows:

1. How do monolingual instructors perceive the content and form of their multilingual students' writing?
2. How do multilingual instructors perceive the content and form of their multilingual students' writing?
3. How do international multilingual students perceive the content and form of their writing?

**Interview Questions**

The interviews with all three groups of participants were semi-structured and the questions were open-ended. The average duration of the interviews was about an hour. Sample interview questions and prompts for the FYC instructors were as follows:

1. What do you see as the goals of first year composition as a course? What are you training students to do?
2. What are your experiences with multilingual writers? Do you have any training in teaching English as a second language students?
3. Do you notice any differences in writing styles between monolingual and multilingual writers? Are the differences noticeably distinct? How are they different? How are they alike? Are there differences in the writings among the multilingual writers? What do you want to attribute to those differences?

4. Let me explain as briefly and clearly as possible “Translingualism” a new paradigm in the communicative uses of language. (After explaining) Now what do you think about it? [Based on the response] Do you think it is possible to assess and evaluate second language writing from this new lens of translingualism?

Sample interview questions and prompts for international multilingual students were as follows:

1. What is your first language? How many languages you speak? Which position you will assign to English -2nd, 3rd, or 4th? Tell me about your experiences in learning English? Was English used as a medium in academic context?
2. Tell me about your experiences in FYC classes. Was composition writing included in English Curriculum in your past academic contexts? Do you experience differences between the uses of English in the writing classes in USA and your home country? What do you like to attribute to those differences?
3. Tell me about the teaching or instructional approaches or techniques and curriculum. Are they different than those of your past academic experiences? What do you like to attribute to those differences?
4. What were your goals or expectations in regard to the learning outcomes by being in these FYC writing courses? Please elaborate on those.
5. What were your experiences in regard to meeting your instructor’s expectations? Please elaborate on those.
6. Let me explain as briefly and clearly as possible “Translingualism” a new paradigm in the communicative uses of language that acknowledges the “errors” featured in

multilingual writing as “resources.” (After explaining) Do you like to share your views in regard to the scope of practicing this approach in the FYC writing classrooms?

Guiding interview questions were centered on perceptual differences in multilingual writing, although questions during the actual interviews kept generating and often expanded to multiple issues.

I focused on experiences both in FYC writing courses and academic contexts and asked participants to elaborate on experiences Questions were asked to gain insights into goals and expectations in FYC writing courses. I was interested in processes of learning, writing, and meeting instructor and course expectations. As with instructors, I explained ‘translingualism,’ a new paradigm and asked them to share their thoughts about it.

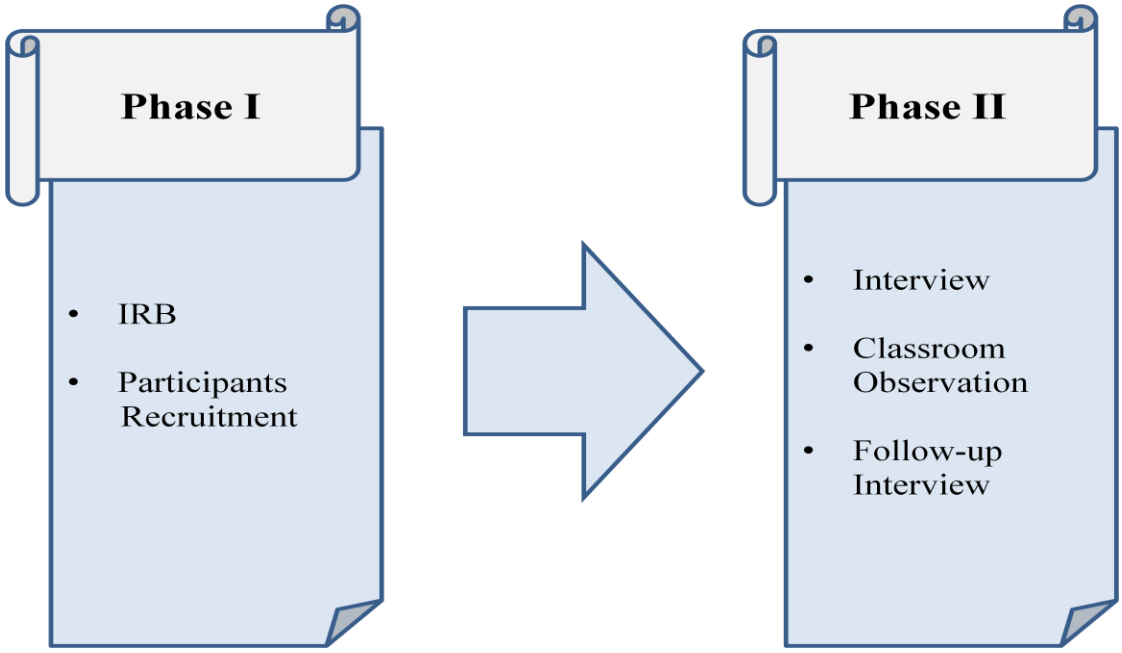

***Figure 3.*** **Data collection process.**

## Monolingual FYC Instructors with Language Experience other than English

Three monolingual instructors-John, Amy, and Ruth –who were contacted via email agreed to participate. All three were teaching FYC writing at the time they were interviewed. When discussing experiences in teaching writing to international multilingual students, some stories surfaced regarding exposures to languages other than English. Throughout the interviews, discussions were spontaneously and contextually shared.

John learnt Spanish as a home language that was practiced in conversations for the purpose of communicating with close family members. John learned French in a formal context during his undergraduate program and he decided to minor in French. His exposure to Frenchwas intensified when he taught English to middle school students in France.

Amy became familiar with the Turkish language during her middle school years while her father was stationed in Turkey for the purpose of employment. She does not consider herself fluent in Turkish, though she has some familiarity with the language.

As a Cherokee native, Ruth experienced Cherokee as it has been practiced in the home and community. Ruth was involved in preserving and practicing Cherokee in her community.

## Monolingual FYC Instructors with Little or No Other Language Experience

Paige, David, and Mary were also contacted via email and they agreed to participate. They were teaching FYC at the time of the interviews. All of the FYC instructors had

international multilingual students as students in their courses Paige, David, and Mary had little experience with languages other than English (their native language).

**Multilingual FYC Instructor**

Maria, a multilingual FYC instructor, was a third generation Mexican -American. Maria grew up speaking both Spanish and English. She was contacted via email and she agreed to participate in the study.

**International Multilingual Students**

The international multilingual students, Sam, John, and Hapa were referred by two FYC instructors. Sam and John were born in Swaziland and Kenya respectively and Hapa was from Saudi Arabia. Their diverse geographical and academic backgrounds have been furthur detailed in the *Participant Profile* (see pp. 43-49). These three students were contacted via email and agreed to participate. Questions were asked about their experiences in FYC courses at Southwest University.

**FYC Classroom Observations**

In Spring of 2017, I contacted a FYC instructor requesting permission to observe her classes. This instructor, who was referred by one of the FYC instructors, had extensive experience working with international populations and ELL (English Language Learners). At the time I observed her classes, she was teaching Comp I in FYC. During the observation, I took notes and wrote memos.

## Follow-up Interview

In Fall of 2017, I contacted one of the FYC instructors to have a conversation about my notes taken from two back to back classes. My purpose was to make sure notes were in synch with the instructor's recollections. I sought opinions and clarifications.

## Data Analysis

### Transcription

Analysis of data began with identifying segments related to the research questions and coding transcribed interviews using inductive thematic analysis. Thematic analysis, the preferred term for "coding and analyzing," as suggested by Shank (2006) involves searching for themes, patterns, plausible explanations, connections among variables, and coherency. This bottom-up hierarchical process of meaning-making involved reading and re-reading (often multiple times) each transcript in-depth. Interviews were categorized into core themes (LeCompte & Preissle, 1993). Themes were identified with monolingual FYC instructors, multilingual (FYC) instructors, and international multilingual students. The objective was to understand both instructors' and students' perceptions of 'content' and 'form' in multilingual writing. Transcriptions were segmented based on the research questions **(**LeCompte & Preissle, 1993). Categories were developed through an open-coding process. Codes were compared and contrasted from multiple dimensions to reach to the state of refined codes.


***Figure 4.*** **Process of data analysis.**

Throughout the process of scanning data, categories were searched and relationships among the categories were connected to the evolving data structure. Later, core categories and themes were complied, summarized, and reported. Finding and comprehending themes was a simultaneous process as suggested by Morse (1994). Notes were taken during and after these semi-structured interviews and clarifying probing questions were asked which were not prepared in the interview protocol. Direct quotes were used to support and establish the credibility during data analysis.

## Coding Table

Following table shows the process of data analysis and coding leading to the emergence of themes. The process of the theme regarding the negotiations of language differences that emerged across all three groups in this study is featured in the following table.

**Table 7**

*Sample of Data Analysis*

Monolingual Instructors with Language Experience other than English

| Transcription | Coding |
|---|---|
| Q. Do you like to share your views regarding the scope of practicing translingual approach in the FYC writing classrooms?<br><br>R. There should be a balance. Translingualism offers dimensions that can be added to what's expected of their writing in school. Some students are keen at acquiring cultures and very good at adopting idioms that make the writing seem authentic. | Instructor recognizes NNWs' negotiations between language differences |
| Monolingual Instructors with No Experience in any other Language other than English | |
| Transcription | Coding |
| Q. Do you think if it is possible to view the differences in the writing of NNWE as 'resources?' | |
| R.I think we can see it as resources instead of mistakes. Multilingual students know other languages which makes them think in different ways and they can be creative in different ways than the people who only use English as their language. The language culture they bring to the FYC classroom is an asset, is a resource. | Instructor acknowledges NNWs' differences in thinking, of culture, and use of language. |
| Multilingual Instructor | |
| Transcription | Coding |

| | |
|---|---|
| Q. What do you think about shifting focus in NNW's writing from grammatical errors to resources?<br>R. My colleagues are excellent academics. I do understand their concerns that NNWs' have many grammatical errors that prevents readers from understanding the message conveyed. But I also am aware of my monolingual colleagues' lack of experience in language acquisition other than English. I wish they could shift their perceptions and have awareness. This could be completely manageable and workable and could be a work-in-progress. | Instructor's understanding of the issues in NNWs' writing and implementing practices to address those issues |
| International Multilingual Students | |
| Transcription | Coding |

| | |
|---|---|
| Q. Tell me your experiences in learning the writing the processes in FYC. Are you applying strategies that seem to be producing writing and meeting your instructor's expectation? | |
| R. From the sea of red, I realized that I had to put more work into it, because I didn't know how to meet the standards. I talked to her about the essay before I handed her the essay. I started going through the process- I would write first draft, then I would critique myself, then I would write the second draft, would take it to the writing center, and they would critique it, and then I would write the third draft , then take it to my professor and she would critique it and then I would write the fourth and final draft. And I valued that process because I wanted to have an 'A,' so I realized have to do 'A' work. | Multilingual student's willingness to negotiate the differences in writing process. |

**Table 7. Sample of Data Analysis.**

**Classroom Observation**

Notes were taken during classroom observations and were used to gain insights into themes.

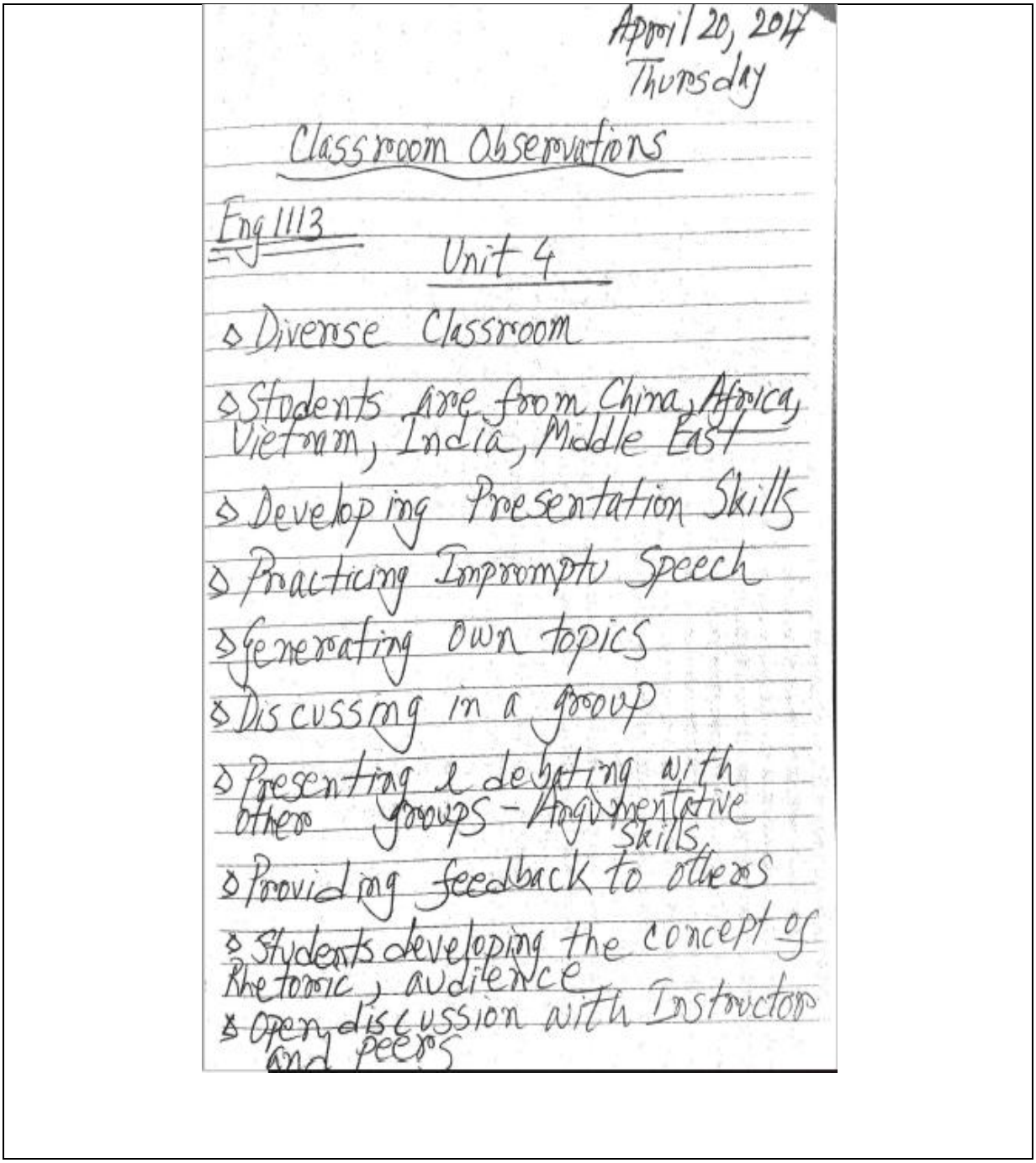


***Figure 5.*** **Notes from classroom observations.**

## Follow-up Interview

Experiences from the observations from two classrooms (Eng-1113) were discussed with a FYC instructor, to gain a broader understanding of international multilingual students' learning processes of writing, the instructor's approach and instructional strategies. Discussions were focused on themes that emerged from the analysis gathered from multiple sources. A new curriculum focused on developing presentation skills was also discussed.

## Trustworthiness

By collecting data from a myriad of sources **(**See Fig. 5, p. 58**)** I attempted to maintain trustworthiness that included semi-structured interviews with three groups of participants – monolingual and multilingual FYC instructors, and international multilingual students, classroom observations, follow-up interviews with participants, and an interview with an administrator from the FYC office. In addition to the triangulation of findings, the wider range of data allowed the opportunity to feature a thick description (Geertz, 1973) by highlighting voices of participants from multiple positions. During the process of data collection and analysis, I discussed understandings, assumptions, and skepticism with my advisor. Also, I consulted with a peer, (Corbin & Staruss, 2015) a fellow doctoral student.

## Strengths

A variety of data sources and methods of data collection and analysis were employed to create a dynamic bricolge (Denzin & Lincoln, 2008) through analyzing multiple phenomena

from multiple dimensions. As the overreaching goal of this research study was to explore a new pedagogical paradigm, 'translingualism' and a multiplicity of perspectives about it.

As a multilingual writer, I have an emic perspective (Canagarajah, 2009) concerning the 'form' and 'content' of multilingual writing. My own experiences and the insights drawn from perusing the data have allowed me to think critically about multilingual writing. My position as a multilingual graduate student could create biases. To help minimize possible bias, data were collected from several sources.

# Chapter 4: Findings

## Overview

This research explored international multilingual students' experiences in first-year Composition (FYC) writing class at Southwest University (SU), a public research university located in the southwestern part of the United States of America. Using a case study design, under the broader dimension of social research, the process of data analysis began with identifying data related to the research questions and then coding data through a process of inductive thematic analysis. Interviews took place over the course of two academic years when interviewees were engaged in teaching and learning in FYC courses. Data were gathered from two classroom observations and a follow-up interview with one of the FYC instructors.

The research design included two phases as follows **(**see Fig. 4 below, previously appeared on p. 57**).**

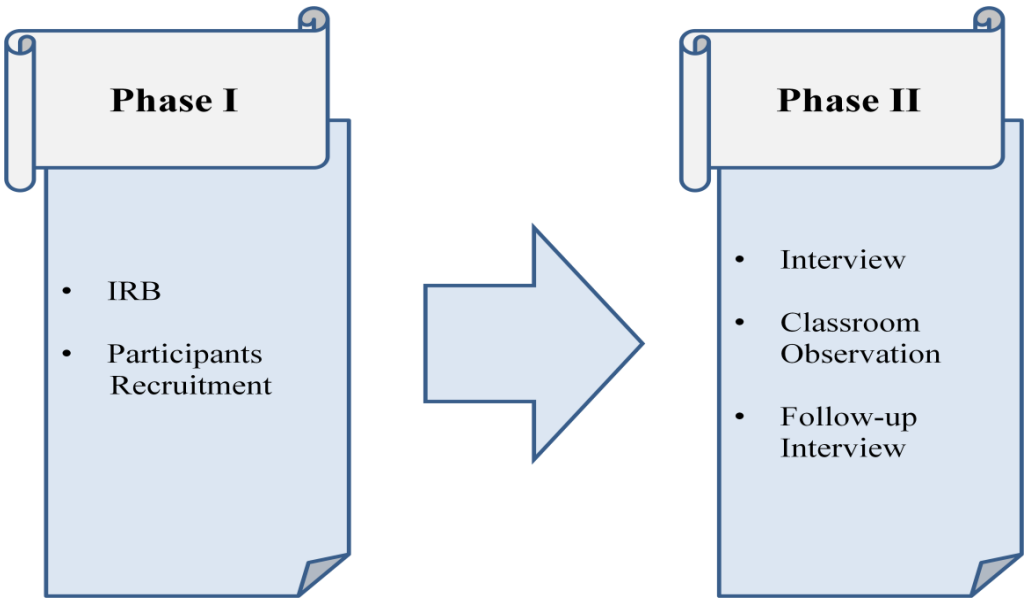


***Figure 4.*** **Phases of research design.**

Following are the stages showing the circular and ongoing process of data collection and analysis:

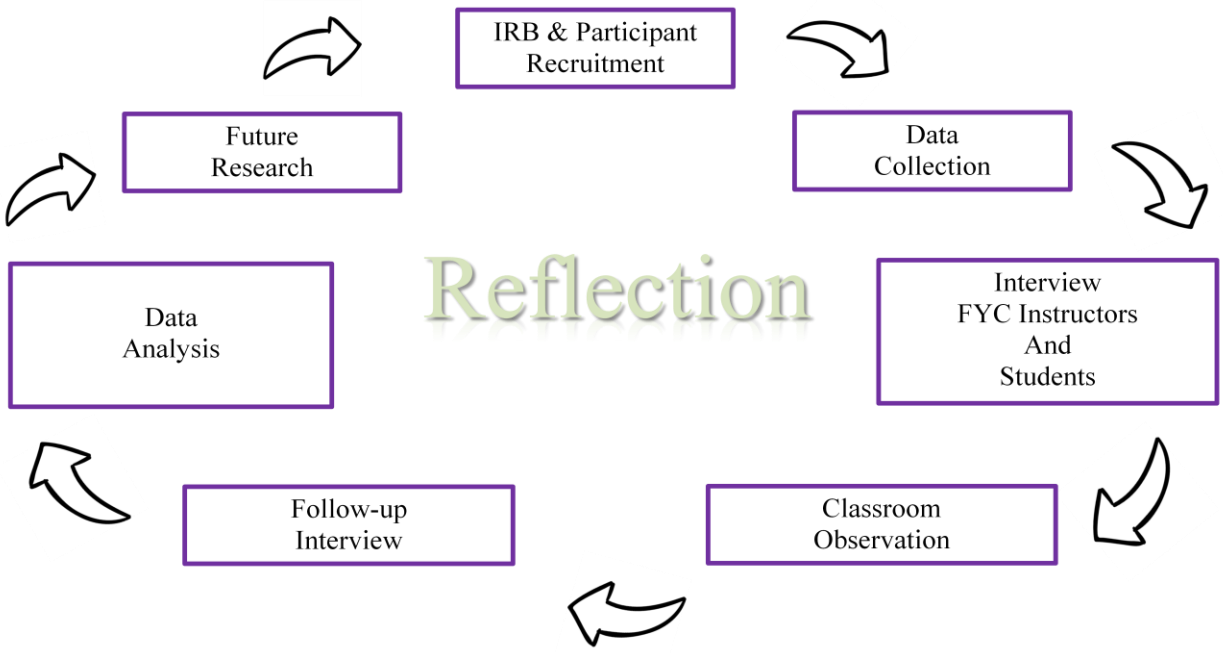


***Figure 6.*** **Process of data collection and analysis.**

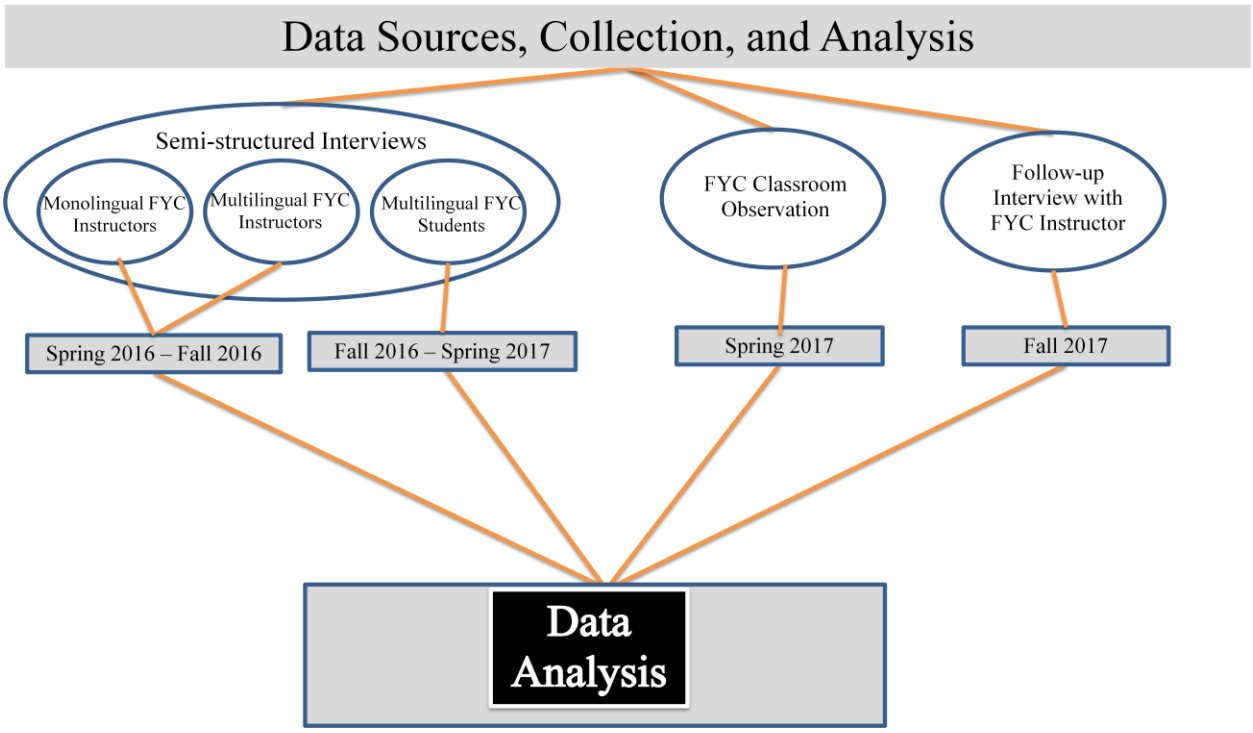


***Figure 7.*** **Data sources with timeline.**

## Interviews

Over a period of three semesters, data was collected from 10 semi-structured interviews that started in Spring 2016 and continued until Spring 2017. Duration of the interviews was 45-90 minutes. I interviewed six monolingual FYC instructors, one multilingual instructor, and three international multilingual students. All participants were engaged in teaching and learning in FYC. With the purpose to understand the experiences of international multilingual students from the perspectives of FYC instructors and students, three research questions were formed:

1. How do monolingual instructors perceive the content and form of their multilingual students' writing?

2. How do multilingual instructors perceive the content and form of their multilingual students' writing?
3. How do international multilingual students perceive the content and form of their writing?

In order to elicit the perceptions of content and form featured in multilingual writing, a diverse spectrum of perceptions and open-ended questions were used. Open-ended questions and prompts were generated during the interviews (see Chapter 3, pp.55-57). Data collected from interviews were transcribed, coded, and analyzed. Findings are organized encompassing the three research questions:

1. Perceptions of monolingual FYC instructors with other language experience of multilingual writing
2. Perceptions of monolingual FYC instructors with no or little experience with other languages of multilingual writing
3. Perceptions of multilingual instructors of multilingual writing
4. Perceptions of international multilingual students of multilingual writing

Themes and subthemes from the semi-structured interviews with monolingual instructors with other language experience, monolingual instructors with no other language experience, multilingual instructors, and international multilingual students are described respectively in the following sections. Sections are distinguished into four groups of participants. Monolingual instructors were distinguished based on their level of language experiences. These two groups are identified as *Monolingual Instructors with Language Experiences Other Than English* and *Monolingual Instructors without Language Experiences Other Than English.* Themes and

subthemes emerged from the interview data from the other two groups**,** multilingual instructor and international multilingual students, are delineated in the sections followed by the monolingual instructors. Interview data were coded and several categories were generated from the responses from the four groups of participants (See Coding Table 7 in Chapter 3, pp. 61- 64). Using open coding, the categories were further coded and multiple themes emerged in response to the research questions (Shank, 2006).

**FYC Classroom Observation**

In the spring of 2017, I emailed a FYC instructor referred by one of the FYC instructors who participated in this research study and requested her permission to observe her classes. I maintained the protocol of describing my research and the purpose of the study to her. This instructor had extensive experience working with international populations and ELL (English Language Learners). At the time I observed her classes, she was teaching Comp I in FYC During the observation period, I took notes and wrote memoranda that I compared and contrasted with the emerged data and themes that were gathered during coding and in-depth analysis. I wanted to see an example of how multilingual students interacted in a classroom setting.

**Follow-up Interview**

In the fall of 2017, I contacted one of the FYC instructor participants to have a conversation about observations of two back-to-back classes. As I was analyzing the data collected from all of the aforementioned sources, my purpose was to find out if my

understanding of the findings from the classroom observations were in sync with the instructor's. I discussed my classroom observations and sought her opinions. I specifically focused on *"Developing Presentation Skills,"* a new inclusion to the curriculum that aimed to improve students' critical thinking and debating skills while fostering discussions.

## Data Analysis

Data gathering process started with interviews. The interviews turned into conversations about multilingual writing. Data were analyzed and coded using inductive thematic analysis as suggested by Shank (2006). Inductive thematic analysis involves searching for themes, patterns, plausible explanations, connections among variables, and coherency. The process began with searching for and understanding themes as suggested by Morse (1994).The process from data gathering to generating themes generally followed the sequence (see Figure. 5, previously appeared on p. 61).


***Figure 5.*** **Process of data analysis.**

Descriptions of themes are presented encompassing the three research questions as follows:

1. Perceptions of monolingual FYC instructors with other language experience of multilingual writing

2. Perceptions of monolingual FYC instructors with no or little experience with other languages of multilingual Writing

3. Perceptions of multilingual instructors of multilingual writing

4. Perceptions of international multilingual students of multilingual writing

## Descriptions of Themes

### Monolingual Instructors with Other Language Experience

Descriptions of themes emerged from coded data gathered from monolingual instructors' experiences in teaching international multilingual writers, also known as non-native writers of English (NNWE). Findings are delineated in the following section. Six themes emerged from interviews with John, Amy, and Ruth, the monolingual instructors with at least some experience in other language (For information on the backgrounds and experiences of John, Amy and Ruth, **(**see pp.47-48**)**. The six themes were as follows.

1. Language differences between native and non-native writers of English are predictable.
2. Challenges and proclivities in multilingual writing vary across the countries.
3. Instructors experience difficulty in evaluating multilingual writing as form and content are sometimes intertwined.
4. Instructors perceive of one-on-one conferencing as the most effective method.

5. Aspects of translingualism are acknowledged, though instructors are not certain about implementation in practice.
6. Training for teaching composition to non-native writers of English is inadequate.

## Theme 1

**Language differences between native and non-native writers of English.** This theme refers to how monolingual FYC instructors perceive the form and content of multilingual writing. Questions asked monolingual instructors with experiences in languages other than English to reflect on their experiences with both NWE and NNWE.

John shared his experience with international multilingual students' (IMS) writings with diverse language backgrounds and proficiency levels in English:

> Words spelled differently, just those nuances that turn into a kind of hurdle, were a problem for my student from South America. She was an extremely strong writer. She kind of mirrors a lot of what I see with my stronger Saudi Arabian writers. It wasn't so much that their writing had problems or anything, it was perfect grammatically. It was word choice that doesn't sound natural to me. With strong writers I was coming down to the experience of negotiating words. Sometime native speakers' word choices seem interesting too**!**

In regard to the stylistic choices, John noticed the distinct differences in expressing ideas between NWE and NNWE.

> I notice differences in style. Style highlights something that is difficult to explain. American writers, when you are trying to get them to write, many have trouble expanding on their ideas because they are too straightforward. They don't know how to go in a more roundabout way. It is the inverse with some of my Saudi Arabian students. There are a lot of expositions and explanations and it's hard for them to make a point. They feel like they've already made their point clearly. American readers are looking for a very concrete point and the American writers typically do not understand that there can be so much more to say.

John shared his insights on differences regarding command of the language,

> It really depends on students' command of the language because if there were large amounts of errors I might question their language competency, but at the same time I had native speakers with various errors in their paper. There would be certain cases where I would think to myself, "This is strange word to use in this situation." But at the same time, I've had native English speakers use words that I question, "Why did they use that word?" There are certain things that set me off a little bit. I would say that this is an interesting use of English. Sometimes I don't know why they wrote as they did. Sometimes it seems like it cannot be attributed to their writing style or their background!

Amy shared her experiences in regard to grammatical and stylistic aspects of writing,

> It depends on where they are coming from. My students who are from China often drop certain articles. They will also get more abstract and philosophical with their writing. You will see Buddhists quote somewhere. I had a student from Venezuela whose writing was very similar to what we taught here. She is very well-prepared for the rigor. Arabic students and my Chinese students will drop certain articles. Interestingly, what's different about their writing is that they will invert subject and verb predicate. Syntactically the sentences don't quite make sense. You have to take your time to assess and parse what they are really trying to say and then interpret it. So a little bit of translation work goes into reading their assignment, more, so than my other students.

In terms of word-choice, and the use of articles, Amy also mentioned,

> Word choices are challenging for all students, but it is exacerbated in multilingual students. Word choice, remembering correct articles, minor grammar, things like punctuation. I do not worry so much about those things unless they are especially distracting. Syntax, structuring the actual sentence, they all do it differently, but that's hard to get down. "How do you convey a sentence in the syntactical order that is expected?" When you get to the university, your writing is fluid, but at the same time, challenging for readers.

Ruth's response resonated with Amy's in regard to the specific and unique differences in writing between native writers of English (NWE) and non-native writers of English (NNWE),

> When you are looking at the writing of international students, it always depends on where exactly they are from. I never have been deeply oriented to translingual writers. If you get enough experience, you can see certain language groups have certain trademark errors. Native speakers make errors, but they just make different types of errors.

Ruth elaborated on the various types of errors in the writings of native writers of English (NWE) and non-native writers of English (NNWE),

> Let me start with the native speakers. What I see is more frequent trademark errors - like commas, apostrophes, referencing the singular object as 'their,' his or hers. They tend to use very vague language because of their verb choice. Native speakers tend to use helping verb, 'to be' verbs and 'have to do.' They really struggle with concrete action words for verbs.

In contrast, Ruth considered problems in the writings of NNWE different from NWE,

> These are not the problems I see in international students' writing. Many times their grammar is better in some ways than the native speakers. Primarily because they have a much clearer sense of parts of speech and sentence structure and this is not to say they do not make trademark errors like native speakers. I noticed the use of incorrect articles and the misuse of plural forms. Pluralization can sometimes be a struggle for them, I can think of one more-'capitalization.' It seems they are not familiar with what is a proper noun in our culture.

John, Amy, and Ruth reflected on challenges in multilingual writing.

**Theme 2**

**Challenges and proclivities in multilingual writing vary across the countries**.

Although international students tend to convey meanings using their knowledge of English, differences in backgrounds are viewed as important factors by all the instructors. John shared his experience with multilingual students and discussed the eclectic nature of writing of multilingual student writing,

> The Chinese student I had, had a lot of troubles. It's not that the content was poor or anything like that; he had more trouble with the grammatical issues. It wasn't that the sentences didn't make sense. It was conjugation or misspelling words. I had a student from South America, from Colombia, so Spanish was her first language. I had a Chinese student. There were different things going on-expression or vocabulary or they are having grammatical problems. I guess that my experience is unique with each student.

In response to the question about what these differences in multilingual writings could be attributed to, John's response was:

> I mean it's very complicated to give one answer. For some cases, with lot of students who are from Asian backgrounds, I think it's a product of the way they have learned language. They have learned it through very rote memorization, so they don't do a lot of production. So, when it comes to production, there is a big focus on their sentence construction. Since they haven't it used it a lot, it gets difficult when they are trying to make meaning. It's not that they have any problem making meaning so much, but it's hard to be consistent. Certain languages might have much bigger obstacles than others.

Amy experienced that multilingual students' word-choices are different from their native counterparts. She also mentioned that all of her students, including her native speakers, have problems with choosing the appropriate word.

> I see word choice problems more often with my Chinese students. They will use the more fascinating words to describe something that I never would pair with it. But it's not a wrong word choice, but it's a jarring one that I have to stop and think about, "What is it I just experienced and how does it change my understanding of the topic?" Those are the students I actually get most excited about because they bring a perspective to writing I would have never considered otherwise.

Ruth reflected on the unique differences in the writings of NNWE with multilingual backgrounds,

> I would say articles are usually for students who are coming from Asian language backgrounds. I mean specifically like Japanese, Chinese. Arab speakers tend to struggle with the pluralization and the capitals. It was interesting to see these kinds of patterns in their writing. But even native speakers have confusion around media and medium.

**Theme 3**

**Instructors experience difficulty in assessing multilingual writing as forms and contents are sometimes intertwined**. Related to the differences in writing between NWE and NNWE, another theme which emerged from pertained to evaluation of second language writing, Amy, one of the monolingual instructors with two years of teaching

experiences in Comp I and Comp II had a limited level of experience in the Turkish language. She expressed her viewpoints on evaluation,

> I create mine with my students so we all have same idea what an "A" paper is going to look like. Those who get there get the "A". So, I do have a lot of "A"s and "B"s in my classes and I am OK with that I told them, "This is what I am looking for. If you do it, this is going to get you a really good grade." When you have very clear expectations, you can make the mark and demonstrate those process moves I am looking for. It would be like a conversation on pedagogy like, "What is it you value as an instructor"? How do you assess and evaluate students' works and then how do you do that in a way that matches the value of your teaching philosophy? I think the teaching philosophy is core because if you can't have a conversation with somebody about what matters, if they are not flexible, then they are not going to budge.

Amy also shared her views on the 'form' and 'content' in the writing of NNWE,

> I think it would require departments getting on board with this particular view and then kind of holding instructors accountable for building that into creating evaluation of student works. I look at the contents and try to see if it shows the critical thinking and clear arguments rather than the punctuation and grammar issues.

Amy's experience in evaluating non-native writers' writing shows the existing underlying issues discussed in relation to the monolingual FYC instructors' lack of adequate knowledge and experience in teaching writing to multilingual students.

John shared his grading philosophy by highlighting the styles of writing that vary across the students represented by both native and non-native speakers of English:

> I used to have handful of different grading styles throughout my time. But one thing I do with each of my students- it is an individualized style with each student. I don't grade each student differently depending on their writing. By no means my international student is on a separate rubric, they all get the same rubric. But one thing I've learnt is like my very first time grading I used a rubric and I didn't it like it because I felt it didn't get to highlight some writing I thought it wasn't fair. I didn't feel like it was a fair way of grading. And then I tried spectrum type of things where I made hierarchies. You could tell that they were trying to just hit what I saw as best and so, regardless of the students' background, if they have certain things that you tell them to do, it isn't writing as a practice, it is trying to do exactly your expectation, I didn't like that because they are not learning to write.

He shared the innovative approaches he applied in creating a rubric for the course he was teaching during the interview:

> Grade is this great cultural capital that needs an "A." I find it hard to make a genuine rubric. I made a new rubric that I am using this semester What I do is, instead of just saying, "This is the rubric, this is what I created." The new rubric grades them on categories. I have topic creation, content, presentation and then writing, style, and resource integration. I have a very detailed description of each section with a huge block of everything I expect. I gave it to all my students and I said them, "This is how I grade. What I want you to do is read this. Don't think of it as what you have to do, but talk to me about it. If you don't think this is fair in certain areas, then tell me because I want this like a conversation." At the bottom of the rubric, I put "I'm open to change."

With regard to grading international students' papers, John expressed his views on the 'content' and 'form' of writing,

> I don't grade so hard on 'errors' when I grade their first papers. I look to see if they are making a point. The 'thesis' is a large part of my grading. Many students struggle with the thesis, both native and non-native. They may talk about the topic clearly, but it's really not exactly clear what they are arguing about. I don't penalize them for that. I look at the 'errors' that have something to do with the core concepts in how to do written expression. Non-native speakers have troubles specifically with 'grammar,' but when I am having a hard time understanding what they are trying to express, I know grammar is not the only point I should look at. I think of it as a teachable moment that I can use to help them learn their weaknesses and make improvement.

Ruth, who taught first year composition at different institutions with different types of programmatic objectives at each of those institutions, had six international students in different classes. She shared her views on 'form' and 'content' and how they are used in creating strategies in grading,

> I am always thinking about my two basic priorities when I grade any piece of writing -content development and clarity. Clarity includes language choice, syntax, and structure. This is how I divide it. And it's the content that is more important to me. As long as you get the content you can learn to be clear. I didn't think in terms like counting the number of grammatical errors. I think of it as counting the type of error. If the student makes a mistake once, that student would probably make the mistake at least one or two more times in the course of a five-

> page essay. That, to me, would count as one problem as opposed to three mistakes. I am more concerned if they are showing critical thinking, if they are challenging themselves with their audiences, are they stretching to show critical thinking , are they being transparent about their own biases, are they using complex examples, are they presenting content in way that builds their case, their arguments?

Ruth elaborated more on her grading philosophy when asked about her focus on form and content in the writing,

> Oftentimes, I would write the same types of notes to non- native and native speakers after reading their papers I put the summative comments at the end and oftentimes they are very similar. They can push on this little bit more On the whole the grades that I give non- native speakers and native speakers are pretty even. There are always exceptions in both categories, native speakers who just need lot of help and non- native speakers who need a lot of help. On average my grades don't differ because I tend to focus more on content in first year writers**.**

**Theme 4**

**Instructors perceive of one-on-one conferencing as the most effective method.**

According to instructors, limited class time, 55 minutes thrice a week or 75 minutes twice a week, doesn't allow flexibility for open interactions and discussion. Participants showed a point of consensus in favor of one-on-one interaction and discussion with NNWE.

John shared his experiences with on one-to-one interactions with both native and international students,

> One-on-one conferencing really helped with some of the international students. I got to learn what was hard to understand in class. But when you are sitting there and asking them, "What did you mean to say?" It seems like you are tapping into their agency and emphasizing that writing is a process, like a dialogue. I take into account their personal journeys as writer. I really felt that I also made some strides, even with my American students.

Amy shared an experience that changed the dynamics with students and clarified issues in their writing assignments,

> The better they are at understanding English, more likely theyare to challenge my interpretation. Just showing them it means a lot. The more proficient they are in English, the more likely they are to say, "I really was trying to say this and this is what you are missing." I had one student, in particular, who is a really fascinating student because conversations were very much like a maneuver. I would say, "Here is what I understand." He will think about it for a while and then would say, "I don't think you understand." He will elaborate and then I still may not understand. It was a lot of going back and forth. He didn't mind how long it took. He would be in my office for couple of hours and I didn't mind how long it took either, as long as we got to a point where I was seeing where he is coming from.

Amy shared her insights on the role of conversation in the FYC program. She thinks conversation is beneficial across disciplines,

> I can definitely make a difference in my own classroom. If we don't have enough conversations with people who don't agree with this, students get to the next class and instructors are not accepting, that can confuse students.

Ruth shared her views that one-on-conferencing with NNWE creates a safe space to engage in open discussion,

> These students have potential, but they probably are stuck somewhere. One-on-one communication through conversation helps them understand issues that they experience in writing assignments. I practiced a lot of one- on- one conferencing when I was teaching first-year. I just enjoyed that part, I love talking to students and helping them. One- on -one seems more authentic. I let them know that if they ask me for more help, I will give it to them. Some students will take advantage of my offer. I tend to meet the student after they turn the paper for a grade. If they want to meet me before they turn the paper, that's up to them. And international students will take me up on that. They tend to express more gratitude, more respect, and they are also much more likely to do something with my investment of time in them in terms of showing improvement in the next assignment than native speakers do.

**Theme 5**

**Aspects of translingualism are acknowledged though instructors are not certain about implementation in practice**. Asking for elaboration on the concept of translingualism, participants expressed optimism although the paradigm was not quite

understood. Describing the concept allowed instructions to rethink the context of their teaching experiences, John responded,

> There should be a balance. Translingualism offers dimensions that can be added to what's expected of their writing in school. It's very important In American school systems; you typically learn what to write. This is your point; prove it, you don't tell me anything else. These are your sources. It's just all A to B, linear every time.

With regard to the negotiations of rhetorical choices and styles of writing that were adopted by his students, John said,

> Some students are keen at acquiring cultures and very good at adopting idioms that make writing seem authentic. They try to become articulate and American in their writing. By the time they write their last papers, it's literally hard to tell any difference between them and native writers.

By emphasizing the interrelatedness of culture and language, John shared his opinion on the possibilities of adopting translingualism,

> I see culture, itself, like a geographical location, a generator. Even if I value translingualism, I can't really change the way I speak in this flat, imposing tone. I can't get that out of my voice. I think it's social pressure, academic pressure, cultural pressure immersed in culture. There is no way for students to escape some amount of influence, even if they reject everything. In some way they still form the meaning. I don't think translingualism is any kind of short shift; we're talking about a paradigm shift that requires drastic measures.

John tried to shed light on the prescriptivist notion of Standard English or Correct English,

> I'm against this grand idea of correct English. Anything you view as 'correct' is a problematic notion with any language. Because, we can't really control how we think and how we use language to express our thoughts. So, the external institutional pressure that we don't accept anything that does not look certain way regardless of idea and content seems like linguistic imperialism. If anyone believes in scientific progress or societal progress or any kind of equality, the notion of 'correctness' seems like an intellectual caste system rooted in prescriptivism.

Ruth, the monolingual instructor with knowledge of Cherokee, expressed her view on the multiplicity of English,

> English is a hybrid language, a mixture of variations of dialects and colloquialisms across people whose linguistic expression is identified with their regional and local establishment.

Using a critical lens of equity, Ruth's views on translingualism emphasized the plurality of languages that are practiced by 'others' who do not singularly speak or write in standard English,

> You are translingual when you speak French and write in English. You are not translingual when you speak some sort of home dialect and come into academic writing setting. That, to me, has to be translingual too! If we're going to recognize the value of textual, compositional or rhetorical distinctions in international students as resources, then we have to do the same for native speakers who write in colloquial or black vernacular English. Standardized language impacts everybody. When I see mistakes in the writing of both international and native speaker students, I tend not to draw stark distinctions between the errors I see in their writing because I feel like we are all kind of confronting the 'same beast.'

In regard to the possibility of practice of translingualism, Amy shared her insights with international students:

> Socially, as we become more and more connected, we are going to see more and more international students. You have to be more accommodating and more accepting of differences I think the university would be a much more friendly place, and wewould have a lot less issues with students if we were more accepting of differences. It is something that we can include our diversity training in terms of accepting cultural differences. I think that international students come here to learn to adapt to the codes and conventions so they can be successful.

## Theme 6

**Training for teaching composition to non-native writers of English is inadequate**.

The theme *Training for Teaching Composition to Non-native Writers of English is Inadequate* relates to other themes with non-native writers of English (NNWE). There

was a core concern associated with the inadequate training provided to FYC instructors in teaching and understanding multilingual writers. When asked about his teaching experience with the international multilingual students, John said,

> Being in education to get some experience, I was thinking I would rather be a teaching assistant than a research assistant. Out of nowhere, I started teaching FYC. It's kind of a mixture when it comes to multilingual students because the students I had to start off with were international students. I know that they had to demonstrate a certain level of English to be in my class. But that's all decided by English as a Second Language.

John reflected on his experiences in teaching English to middle school students in France, whose first language was not English:

> I taught in France for a little while. All my speakers were non-native speakers of English. But I was teaching English to middle-schoolers, seventh graders. I was specifically told to help develop their conversational skills. I was there specifically to engage them in any way in their native tongue. It's actually an interesting experience. They were learning American English and I was there to Americanize their speech.

Ruth taught FYC for almost 20 years both at community college and public university,

> In a first-year composition program the majority of instructors are graduate teaching assistants who are in very first years of teaching writing. It's important to orient them to teaching international students and theories around teaching international student writing. When you are in first, second, or third –year of teaching at the college level and you are twenty-three, like I was when I started, you are kind of locked into your own insecurities, your own authority.

While asked about addressing needs and issues in multilingual writing, Amy who had international students in FYC for two semesters, mentioned,

> Academia needs to reconsider what constitutes good writing and I think what could really help is to train faculty better so that they understand when you have somebody in your classroom who doesn't speak English as their first language, here are some of the issues.

## Monolingual FYC Instructors with No or Little Experience with Other Languages

### Theme 1

**Language differences between native and non-native writers of English are predictable**. Because responses were similar for monolingual instructors with experience with languages and monolingual instructors without experiences in languages, they both shared the six themes. However, some of the nuances of student responses are interesting and worthy of discussion. Mary, Paige, and David were monolingual instructors (For more information on the backgrounds and experiences, see pp. 48-49) without experiences in languages other than English. Mary's perceptions of the differences in multilingual writing has been derived from 22 years of teaching experience with a vast range of non-native English writers in a host of post-secondary institutions in the USA,

> You don't have to be a Comp teacher to see the differences. I had sample essays handed to me this semester to use as samples. I handed copies out to my students a couple of weeks ago. Students in the group who had the ESL copy were able to tell that it was not an American speaker. I read three different samples by ESL speakers or writers, so I couldn't remember the essays that they were reading. They had to explain them to me. As soon as they started to explain and they started to read, from the sentence structure they were able to tell. They didn't say, "it's an assertion." They said, "Is this a second language student?""It is because of the sentence structure."

Mary shaped perceptions on the differences in multilingual writing,

> I do not think that international students' writing differences can be attributed to cultural aspect. It's more their lack of knowledge of English language or grammar. When students were doing the analysis of a paper for the purpose of learning how to write, I asked them, "What you think about this thought process?" It was no problem for them in terms of reading ideas. But when it comes to writing, they had to stop. It was stumbling over the word and the sentence structure and the structure of the essay itself.

Paige, in her 3rd semester of teaching, had three international multilingual students –one of them was from Angola, a native speaker of Portuguese with an advanced level of

competency in English and, the other two were Arabic speaking Saudi Arabians with advanced levels of writing skills in English. In the writing of the student from Angola, Paige found her style interesting,

> It's beautiful in a way she constructed metaphors and made connections with language. That wasn't something that I saw often with native or monolingual students.

Paige was impressed with the writing of her international multilingual students,

> Their writing was a little bit different, phrasings and word-choice that they would use. May be native speakers necessarily wouldn't use that but it still was clear and made sense.

David was teaching FYC for the first time with one multilingual student from Cameron, a Central African country, who by age nine had experiences in three languages, Cameroonian, French, and English. David taught regular composition writing, and listening and speaking to international students in the Engineering college in summer. He also taught English in China for a year. In regard to the limitations of vocabulary, David's experience was in line with other FYC instructors.

> Vocabulary presents a real problem, the right vocabulary. Although the message gets conveyed, if you don't know the appropriate word, then you might have to use a whole sentence to try to describe what that word is. This presents some problems for international multilingual students because they have a more limited vocabulary than their native English –speaking peers. International multilingual students don't have as much room to express their thoughts as native English language speakers have.

## Theme 2

**Challenges and proclivities in multilingual writing vary across countries**. Differences in how international students tend to convey meanings using their knowledge of English

were emphasized by all instructors, both monolingual and multilingual. Reflecting on his teaching, David shared his opinions on the writing of Chinese students. He attributed their limitations in creative expression and critical thinking to the Chinese education system:

> It definitely depends on where they are from. Because of the way the Chinese education system is set-up, it's based on passing standardized tests. To get between high school and college, there is a national standardized test. Every student is China takes the exact same test and then, based on their scores on that test, every student in China is ranked and given the opportunity to go the various colleges based on their ranking. So everything about the Chinese learning experience is oriented toward passing that standardized test. The aspects of English language learning are not emphasized on that standardized test and part of the test requires students to write essays in English. It's a multiple choice test done on scrantons, so those can be run on the computer. The only aspects of language that can be contained in a multiple choice test are grammar rules and vocabulary definitions. That's why they learned English the way they did. That's why the teachers teach to the standardized test. That prevents them from learning the way the English is used. So, they have the words, they have the grammar rules but they have no idea of how to put the words together with grammar rules to make sentences, to make paragraphs, to make essays.

Differences in multilingual writing even among non-native-English speakers were reinforced by instructors in all groups. This theme of writing differences among the multilingual students continued to be reflecting as Paige pointed out the differences between her two Saudi Arabian students' writing in the same class.

> Two of the other students, who were from Saudi Arabia, had differences in terms of articles and things like that, but I would say that they all had advanced English speaking and writing skills. One of them was more confident in his ability than another who did have some struggles with clarity of thought. I could see her thinking process and which was really complex, but then in just of the sentence-level there were issues of clarity but still an advanced writer and speaker of English.

When asked to share her experiences with writing differences of multilingual students, Mary reflected on an approach that she was trying to apply with one of her Chinese students,

> For the first time in my life, I have made a transition from my former assumptions that everybody who is coming to United States is getting better chances or something like that. I always valued language and I always encouraged my non-native speakers to speak their own languages among themselves. In my current class, I have students with different levels of proficiency. Among them, one Chinese student with low grammar skills. I said to him, "I want you to choose essays from the book and write your responses to the essays in Chinese. Then translate if you can. If you can't, ask one of your friends to do that for you."

At one point of her responses, Mary attributed the varied level of language proficiency of her multilingual students to the duration of learning English that their academic system required.

> He handed in his essay and I couldn't grade it as there were just too many grammar mistakes. I talked with him and asked about his experience in learning English. He told me about learning English in China in Chinese. He has been taking English for eight years, but has never taken English with English speaking teachers.

Mary also reflected on her experience with a Peruvian student,

> The Peruvian student got a B minus. Now for me, that's a really low score. And part of his B minus is he was not really engaged in the topic. He came to talk to me if he could change the topic. He wasn't engaged in a sense he doesn't have that life-long desire.

To provide a clear idea about the differences that affect the quality of writing, Mary also shared her experience with the native writers of English (NWE),

> Because, I have a student who is American who chose a topic on cutting of music and arts from their curriculum for the budget. He was in band; he is in the school he is coaching. All of a sudden, everybody has to pay to be in the band, and his students' parents can't afford it. His first essay was so deep. The topic has to have a public connection and interest, and possibilities for research.

**Theme 3**

**Instructors experience difficulty in evaluating multilingual writing as form and content are sometimes intertwined**. David shared his personal philosophy of grading:

> I do not grade for grammar or spelling or punctuation or usage. I do not take points off for improper use of grammar, spelling, or usage or using idiom in the wrong way. I heavily deemphasize those kinds of things the international students have the most problems with.

In response to the question whether different criteria are used for grading international multilingual students' paper, David said,

> Officially, no. But it's very difficult not to grade each student differently regardless of which language they are most comfortable using. Even if I had a class of all native English speakers, it's hard to assess each one of them differently as I know about their educational background, the interactions I had with them, how much trouble I know that they are having. It's hard for me to keep myself out of that. So, the same thing applies when I have multilingual international students.

To the follow up question that emerged consecutively, "Does the language difference of international students play a role in grading?" David's response reveals his perceptions.

> I only focus on the content, the actual ideas that they are trying to express. This is problematic though, if you are having difficulty wielding a language, it usually takes you many more words to say something. Because it takes more words to say the same thing that means you have less space to say more things. It takes more words to get the ideas across. So, I try not to assess them on that basis. But, because of their difficulties of wielding the language that makes it more difficult to achieve the ideational requirement of the prompt, the content elements.

Although he tends to emphasize content over grammar, international multilingual students' limited vocabulary play a crucial role in making the intended meaning. across. This makes it difficult for an instructor to assess lack of vocabulary as it seems to weaken the strength of the meaning. He also brought up issues of grammar and 'form.'

> They write me a paper and, regardless of the grammar or spelling or the punctuation, I can see the ideas at work. I can see their thought process. I treat them just like native English speakers. I work with the thought process and completely ignore the grammar. I say "ok, what do you think and, why are you thinking it? What caused you to think this way? Given that you are thinking this way, does this next paragraph make sense?" So, we're trying to focus on larger structural issues with the paper, not sentence level issues, but paragraphs as self-

> contained ideas. The only problem is sometimes the grammar and spelling issues make it difficult for me to ascertain the larger meaning, even though that's my focus.

In response to the grading criteria on content and form Paige emphasized that,

> I don't put a lot of emphasis on grammar or meeting some type of standard English for any student. I am influenced from working in a writing center where we think about how power structures come into play through assessing languages. So, whenever I was grading these international students' papers, I wasn't going through and saying, "Oh this doesn't sound like native English speaker."I didn't do that. I didn't really focus on grammar at all.

Paige shared her experience with one of her international student's writing,

> One student who had difficulty in paper was trying to engage with the assignment, but it didn't seem like the way she was forming sentences. I don't feel like I counted off necessarily for form, but it was the content, not engaging with the assignment. I put more responsibility on myself to help her further comprehend the assignment sheet. But, that's the way I assessed all students on how they were engaging with the prompt.

By reflecting on an experience with an international student, Mary shared her grading philosophy in regard to her perception of 'form' and 'content' in the writing of NNWE.

> The Chinese student that I was talking about chose a topic on 'Olympics and Security.' It's a good topic, hot topic, and it's important. So, he was talking about Rio, Olympics and the security. He has the ability to go to the Olympics if he wanted to go. He heard about security issues and made the decision that it was not safe for him to go. He was scared. He did his paper with grammatical errors. At first I wasn't impressed as the grammar got into the way. And then I began looking past the grammar. But it was poorly written and that got in the way of engaging with the ideas. I had to read the essay three or four times before I got it. He knows the technical terms, but he doesn't know how to apply them. The only way he can learn is more immersion in English speaking culture. I went from not giving him a grade to deciding to give the paper a 'C.' I told him that the language is really a problem, but the thought is great thought.

**Theme 4**

**Instructors perceive of one-on-one conferencing as the most effective method**.

Although limited class time doesn't allow instructors enough flexibility for open interaction and discussion, all participants showed a point of consensus in favoring one-on-one interaction. Highlighting the value of one-to-one conversation, David said,

> I have to talk with them personally. It's essential because their speaking level, listening and speaking comprehension is usually much more fluent than their reading and writing comprehension. So, I use the fact that they can speak English more strongly than they can write it to supplement the writing. Whereas for the native English speaker, I probably understand what they are trying to say. Ironically I find that, even you are a native English speaker, it doesn't mean you are a native English writer really. With international multilingual students, I can walk through their papers with them and say, "Ok for this paragraph, this is what I interpret that it says. Is that what you intending to be saying?" If they say "yes" then I say "Ok, I got the meaning." If their response is "no," then we can go outloud and I say,"when you read this sentence, that's what made me think that you are meaning this in this paragraph." So, we can use the fact that they have greater facility with outloud speaking and listening than they do at writing to supplement what they are trying to say.

By recalling one particular one-to-one interaction with a student from Saudi Arabia, Paige reflected on the value of conversations with NNWE.

> I remember one conversation I had with a student from Saudi Arabia. He always used to come to talk to me after class. I feel like I got to talk with him a lot more than other students. One time, he asked me, "I'm having a really hard time." I think it was a rhetorical analysis that they were doing at that time. So, he was saying, "I'm really having a hard time finding what to say, what arguments to make." So, we talked about strategies of conducting rhetorical analysis and I remember saying, "It's about what you find in the text, how your understanding the text and what connections you're making." He seemed surprised saying, "Oh, it's not like there is a right way or correct answer." I said, "I'm interested to see how you're interpreting this. You might even approach the text from your perspective. I hope that I cultivated an environment for the student to feel that he can be creative in using his voice.

By reflecting on her experiences on the classroom interactions, Mary shared her opinion on the value of one-to-one interaction in regard to developing better communication with international students.

> I found out that in one-on-one conversation when I repeated the question that I asked in the classroom, my Chinese student nodded. That seemed 'yes' to me. A minute later, it turned out, he actually said 'no.' That was the case with international students. They will nod to the questions I asked as if they understood and I found out they didn't. It could be because I spoke too fast or because they were just hoping everything would be okay. I think, it's a combination of both. I can remember at the beginning of the class trying to speak slowly and precisely. I looked at them and asked, "Do you understand what I said?' I wanted them to tell me the truth rather than just nod their heads. So, it takes time to build up that relationship. I found that one-on-one is the only way to build that relationship.

**Theme 5**

**Aspects of translingualism are acknowledged though instructors are not certain about implementation in practice**. With regard to the English language, David commented on its hybridity,

> English is a robust language. It says something that nobody really knows how many words are in the English language. Some people say two hundred thousand; some people say five hundred thousand. It's not like French or Spanish. In France and Spain they have special academics whose job is to decide what a word is and what is not a word officially. English has no such institutions. No authority decides what counts as an English word. In the 1970s when Japanese restaurants were becoming popular, people were becoming exposed to 'Sushi' and 'Teriyaki' and 'Tempura' and 'sake.' When enough people get exposed to those kinds of words 'sushi' is a word in English now, 'teriyaki' is a word in English now, 'taco' is a word in English now, 'yoga' is a word in English now. So, we do not have any rules about what words can and can't be borrowed.

In response to the question whether it is possible to see, depending on the level of writing, differences in the writing of NNWE as 'resources' David said,

> I think we can see it as resources instead of mistakes. We tend to think of non-native English speakers by the things that they can't do the things that they are not

> yet good enough. We don't think of that the whole other set of tools they have that we don't have. We think about them as people who lack English, not as the people who have some other language they bring. They know other languages which makes them think in different ways and they can be creative in different ways than the people who only use English as their language. The language culture they bring to the FYC classroom is an asset, a resource.

David also expressed concerns in regard to how to implement translingualism in the FYC classroom.

> I don't know how to utilize that contribution and bring it into my classroom. I don't know, it's hard to say.

Paige tends to advocate for negotiating language differences, but she also chose to be cautiously realistic:

> I have some idealistic views, but as a teacher, it's my job also to help students prepare for the conventions of academia and academic writing. It would be a disservice to students if I wasn't being explicit about what is expected. This is the way I think about the norm of standard writing. It is wrong to have these standards, but here they are. We can have the conversation that if eventually you try to submit to a journal, your professor might expect standard usage. Negotiation is really tricky to prepare students while still making it known that there are ways of knowing and expressing themselves that are valued.

Although by referring to Canagarajah's *"The fortunate traveler,*" she shared optimism on translingual practices in multilingual writing through a different rhetorical lens.

> I feel like Canagarajah in *"The fortunate traveler*" wrote in a way that seemed more like spiraling. It's published in an academic journal that is well-known. Writing this way just challenges conventions. But he definitely has a deep understanding of language and rhetorical lenses but he still uses his own way.

Instead of sharing her opinion on whether writing differences of NNWE can be negotiated, Mary took a different approach. She suggested the redesign of Comp I and II to put more focus on transferability of skills to other courses across disciplines,

> For the first time in my life, I wondered why international students came here! I may be more sensitive to this issue than I have ever been. I just have been thinking, "Do we really give them something valuable that they would have to put

> themselves through this!" The new Comp I and II program this year, we were told in the orientation this summer that the President and the department heads throughout the university have decided something new. They think that the comp program needs to help students develop the right skills to meet the requirements of the academic community.

**Theme 6**

**Training for teaching composition to non-native writers of English is inadequate**.

This theme is focused on training, referring to the larger theme related to the FYC instructors' experiences in working with multilingual writers and their writing and the effort to address the needs of international students, commonly known as second language writers (L2), Mary's response echoed with her counterparts. While asked about the training offered by the FYC administrators, Mary reflected on her teaching experiences with multilingual populations,

> My training was on the job, learning by teaching and reading. There were a couple of books in the first year Comp world that were more accessible to multilingual or ESL students. I'm sorry I can't tell you who the authors are but there are couple of books, like my Bible, with those kids. That gave me some place to sort of look things up. There are other teachers who are also working, so I did always talk with them.

Paige was pursuing her Master's in Composition, Rhetoric, and Literacy in the English Department of Southwest University, where as a graduate teaching assistant(GTA), she was also teaching Comp I in the department's FYC program. Since her senior year, Paige had experiences consulting with NWE and NNWE at multiple academic levels. During fall of 2017, Paige mentioned that she had been teaching both Comp I and Comp II consecutively for six semesters and had international multilingual students from Saudi Arabia, and Angola. Paige noted the lack of training in addressing issues concerning the writing of non-native writers of English (NNWE),

> I don't feel like it was a big topic of conversation in addressing the issues multilingual students bring to the classrooms.

The FYC department offered a two-week long workshop and a semester-long required course '*Teaching College Composition'* to address issues of in FYC courses, David shared his understanding,

> The attitude is that they shouldn't be in an American university unless they're already fluent in English. If we let them in, and if they do not have the fluency level to be able to be in mainstream FYC classes, they need to be in the Center for English as a Second Language (CESL) to get up to speed. It's not our responsibility to teach eighth grade English or tenth grade English to the students. At the same time we are supposed to try to teach thirteenth grade English. We can't do both. This is the mentality of the FYC department. We can try to make some accommodations for them. Maybe we can give them extra time on assignments, maybe we can direct them to the writing center or other resources, maybe we can take into consideration the way we read their papers. The mentality of the FYC department is that we can't teach freshman college writing classes at that level and at the same time help students who may have eighth grade or tenth grade grammar and vocabulary. We shouldn't do both of those.

**Multilingual FYC Instructor**

The second research question aimed to understand multilingual instructors' perceptions of contents and forms featured in their multilingual students' writings**.** Themes and subthemes that emerged from analysis of coded data from a semi-structured interview with Maria, (For more information on background and experiences, see p. 50), the only multilingual FYC instructor, are discussed in the following section. This section detailed the five themes and two subthemes that emerged from the interview.

1. Teacher strategies to learn about multilingual students' diverse backgrounds appear to promote their identity and empower their voices.

    a) Lack of shared knowledge of language seems to be a barrier to addressing the issues associated with multilingual writing.

2 .Teacher strategies to learn about multilingual students' diverse writing contexts in English seem to elevate their concept of academic writing.

a) Reconsidering the audience seems to be an effective strategy for multilingual writers to understand the academic audience.

3. Instructors perceive of one-on-one conferencing as the most effective method.

4. Aspects of translingualism are acknowledged though instructors are not certain about implementation in practice.

5. Training for teaching composition to non-native writers of English is inadequate.

**Theme 1**

**Teacher strategies to learn about multilingual students' diverse backgrounds appear to promote their identity and elevate their voices**. Learning about multilingual students' diverse backgrounds surfaced as an effective approach. Strategies employed by Maria at the beginning of the course, such as initiating interaction with her international students and gaining a grasp of their diverse cultural, social, and academic backgrounds were empowering as it opened avenues for 'dialogic communication'(Mercer, Hennessy, &Warwick, 2010). Maria shared her strategy in learning about multilingual students' backgrounds,

> My strategy has been to learn about their backgrounds and I think I do that because of the way my background experience was important in my language acquisition and in just trying to improve my English. So, I follow that same strategy for my international students. If I get an understanding of where they are from, how their experiences were in their home country, and how their school experiences were in their home country then I can have a better understanding of what strategies might work for them.

Maria tried to understand the language phenomena her Kenyan student was bringing into his writing and the initiative of reaching out to him created a platform to channel the conversations that brought out his perspective.

> He was struggling with the first assignment which was a personal narrative because he wanted to write what I believe to be more of a theme that seemed a bit like what other students were talking. When he came to talk to me and I encouraged him to talk to me because it seemed like he was struggling. I asked him why he wanted to choose this topic. It did not seem personal to him. And he articulated that it seemed that everybody in the class was choosing something about their first experiences here in being at college. I told him to tell me little bit about his experience from Kenya and how that experience may have been influential. And so getting him to think in that way and getting him to value what he brings into the conversation was important, so he was able to develop a narrative based on an experience that he had during his elementary school. He could develop it into a very well-written essay. And I don't think he struggled in developing that essay as much as he was developing his first one because he was able to use an experience that was meaningful to him.

**Subtheme 1(a)**

**Lack of shared knowledge of language seems to be a barrier to addressing the issues associated with multilingual writing**. In addition to knowledge of the diverse backgrounds of multilingual students, shared knowledge of language with multilingual students is another important aspect that Maria believes plays an important role in developing positive interactions. It also alleviates difficulty in understanding and learning the context of writing. Regarding the lack of shared knowledge of language, Maria said,

> I think I am adequate in trying to address the needs of international students and I have more awareness and empathy because of my background.

She also expressed her limitations in addressing the issues faced by international multilingual students who do not share the same first language as her,

> I am able to communicate with someone in their native language when it is the same as mine. What I can offer to my international students that don't share my background is that I have an awareness. In just sharing with them where I come from and that I am a multilingual speaker. I worked with people whose first language isn't English and have built trust Then, they are willing to come talk to me.

Maria believes that this approach of building trust creates a safe and collaborative space with international multilingual students,

> Building collaborative space through trust. They themselves tell me what they need and I let them know I just worked with people whose first language is Spanish. I have strategies that I have used. I am able to communicate with them in a better way in Spanish. But if I don't share Spanish with you, what you can do to help me is to let me know where you think you are struggling and we can work through that. About half of my students take that to heart and will come and talk to me. We will have that confidence in expressing that they are struggling through something and they want to work through it. So, they understand that it's more of a collaborative effort.

**Theme 2**

**Teacher strategies to learn about multilingual students' diverse writing contexts in English seem to elevate their concept of academic writing**. Maria believes learning about multilingual students' knowledge of writing practices in diverse contexts assuages their difficulty in grasping the concept of a new genre of academic writing. Though she was born, and raised in the U.S., and educated in U.S. academic institutions. Maria has been able to relate to international students' apprehension In regard to constraints experienced by multilingual writers in the process of developing academic writing; Maria reflected on strategies that she applied,

> I struggled with appealing to an academic audience. Because I have that awareness, I am able to let them know, "you don't need to completely change your writing style and that's not what I am asking you to do. I'm asking you to

> reconsider your audience a little bit more –what kind of terms are you going to change, what kind of concepts you would develop more critically?" I'm not asking you to focus on how you are going to change your sentence structure, or your paragraph structure. Don't try to completely do a whole new shift.

**Subtheme 2**

**Reconsidering the audience seems to be an effective strategy for multilingual writers to understand the academic audience**. The subtheme of considering the audience for academic writing from a different dimension reflected a difficulty that international multilingual students experience in FYC writing courses. Maria noted,

> I believe there is apprehension for international students that they can't develop a strong essay or strong piece of writing for an academic audience and for our FYC classrooms. It seems the push should be to appeal to an academic audience which I think should be an expected outcome. But, it seems to encourage students to pursue that outcome. It seems sometimes inhibiting for the international students because the focus is that they have to relearn the language in a completely new way. For international students, I try to let them know it's not that process of relearning, it's just using what they already know and perhaps modifying strategies to accomplish what everybody else is accomplishing.

**Theme 3**

**Instructors perceive of one-on-one conferencing as the most effective method**. Regarding the face to face interactions with multilingual students, Maria said that usually international students are reluctant to talk about the issues they experience. Instead, they struggle silently through the process of writing. They also do not tend to discuss issues in class in the presence of peers. However, they responded to emails when Maria reached out to them. She noted,

> International students I have encountered are usually reluctant to bring up any issues that they have in class. So, I either let them know via email or I share with

> the class that if they are struggling to let me know. When I share my experience, it gives them confidence to come see me one-on-one. Many of my international students have taken advantage of it. They are the ones who also come to me before a paper is due.

**Theme 4**

**Aspects of translingualism are acknowledged though instructors are not certain about implementation in practice**. Drawing attention to the newly launched curriculum and stressing on the fixated perceptions of the monolingual instructors on the grammatical errors made in multilingual writing, Maria shared the insights drawn from her own experiences with writing produced by international students in her FYC class,

> The curriculum that is in place this year is new and malleable to instructors and their style of teaching. And whenever it was presented to us I wish there was more discussion about the needs of international students. And I would like for that currently and continuously to be a topic of conversation and I think when that conversation happens suggestions and strategies need to be shared. I would like my colleagues to talk to me about what has worked with them whenever they are dealing within international students. And it's discouraging whenever they talk about international populations and they focus on what I call minor issues which is grammar. And whenever I speak to these instructors who are not multilingual, have not gone through this experience of language acquisition.

She continued commenting on this prevalent issue of focusing only on grammatical mistakes. She shared her experience initiating dialogue among her colleagues as that could lead to strategies of intervention in addressing issues in multilingual writing. She also suggested dialogue with the students as that could create an open and a safe space for both instructors and students to bring potential change in the process of teaching and learning writing, at the very least in the department.

> They are excellent academics that are published, so I do respect what they have to say and their concern is that this student isn't able to produce something coherent. There are so many spelling and grammar errors that prevents readers from understanding what they are saying. I wish these instructors could shift their perceptions and have awareness. This could be completely manageable and

> workable and could be a work-in-progress throughout the semester or throughout the student's career as an undergraduate. So, if the instructor sees something not as a failure but something that could be addressed throughout the semester and could talk to the student.

**Theme 5**

**Training for teaching composition to non-native writers of English is inadequate**.

> I agree that there is a lack of training and it seems that every year that I go through a workshop before the fall semester.

Maria voiced similar concerns as her monolingual counterparts that little attempt is made in addressing the issues or needs of international students with multiple and diverse language backgrounds. She also added that there is urgency in promoting awareness among the administrators and instructors, especially to inquire about pedagogical theory, practice, and curriculum in addressing international multilingual students' needs.

> Unfortunately, there hasn't been any significant change in addressing the needs of international students. Now in retrospect it seems that when I first went through the workshop there was more of a concentration in trying to bring in instructors who taught the remedial English courses or the courses that are geared towards international students to try to come talk to new instructors and build the awareness of what kind of strategies new instructors implement into their curriculum in order to address the needs of international students. But I would definitely like to see more workshops that are geared towards international students, more people that work with that population, experts who have the experience working with that population to come in and address those needs.

With an optimistic note on Maria's hope of expanding one's perspective by learning from such experienced professionals, integrating such insight into the curriculum, and implementing and practicing these lessons in FYC writing classes, I transition to discuss the themes emerged through a thorough analysis of the interview data collected from international multilingual students.

## International Multilingual Students

International multilingual students interviewed for this study revealed a mosaic of meaningful experiences that are complex and multilayered. In this section of chapter four, I present the findings gathered through the analysis of the interview data pertaining to the third research question that aimed to understand the perceptions that international multilingual students have of their writing.

Themes and subthemes are discussed in the following section that emerged through transcribing and analyzing the interview data received from three international multilingual students enrolled in Comp I and Comp II courses (For more information on background and experiences, see p. 50-53) designed for the mainstream native-speakers of English (NSE) student populations and offered by the first-year composition (FYC) writing program of the Department of English at Southwest University.

Findings evolved in response to the interview questions that aimed to understand the perceptions of international multilingual students on the form and content of their writing were organized into five themes and one subtheme.

1. Multilingual students experience challenges in FYC in learning writing strategies as that are different from previous experiences.
2. Multilingual students view writing structure and process in FYC more contextual and research-based.
3. Multilingual students perceive of one-on-one conferencing with instructor as the most effective method.
    a) Peer feedback from native speakers is not viewed as constructive to multilingual students.

4. Multilingual students negotiate differences in writing processes and strategies by adopting forms and contents as suggested, but face challenges in the process of relearning.
5. Multilingual students regard 'culture' as playing a significant role in the differences and methods of writing as practiced around the world.

**Theme 1**

**Multilingual students experience challenges in FYC in learning writing strategies as that are different from previous experiences**. During the interview, when asked to share her experiences of learning to write English in an IB program in Swaziland, Sam emphasized the writing strategies that shaped her way of thinking seems to be in conflict with the writing strategies and approaches in the FYC writing course,

> Because we don't think in that manner, so that the way I learnt English, English is not being taught here. So that raises the difference. You have to find a way to approach this problem in a way that you can solve it again in a new way. Because it's not the same, it's not the same. So you have to kind of learn in addition to learning the material, you have to learn how to understand the material or what you are supposed to learn from the material, that is different.

John shared his experiences of learning to write in Kenya, Nairobi, and Norway where he attended the IB program and discussed the differences in the way writing is taught in FYC:

> The mode of analysis is different here than in Kenya because the students are asked to write with pre-determined answers. Here students are asked to do their own analysis, which becomes little bit challenging because the criteria are blurry on how to really express your ideas. But I will say here I get more flexibility as opposed to Kenya where the rules and standard were imposed on you, because here we are asked to bring an element of your own interpretation.

Hapa shared his writing experiences in a variety of academic institutions, both public and private, that he attended in Saudi Arabia,

> I never wrote essay in high school. I came to know about the term 'essay' when I started my training program. The instructors were American and they really taught English very well, they had a very good curriculum compared to the public school that I chose to attend. Their English curriculum was mostly grammar-based. So, when the students attend university after graduating from public school, they suddenly start suffering as the texts are written in English. But the training program required students at the first trimester to pass IELT, equivalent to TOEFL in USA because all content areas were taught in English.

Reflecting more on the differences, Sam tried to clarify the reasons by comparing the writing strategies between the two pedagogical approaches.

> I think what it has to do with what each group holds to be more important. For example, keywords Americans may find important to know and to learn, I may not consider as important because of what I have been taught that the main idea is the most important thing. But here it is different, you have to know the little snippets of everything.

Similar to Sam, John attributes these differences to pedagogical approaches,

> The way of writing is different. So, when I was thinking about essay or composition, when I am thinking to present my work to someone else. Then I'm thinking what is the reader expecting out of me rather than just what I want to express. So, I tailor-make my composition to specifically fit those criteria. I could express it in a normal language but I make it more precise because it is a very small piece of writing. I use vocabulary which might seem little formal to them but that's how I used to express my ideas back there at home. Well, when I ask them how could I change, they say probably using less complex words could be better.

**Theme 2**

**Multilingual Students view writing structure and process in FYC more `contextual and research-Based**. In response to differences in the use of English between Swaziland and USA, Sam stated,

> It wasn't the language that was difficult; it was the structure of how English is structured here in USA. So, it was like I was writing an essay but then I had to work hard on my structure because the structure was different. So, that's what it made it difficult. It's completely different because the organization or method of delivering ideas is different.

John shared his experience regarding the choice of vocabulary in writing that he was taught in Kenya, which he thinks is viewed differently in the FYC classroom:

> Initially, I was told my language was much better, if you used vocabulary or synonyms that are not commonly used or if you use language that is bit at a higher level than your conversational level. For me, I still have that consciousness that how I'm supposed to construct my sentences-very short and precise. I was also applying the rules that were expected of me in Kenya in national exam, where instructor or examiner wanted to see specific points in your essay when they skim through it. So if they don't see that they do not consider it a well-written essay. I still have those rules in the back of my mind when I write. I am trying to project the message as concisely as I can. So, I got positive feedback from both my instructor and peer as they think it's formal but it's well presented.

Reflecting on his experience in the training program run by corporate America, that he attended after graduating from high school, Hapa shared his experience in Comp I in the U.S.,

> I don't think that any essay I wrote for Comp I was really challenging. Because in the training program back there at home, in the last trimester, we had to write a research paper which was heavily focused on research. That was really rigorous. I leaned to write academic paper, learned to express my own ideas not just quoting and paraphrasing someone else's ideas. I liked the structure of writing in FYC more than 10 months of training that I was in Saudi Arabia because I was able to explore more here like instead of thesis statement , I could put "line of inquiry." So, though the structure is similar in FYC, it's more lenient that I was allowed to quote and paraphrase by giving credit to the authors of course without plagiarism.

Sam reflected on her experience in the process of writing an assignment in Comp II,

> The process actually looks familiar, the process that we use is actually scientific method. So you see something, then you hypothesize, then you research and then you analyze your findings and then you have your results. So, that's what actually is familiar as I have been taking science. So, when I step into the class, and my professor said go outside, find like a generic issue, think anything that is like a

problem. I think it is a more logical process of learning and writing. Writing is more contextual.

Sam delved deep into the aspects of writing process by elaborating on the differences of writing strategies between the two education systems:

> We read poetry or prose or novel and dissected and analyzed and used those materials to apply to our own writing. Here one different thing I saw is that we read texts or articles about 'how to write" which was different. And it was difficult for me to learn and I don't think that particularly worked for me because I feel like having an example of how you should do something is better than telling someone how to do something. So, it was difficult for me to learn that way. Here writing is more applicable to everyday life- literary vs. literacy. In Swaziland I read lot of Shakespeare, lot of Shelley, lot of Lolita, learned similes, onomaetopia, punctuation, where to put period, where to put comma-it was more like passive learning. Reading helps you to learn but more passively. It is more "how to write" but here it is more "what to write."

Emphasizing the aspects of rules and standards, John shared his view on the differences between the writing process in Kenya, Norway, and the U.S.,

> In Kenya, it was a lot of strict rules on what and how you should write, so we just had to comply to that. The IB program in Norway followed British curriculum system, underlying guidelines of writing were still there but we did lot of analysis of books, we studied the application of language in society like in advertisement, speech. Here in USA, there are guidelines that govern your writing but at the same time there is little bit more freedom in expressing my own ideas.

Hapa shared his experience with the writing process in the training program where he learnt to write essays from an American instructor:

> The research paper that I had to write was a 6 page research paper in the training program I had to do research everyday, write drafts, revise, and review. So, when I had to write essay in Comp I, the process seems very familiar to me. Although, I felt challenged while writing the third essay, the argumentative essay, because I had to argue in it and write in a different style. And specially arguing and counter-arguing seemed bit challenging to me. I like to argue but in this essay, I had to present it in an objective way, couldn't be biased about my opinion.

Comparing the first and third essay, Hapa thinks writing the first essay was more enjoyable:

> We were given the chance to write in our own style in the 'Value' paper. I was able to use the word "I' in it. I was very happy because I was able to express my own personal belief.

**Theme 3**

**Multilingual students perceive of one-on-one conferencing with instructor as the most effective method**. Sam viewed the feedback from her instructor with importance and took the opportunity to meet her individually. She strongly believes the face-to-face interaction with her instructor allowed her to discuss issues that were provided in the written form as comments on the paper and helped greatly in understanding clearly what was expected of her in order to structure the essay and convey ideas meaningfully:

> My first paper was just sea of red. Because I hadn't done in a way my teacher was expecting it to be done. My instructor was very adamant about office hours. During office hours, she worked on the processes, so it was like extra instruction. She gave generic information to the class before the first assignment, but after she read my paper she realized she needed to provide more instruction. So, technically English was much harder for me than I think the students who were writing English in this way.

John also acknowledged the face-to-face interaction with his instructor providing additional clarity,

> My Comp I instructor always encouraged us to take advantage of her office hours. So, I used to talk to her whenever something seemed not clear and that helped me to have a better understanding. She always clarified the rules.

Hapa shared his experience on his instructor's feedback that he received on his argumentative paper:

> One thing that I noticed in my third essay was that I didn't have to put my opinion, I just had to state the both sides of the argument. So, the whole paper is objective, but in the last part of the essay I could state my own opinion on the matter very briefly. Because, if I would explicitly express my opinion, it would ruin the whole purpose of writing. So, I didn't do that and I got feedback to

> elaborate on my opinion. So, I went to talk to my instructor in the office hour and told that I was not sure if I can state my personal opinion because it would twist the purpose. So, my instructor said if you think it would defy your purpose you do not need to add that.

**Subtheme 3(a)**

**Peer feedback from native speakers is not viewed as constructive to multilingual students**. Sam shared the insights she gained when reflecting on the differences between the feedbacks received from her NSE and NNSE peers:

> My peers were mostly American, so they didn't have the same problems that I had. And the only people those who understood that actual problem was my international friends because they were also going through the same thing kind of not understanding what I should be learning, what's the purpose of reading those texts.

John thought peer view was good enough in terms of having a second set of eyes on his writing,

> You might be saying something but you don't know how it would sound when someone else would read it. So, it was good to understand that. After having the peer review I was becoming more confident because I was able to understand what I was trying to say.

On another note, in his view,

> Peer review also can be improved because sometimes people just did it for the sake of doing it.

Hapa shared his perspective on the native speaker's use of language that he learnt from peer reviewing one of his classmate's papers,

> I peer-reviewed my classmate's essay who was a native speaker and I noticed some grammatical mistakes in that paper. I think I can relate these mistakes because I had a Korean language instructor whose first language was not English and it was easier for him to address those small differences or nuances that shouldn't be there. Native speakers learn their language naturally so it's possible that they sometimes do not notice their mistakes.

Moreover, he also shared his opinion on the feedback he received from his native speaker classmate,

> The advantage of me being peer reviewed by native speaker because they point my attention to things that they would like it better because it was structured this way, because they are native.

**Theme 4**

**Multilingual students negotiate differences in writing processes and strategies by adopting forms and contents as suggested, but face challenges in the process of relearning**. Sam shared her experiences in regard to the initiative she took to understand the writing process by valuing her instructor's feedback, suggestions, and using resources available on campus. Throughout this learning process, she has been adopting new strategies to meet the writing criteria set by her instructor which has also affirmed her willingness to negotiate the differences between two writing processes practiced in two different academic contexts:

> From the sea of red, I realized that I had to put more work into it, because I didn't know how to meet the standards. So, I went to the writing center, I took peer review seriously, I talked to her about the essay before I handed her the essay. I started going through the process- I would write first draft, then I would critique myself, then I would write the second draft, would take it to the writing center, and they would critique it, and then I would write the third draft, then take it to my professor and she would critique it and then I would write the fourth and final draft. And I valued that process because I wanted to have an 'A,' so I realized I have to do 'A' work.

Based on her experience in learning a process of writing, that is practiced in US writing classrooms, Sam suggested that sequencing FYC writing  integrating relevant curriculum could be beneficial for the English language users with varied language and cultural backgrounds,

> A hybrid English syllabus would do better if you would have textual semester I and Contextual Semester II for Freshman, I think would be very helpful, very helpful.

Reflecting on the improvement in his analytical skills, John believes he gradually learnt to express himself better:

> In the beginning, I was very skeptical because I did not know how to start at the first place, because it's a different system. But after I did my first assignment, a personal narrative essay which was much easier to write because it was more personal where I had to explain my personal value. As we continued, the elements of research were brought into writing, and we were required to come out of ourselves and asked to do investigation and become objective. We had to present information out of the research in an objective way rather than a subjective way, and then using language became little complex.

John strongly believes that the discussion with his instructor was beneficial because it facilitated the development of his analytical skills,

> I always took the opportunity to discuss with my instructor the issues that she commented on the paper. I think international students have very good command of language itself in grammar, and vocabulary as we learnt these rigorously in our education system. I'm thinking about the analysis skill and language capability. So, conferencing with my instructor helped what and how you were supposed to present. By the time I was presenting my final speech, I knew how to present information I knew what is expected of me.

Although John mentioned his struggle in applying mechanics of the language in spite of conveying his message clearly,

> Most of the time I had trouble using punctuation. Because it's very different to me. So, for example, if I take a pause while speaking, I apply a comma in writing. But after rules were laid down, how punctuation is done, it became better. At the same time when I express myself in English, structures of other languages like Swahili, the national language, Maragoli, the vernacular, that I speak at home, play in place.

He shared his insights on an individual's language identity that influences one's agency as a writer,

> We use language to express ourselves. And depending on the place or culture we are raised in we have different views and ways to express. When it comes to the

> colloquial errors that's how I am phrasing my sentences, I don't think it should be viewed as errors. Because when I express my way of thinking, it could not necessarily be the way people in USA are thinking. So, may be if the message is conveyed, meaning is made in the contents that can be accepted. Of course, the standard of spelling, correct grammar should be maintained.

Hapa attributed his interests in learning English to Japanese animation movie rather than reading fictions written in English.

> I learnt dense scientific terms, Japanese animation with English subtitles. Then I read the books written on those animations that I think made me learn English actually. So, I think that's my breakthrough that what made me love English so much, made me better at English grammar, made me understand complicated stuff in writings. I think that also made me write well.

**Theme 5**

**Multilingual students regard 'Culture' as playing a significant role in the differences and methods of writing as practiced around the world**. Sam shared her views regarding the notion that culture plays a crucial role in language learning that she thinks is "very true":

> I feel like culture is so vast. For instance, I learned French in high school, but even if I did learn to communicate in French doesn't mean that I understand the culture. I understand just one aspect of French culture which is the language. Even then some sayings in French if literally translated in English would mean "bolt of lightning," but it also means "love at first sight." So, you may know a language but you don't know how it is expressed in a particular cultural context.

Emphasizing the initiative to understanding other culture and how English is widely practiced globally in different contexts, Sam shared the insights that she gained through observing the American culture inside and outside of the classroom,

> I like to see them wanting to step out of the idea of American exceptionalism, think it would be beneficial if they did want to step out of that and realize English as a language has several diasporas all over the world. English is not the same all

> over the world, if we take a global look at the world, it would be helpful. I do feel like it would bridge the gap.

John thought that culture or the context plays a big role in using language. Drawing an example of how some expressions as “I am sorry” or “Thank You” used both in Kenya and USA but differently, he shared his perspective on the varied use of language in different contexts:

> How we look at things that happen in society is very different in the U.S. as compared to what is happening back at home. Because it is not your native language, you are supposed to follow rules that should govern your expressions. So, it’s much more formal. I don’t think there is a big difference when I speak inside and outside of class. Because it’s grown in such a context that it’s supposed to be- this way or that way. So that value system is underlying- the understanding of the language. Here it can change a lot, it can become very formal when you go to class and very casual when you speak outside of the class. Like there are phrases that you can use inside class and some when you speak with someone outside of the class. So, here when I speak in a very casual environment, people say your language is very formal. I think it is due to the reason that has been developed in a very different circumstance. At the same time, someone who grows up in the context using the native language. Those are embedded in your language.

Hapa shared a very interesting perspective regarding the role of culture and environment in learning language:

> I liked English wholly as a language. English never seemed foreign language to me as I grew up listening to this language at home from my family member, watching movies, and cartoons .We also had another foreign member at home whose second language was also English and communicated with us in English. I was exposed to English since elementary school as I went to private school. Although I didn’t fully pay attention to learning grammar until I went to high school. The teachers there were there also second language speakers of English.

## Classroom Observations and Follow-up Interviews

The following section delineates the findings derived from the follow-up interview with the multilingual FYC instructor and two classroom observations.

### FYC Classroom Observations

I observed two Comp I-1113 classes taught by a monolingual instructor back to back in one day at the end of April of 2017. The duration of each class was 55 minutes. Both classes were dedicated to the assignment with a focus on developing students' speech and presentation skills, with the new segment of the curriculum designed for unit 3. Each class was a mix of about 15 multilingual and native speaker students each. Multilingual students were truly represented from diverse countries ranging from China, Africa, Brazil, Vietnam, India, and those in the Middle –East.

Prior to the observation of the two classes the instructor shared with me the lesson plans to be delivered in those classes. She also mentioned that she was offering one –on-one conferencing and more in-class revision prior to writing the *Persuasive Paper*, the final paper, as her students were struggling a bit with unit 3. She started the classes by giving a quiz for 15 minutes on the reading on rhetoric and free speech that students were instructed to read in the previous class. Followed by the quiz, she went over the quiz by discussing the similarities and differences between speech and writing, the importance of public speaking and delivering speech effectively and professionally, and strategies to present perspectives persuasively through clear and concise speech. Then through asking a host of discussion questions, she guided the class to express their understanding and views of speech regarding what should comprise of a good speech. As the students began to respond, she began to write the responses on board.

She engaged the students to think together and critically about the concept of speech from a varied range of spectrum and presenting speech creatively using multimodality through various medium including video, graphics, and painting. Then, she introduced prompt questions to guide students to engage into discussion with their peers in designated group. Following the discussion, students were instructed to write scripts for individual impromptu speeches that they would deliver in front of the class for five minutes. She reminded students to be persuasive as they presented their speech emphasizing information, argumentative, and advocacy.

She ended the class by giving the assignment for the next class to bring a paper draft for the persuasive paper, to read an article on "Public Speaking Development" and to prepare for a quiz out of that reading, and to bring a short speech plan including a clear topic, thesis statement or line of inquiry.

**Follow-up Interview**

I had the opportunity to have a follow-up interview in an informal setting with the multilingual FYC instructor and during our conversation; I wanted to know about a change in the curriculum, if any, in addressing the issues experienced by multilingual students since I interviewed her a semester ago. She mentioned a recent change in the curriculum focused on multimodality,

> International students that I had were excited to be able to create something that delivered a message that communicated a message, that wasn't necessarily in the form of an academic essay. So they were able to not be apprehensive about trying to mimic a certain style and they were able to take ownership of something that they created.

In her view, this multimodal composition seems more engaging for the international students as they were able to create some meaningful presentations. However, she expressed

concerns about the new curriculum that is focused on speech delivery that international students might struggle with language in terms of delivering the speech to the classroom full of students. Though, she found it beneficial for the international students as it would alleviate their anxiety in communicating their ideas with audiences.

This positive perspective regarding the new addition of multimodality into the curriculum has also been found in line with one of the monolingual instructors interviewed in this study. Similarities of perspectives that have intersected across the findings will be discussed in the discussion section of chapter five.

# Chapter 5: Discussion

## Overview

Through the three research questions, this dissertation study aimed to understand how monolingual and multilingual first-year composition (FYC) instructors and international multilingual first-year composition students perceive of form and content. This chapter discusses the insights drawn from all data sources. Following the discussion in relation to each of the research questions, concluding thoughts and recommendations for further research are presented

The research questions were as follows:

1. How do monolingual instructors perceive the content and form of their multilingual students' writing?
2. How do multilingual instructors perceive the content and form of their multilingual students' writing?
3. How do international multilingual students perceive the content and form of their multilingual students' writing?

## Research Question One

In response to the first research question, interviews with six monolingual FYC instructors, showed both resonance and dissonance across the common coded themes.

Although research suggests that both native and non-native writers' writing involves the recursive composing phases of planning, writing, revising, generating, developing ideas, and expressing those through appropriate rhetorical and linguistic tools, salient and distinct

differences need to be accounted for (Silva, 1994). The first theme that emerged, *Language differences between Native and Non-native Writers of English are Predictable* seems to justify the view that any language involves elements of discourse that go beyond knowledge of grammar, vocabulary, structure and surface meaning. For international multilingual students who are non-native writers of English (NNWE), familiarizing themselves with the conventions of writing practiced in U.S. academic institutions is crucial as they not only need to adopt the writing strategies, pertinent to the process of writing, "but they also need to understand the socio-rhetorical reasons for the conventions' use and ultimately gain the ability to appropriate those conventions for individual creative and rhetorical purposes" (Bawarshi & Reiff, 2010; Johns et al., 2006).

Monolingual instructors indicated differences in multilingual students' writing styles, and patterns could not be measured on a single scale of linguistic difference. Rather, according to their experiences, differences could be attributed to a spectrum of multiple factors such as academic experience, knowledge, and command of more than one language. The majority of instructors' responses point to word-choices and sentence structure as deficiencies seen in non-native speakers' writing. To some extent instructors showed concern that these aspects sometime could potentially conflict and contradict the intended meaning.

Only one instructor's opinion concerning the differences in multilingual writing did not align with her counterparts, as she expressed concerns derived from her experience with international multilingual students' (IMS) word choice and sentence structure, "I do not think that the international students' writing differences can be attributed to the cultural aspect, it's more like their lack of knowledge in English language or grammar." In light of the perceptions overall, it seems that monolingual instructors might consider expanding their repertoire of

instructional strategies to address the diverse needs of multilingual students, who might have different needs from their native speaker counterparts.

A second, related theme, *Challenges and Proclivities in Multilingual Writing Vary across the Countries* emerged. International multilingual students (IMS) do not all have similar backgrounds with regard to languages, educational systems, social environments, and culture..Although, international students tend to convey meanings using their knowledge of English, the differences were emphasized by all the instructors. One instructor shared his opinions about the writing of Chinese students and attributed their limitations in creative expression and critical thinking to the Chinese educational system, which is heavily focused on teaching English grammar rules and passing standardized tests. Students' grammar skills are assessed using multiple choice tests and do not require the writing of essays.

Another instructor shared her experience with differences in writing among two students from Saudi Arabia. The students varied in the use of grammar, articles and the clear ideas. Five out of six instructors revealed that word choice was somewhat geographically dependent. One of the Saudi students explained that private and public educational systems in his country were structured differently. English was not taught until middle school in the public school system and even when taught it is heavily focused on grammar instead of content. English in private school was much more rigorous and subjects, such as science, were often taught in English. introduced in the private school system at the elementary school level, including in major content areas as science, and Math.

One instructor suggested that differences in competency in English could be attributed to the geographical proximity of a student's country of origin to the United States. Referring to the writing of a South American student, he mentioned that though she spelled words differently in

her writing, she was a strong writer. In this regard, five out of the six instructors interviewed also revealed that word choices are challenging typically across all students.

A third theme, *Instructors Experience Difficulty in Evaluating Multilingual Writing as Form and Content are Sometimes Intertwined* was prevalent**.** All instructors mentioned the need to re-view and re-think established notions of evaluating English. In response to the interview question, "How do you evaluate second language writing and do you create criteria separate than the one used for NWE?", Amy, one of the instructors, expressed concern stating that,

> I think it should be like a conversation on pedagogy in general about what an instructor should value. Teaching philosophy is core because if you can't have conversation with somebody about what matters and if they are not flexible then they are not going to budge.

In regard to the evaluation of non-native writers' writing, Burton-Lamm (2005) noted, "L2 students were only briefly mentioned in English 115 training. When instructors asked composition program administrators for additional advice on evaluating second language writers, they were told to consult a handbook or instructed to do the best they could to be fair"(p.1).

One instructor said his teaching philosophy included deemphasizing assessment based on grammar, spelling, punctuation, usage, and misapplication of idioms.

> It is problematic if you are having difficulty wielding a language it usually takes you many more words to say something than somebody who is not a full user of that language. So, I try to not to assess them on that basis. Because of their difficulties in wielding a language, it makes it more difficult to achieve the ideational requirement of the prompt, the content elements of the prompt.

In general, instructors said that they valued content over grammar. If there was a sticking point related to grading on content, it was international multilingual students' limited vocabulary. An instructor agreed a focus on content was more engaging to students and eventually led to a more meaningful, clear piece of writing. Rather than commanding grammatical correctness,

instructors could consider prioritizing certain writing elements to guide students in developing and honing their ideas.

An analysis of graded papers could have provided confirmation for the grading philosophy and strategies employed by instructors. Instructors reiterated, time after time, that they graded on content, not correctness. However, access to graded papers was not granted, so the extent to which instructors actually graded on content and not correctness was not verified. However, it must be emphasized that all instructors said that they tried to prioritize content over form.

In addressing the unique needs of multilingual writers, the fourth theme, *Instructors perceive of one-on-one conferencing as the most effective method* reveals the value of one-on-one conferencing as potential in creating a positive atmosphere and safe space. Most importantly, it builds an avenue for the multilingual writers to engage in open and productive discussion with their instructors that usually does not occur in classrooms in the presence of their native speaker peers. Instructors pointed out that all students, regardless of NWE and NNWE, should avail the opportunity of one-one-conferencing as it facilitates a constructive dialogic conversation Simply put, it might be useful for an instructor to be cognizant about individual issues, and to be creative and critical in implementing instructional strategies.

The effectiveness of one-on-one conferences was emphasized by all instructors, and students all three group of participants, monolingual and multilingual instructors, and multilingual students. One monolingual instructor has expressed the value of face-to-face-interaction by drawing attention to the potentiality of another characteristic of multilingual writers,

> I have to talk with them personally, it's essential because their speaking level, listening and speaking comprehension is usually much more fluent than their reading and writing

> comprehension. With the international multilingual students in the paper conference, I can walk through their papers with them and say, "Ok for this paragraph, this is what I interpret that it says, is that what you intending to be saying?"

The scope of co-construction of dialogue between instructor and multilingual students leads to a better grasp of abstract concepts, and deeper levels of understanding. The fifth theme, *Aspects of translingualism are acknowledged, though instructors are not certain about the implementation in practice* suggests "translingualism" still resides in a grey area. The data suggests acknowledging differences in multilingual writing through negotiations can be quite beneficial.

Canagarajah's (2013) focus on translingual practices in written English through promoting plurality in writing by accepting hybrid texts provides a clear view that no communities are in a position to claim the sole ownership of any particular language By nature, language is fluid, open to negotiation, and modifiable through diverse modes of communication and eclectic environments. One participant noted,

> English itself is a hybrid language as it is a mixture of variations of dialects and colloquialism across people whose linguistic expression is identified with their regional and local establishment.

Participants suggested moving away from the center and towards the periphery as changes of positionality allowed them to view the dynamic potential of multilingual students. An instructor who advocated for negotiating language differences also was cautiously realistic.

> I feel like I have some idealistic view like this is impressive, but also as a teacher it's my job also to help students prepare students for the conventions of academia and in the academic writing.

Referring to Canagarajah's *"The fortunate traveler*", she shared her optimism about translingual practice.

> I feel like Canagarajah in *"The fortunate traveler*" wrote in a way that seemed more like spiraling. It's published in an academic journal that is well-known. Writing this way just

challenges the conventions. But he definitely has a deep understanding of language and rhetorical lenses, but he still uses his own way.

The sixth and the last theme, *Training for teaching composition to non-native writers of English is inadequate,* emerged. Each participant expressed the lack of adequate training in addressing the diverse needs of multilingual students. Like many U.S. university writing programs, new GTAs at Southwest University (SU) participate in a two-week summer workshop and a one-semester long pedagogical course, *Teaching College Composition-Theory and Practice,* designed to develop pedagogical principles and knowledge. GTAs found existing training to be a "knowledge-that" approach, not a "knowledge-how" approach (Boardman, 1994, p.34,). Instructors felt not much equipped to recognize and address the distinctive linguistic and cultural needs of their multilingual students.

Monolingual instructors interviewed, in particular, expressed frustrations. They said that they needed better understandings of pedagogical approaches. Additionally, concerns were expressed about the form of ideal academic writing being promoted in the courses.

**Research Question Two**

The second research question of this study aimed to understand multilingual instructors' perceptions of contents and forms featured in their multilingual students' writings. Coded themes and subthemes emerged from the interview with one multilingual instructor highlights the experiences, ideas, opinions, and thoughts, many which either intersected or paralleled with other FYC instructor participants. A plethora of research has been available on the language acquisition of non-native speakers English (NNSE) in the ESL context at higher academic institutions at both undergraduate and graduate levels. Interestingly, the majority of these ESL instructors are monolingual instructors of English and only some possess ESL certification.

Compared to monolingual instructors, multilingual instructors are scant. Keeping that disposition in mind, this study sought to understand how the forms and contents in multilingual writing perceived by the multilingual instructors in the FYC courses.

Initiating interaction and conversation was one of the instructional strategies that Maria implemented with her international students to gain a grasp about their diverse backgrounds that are widely different- culturally, socially, linguistically, and academically- from her mainstream native students. The first theme, *Teacher strategies to learn about multilingual students' diverse backgrounds appear to promote their identity and empower their voice seems to be emphasizing* the initiative to learn about multilingual students exemplifies teacher awareness about the presence of international students and also demonstrates commonalities and relatedness to them in terms of Maria's language acquisition experience.

Maria believed that learning international students' backgrounds specifically regarding to their English language experiences in their home country during last 18 years of their life is compelling and effective because in a broader sense, it shows the prospects and potential of pedagogical philosophies and practices that can empower instructors to value the identity and voice of these students with diverse experiences. This sense of awareness of the presence of multilingual students, sense of relatedness to their new identity in the writing class in U.S. higher academic institutions, and facilitation of their writing process by understanding their perceptions of writing in meeting the purpose of a specific assignment's audience, while valuing the academic audience by not losing their identity and voice may have the potential to create an opportune space for an effective dialogue.

This strategy applied by Maria aligns with the very principles of "dialogic pedagogy" (Bakhtin, 1981; 1986) on which this study is theoretically framed that an effective platform is needed to channel the conversation between teachers and students.

A sense of empathy with the multilingual students can be empowering in furthering their strength in writing. This subtheme, *Lack of shared knowledge of language seems to be a barrier in addressing the issues associated with multilingual writing*, reflects Maria's views in her ability to relate to her multilingual students as a strength because she is able to grasp the struggles they experience in developing their writing to meet the criteria of a different nature of assignments throughout the semester. She is also able to provide strategies to unpack diverse issues to the students with the same first language background as hers. What she believes is the trust that she builds with the students from diverse backgrounds creates a collaborative and safe space with these students,

> I think I am adequate in trying to address the needs of international students and I have more awareness and empathy because of my background.

Understanding the background of multilingual students in which their learning and knowledge of the writing process developed is essential for instructors when building strategies appropriate for students' needs and in showing them a pathway to internalize the process of constructing academic writing. The second theme, *Teacher strategies to learn about multilingual students' diverse writing contexts in English seem to elevate their concept of academic writing* emerged from Maria's experiences that she observed her multilingual students adopt coping strategies throughout their writing process as they try to comprehend the concept of academic writing. As Maria showed her willingness and compassion in mitigating the tension and difficulty these students experienced in understanding the concept of academic writing, she

began to have a grasp of a host of academic contexts these students' writing experiences were structured within,

> If I get an understanding from where they are from, how their experiences were in their home country, how their school experiences were in their home country, then I can implement better strategies that might work for them.

In this regard, it needs to be noted that the native speakers of English with academic experience in the U.S. even also experienced difficulty in understanding the concept of academic writing. Moreover, the constraints linguistically diverse multilingual writers experience in developing academic writing is critically tied to the need of awareness of the presence of multilingual students and the clear perception of the structure of their writing that are unique and distinct from their native counterparts. Maria as a multilingual writer has always been able to draw from her own experience of language learning and writing process and that heightens the sense of relatability with her multilingual students.

> I'm not asking you to focus on how you are going to change your sentence structure, or your paragraph structure , if that's something you struggle with then still try to keep working on that and don't try to completely do a whole new shift.

Therefore, the first-year composition program might reconsider pedagogical insights and practices to work effectively with these multilingual students who are robustly diverse in culture, academics, and linguistics.

Multilingual students' past academic experience in learning English and writing processes affects their use of English language and understanding of the structure of writing processes as practiced in the U.S. universities. The subtheme, *Reconsidering the audience seems to be an effective strategy for multilingual writers to understand the academic audienc*e**,** reflected Maria's understanding that the underlying issues associated with the standard Edited American English (SEAE) and the established structure of academic writing need to be discussed

to adopt a pedagogical perspective that values a more emancipatory approach to acknowledge the differences of these linguistically diverse students. Such an approach may potentially create a safe space for these multilingual writers to eloquently use language and preserve their agency by not becoming "passive receptacles needing to learn and replicate the conventions of dominant codes" (Olson, 2013, p.3). In my view, Maria's perception about the obstacles that multilingual students experience in the FYC classrooms is a testament to the fact that,

> I believe there is apprehension coming from international students that they can't develop strong essays or strong pieces of writing for an academic audience and for our FYC classrooms. I try to let them know that it's just using what they already know and perhaps changing or modifying a few strategies in order for them to accomplish what everybody else is accomplishing.

The need for a safe space for productive conversations and meaningful dialogue between instructors and multilingual students in FYC is critical and essential. Instructors should inquire into their positions not just as writing instructors but language teachers. A litany of factors including the intimidation raised from a multilingual student's perceptions of lack of fluency in English do not allow multilingual writers to willingly participate in class discussion with their instructors and peers. The third theme, *Instructors perceive of one-on-one conferencing as the most effective method,* that indicates the need of meaningful and effective dialogue is expressed through Maria's concerns regarding this issue as she stated,

> I worry when I have international students that throughout the semester they are silent in the class and the composition classroom because the curriculum is built on the collaboration throughout the class sessions. I know they don't share or that they are reluctant to share because I have seen that many times in my experience teaching.

Maria's concern also reflected that her support of her multilingual students and creation of an anxiety-free classroom environment that enables her to understand and address her students' issues, unique to each student,

> I incorporate strategies in the classroom purposefully for my international students to make sure that they are contributing to the conversation. I think whenever I do that my expectation is clearly set out and then that promotes more inclusivity in the classroom. I do find that strategy has worked well for me and that's something I brought from teaching high school.

Inclusivity is both possible and inevitable in the FYC program. Maria values her multilingual position has used it to create a trusting relationship with her students and a potential safe space to be effectively engaged with these linguistically diverse students in offering them tools to overcome stumbling blocks,

> My international students have taken advantage of one-on-one-conferencing as some of them will come to see me because they feel that doing so will enable them they to accomplish the objectives of the units better. Towards the end they are able to articulate ideas, that they might not have been able to in the beginning.

This gradual development in having a better grasp of writing also echoes in Canagarajah's writings (2016), "Dialogicality also helps in writing practice" (p. 267). In this regard, Weinstein and Schwartzs' (1979) perspective of inclusivity can shed some light on the possibility of inclusion, "A teacher is incapable of choosing the effective world for his student if he cannot experience the students' needs from the standpoint of student and teacher. Inclusion means just such ability" (p.206).Such initiative needs to be evoked not only at the programmatic level but in the broader context of the institutional system.

The fourth theme, *Aspects of translingualism are acknowledged though instructors are not certain about implementation in practice,* that emerged from the interview with Maria is aligned with the fact is that multilinguals do adopt strategies during conversations with other multilinguals and native speakers of English and constantly negotiate differences to make the communication meaningful. In the context of writing, the research in finding this fact is relatively new although additional initiative is ongoing. Studies do show that negotiations in spoken conversations by multilingual writers also appear in the written context but they use

forms and conventions differently from native speakers of English (Canagarajah, 2009; Olson, 2013). This reality is also reflected in the frustrations that Maria found among her colleagues as a missing piece,

> They are excellent academics that are published, so I do respect what they have to say and their concern is that this student isn't able to produce something coherent. There are so many spelling and grammar errors that prevents readers from understanding.

In response to this issue, Maria thinks change can happen if FYC instructors consider accounting for multilingual writers' needs and recognize their differences instead of expecting them to conform to the codes and conventions of standard Edited American English(SEAE),

> I wish these instructors could shift their perceptions and have an awareness that a problem with grammar is something that is manageable and workable and could be a work-in-progress throughout the semester or throughout the student's career as a undergraduate. It would be better if the instructor sees something not as a failure but as something that could be addressed throughout the semester and talk to the student and let them know this is something they could work on not only for that semester but for their entire career.

In order to make the change of this mind-set of "correctness," the initiative of negotiations needs to happen not only among the monolingual instructors, but in the entire institutional system. It is observed in many studies that multilinguals invest effort to adopt the codes and conventions practiced in a new academic, which should be viewed as a willingness to negotiate. Multilingual do perceive their language use as 'peculiar' as they receive similar critiques from monolinguals. Perhaps a concept of *emancipatory pedagogy,* which creates an inclusive atmosphere that recognize and acknowledge differences in English and adopts a translingual approach could help (Horner, 2013).

The fifth theme, *Training for teaching composition to non-native writers of English is inadequate,* that emerged from the interview with Maria who reflected on her four years of experience teaching mainstream FYC courses She voiced a similar concern that echoed her

monolingual counterparts- that little attempt is made in addressing the issues or needs of international students with multiple and diverse language backgrounds in the FYC writing classrooms. And in terms of the changes, if employed in her four years of her teaching FYC, Maria added more to her opinion that ascertained the urgency of promoting awareness among the administrators and instructors to inquire the pedagogical theory, practice, and curriculum in addressing international multilingual students' needs.

It appears that the common issue concerning the lack of professional preparation programs that intersects throughout the findings of this study is also found in the study that investigated the writing teacher's perceptions of the presence and needs of second language writers (Matsuda et al., 2013). In line with the urgency stated by the researchers in their institutional case study, the FYC instructors, both monolingual and multilingual have similarly expressed that writing program administrators need to be more cognizant of the growing presence and needs of international multilingual students enrolled in FYC writing courses. Drawing attention to this pressing issue, Maria shared her perspective that the opportunity to learn from the multilingual writing experts with pedagogical experiences and insights rather than the instructors of the remedial English courses could build more awareness among the instructors in implementing instructional strategies into their curriculum.

Therefore, in light of this discussion, it can be inferred that writing program administrators may want to rethink, reassess, and restructure program policies that are geared towards to providing resources to FYC instructors. These instructors want to create viable pathways to guide multilingual writers, but they just do not know how.

**Research Question Three**

Themes and sub-themes that emerged from the detailed coding and analysis of the interview data received from three multilingual international students in response to the interview questions are discussed below in relation to the third research question that aimed to investigate the perceptions of multilingual students on the forms and contents in their writing.

The first theme, *Multilingual students experience challenges in FYC in learning writing strategies as that are different from previous experiences***,** highlights the concerns regarding differences in writing strategies that are expressed by two multilingual students who share similarities in educational backgrounds in terms of knowledge and experience of the English language. They are from different countries but from the same continent. Historically, Africa was once comprised of multiple British and French colonies. Being a colonized continent, the African educational system emphasizes language education in both English and French offered during a k-12 education. Both of these students have strong backgrounds in English that have been developed throughout their academic experiences in their own countries. Moreover, they also had the opportunity to be placed in a prestigious international Baccalaureate (IB) program on the basis of merit as measured by performance on a national standardized test.

The issue regarding the writing strategies identified in developing writing skills in the FYC Comp II class that Sam attributed to the differences in pedagogical strategies between the two education systems is not based on the difficulty of using English as a language. Instead, these experiences are indicative of how essential it is for international students to re-conceptualize their writing strategies to re-learn writing in a way that meets the criteria and expectations of the new academic context. If a student with high proficiency and competency in English is placed in Comp II instead of Comp I, still struggles to find strategies to organize ideas,

then a contextual change should be considered instead of the student's struggles with standard American academic writing. This issue also needs to be viewed from a standpoint of pedagogical practice that needs to be reconfigured in order to strategically address the issues in a way that comprehends the apparent differences in multilingual students' learning.

Sam viewed the writing process in FYC classes from a problem-solving approach as the assignment required ones to think in a different way and to have both a grasp of the concept and ability to analyze the materials. John, the other participant, who was from Kenya and also had experiences being in the IB program in Norway, agreed with Sam and stated, "the mode of analysis is different here" as it pertains to students to analyzing materials to develop their own understanding. While the process of writing creates some pressure as it can seem to students that they are relearning both the thinking and writing process, they began to realize the differences throughout the course as they adopt and apply the new strategies to solve the new kinds of problems. Such an initiative indicates how multilingual students adopt the modes of negotiations by applying strategies to redefine their learning differences.

In this regard, the two FYC instructors, one monolingual and one multilingual, had distinct perceptions that their multilingual students were struggling to write the essay to conform to the writing structure in the composition writing class in the US. Their approaches in recognizing and assuring these students of their capacity in writing and guiding them to comprehend the construct of the audience of academic community can be viewed as adopting balanced approaches to move the multilingual writers towards an institutional structure. There does not seem to be anything wrong with this approach as it is also a part of the process of negotiation, and it creates an avenue to shift thinking to pedagogical emancipation. Ultimately,

this approach can be discussed critically from both the pedagogical and programmatic standpoints.

The second theme, *Multilingual students view writing structure and process in FYC more contextual and research-based,* is reflected in the experience that was shared by Hapa, the Saudi Arabian student who seemed not to experience much struggle in adopting new strategies as the African students. His experience can be attributed to his familiarity with the American writing structure that he received in a ten month-long training program sponsored by a petroleum company. The instructional approaches and writing structures in that training program were similar to that of FYC and seemed not to create conflicts as he approached the writing assignments in the composition class in the U.S. Therefore, it can be inferred, if that being proficient and competent in English can not necessarily be viewed as resources as the familiarity with the writing structure practiced in the U.S. academic system can be facilitating for multilingual students in learning the writing process. On the other hand, unfamiliarity with the writing structure can be challenging for multilingual students as they are required to rethink the process of writing that is distinctively different than theirs.

Different ways of thinking and writing that manifests in multilingual writing can be attributed to differences in academic experience in which various students' knowledge of English language and writing has been structured. Drawing back from Hapa's experience-he never heard the term 'essay' or wrote any in high school, but became conditioned with the American structure of writing. He learned to follow conventions and codes that he learned from an American instructor while in the training program. Whereas, on the other end of the spectrum, both Sam and John experienced challenges in aligning and accommodating their strategies to meet the criteria of the essay that were perceived different from their understanding of writing

and using language. Negotiation strategies were employed throughout the process to make meaningful communication and as John stated, “I’m thinking what the reader is expecting out of me rather than just what I want to express. So, I tailor-make my composition to specifically fit those criteria.” Both scenarios regarding the differences between the writing processes and structures experienced by multilingual students can be attributed to the pedagogical approaches that could influence differently their approaches and strategies of writing.

Differences in multilingual writing can be viewed from a wide array of perspectives, but the approaches and strategies shared by multilingual students in this study are indicative of the negotiation strategies that are actively employed by them. One of the strategies that has been voiced by the multilingual participants in this study is the difference embedded in the writing structure in the FYC course which constitutes the ‘method of delivering ideas’ as Sam mentioned and the ‘use of vocabulary,’ as John discussed. The latter construct, which seems to be at the junction of structure and rhetoric, should not be looked at merely from the notion of lack of vocabulary as it appears in the multilingual students’ perceptions of language use in this study.

For example, the feedback that John received on his choices of vocabulary as later discussed, **“**I was told my language was much better, if you used vocabulary or synonyms that are not commonly used or if you use language that is bit at a higher level than your conversational level” stressed changes to be made in his writing to meet the purpose of communicating messages to the readers in the American academic contexts. It is quite intriguing how multilingual writers challenge themselves to bring their resources to the forefront to enhance their capability through continual adjustments. The reality is that their linguistic choices are different, and it is important to understand that these differences are due to contextual differences where English was likely not used as interactively as in the US context. Perhaps

pedagogical approaches should be practiced more pragmatically to help multilingual students understand the rhetorical purpose of using language and organizing ideas as they make decisions in their writing.

Once again, the differences in pedagogical approaches play crucial roles in multilingual students' differences in approaching writing. For example, it appears in the Saudi Arabian student's mind as he draws differences between the training program and FYC. In his view, the FYC writing structure seems more challenging as it provides more flexibility and autonomy in developing writing. He perceives the structure of writing as more demanding in the company's training program as they were not allowed to quote other's ideas as they are in FYC, but only build on their own ideas and values. Therefore, pedagogical decisions can play critical roles to help create awareness in multilingual writers of the rhetorical purpose and situation by paving the path for them as they try to understand how the process of writing varies as contexts change.

As it turns out the aspects of such strategies, structure, and process as applied are unique in their own way but nevertheless fall under the differences multilingual students experience in FYC writing classes in U.S. academic institutions. In light of these differences, one very important point needs to be brought to the forefront of the discussion, multilingual students should not and cannot be generalized as their differences are not only confined to the differences of their first languages other than English, but also their academic, social, cultural, ideological, and political backgrounds. In this regard, it is also essential to understand that multilingual students are unique individuals. They differ in their personalities and beliefs, which manifests in how they apply strategies as they engage in the *process of writing* in FYC classes.

In this study, it is revealed that multilingual students perceive as different the process of writing that can be attributed to the professional path they are pursuing in a U.S. university. As Sam, a chemical engineering major, explains,

> So, when I step into the class, and my professor says, 'go outside, find a generic issue, think anything that is like a problem,' I think it is a more logical process of learning and writing. Writing is more contextual.

Here, she had to invest enormous effort to grapple with the concept of a different way of writing but views the process as 'active' rather than obtaining knowledge passively skimming through Shakespeare, Shelley, and so on. Echoing Sam, John, though with a different IB experience in Norway that was focused not only on gaining literary knowledge, but also on contextual literacy, agreed with such freedom of expressions and ideas. The first assignment (see p. 45 )in Eng-1213 focused on encouraging students to explore public issues and investigate underlying reasons promote autonomy by taking ownership in their learning process and provides scope to all students, specifically multilingual students, to re-conceptualize writing from a multidimensional perspective.

Hapa, the Saudi Arabian student, appreciated the writing process in the training program as he believes that prepared him to understand and adopt research strategies in the writing process in the FYC writing class. As a petroleum engineering major, he finds the recurring process that engages in writing multiple drafts, revising, reviewing, providing and receiving feedback beneficial to his professional endeavor. Moreover, Hapa also began to see the value of the rhetorical aspect of writing as he was trying to grasp the concept of argument and counterargument when he was developing an argumentative paper that was required to present opinions by not being biased.

All three multilingual students in this study are from both similar and different backgrounds, and at different levels they reported that they benefited from their multilingual instructor as initiative was taken to understand and address the difficulties they were experiencing in understanding academic language in different academic contexts. In this regard, it needs to be noted that the experience shared by multilingual instructor in helping international students in class was meaningful when connections in linguistic similarity were able to be made with different students. It is also worthwhile to mention here that a few monolingual instructors also took initiatives to attend to the varied range of problems their multilingual students were facing when grasping the differences in structure and process of writing as practiced in FYC writing classes. I noted commonalities within and an intersection of perspectives with regard to the pedagogical practices and insights.

The third theme, *Multilingual students perceive of one-on-one conferencing with instructor as the most effective method*, highlights the importance of interaction with their instructors in a one-on-one setting that is valued by all three international multilingual FYC students. Sam strongly believed the face-to-face interaction with her instructor allowed her to discuss issues that were provided in the written form as comments on the paper and helped greatly in understanding clearly what was expected of her in order to structure the essay and convey ideas meaningfully. She expressed her anxiety after receiving feedback on her first paper, "my first paper was just sea of red."

Similarly, both John and Hapa agreed with Sam regarding the open discussion that facilitated their understanding in certain aspects of writing related to the use of language and the concept of developing writing for a specific genre they were struggling with. It seems one-on-one conferencing helped create a safe space for these multilingual students to engage in open

dialogue that allowed them to discuss the constraints of writing such as the rhetorical aspect of writing which seems more challenging.

It is not necessarily the case that the differences in multilingual writing can always be viewed as correct or 'resources' from Canagarajah's (2010) translingual approach and in Olson's (2013) view,

> When I read and respond to texts , having a more open mind doesn't mean that I take all choices made in a writer's text as unquestionable, but as available for dialogue about the rhetorical value of one choice over another given the enablements and constraints of particular situations.(p. 127)

Regarding the value of *one-on-one conferencing*, one interesting fact is that students are often suggested and sometimes strictly instructed to consult with the tutors at the writing center, especially to resolve issues with mechanics and grammar rules to meet as it is one of the criteria to be evaluated their writing. While 'grammar' may sound as if it is a surface issue, improper use of grammar may skew or complicate the intended meaning. The point that I try to make here is that if the one-to-one interaction at the writing center setting is believed to be benefiting the international multilingual students, then one-on-one conferencing with the classroom instructor can create an impetus for these students to take full advantage of this effective pedagogical approach. Interactions between instructors and students create a collaborative space that initiates dialogicality (Canagarajah, 2016), which drives students' focus on content, which they weave in writing through understanding the new composing process in the FYC context.

The subtheme, *Peer feedback from native speakers is not viewed as constructive to multilingual*, that emerged from the interview with multilingual students reflected on the beneficial aspect of *peer feedback*. The majority of the students in FYC such are native writers of English (NWE). Though, it can be a discovery for multilingual students that NSEs may not necessarily be superb writers. As discussed by the Saudi Arabian student,

> I peer-reviewed my classmate's essay who was a native speaker and I noticed some grammatical mistakes in that paper. I think I can relate to these mistakes because I had a Korean language instructor whose first language was not English and it was easier for him to address those small differences or nuances that shouldn't be there. Native speakers learn their language naturally so it is possible that they sometimes do not notice their mistakes.

Indeed, reality often conflicts with assumptions. My own experience as a writing center consultant working with international multilingual students is a testament to this assumption native speaker of English are beyond making grammatical mistakes in their writing. First language speakers of English develop a perception of the language by learning the language in a culture where it is autonomously spoken and communicated on an everyday basis through a multiplicity of mediums.

The fourth theme, *Multilingual students negotiate differences in writing processes and strategies by adopting forms and contents as suggested, but face challenges in the process of relearning***,** reflects on multilingual students' experiences in regard to initiatives to understand the writing process and practice in FYC. Instructor's feedbacks, suggestions, and resources available on campus are viewed important but challenging too in the process of negotiating differences and strategies in the process of learning writing processes. Sam shared her experiences in regard to initiatives she took to understand the writing process,

> From the sea of red, I realized that I had to put more work into it, because I didn't know how to meet the standards. So, I went to the writing center, I took peer review seriously, I talked about the essay before I handed that to her. I started going through the process- I would write the first draft, then I would critique myself, then I would write the second draft, would take it to the writing center, and they would critique it, and then I would write the third draft, then take it to my professor and she would critique it and then I would write the fourth and final draft. And I valued that process because I wanted to have 'A,' so I realized I have to do 'A' work.

Regarding Sam's mission to decode the process of writing, it can be inferred that international students' writing practice can take a different direction as they go through the

process by adopting numerous strategies to develop and amplify their writing capacities. Students learn to zero in on their limitations and strengths by pinpointing on multiple aspects of writing. Specifically, they begin to develop the concept of differences between form and content and how these aspects affect the meaning of writing they intend to communicate with readers. In a larger sense, they also start to develop an awareness of the broader audience and associated rhetorical situation as the ultimate goal of the writing piece that they are invested in is to able to convey their messages. Keeping all these aspects in mind as they consistently advance towards communicating purposefully and meaningfully with the academic community, they constantly negotiate between the resources they brought with them and the new resources that they have been introduced to.

I view this process as a negotiation between the strategies and processes of writing as they constantly interpret new modes of analysis, new genres of writing, the new concept of rhetorical awareness, and needless to say, various linguistic differences. In Canagarjah's view (2016), "the composition of each class with its own mix of multilingual students from varying backgrounds is resourceful for translingual negotiations" (p.68).

The perspectives that surfaced in this study show that form and content commingle as instructors show an intention to negotiate pedagogical philosophies and offer strategies to multilingual students which would offer them spaces to accept the challenges of learning a new process of writing, use those creatively, and making a connection. The moral of this discussion is that negotiations need both sides to be willing to solve problems and resolve long-lasting issues. Taking that into the context of FYC, all actors that are involved at multiple levels, from the institution to the department to the program to the classrooms need to recognize the differences

that these multilingual students from various backgrounds bring to the U.S. academic landscape and take initiative to delve deep into the new reality.

The fifth theme, *Multilingual students regard culture as playing a significant role in the differences and methods of writing as practiced around the world***,** sheds light on concepts of culture that are portrayed in this study play a critical role in shaping and developing one's use of language. This concept can be interpreted as the commonalities and variations that multilingual students possess can be attributed eclectically to their distinctively different cultures, languages, and personalities. I want to emphasize Sam's view of culture and language that can be interpreted from a standpoint of inclusivity,

> I like to see them wanting to step out of the idea of American exceptionalism. I think it would be beneficial if they did want to step out of that and realize English as a language has several diasporas all over the world. English is not same all over the world, if we take a global look at the world, it would be helpful. I do feel like it would bridge the gap.

Inclusivity requires a change in the attitude and mind-set that perpetuates the concept of the sole ownership of English. We must realize the reality of the globalized world where English is viewed as a link among the speakers of English around the world, who do not necessarily speak only in English and are identified as multilinguals with the rich repertoires of many other languages. Their understanding of the world is not only confined to the physical space they live in, but their worldviews are constructed with many other worlds in their surroundings. Putting this concept into the pedagogical context, it can be suggested in the context of this study that the pedagogical philosophy needs to be reconceptualized and reconstructed to understand multilingual students' differences holistically not just linguistically, develop awareness of their presence, and address the various nature of their needs to create a pathway for them to become meaningfully connected through their writing.

## Insights

### Classroom Observations

Classroom observations gave me the opportunity to understand the dynamics with regard to the interaction and communication of international multilingual students with their peers, both native and non-native speakers of English (NSE) counterparts. These observations in two back-to- back English-1113 classes allowed me to understand the instructor's deployment of instructional strategies to engage students in spontaneous interactions and conversations with their peers. Assignment 4 (see p. 44), the last of the four assignments, was designed to engage students in reflecting on the first three assignments (see p. 44 ) throughout the course.

The instructor designed the lesson plans with guiding questions to prompt group discussions that allowed students to think critically on the prior experiences and previous assignments. Students seemed to value the concepts developed through the course and with the autonomy in deciding on the topic for presentation and paper. The process of engaging in these tasks seemed to be effective for all students, but benefitting multilingual students with opportunities of active participations in meaningful interactions and productive conversations with their peers by creating a positive atmosphere and providing an open space. In light of this finding, it can also be suggested that the discussions with the peers might be complicating and amplifying their existing knowledge and perspectives on subject matters through raising curiosity and generating critical questions.

I observed that the instructor's guiding questions in group discussion allowed students from diverse linguistic and cultural backgrounds to initiate conversations to share and learn the opinions, ideas, and worldviews from multiple perspectives. Yet, multilingual students found

that *Peer feedback from native speakers is not viewed as constructive.* Multilingual students often perceived that the feedback received from Native English speakers was preferable to feedback from their multilingual peers.

Throughout observations, I found that classroom-based discussions encouraged students in generating ideas, promoting critical thinking, and engaging in meaningful interactions and discussion with peers. A good rapport existed among instructors and multilingual students through the open, responsive, and encouraging interactions and discussions that occurred at different phases of the classroom activities. The positive atmosphere created and encouraged by instructors, in general, was in line with the philosophy of dialogic pedagogy. There was a strong sense that instructors wanted to promote a positive learning environment and build trust. Such a stance seems well aligned with constructionism.

**Follow-up Interview**

Multimodal composition opens a new possibility and platform for multilingual students as it provides them autonomy and a new medium for them to be expressive and creative in sharing their ideas and thoughts. As Maria experienced with her international students, that they feel less apprehension and more freedom to express abstract concepts compared to the pressure and anxiety they experience while they are obliged to meet the criteria of standard English in academic writing. Different modes of visuals allow them to realize their agency as a writer, take the ownership of writing, and focusing more on crafting meaningful contents rather than being primarily with the standard rules of grammar and usages in English.

If the ultimate goal of the FYC program is to provide resources for international students to become effective writers, they should be allowed a space where they can show their

understanding of critical concepts using a multiplicity of modes in addition to the channel of academic writing. By considering the prospects of multimodality that allow multilingual writers a space to realize positive experiences in expressing their ideas and understanding, further initiative can be taken to make changes in pedagogical practices and approaches.

**Complexities of Teaching College Composition**

Teaching writing to first-year undergraduate students in First-year composition (FYC) class, regardless of native and non-native writers of English (NNWE), is challenging as it surfaced on in this study throughout the responses from both FYC monolingual and multilingual instructors. Teaching writing to non-native writers of English (NNWE) is not easy. There is an urgency to develop pedagogical strategies for NNWE in English and to acknowledging their writerly identity and agency by recognizing distinctive differences in their writing.

It is apparent in the first theme, *Language differences between native and non-native writers of English,* emerged across both monolingual and multilingual instructors, that instructors are well-cognizant of problems, grammatical and syntactical, pervasive in the writing of their non-native writers of English (NNWE). They also shed light on the stylistic aspects of writing that vary from those of native writers. Instructors drew attention to the occasional word-choices of native writers of English that seemed to be *interesting* to them. The issues observed in the writings of non-native writers are attributed to a host of wide-ranging factors from multilingual students' diverse linguistic, cultural, and academic backgrounds to their command and proficiency in English. The issue of fluency appeared in both native and non-native writers' writing concerning *word-choice.* Syntactical aspects concerning word-choices, structuring sentences by logically arranging parts of speech, and grammatical mistakes are pervasive in

multilingual writing. In conjunction, the rhetorical aspects that constitute the quality and contents to make meaningful connections between writers and readers heighten the communicative road-blocks of miscomprehensions, tensions, struggles, and frustrations in multilingual writing.

In effect, such variables complicate the process of conveying and receiving intended meanings for an academic audience. These same variables lead to an uncertainty in developing and improving writing, which is absolutely essential in a student surviving any academic journey pursued in U.S. academic institutions. High stakes standardized tests, such as the GRE, remain performance-based evaluations in which academic English is venerated. Thus, the tug of correctness remains embedded in writing courses and keeps instructors conscious about their responsibility and accountability for student success in these well-established terms.

As long as standardized exams, such as the TOEFL and GRE serve as gatekeepers into higher education, the academic system unequivocally demands acute awareness of delivering writing with correct grammar and standard English. In reality, such gatekeeper constructs are built into most academic systems, not only in the American higher education system, but also in global contexts. This reality is evident in one of the instructor's opinion,

> I feel like I have some idealistic view like this is impressive, but also as a teacher it's my job also to help students prepare students for the conventions of academia and in the academic writing.

In light of discussions generated from insights gained from the theme that highlighted the multiplicity of issues concerning the use of English of multilingual writers, FYC instructors seemed to be wandering around in a grey zone, wanting to assess a piece of writing based upon content while knowing that form would carry a momentous weight as students attempt to navigate a future in higher education. To address the issues that can assuage the tensions and

dismantle the thresholds experienced by both instructors and international multilingual students in reaching a consensus of meaning, FYC instructors need to balance contradictory goals.

Although the intentionality to value ideas and meaning over grammar is apparent and compelling, improper use of grammar, it must be noted, can be an obstacle in skewing intended meaning. This awareness of multilingual students' distinctive use of grammar that is different than their native counterparts and might be used in re-visioning multidimensionality in pedagogical practices. Such an approach might be intentional in investigating the underlying reasons for the application of English differently and trying to use these differences as leverage for more powerful writing. Unpacking the complex factors of multilingual writers' identity and agency, an amalgamation of cultural, linguistic, and academic knowledge and experiences that are manifested in their writings would seem to be necessary first step. In a word, disregarding multilingual writers' distinctive differences in writings are not value-free, as Olson has noted (2013).

In spite of their lesser focus on grammar or form and intentionality to value the ideas in the content, FYC instructors were not much in the positions of advantage in knowing multilingual students as individuals and, in particular, understanding the assumed peculiarities of their writings. However, they could act as agents of change by stressing cultural and holistic perspectives. Truth be told, grammar cannot be taught or learnt in isolation and that is why the clamoring over multilingual writing continues without much clear direction on the horizon. Trimbur and Horner (2002) note that the field provides, "crucial opportunities for rethinking writing in the academy and elsewhere: [to provide] spaces and times for students and [tutors] both to rethink what academic work might mean and be" (p. 621).

Instructors are in powerful position to bring a broad diversity of global perspectives into play. They might consider the advantages of creating possible synergies and new modes of composition rather than trying to fit new realities into old boxes. Translingualism calls for a shift in pedagogical practices to recognize the multidimensionality of writing by allowing a multilingual writer a space to bring a distinctive voice, agency, and identity to the fore. Needless to say, such a shift necessitates a change in the institutional policy that perpetuates that only one standard form of universal English is acceptable, as measured by standardized examinations.

Translingualism makes a compelling case for considering the communicative component of language rather than its standardization. Translingualism is rooted in negotiation, the key force that empowers the values of both sides. As Canagarajah (2010) noted, "We should make students sensitive to the dominant conventions in each rhetorical contexts" and "we must also teach them to critically engage" (p. 177).

In the context of first-year composition negotiation is expected to be realized through accommodations from both instructors and multilingual students. Instructors in this study are enthusiastic enough to be willing to view the differences not as *deficits* but as *resources* by valuing a student's critical and creative strength in writing, influenced by the years of practice in the contexts they were situated. Similarly, multilinguals also need to have the awareness of their audiences, who are both monolingual and multilingual, as they desire to be understood and accepted by both. This mentality of negotiation is reflected in one of the instructor's interaction with her multilingual student,

> You don't need to completely change your writing style and that's not what I am asking you to do. I'm asking you to reconsider your audience a little bit more –what kind of terms are you going to change, what kind of concepts you would develop more critically?"

Change is strongly supported by the majority of FYC instructors, monolingual and multilingual, as they opine that shifts in mind-set and institutional discourse are necessary. The lack of adequate training in addressing international multilingual students' needs and issues in writing is another key theme: "*Training for teaching composition to non-native writers of English is inadequate.*" One instructor noted:

> In a first-year composition program the majority of instructors are graduate teaching assistants who are in very first years of teaching writing. It's important to orient them to teaching international students and theories around teaching international student writing.

It is important to recognize the identity of these linguistically diverse students, specifically the international multilingual students who are from countries where English is learned simultaneously with their native languages or as a second or third language. In some countries like China, Korea, and Saudi Arabia, English is rarely used in everyday life, except in academic institutions at a particular level to a limited degree. In light of this reality, I find it problematic to label all multilingual students as English as a Second Language (ESL) learners in higher academic institutions in the United States, where the reality is that even chronologically English could not be their second language.

The placement system currently categorizes a linguistically heterogeneous population into only two sections-mainstream and international sections also known as ESL (Chaudhuri, 2012). According to Olson (2013), a deficit model of second language learning, the notion of first language interference in second language learning is still prevalent in most institutions of higher education. The scholar writes, "Within composition and writing center conversations, multilingual writers are primarily characterized from a deficit model, which obscures a view of their language varieties and interlanguage as a resource" (p. 12).

One reason for setting this premise is it would not be logical to group multilingual students monolithically as they are far from akin to an enormous quilt with countless patches of prints, patterns, and colors. One instructor explained:

> Socially, as we become more and more connected, we are going to see more and more international students. You have to be more accommodating and more accepting of differences I think the university would be a much more friendly place, and we would have a lot less issues with students if we were more accepting of difference

From all indications (Olson, 2013; Williams, 1995), most international FYC students who come to writing centers to have their writing corrected, are also simultaneously enrolled in mainstream FYC courses. Each individual's problems can be unique and distinct, regardless of the language orientation. Brandt (1994) emphasized the differences in cultural attitudes and contextual circumstances that could influence writing literacy.

**Limitations of the Study**

The major limitation of this study is a limited sample of six monolingual FYC instructors, one multilingual instructor, and three international multilingual students. Though, the monolingual instructors represented multiple disciplines and various levels of teaching experiences, only one multilingual FYC instructor participated in this study. More multilingual instructors with diverse teaching experiences, linguistic, and cultural backgrounds could provide perspectives and insights from a broader spectrum. In addition, international multilingual students are represented only from countries in Africa and Saudi Arabia. Since this research aimed to understand their experiences in FYC writing courses regarding their use of English, students with diverse countries could enrich this study with a wider range of experiences in English in versatile contexts. Another shortcoming is the lack of analysis of graded papers by the

FYC instructors as that could provide an opportunity to analyze how their grading philosophy is aligned to their strategies in evaluating multilingual writing. Furthermore, including writing center consultants in a future study should be given a consideration as they may have even more experience and knowledge in working with international multilingual students. Therefore, in the future, a larger and diverse group of participants could contribute additional perspectives from in exploring the intricacies and innate issues ingrained in the dynamics of the structure of the FYC program that defines the parameters of academic writing.

**Implications for Further Research**

Findings of this study may not be generalized to other contexts of First-year Composition (FYC) programs as this study was an initiative to understand the experiences of FYC instructors, both monolingual and multilingual, and their international multilingual students enrolled in mainstream FYC courses in relation to teaching and learning language and writing in Southwest university, located in the Southwestern part of U.S. If FYC is viewed as a massive map, the context of this study is barely a tiny spot on that. Nevertheless, this fact does not necessarily strike out the insights obtained from this study in regard to the multilingual writers' language differences and how those differences can be re-conceptualized and re-viewed as 'resources' instead of 'errors,' on the basis of the prevailing notion of standard edited American English (SEAE). Therefore, in order to amplify the conceptual understanding of the issues derived and discussed in light of the experiences of these group of participants, similar studies can be replicated in FYC writing programs in this country's other higher academic institutions.

The fact of the matter is that multilingual writers think differently and thus write differently. This concept has been voiced by the participants in this study across the three groups,

but the differences cannot be generalized or attributed to a single common factor. Viewed from that sense, the possibility is this study may offer broader insights into an implementation of emancipatory pedagogy that can promote the ideas of translingualism which recognizes and acknowledges the linguistic differences of multilingual writers.

Sapir and Whorfs' theory of Linguistic Relativity and Determinism (Kay &Hampton, 1984; Arnold, 1986) seems to be not so logical and realistic and practical as they tried to claim that human minds are conditioned to think according to the way their linguistic structure is designed, or to fit into the linguistic structure. Such a notion questions an individual's ability to think, their world-views or view-points change as the contexts change that range widely from social to cultural to political to economic. These changes are intertwined or concurrent with the changes that are in line with pragmatic purposes that are not predictable, not inevitable, not obvious thus those changes are manifested in the discourse or use of language throughout constant or continual negotiations. In effect, this process of negotiations engages one in re-adopting views, acknowledging or recognizing values, re-evaluating beliefs, reconsidering contexts. Sapir and Whorf's conception of cognitive aspect in the relationship between language and thought that puts linguistic structure first, thoughts later does not support the fluidity of language, freedom of thoughts rather questions human's intelligibility, intellectualism and imprisons individuals into the linguistic boundary as Kellman (2000) points out, "If , according to the Sapir-Whorf thesis , we are epistemological prisoners of the limited possibilities inherent in the languages we speak, then multilingualism is emancipation" (p. 36).

At the outset, seemingly, Sapir and Whorf accounted only the native speakers of English as superior than the interlocuters or speakers of other languages thus ranking ' English' a language of privilege and prestige as the other languages did not get the scope and status of

being published, being communicated with others. This notion can be viewed justified from the monolingualistic assumption, ideology, and standpoint. Hereby, the very honest or innocent question is to be raised with the multilingual speakers' cognitive process of thinking if viewed from Sapir and Whorf's theory in regard to individual's selection of linguistic structures prior to their thinking process. How many languages then they think in? How would they assemble their thoughts in multiple languages they use? This question leads to the upcoming discussion on the translingualism, the long-practiced language phenomena in place with the multilinguals all around the world.

**Researcher's Concluding Thoughts**

The long-held notion of adopting "Standard English" in U.S. academic institution that is both explicitly and implicitly embedded in the psyche of these institutions' writing centers and composition classrooms not only challenges the international multilingual students' identity as a person and as a writer but places unnecessary obstacles in their academic journey. Although English is not the official language of the U.S, it is a well-known fact that writing instruction in an English-speaking nation such as U.S. should is in English. This fact is clearly manifested in the country's academic institutions in all levels from pre-kindergarten to grade schools to post-secondary to graduate schools. Politicians and educational policymakers are relentlessly making the case that proficiency and competency in English language is essential and the instrumental key to academic, professional, and personal success. For many non-native writers of English (NNWE) , who keep landing at the shore of this land of opportunity and ambitiously invest their hopes, dreams, and energy in the pursuit of fulfilling and realizing all these possible

successes in both the academic and professional contexts, the episodic journey begins in the context of first-year composition(FYC) classroom.

As the field of second language writing is shifting from disciplinary to interdisciplinary to transdisciplinary (Matsuda, 2013) and emerging as multilingual writing with a new identity, thereby weakening the modernist conception of disciplinarity that aims for discrete solutions to this multifaceted issue-driven field, studies and research also tend to shift focus from 'writing' to 'writers,' as they are becoming increasingly diverse key components in the equation. Casanave (2012) points out, "L2 writing as a field is as much about people who write (including ourselves) as it is about text" (p. 297).While the focus of this research is to address the issues international multilingual students experience in first-year composition (FYC) classrooms as they are introduced to a North American higher education system, critical research in re-constructing the current system should be furthered. Exploring those diverse writers and their language diversity could raise the possibility of anticipated change at both institutional and programmatic levels.

Throughout my research, I intended to capture a diversity of perspectives through the lens of multilingual writers representing a multitude of linguistic, geographical, academic contexts along with monolingual and multilingual teachers of writing who also have a diverse range of academic, teaching, and linguistic experiences and knowledge. Through semi-structured interviews that fostered a space for critical but spontaneous discussion and open dialogue.

The purpose of my research was to propose to adopt a negotiated mentality rather than continuing to adhere to the norm of Standard Academic English. In my view, it is possible to make a shift in the set mindset of "taken for granted mentality" to promote a better and diverse global community by recognizing the negotiation strategies adopted by the international multilingual community in their writing. Adopting a new mentality requires us to adopt

negotiation strategies to view and value the language differences of international multilingual writers. My goal is to bring productive growth to the scholarly community by creating a pathway for a creative use of a rich and diverse repertoire of language and experiences. Most importantly, in my opinion and also from the perspectives of my research participants, I anticipate institutional change is possible in embracing an *emancipatory pedagogy* that appreciates the inclusivity and multiplicity.

Last Word: Maybe we do not want to make assumptions based on our own perceptions. We need to acknowledge the differences of others as differences are relative to the individual, we all as individuals are different and that makes us who we are.

*So, can we think about writers without borders?*

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