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Introduction

Transnational Migration and Multilingual Writing

My inquiry into multilingual writing in entanglements builds on research that unravels the complex relationship between transnational individuals' semiotic repertoires, literacy practices, and intersecting global and local forces that shape the exigencies and contours of migration. Broadly, such scholarship has argued that situated literacy activities of transnational individuals cannot be understood in isolation from other forms of cultural, geographic, and imaginary forms of border crossing, which provide such individuals with experiential and linguistic resources and allow them to develop transnational funds of knowledge (Lam & Christiansen, 2022; Karimzad & Catedral, 2021; Guerra, 1998; Medina, 2010; Sanchez, 2007; Skerrett, 2012). As transnational migrants negotiate myriad academic, social, and career challenges, they draw on shifting semiotic repertoires and literacy and identity resources developed in spaces that span multiple geographical territories (Lam & Warriner, 2012; Lorimer Leonard, 2017; Sarroub, 2002; Vieira, 2016). Specifically, transnational migratory processes allow migrants to acquire a "bi-focal" lens with which to view their experiences, develop strategies to disrupt meta-narratives, stigmatizing labels, and nefarious politics through which dominant social discourse

portrays migrants, and forge multiple affiliations across transnational networks (Lam & Christiansen, 2022; Suárez-Orozco & Suárez-Orozco, 2001). Transnational migrants mobilize and attune dynamic semiotic repertoires, which encompass wide-ranging print-based, visual, gestural, affective, and imaginary resources to perform, destabilize, and redefine literacies required to meet the new demands of changing social and cultural circumstances (Christiansen, 2017; Yi, 2010; Wang, 2019b). In such accounts, transnational students' multilingual, multimodal, and multisensory repertoires co-evolve with experiential and linguistic resources enabled by and propelling multiple forms of physical, virtual, and imaginary border crossing (Lorimer Leonard, 2015; Rubinstein-Avila, 2007; Vieira, 2019).

In composition studies specifically, scholars have used mobility as a framework to theorize the strategic ways in which multilinguals move textual meaning and attune writing-related dispositions, practices, and knowledge across languages and modalities (Fraiberg, 2010; Gonzales, 2018; Wang, 2019a). Such a view reflects conceptual turns toward languages as practice-based, adaptive, and mutually constitutive linguistic, cultural, and ideological structures. Viewing multilingual writing as sites for embodied, affective, and negotiated rhetorical practice, translingual perspectives recognize language differences as linguistic innovations, highlight language users' agency in working through language ambiguities for strategic gains (Creese & Blackledge, 2010; Horner et al., 2011; Lu & Horner, 2013; Li, 2018) and theorize multilingual writing as coordinated and innovative performance of semiotic repertoires in reaction and resistance to historically inscribed norms (Alvarez, 2018; Li, 2018; Lillis & Curry, 2010).

More specifically, composition scholars have argued that translation, broadly construed, is a core process of all writing, which is always implicated within the traffic of ideas, concepts, symbols, and discourses (Ayash, 2019; Gonzales, 2018; Horner & Tetreault, 2016; Pennycook, 2008). As multilinguals' literacy practices carry intense legal, social, and professional consequences and fulfill important social functions, they are creative interpretations that materialize through the ongoing negotiation of language, rhetorical, and cultural systems and traditions. Composition scholars have argued that multilingual writing is a creative process through which meanings are continuously discovered, interpreted, formulated, and mobilized across languages and rhetorical situations (Lu, 2006; Schor, 1986). Indeed, multilingual writing, like any act of writing, is an inevitable outcome of reworking historically developed practices and meanings because each uptake of a word, phrase,

or language emerges from ongoing attempts to populate historical meanings with new intentions and modifications. Such a revised view of translation as rhetorical practice enables multilingual and monolingual writers to view language as dynamic, fluid, and negotiable (Ayash, 2019). Yet the intense physical, emotional, and intellectual labors entailed in such language work have often remained unseen to multilingual writers who use and benefit from them as well as writing instructors who work with multilingual writers (Wang, 2020).

As multilingual students' literacy lives are complexly intertwined in migratory processes and shifting semiotic repertoires, it becomes necessary to expand our analytical gaze toward the expansive literacy landscape of transnational students, especially their writing extracurricular activities, where multilingual writing vibrates with great energy, often in dynamic connection to forms of academic writing experienced and expected in writing classrooms. An emerging body of research has paid closer attention to the fluid fashion in which writing, reading, and digital literacies continue to connect, cross-fertilize, and engage in contestation across spaces. In writing studies, scholars have explored the intricate connection between self-sponsored literacy practices that take place beyond the writing classroom (Fraiberg, 2017; Gere, 1994; Rounsaville, 2014; Roozen, 2012; Yancey, 2004; Yi & Hirvela, 2010), which expands our understanding of writers' discursive repertoire in connection to the literate landscape they traverse. Digital spaces emerge as an important sphere of the literacy landscape of transnational students, who routinely traverse multiple digital platforms and networks to not only access but also participate in transnational dispersal of news, cultural events, and political advocacy. Transnational students weave together writing technologies and digital tools to engage in globally distributed forms of youth culture, to author and perform identities, and to develop simultaneous affiliations with local and translocal communities of diaspora (Black, 2005; Lam, 2009; Takayoshi, 2015; Wang, 2024). Furthermore, these scholars have examined self-sponsored, digital literacies such as fanfiction, personal, and collaborative writing within and across digitally mediated interest and study groups (Fraiberg & Cui, 2016; Wang, 2017; Zhang-Wu, 2021) to facilitate literacy learning in formal spaces. As these authors and others observe, self-sponsored writing activities create opportunities to practice writing for authentic purposes, in multiple genres, and in service of school writing (Roozen & Erickson, 2017). In these self-sponsored writing spaces, transnational students develop agentive identities and positive relationships with

literacy through collaborative play, constructive peer feedback, and interest-driven writing activities. In documenting the forms and functions of various digital literacies, such research has provided richly nuanced accounts of the multifaceted literacy experiences of transnational students.

Together, writing researchers have grappled with the complex entanglement of semiotic, affective, socioeconomic, geopolitical, and cultural circumstances through which multilingual writing emerges, while calling attention to the strategic and negotiated ways in which transnational students traverse literacy spaces that are deeply implicated with cultural, linguistic, political, and ideological differences. At the core of such work is also attention to a holistic view of multilingual students' semiotic and rhetorical repertoires, which are honed through wide-ranging communicative tasks that are fundamentally mobile, dynamic, and networked across complex assemblages of texts, technologies, brokers, spatiality, and trajectories. While richly textured accounts of transnational students' literacies have extended our understanding of what Jody Shipka calls the "potentials of alternative, hybrid, mixed, and experimental forms of discourse" (Shipka, 2016, p. 3), they are limited in several ways. First, in operating with dichotomous views of social spaces that divide the literate landscape that writers inhabit (e.g., church, social media, classroom), such studies often overlook the simultaneously fluid, frictive, and fixed ways in which literacy practices pass from one person, space, language, and mode to another or the dynamic ways they continue to connect, extend, and give rise to new exigencies for writing (Lorimer Leonard, 2017). In fixing an analytical gaze on specific locales of students' literacy performance, we have yet to unravel the complex ways in which reading, writing, and digital literacies are meshed, reconfigured, and entangled across spaces to fulfill the literacy expectations entailed in multilingual living. Second, such research has often conceived transnational students' literacy practices developed across language, cultural, and rhetorical differences as discrete dimensions of their literacy lives, while overlooking how writing expertise developed in one language and rhetorical tradition might connect with writing-related knowledge and practices acquired in another. As such, current research has yet to arrive at a productive reconciliation of celebratory accounts of multilingual writing as transformative, agentive, and empowering and the plight of such students working to fulfill the literacy expectations of university classrooms. Lastly, as Pamela Takayoshi (2018) has rightly noted, in focusing on the sociality of writing, current research has not adequately examined the messiness of the writing processes of individuals working through, with,

and against ideologically inscribed norms, identity scripts, and power structures. In celebrating multilingual writing as the achievements of agentive and strategic language users, we have yet to fully notice or adequately theorize the messy, indeterminate, and surprising aspects of writing. That is, we have only begun to notice how surprising discoveries, ephemeral encounters, unintended consequences, and unsettling accidents upend ideas and drafts, redirect writing contours, and compel writers to explore new possibilities and forge new relationships through and with writing.

This book is an effort to notice the messy, indeterminate, and surprising aspects of multilingual writing, which I argue to be the exigencies and outcomes of multilingual writers working through differences, in collaboration with others, and toward open articulation of meanings. To do so, I provide fine-grained analysis of the messy, indeterminate, negotiated, and mobile writing processes of two Chinese international student writers. This book-length study of two students' multilingual writing and living builds on careful tracing of their literacies across FYW classrooms, social media, and other significant locales of their natural, cultural, and literacy landscapes, allowing me to enter the backstage scenes of their writing, to follow hidden themes and emerging connections across multiple literacy spheres and spacetimes, and to document the intense intellectual, emotional, and physical labors of writing across differences. This deep dive alerted me to the many unexpected yet productive juxtapositions between ephemeral encounters and their long-lasting effects, delightful and alarming surprises, and unintended detours despite exhaustive plans. I now recognize these juxtapositions, which I initially noticed as methodologically inconvenient accidents, oddities, and anomalies during the research process, as windows into the writers' constant effort to work through the mess of writing labor. They drive and move writing through entanglements, when living and nonliving things (e.g., readers, reviewers, friends, trees, rivers, animals) that otherwise populate the natural and cultural worlds of writers are woven into dynamic and mobile assemblages to provide powerful exigencies for discovering, making, and articulating meaning. To think with mess and surprises, I begin by exploring the improvised, spontaneous aspects of writing labor, which emerges from visceral reactions to ephemeral, fleeting, and chanceful configurations of worlds-in-articulation. Doing so invites me to pay close attention to multilingual writers' organic and haphazard acts of shuttling across languages, genres, and modes as an essential part of navigating capricious, messy, and complex multilingual living. To understand why and how certain ephemeral

encounters achieve lasting emotional, affective, and imaginative impact or gain mobility across languages, modes, and spacetimes, I follow the semiotic threads of memories, sensations, knowledge, and practices accumulated across moments of multilingual writing and living and observe how such threads forge and fork in simultaneously predictable and what Haraway (2016) calls "tentacular" ways to make writing happen.

An Entanglement Perspective for Multilingual Writing Research

My effort to grapple with mess, surprises, and indeterminacy as the outcome of multilingual writers encountering, connecting with, and relating to natural, cultural, and literacy others draws on a long tradition of composition scholarship informed by ecological metaphors developed partially in critique of earlier cognitive models of writing, which often depict the solitary writer immersed in their ideas, isolated from the forces of the social world, and performing codified and unified writing processes. For writing scholars interested in imagining and enacting research in a time when writing flourishes in forms and functions across spaces, metaphors informed by ecological studies usefully guide conceptual and methodological efforts to examine writing as a "complex, diffuse, and messy" phenomenon (Law, 2004, p. 2). That is, an ecological perspective begins with the recognition that how we perceive, comprehend, discover, and articulate meaning simultaneously reacts to and evolves with our environment (Coe, 1975), attends to the complex relationships writers form with readers, texts, and broader social systems of meaning making (Cooper, 1986), and examines writing as distributed, collaborative efforts of networks of writers, readers, texts, and tools acting and interacting in parallel with each other through interrelated, complex, socially constituted systems (Syverson, 1999).

Positioning eco-composition as a site to explore "complex interrelationships between the human activity of writing and all of the conditions of the struggle for existence," Sidney Dobrin argues that how we operate within and against the systems in which we find ourselves "is both a matter of discursive maneuvering and a matter of physical and material positioning, and consequence" (2001, pp. 12–13). Some take an ecological conceptualization of writing to examine the materiality of spaces where writers are situated, noting how the material bodies, structures, and actions are complexly interconnected to enforce normed and raced discursive conventions and to discursively, performatively, and materially shape how writers dwell, labor, and

get evaluated in such spaces (Inoue, 2015). Others extend ecology to examine the expansive and diverse assemblages of cultural, social, technological, disciplinary, and material networks that circulate and interact to shape how and why we write (Mays, 2017). A compelling example of such sociorhetorical ecologies can be found in Anis Bawarshi's discussion of rhetorical genres as powerful ecosystems within which the individual and the social are mutually reproduced (2001). As he illustrates, the genre of the "Patient Medical History Form" plays an important role in mediating the interaction between patient and doctor, enabling socially recognizable identities, inviting typified activities, and invoking ideological constructs of Western notions of medicine that inform how doctors recognize symptoms and devise treatment plans. In efforts to name and theorize writing ecologies, these authors have unraveled the importance of messy relationships in driving the co-evolution of writers, the symbolic and material structures of their environments, and normalized expectations for identities, practices, interactions, and relations. As Weisser and Dobrin suggest (2001), an ecological perspective focuses on the multiplicity of relationships between words, thoughts, writers, readers, material and imaginary spaces, and temporal trajectories, which enable the co-constitutive existence of writing and natural and cultural worlds writers encounter, traverse, and inhabit (p. 2).

Ecological attention to relationships offers a lens to consider writing and rhetoric as intimately related to place, environment, nature, and location. For multilingual writing research, attention to relationships allows us to observe seemingly idiosyncratic writerly choices, such as the translation of a word from Chinese into English or the writer's strategic deployment of a rhetorical strategy resonating across rhetorical traditions as mutually constituted with an expansive universe of material, natural, and cultural systems operating at various scales. Multilingual writing-in-entanglement is fluid, emergent, and transformative because it is a complex system involving "great numbers of parts undergoing a kaleidoscopic array of simultaneous interactions" (Syverson, 1999, p. 3). Ecology therefore provides a lens to get at the fluidity and complexities of writing as a phenomenon rather than the individual writer as a distanced, strategic designer. Ecological entanglement not only allows us to observe the strategic and purposeful ways in which writers formulate relationships, weave semiotic repertoires, and simultaneously enact and shape material and symbolic environments, but also encourages us to notice the spontaneous ways in which relationships, repertoires, and environs coalesce in unexpected ways, invite improvisations, and redirect

contours because writers respond and adapt in reaction to unpredictable, random, and ephemeral forces that ripple through fluid interconnections.

Throughout this book, I build on and extend ecological metaphors by exploring propositions offered by scholarly efforts to think with and about fungi, which are famously collaborative, capricious, and innovative creatures that make life possible. I draw on theoretical metaphors developed by fungi scholars (Sheldrake, 2020; Tsing, 2015) to propose several ways for considering multilingual writing as the outcome and medium through which multilingual living takes shape. I argue that fungal entanglement provides useful ways to observe and theorize reciprocal relationships, unpredictable encounters, and chronotopic figuring as central features of multilingual writing. Ways in which fungi forge reciprocal relationships with trees, rocks, animals, and humans to make collaborative living happen mirror the becoming of the multilingual writer through sustaining relationships the writer strategically and unwittingly forges with other forms of being. Fungi's ability to entangle across categorical boundaries helps to shift our analytical gaze away from texts, languages, writers, and writing technologies as independent entities with determinate boundaries and properties. Instead, fungi provide a way to theorize multilingual writing as unfolding through coordinated and improvised assemblages of writers, readers, literacy brokers, writing technologies, texts, and material and semiotic environs, which are achieved through the constant attuning of and innovations with expansive repertoires of writing-related knowledge and practices. Unpredictable encounters across lines of differences, which drive transformative relationships between fungi and their unlikely partners, similarly energize new affective and imaginative possibilities for multilingual living and writing. Placing mushrooms and multilingual writing in entanglement offers useful insights into facets of multilingual lives that extant research has yet to fully explore. For one thing, how can we study writing as the outcome of divergent, layered, and conjoined projects that make up multilingual students' life worlds? What does it mean to observe multilingual writing as articulation of world-in-becoming when an open-ended gathering of the writer and natural, cultural, and literacy others (re)configure in response to fickle material and semiotic environments? How do we understand writing as determinate and indeterminate happenings when strategic coordination of relationships and unpredictable encounters play equally important roles in directing its contour? In important ways, the move toward entanglement makes it possible and necessary to notice the unruly, random, serendipitous,

indeterminate, and improvised aspects of multilingual writing as meaningful sites of inquiry.

Following multilingual writing in entanglement involves conceptual and methodological moves that intentionally burst categories, trespass boundaries, complicate dichotomies, and upend identities (Tsing, 2015, p. 132). Such transgressive moves begin with conscious efforts to dislodge what Karen Barad (2007) critiques as "remnant anthropocentric and representationalist assumptions" rooted in binary conceptions that pit nature against culture, human against nonhuman, and discursive against material practices. Following life-in-entanglement therefore rests upon serious reconsiderations of where to look for evidence of writing and what to look for. By shifting our analytical gaze away from the false assumption of the agentive human who weaves natural, material, semiotic, and symbolic resources into the social fabric we inhabit and navigate, we then begin to feel "accountable for the role we play in the differential constitutions and differential positioning of the human among other creatures, both living and nonliving" (Barad, 2007, p. 136).

As the open-ended gathering of multiplicity of life forms, relationships, and communicative repertoire is essential for the resilience and productivity of life-in-coordination, multilingual writing vibrates with energy from multiplicities stitched together through dynamic relationships, which carry with them layers of historically developed spatial and temporal meanings. As Fleckenstein et al. (2008) usefully argues, "ecological research enacted rhetorically" (p. 390) aims to achieve "resonance *among* the metaphors that undergird our conceptualization of the phenomenon of study, our methods of study, and our enactment of those methods" (p. 389). That is, theoretical constructs informed by ecological metaphors necessitate retooling of ethnographic methods for capturing and accounting for multilingual writing in entanglement. Below I provide an outline of propositions for researching writing from an entanglement perspective and explain how these propositions inform my conceptualization of the phenomenon, my method of study, and my ongoing efforts to attune the theoretical and methodological tools for following multilingual writing in entanglement. In doing so, I respond to Donna Haraway's invitation to consider the "polytemporal, polyspatial knottings" for examining how natural, cultural, and literacy beings are woven into contingent, dynamic, and complex patternings through multilingual writing (2016, p. 60).

NOTICING BECOMING-WITH. Writers change and are changed in shifting entanglement with the natural, cultural, and literacy others. I look for material and semiotic practices of these others, their inventions and improvisations,

meanings they acquire through associations with humans and cultural institutions, and their ability to affect, inspire, soothe, and agitate multilingual writers and writing through inter- and intra-actions in heterogeneous temporalities and spatialities. In doing so, I draw on Barad's agential realism to note the constant co-emergence and becoming of fused *spacetimemattering* rather than observing the interaction of persons and objects against static spacetime configurations (2007). Such a perspective guides my analysis that "amplifies accounts of the creative, improvisational, and fleeting practices through which [beings such as] plants and insects *involve* themselves" in writers' lives (Haraway, 2016, p. 69). Such a view positions researchers not as designers of research apparatuses or observers of naturally occurring phenomena but as part of entanglement and world-in-articulation. It also recognizes that our practices as writers and researchers entail material/discursive practices that differentially enact boundaries, properties, and meanings.

TURNING TOWARD THICKETS OF RELATIONSHIPS. Entanglement provides an analytical footing for mapping the intersecting multiplicities that are fluid, ephemeral, and archaic. Such a move toward multiplicities and relationships allows writing researchers to connect concrete acts of reading, inventing, conversing, sketching, drafting, outlining, inscribing, translating, reviewing, conferencing, revising, proofreading, and editing as co-constituted with a web of literacy brokers, forms of being, semiotic resources, writing technologies, texts, lived spatiality, and temporal rhythms. As ideas, texts, memories, and artifacts are mobilized and continue to form expanding relationships, it becomes important to notice and theorize literacy activities as ways of being in the world and forms of life that are always in the making through relationships. It becomes equally important to observe how semiotic fibers form "complex, multifarious chains of transformations in and across representational states and media" (Prior & Shipka, 2003, p. 181). Multilingual writing becomes part of how multilingual writers make, inhabit, fiddle with, and transform natural, social, and imaginary worlds.

DWELLING ON UNPREDICTABLE ENCOUNTERS. Relating and encountering across differences do not always result in desirable outcomes for players unwittingly drawn into the semiotic and material tapestry of the world. Research efforts with an eye toward the multiplicity of relationships, sites, and perspectives do not benefit from theoretical and methodological tools that aim at precise models, predictable outcomes, and replicable designs. An entanglement perspective follows, anticipates, and prepares for unintended consequences from unexpected connections of unlikely partners. Instead of

pursuing the promise of certainty, entanglement encourages us to appreciate the analytical value of messy multiplicities, fluid relationships, porous boundaries, and indeterminate ways. Instead of asking how multilingual writers *draw upon* semiotic resources, cultural tropes, and literacy experiences, entanglement asks how literacy activities emerge through the transformative encounters of life forms, semiotic resources, and spacetimes in unpredictable ways and explores how writers are physically, affectively, and imaginatively *moved by* encounters with human and nonhuman others. As a result, moments erupting with surprises, serendipities, anomalies, and improvisations become meaningful sites of inquiry.

FOLLOWING CHRONOTOPIC FIGURING. I draw on metaphors of chronotopic lamination (Prior & Shipka, 2003) and string figuring (Haraway, 2016) to coin the term "chronotopic figuring," which provides a way to think about how multilingual writing takes shape through ongoing figuring of semiotic, emotional, and material fibers, which simultaneously encode languages, practices, and identities with historically developed spatial and temporal meanings and provide opportunities for layering, blending, and hybridization. Drawing on how fungi hyphae tip forge and fork as living and moving beings (Sheldrake, 2020; Tsing, 2015), I explore how these fibers continue to forge new connections and create new possibilities, and at the same time I explore how they retain stabilized meanings that are figured and reconfigured in tentacular and messy ways (Haraway, 2016). I propose chronotopic figuring as a method for "tracing [and] following a thread in the dark" and for finding "their tangles and patterns . . . in real and particular places and times" when encounters, stories, feelings, memories, and various ways of articulating their meanings are passed on and received, made and remade, picked up and dropped (Haraway, 2016, p. 3). Chronotopic figuring allows me to observe the thickening of meaning across spacetimes and to follow the dynamic patterning that solicits passing and response in indeterminate ways. As a theoretical and methodological tool, this concept provides a lens for considering the transformative heterogeneity of relationships, practices, and identities and for observing how unpredictable encounters across differences give rise to novel solutions, provide old strategies with new purchase, and invite negotiation across differences.

In writing entanglements, movement is the norm and manifests in multiple forms. Writers are physically mobile as they move from a teacher conference to a scheduled writing center consultation and then to lunch with a friend, where writing surfaces as a topic to be discussed, strategized, and negotiated.

Even when writers are not physically on the move, texts might travel far through the mediation of technology—a draft is sent through WeChat file share to friends who are spatially and temporally distanced. The circulation of intertextually linked documents is accompanied by interanimating streams of exchanges taking place across multiple modalities—textual vestige of track-change edits quickly disappear with each mouse click to accept a change; digitally mediated conversations between two transnationally distanced friends juggling time differences allow writers to strategize for revision; asynchronously managed interactions through voice memos are produced during a bustling day of one literacy broker when the other is sound asleep; face-to-face meetings at the writing center encode a different ideology that determines what kinds of help and support are desired and delivered; language irregularities are viscerally experienced and valuated through accented, shaky voices of the international student reading her essay. It is these messy, ephemeral, and indeterminate scenes of writers collaboratively negotiating through language, cultural, and rhetorical differences that I follow, unpack, and analyze in this book. To surface, describe, and theorize these spatially and temporally dispersed backstage scenes of multilingual writing, I pursue the following research questions.

- How does multilingual writing emerge through focal students' ways of experiencing, feeling, knowing, understanding, and relating to natural, cultural, and literacy others in their multilingual lives?
- How does indeterminacy, manifesting in surprises, detours, and unpredictable encounters, energize, drive, and direct multilingual writing?
- How does multilingual writing take shape through spatially and temporally dispersed chains of composing activities across language, cultural, and rhetorical differences?
- How do multilingual writers transform with multilingual writing through the dynamic passing and translating of meaning across persons, languages, modes, activities, and spacetimes?

Methodology for the Project

In 2014 and 2015, I traced five international students as they migrated from reading and writing classes offered at the English Language Center into a bridge writing course and regular/honor FYW courses housed in the Writing Department at a large, public university in a midwestern state of the United

States. My broader aim was to understand how Chinese international students navigated the myriad literacy tasks offered at these academic units, which were responsible for introducing language practices of the academia to multilingual writers. Out of the five students, I was able to develop strong rapports with Morgan and Leo (all names are pseudonyms), which enabled ongoing inquiry into their literacy, social, and professional lives beyond first-year writing.

INSTITUTIONAL CONTEXT

Like many institutions of higher education across the US, the university had witnessed a rapid and drastic increase of international students, from a 5% to 8% annual increase from 2012 to 2017, so that as of 2017 international students constituted 14.5% of the entire undergraduate student body, with significant drops in the number of international students enrolled at the university during and after the Covid-19 pandemic ("Statistical report"). Such demographic changes engendered drastic changes to the cultural and linguistic realities on and off campus—Asian restaurants and grocery stores flourished in the college town; license plates on vehicles were customized to reference linguistic codes and cultural tropes from diverse countries of origin; in and out of classes, students constantly switched between languages, dialects and distinctly accented Englishes as they helped each other grapple with course content; instructors received writing assignments completed in various approximations of standard, edited, written English. Indeed, the linguistic reality of the classroom mirrored what translingual scholars call a new global norm, which is marked by the increasing traffic among peoples and languages shaped by and shaping the global reach and use of new communication technologies and networks (Canagarajah, 2012).

Most international students received an introduction to official language practices of the academy through a sequence of coursework housed across different academic units, including the English Language Center, the university's writing center, and bridge, regular, and honors FYW classes housed in a stand-alone rhetoric and composition program.

ENGLISH LANGUAGE CENTER. The English Language Center and its Writing Lab aim to help international students "improve English language skills before beginning academic course work at the university" by providing "English language instruction against a backdrop of American life and academia" (English Language Center, 2022). International students offered with conditional admission to the university are placed in level-appropriate

courses within the Intensive English Program (IEP) based on their Test of English as a Foreign Language (TOEFL) scores and performance on placement tests administered by the center. With a strong focus on improving students' reading, writing, listening, and speaking skills, IEP courses offer explicit instructions on vocabulary and grammatical structures and provide opportunities for students to gain experiences with texts of dynamic structures and purposes and varying degrees of complexity and abstraction. Students are promoted through the program in accordance with a combination of class performance and test results before they "graduate" into FYW courses offered at the Writing Department.

THE BRIDGE WRITING CLASS. The First-Year Writing Program is housed in the Department of Writing, Rhetoric, and Composition, which offers more than 200 sections of bridge, regular, and honors FYW classes to more than 7,000 undergraduate students annually. FYW courses share a curriculum consisting of five major writing assignments (literacy narrative, cultural artifact, disciplinary literacy, remix, final reflection). Positioning "inquiry, discovery, and communication" at the core of the curriculum, the FYW curriculum supports a recursive process of posing questions, pursuing answers, and making knowledge through personal, practical, and cultural inquiries (Department of Writing, Rhetoric, and American Cultures, n.d.).

At the time of my study, the bridge writing class (WRA 1004/0102) served a large population of first- and second-year international students, some having taken coursework through the IEP program, others directly placed in the bridge writing class based on their testing scores for the writing portion of standardized tests (SAT, TOEFL). Most international students take the bridge writing class before taking the required regular or honors sections of FYW classes. During the decade from 2010 to 2020, the bridge writing class annually served 500 to 900 international students, which constitutes as high as 5% to 8% of the undergraduate population ("Statistical report," 2016). The learning goals and curriculum of the bridge writing class traditionally mirrored those of regular FYW classes that followed. Instructors often referred to the "old" bridge writing class as a "pre-peat" because it used the same FYW curriculum, with individual instructors making decisions about discarding one of the standard five projects. It was also a course that instructors without ESL training tended to avoid.

In response to such pedagogical concerns and demographic changes, a group of teacher scholars, including myself, engaged in collaborative pedagogical work that resulted in a reinvented curriculum and new learning

goals for the course, which framed students' languages and cultures as "sites of inquiry and resources for student learning" and supported the use of multimodality "as means to identify, understand, and place the 'self,' and to communicate that knowledge to others" and to foster the students' "introduction to, and integration into" the university culture (WRA 1004/0102, n.d.). As I will continue to explore and discuss, specifically in Chapter 6, the bridge writing course operates with asset-based curriculum and pedagogy through assignments and activities that depart from the curriculum of regular FYW courses.

HONORS FIRST-YEAR WRITING COURSE. Undergraduate students enrolled in the university's Honors College can take honors-designated FYW courses to fulfill the college's requirement. During my research, international students were significantly underrepresented in the honors sections of FYW. Only a handful of international students enrolled in the honors-designated writing course each year, with five sections offered annually to serve over 200 students during 2014–2016, which was roughly 2% to 3% of the entire undergraduate population. My informal conversations with international students suggested that most students turned away from honors sections because of their perceived lack of capacity to cope with the intensive reading and writing tasks expected in the course. Honors sections share the curriculum of FYW, with individual instructors making adaptive decisions about extra reading assignments, ranging from additional articles assigned for each class to whole books assigned for the semester.

WRITING CENTER. The university's writing center operates with an "expansive view of literacy, writing, and pedagogy," which "[challenges] the notion of standard English" and "[promotes] diverse understandings of writing and the disciplines in which they are situated" (Vision Statement, n.d.). Aiming to support student writers throughout the writing process, the writing center encourages writing center consultants to move away from roles as proofreaders and instead to focus on working with student writers to identify goals for invention and revision at different stages of the invention, drafting, and revision process.

As evidenced here, multilingual writers' experiences with writing and writing instruction at the university are shaped by an entanglement of teachers, curriculums, pedagogies, and learning goals variously informed by individual, programmatic, and disciplinary frames for theorizing, valuating, and instructing writing, which further entangle in broader interdisciplinary conversations around monolingual, multilingual, and translingual pedagogies

to create opportunities and fissures as students work to mobilize writing-related knowledge and practices across courses.

As multilingual writers traverse across these programs, they experience dissonances that introduce opportunities for learning and challenges for navigating competing, sometimes conflicting expectations for writing. For instance, the explicit instruction on grammar and vocabulary and sustained attention to formulaic writing genres at the English Language Center often contrasted with the FYW curriculum's emphasis on helping students to develop the ability to use introspection and reflection to guide their ongoing inquiry into cultural and disciplinary curiosities and to revise writing-related goals and strategies. Similarly, language irregularities manifesting in student writing, variously shaped by linguistic, rhetorical, and cultural differences, are differently perceived, valued, and leveraged by teachers, whose pedagogical practices are shaped by their own employment statuses, professional training, personal experiences, and writerly idiosyncrasies. As I will detail in the following chapters, language irregularities that are blanketed as grammar mistakes by a writing teacher or used as sites of inquiry into rhetorical differences could unravel the complexities of the institutional entanglement of academic units and programs with distinct structures, values, and practices.

Running parallel to the formal learning space was also a digital space that played an important role in international Chinese students' learning. WeChat is a popular smartphone application with 1,200,000,000 active monthly users in China and 70,000,000 users (about twice the population of California) outside of China (Tencent Technology [Shenzhen] Company Ltd., 2020). Of interest for my research is the Moments function of WeChat, comparable to the Wall function for Facebook, which allows users to display personalized content in reverse-chronological order for selected circles of friends. The ebb and flow of the students' WeChat activities mirrored the changing flows of their literacy activities in the writing classroom particularly and their cultural experiences at large, with their posts ranging from documentation of reading and writing activities within and beyond FYW classes, sharing of popular cultural content (e.g., memes, jokes), performance of talents (e.g., video clips of Leo performing magic tricks, street dances, and piano scores), sharing of achievement or frustration in the FYW class, and broader efforts to connect to transnational networks of friends, family, and professional relations. As my analysis will show, self-sponsored literacies on WeChat played an important role in enabling the ongoing entanglement of the writer with and

through ephemeral encounters that inspire writing, moments of improvised and orchestrated writing, ongoing efforts to attune and reconfigure semiotic and material repertoires for writing across differences, and personal and professional relationships that enabled the chronotopic figuring of the multilingual writing process.

PARTICIPANTS

Morgan and Leo were Chinese international students attending the public university. Both students took different sections of the bridge writing class I taught during their first year, before enrolling in honor-designated FYW classes, within and beyond which my research took place. At the time of my research, they were sophomores, with Morgan having declared her major in finance and Leo yet to submit his application for admission into the Business College.

Both students attended highly selective traditional high schools in China and were variously prepared for the intensely competitive college entrance exam that was used by Chinese universities to determine admission decisions. Morgan completed the 3-day exam and received a good score that earned her admission to a prestigious university in Beijing, the capital city of China. Not satisfied with this outcome, her family decided to send her abroad for postsecondary education. Leo, on the other hand, was informed of his family's decision to send him abroad right before the exam; he walked out of the math and science portions of the exam, using this dramatic performance to voice his defiance of what he called a "torturous" testing system many of his peers had to suffer through. While Morgan took a gap year to prepare for the TOEFL exam and complete her college application for US universities, Leo arrived at the university on conditional admission, which was determined by his TOEFL score below the university's admission threshold. Leo was required to take classes from the English Language Center for a semester before he "graduated" into the regular university curriculum during his second semester.

Both students claimed they were ill-prepared for their applications to and first experiences with the university because they attended traditional Chinese high schools rather than international high schools, which offered curriculums mirroring that of typical American high schools and provided students with extensive resources for navigating SAT and TOEFL exams. According to Morgan, this gap, coupled with a haphazard application process, led to her application being incomplete without a SAT score and a less-than-ideal TOEFL score. These factors, Morgan argued, damaged her application

and failed to land her in an Ivy League university of her dream, which she was determined to pursue for her postgraduate degree. Leo, on the other hand, was satisfied with the outcome of his application and took a go-with-the-flow approach to life at the university.

Morgan used a popular class label of the 屌丝 (*diaosi*, loser) to suggest she was from a less affluent family in China and inherited little social, cultural, and financial capital that could propel her upward social mobility (Szablewicz, 2014). She was energized by ambitious academic and professional goals. When I asked Morgan to select a pseudonym for herself, she spurted out "Morgan" without hesitation. The name, taken from Morgan Stanley, a leading financial investment firm she hoped to join upon graduation, reflected her emerging career aspirations and intense desire for the cosmopolitan identity of a global elite (Wang, 2019b). Ambitious goals weighed heavily on Morgan as she worked tirelessly to maintain a solid GPA and assiduously sought out professional resources that would allow her to find a job in the United States. Her planner was densely populated with due dates, deadlines, and plans.

Leo, however, reluctantly identified himself as a second-generation government official, as his parents held important positions in a state-owned enterprise and a regional hospital. Leo took a more exploratory and relaxed approach to coursework, sampling a wide range of classes from theatrical performance, art history, and political science, dropping classes when course content failed to meet his expectations or became so challenging as to jeopardize his GPA. Keenly aware of his family's influence and professional connections, Leo was not deeply invested in discovering professional development opportunities at the university; instead, he worked hard to maintain a high GPA and took pride in the fact that he was a high-achieving student in his general education classes and core courses in his major. Throughout my research process, Leo was quite open about his intention to return to China after completing his postgraduate studies, where he could pursue a successful career in business with the support of his family.

Leo and Morgan had different experiences with the university's honors program. Morgan was not admitted to the Honors College because of a clerical error that placed her in a bridge writing class during her first semester, which prevented her from fulfilling course requirements based on which invitation letters from the college were awarded. To address this "administrative error," Morgan made numerous visits to the registrar's office and used her "broken English" to negotiate her way into the program. Her experience

in the honors FYW class was emotionally tumultuous as well, as she struggled with a reading- and writing-intensive curriculum themed around topics in American history. Specifically, Morgan struggled to fulfill the expectation for critical reading, which was assessed through regularly administered reading quizzes (Wang, 2019a). She also struggled with the course's focus on argumentative writing, which invited students to critically engage with entrenched American assumptions and values. Morgan's efforts to seek clarification from her writing instructor turned increasingly confrontational, as her instructor seemed to perceive her efforts as "bargaining for a better grade." The stress she experienced in the FYW classroom specifically and at the university broadly led to Morgan resorting to her peer networks for writing-related support. Despite her extensive efforts, Morgan received a 3.5 out of 4.0 from the honors FYW course, which she lamented for having negatively affected her otherwise perfect GPA of 3.95.

Leo received an invitation to join the Honors College at the end of his first year. When he was informed that honors students were required to take a "special section" of FYW, he exhausted his peer resources to identify instructors who were known as harsh or friendly to language irregularities manifesting in international students' writing. It was through pure scheduling coincidence that an instructor highly recommended by his peers was to teach an honors section of FYW. Leo decided to enroll after careful weighing of the risks (the negative impact of a challenging course on his 3.95 GPA) and rewards (a chance to prove himself as a sophisticated writer). Recognizing that his peer network would not be of much use in this writing class, in which he was one of only two international students, Leo worked actively to develop a cordial relationship with his instructor, who came to appreciate his thoughtful and creative approach to course assignments. In the classroom, Leo impressed his teacher and classmates with a series of skits and presentations he delivered successfully with effective props, well-crafted speeches, and entertaining interactive activities. Leo received the highest possible grade in the class. To a certain extent, the trajectories of students like Morgan and Leo mirrored the experiences of "traditional high" students that Zhang-Wu explored through her case studies (2021).

It is worth mentioning that both Leo and Morgan mobilized rich literacy expertise developed in their home language to help them navigate the honors writing classes. Both students were avid readers and once entertained the possibility of pursuing creative writing professionally, an aspiration partially fueled by the commercial success of a new generation of young Chinese

writers such as Han Han and Guo Jingming. Both students were accomplished writers whose narrative essays were read and analyzed as exemplary texts in classes; both students received awards in regional and national writing contests. Rich literacy experiences in their home language allowed them to develop a repertoire of rhetorical strategies, creative writing techniques, and meta-vocabulary for naming attributes of good writing. The confidence and ease with which they maneuvered writing and their popular cultural expertise easily flowed into their digital literacy practices, as they used social media to sample a variety of cultural texts from niche communities of youth culture (e.g., Japanese anime, memes, Korean variety TV shows, and Hollywood movies) to perform their literacy and class identities. The mobility of writing-related knowledge and strategies, from Chinese and English, from printed to multimodal, turned out to be an adventurous and precarious enterprise. Although both students were well-versed in the literary devices commonly discussed and practiced in FYW (e.g., personification, hyperbole, metaphor/simile), their efforts to translate such rhetorical knowledge into successful English writing were fraught with challenges at semantic, rhetorical, and cultural levels (Kiernan et al., 2016; Smith et al., 2017; Wang, 2020). To navigate such high-stake writing, both students leveraged their established and emerging relationships and resources to help them succeed. WeChat often became a space to process tumultuous emotions, seek support from peers and family members, and share knowledge and expertise. It is such creative and perilous work of weaving streams of literacy experiences, semiotic repertoires, and relationships into shifting entanglements that made their cases compelling for my research.

RESEARCHER POSITIONING

I taught Leo and Morgan in different sections of the bridge writing class prior to their enrollment in two different honors FYW classes. I invited their participation in my research because of the strong rapport I was able to build with the students and their willingness to share aspects of their writing with me. My own background provided useful insights into these multilingual writers' literacies. As an international student who came to the United States from China in my early 20s and a writing instructor at the time, I had experienced similar struggles in adding English to my linguistic repertoire. My proficiency in Mandarin and English; lived experiences of cultural, linguistic, and disciplinary transition; and familiarity with the FYW curriculum helped me develop a degree of rapport that was essential for exploring the students'

literacy practices. However, rich points of investigation also emerged from marked differences in our educational experiences and class identities. These differences were especially visible through my limited knowledge of digital technologies, literacy pedagogies, and educational trajectories that powerfully shaped the students' semiotic and rhetorical repertoires. Similarly, my upbringing in socialist China, prior to national policy shifts that propelled dramatic economic transformation, allowed me to recognize class-specific privilege and societal-wide wealth disparity arising as the result of increasing social stratification and shifting class structures in China. My curiosities as a cultural outsider created a space where cultural differences and class nuances became a site of inquiry, students' literacy and identity practices as objects of analysis, and their linguistic and cultural expertise as resources for learning.

I was entangled in the students' writing in many ways: as a former teacher to provide clarification and guidance, as a writing researcher to learn about their writing-related triumphs and struggles, as a friend to discuss and vent about the many challenges life had to present, and as a mentor to provide advice on academic success and career development. Following the students' multilingual writing in entanglement mobilized me physically, affectively, and imaginarily. As a writing researcher, I followed the movements of bodies, ideas, texts, and conversations by partaking in acts of inventing, drafting, reviewing, and revising that were dispersed across acts of eating, walking, and idling. I was willing but nonetheless surprised by how I could be affectively moved by the thrills and surprises of being in the moment to observe multilingual writing becoming through encounters, inspirations, setbacks, conversations, and revisions. Throughout the research process, I became increasingly aware that my way of being and relating to their writing entanglements necessarily and inevitably transformed everyone's experiences. I partook in the students' imaginary traversals across literacy spheres and trajectories as I made efforts to string figure disparate streams of activities, semiotic and rhetorical repertoires, discussions of writing-related knowledge, practices, and dispositions, and imaginaries of academic, social, and professional lives, identities, and aspirations.

DATA COLLECTION

An entanglement perspective for writing research compelled my own active involvement in and contribution to a research ecology that spanned natural and cultural worlds. To entangle in my research was to be immersed in a multilevel, multifaceted environment, which fused the knower, the known, and the

material surrounding the acts of knowing (Haraway, 2016). Doing so meant that I actively participated in the production of ethnographic understanding by tracing the messy linkages and attending to ephemeral and elusive feelings, affects, and bodily sensations arising from unintended partnerships and unpredictable encounters. In my ethnographic inquiry, I ventured into the backstage, mobile, and less visible aspects of writing. In this direction, my ethnographic methods of data collection (see Appendix) built on and extended previous efforts in sketching the contours of literate activity by working to capture literacy activities in situ. In situ observation data, captured through participant observation field notes and audio recordings, were coupled with multilingual writers' own efforts to document and annotate their literacy lives (e.g., WeChat Moments posts and screenshots), retrospective interviews, and student artifacts associated with literacy tasks expected in FYW classes.

The primary source of data was collected during the academic semester when students took the honors FYW classes (fall semester of 2014 for Morgan and spring semester of 2015 for Leo), with intensive data collection unfolding during their writing processes for the first writing assignment, the Learning Memoir assignment (hereafter referred to as Memoir), because this assignment provided rich opportunities for multilingual writers to surface, describe, and analyze personal and cultural experiences as resources for learning. Memoir, the first assignment in the course, "invite[d] students to consider their experiences with learning in and out of school to encourage them to reflect on the relationship between their learning histories and present lives" ("About the FYW curriculum"). It embodied an important learning objective of FYW—positioning students' own knowledge and experiences as important resources for generating new understandings of rhetoric, literacy, and culture. During the four weeks dedicated to the assignment, Morgan's instructor used class time to engage students in guided reading of autobiographical narratives by American authors (e.g., Maya Angelou, Amy Tan), identify and explore meaningful literacy experiences through inventive activities, and further develop creative writing techniques and reflective insights through peer review and instructor conference. Similarly, Leo's instructor used autobiographical narratives in a course reader specifically designed for the FYW curriculum (DeJoy et al., 2011), along with readings from the Writing Spaces series (Lowe & Zemliansky, 2011) to help students identify, name, and practice creative writing techniques. The culminating artifact was a narrative essay of approximately five pages. This assignment therefore provides exigencies for students to locate familiar personal and cultural experiences

as sites of reflective inquiry and meaning making. Leo and Morgan both commented on the fact that their daily encounter with a new culture invited ongoing scrutiny of familiar, established assumptions, norms, and practices, which provided rich resources for writing. Alongside intensive data collection around students' writing processes in situ, I used semistructured interviews and field observations to broadly explore students' literacy history, writing-related knowledge, practices, and theories, and their experiences of transitioning into the university life academically, socially, and professionally.

For each student, I conducted three semistructured interviews in a mix of Chinese and English, each lasting 60–90 minutes. These interviews broadly explored students' literacy experiences, identities, and educational histories. To capture their school- and self-sponsored reading, writing, and digital literacies, I conducted weekly observations of the students engaging in literacy work in locales of their choice, each lasting 45 to 90 minutes. I observed the students performing a wide range of literacy tasks at different stages of their writing process, including reading assignment descriptions; brainstorming and doodling; outlining; reading; preparing a reading response; drafting, translating, reading, and responding to peer review; rehearsing for a class presentation; or processing experiences in relation to the writing class. I gathered multiple drafts that contained edits and comments from teacher conferences, in-class peer reviews, writing center consultations, and self-sponsored peer reviews, along with inventive artifacts (outlines, annotated reading materials, and notes) and WeChat posts they created during my research. Following this period of intensive data collection, I also followed their literacy and professional trajectories through informal conversations (approximately twice a year) throughout the course of their college career and beyond.

I used interviews and observations to explore and identify multilingual writing in entanglement. To achieve this goal, I followed Morgan and Leo into the various locales where literacy work happened. Sometimes we met in my office immediately after their writing class to debrief about classroom activities, brainstorm ideas for their assignments, process setbacks, and strategize for new challenges. Sometimes we met in one of the campus cafeterias where we ate, chatted, wrote, and studied together, with discussion about writing foregrounded or backgrounded depending on our priorities for the day. Sometimes we connected late into the evening through WeChat as they shared screenshots of their essay drafts, feelings of frustration or achievement, and questions about a writing task at hand. I sometimes followed them to corners on campus where they liked to spend time reading, socializing,

or idling (e.g., the bank of a campus river, a sunny corner in an instructional building, a bench under a beautiful birch tree in a secluded corner) to get a sense of the rhythm of their daily routines and ephemeral encounters that prompted self-sponsored writing. Other times I walked with them on their daily routes from dorms to instructional buildings, as their cell phones rang with incoming messages and their replies in voice memos. On a few occasions, I participated in or witnessed informal WeChat discussions or WeChat Moments posts followed by comments, which involved literacy brokers from the students' social networks. By providing minimal structure to such conversations and encouraging the students to direct their own literacy activities during these meetings, I was able to observe in situ acts of multilingual writing emerging through the complex coordination of multiple life worlds of resonant, discordant temporal rhythms and spatial arcs, negotiation of meaning across languages, modes, and minds, and multidirectional flow of information through channels sustained by writing technologies and digital tools. Attending to entanglement necessarily directed my gaze toward the complex ways in which writers, things, environs, and ideas are woven into heterogeneity through carefully cultivated relationships and unpredictable encounters.

DATA ANALYSIS

Triangulated reading of multiple streams of data allowed me to map multiplicities of relationships, follow multilingual writing processes on the move, and attend to unpredictable encounters that gave rise to impromptu acts of writing. Moreover, following multilingual writers across multiple episodes of composition and multiple entanglements of multilingual living surfaced writing-related theories and practices that were rendered irrelevant unless read against the backdrop of literate lives that spanned linguistic, cultural, geographical, social, and rhetorical boundaries. In the same vein, I attended to accidents, surprises, anomalies, silences, and slips as equally useful as well-articulated intentions, designs, and strategies in revealing the dynamic ways in which multilingual writing took shape.

Data analysis was recursively organized throughout the research process to explore how the making and movements of meanings, identities, and practices take shape through emergent, shifting entanglements of writers and other forms of being and living, languages and modes, technologies, and tools. In light of the theoretical focus on entanglement as a unit of analysis, my first pass at data analysis focused on identifying assemblages of living human (peers, friends, consultants, instructor) and nonhuman (rivers, trees),

material (texts, digital tools, writing technologies), semiotic (languages, modes, jokes), visceral (memories, feelings), and conceptual (identity labels and narratives, writing-related theories and practices, genres) agents that gave shape to tentatively stabilized literacy events (e.g., a casual walk that invited an idea for writing, crafting a bilingual outline for an essay, posting a multimodal message on WeChat, conversation with a friend or teacher).

My second move focused on exploring how a literacy event emerged through the multilingual writer's entanglement with the natural, cultural, and literacy others, such as observing how writers were moved by encounters that generated visceral reactions and feelings and exploring how such encounters mobilized or left traces of memories, imaginaries and representations that reconfigure the natural, cultural, and literacy others. Simultaneously, I observed how a literacy event buzzed with temporal rhythms of multiple life worlds and historical trajectories in coordination, which not only wove into juxtaposition multiple voices, perspectives, and contours of writing, but also reconfigured these life worlds and trajectories by inserting new meanings and enabling new relationships among them. Such an understanding was achieved through triangulated reading of interviews, informal observation field notes, drafts, social media posts, and interactions to identify contours of meanings moving across persons, texts, languages, modes, and spacetimes, with questions asked about which and how human, nonhuman, material, semiotic, and conceptual elements were entangled in open articulation of the world.

Following multilingual writing in entanglement then compelled my attention to how literacy meanings and identities located in an embodied spacetime simultaneously enacted meanings brought from afar, gained mobility or mobile potentials, string figured with meanings and practices emerging in other spacetimes, and achieved determinate and indeterminate contours and effects. Following the entanglement of ideas, identities, and practices through the lens of chronotopic figuring enabled systematic examination of how multiple semiotic fibers, voices, and practices could be woven into meanings that were simultaneously durable and innovative.

Limitations

With its detailed accounts of two focal students' multilingual writing processes, this book aspires to achieve depth and nuance, rather than width and generalizable patterns. Its narrow focus on a small sample of students from one demographic, namely accomplished Chinese international student

writers, echoes Zhaozhe Wang's argument that a "dynamic view of difference as emerging and relational" is needed to disrupt the institutional discourse of diversity that operates within the neoliberal economic and political climate to stabilize, reify, flatten, and capitalize on the vast and varied experiences of a growing population of multilingual students (2024, p. 166). That is, the analysis points to the profound differences despite seemingly shared linguistic, cultural, and rhetorical backgrounds of the students—their approaches to, beliefs about, and practices with writing. A deep dive into these writers' idiosyncrasies, affiliations, inspirations, and encounters reveal important insights about language and identity practices they develop across life-spans. As such, the insights developed therein could be applicable to an increasingly heterogeneous population of diverse students, including domestic multilinguals, native speakers of historically underprivileged varieties of English, speakers of world Englishes, and international, multilingual students from other linguistic and rhetorical backgrounds. By detailing multilingual writing processes as unfolding through the emergence of the writer across linguistic, rhetorical, writerly, and cultural differences, these ethnographic case studies further complicate Paul Matsuda's critique of the "myth of linguistic homogeneity in the U.S. college composition," which has been facilitated by the "concomitant policy of linguistic containment that has kept language differences invisible in the required composition courses and in the discourse of composition studies" (2006, p. 641).

Even though these case studies are very focused on the lived experiences of two students, the fine-grained analysis, informed by an entanglement framework, provides conceptual and methodological tools for attending to the messy, indeterminate, and improvised dimensions of writing, which extends our understanding of the dynamic, mobile, and distributed nature of writing for multilingual, monolingual, veteran, and novice writers grappling with writing across rhetorical situations, disciplinary contexts, and professional fields. This deep dive into the backstage scenes and invisible trails of multilingual writing enhances our understanding of multilingual writing, simultaneously strategic, ephemeral, and improvisational, as the exigencies and outcomes of working through linguistic, cultural, and rhetorical differences. Insights, and mobile methods used to generate such insights, contribute to the repertoire of writing research methods for engaging with writing as mediated, distributed, and dispersed phenomena across writers' literacy landscapes and lifespans.

Overview of the Book

Chapter 1 presents entanglement as a theoretical framework and unpacks useful conceptual and methodological tools for multilingual writing research. I develop theoretical metaphors informed by fungi and ecological studies to discuss ways writing researchers might usefully engage with the messy, ephemeral, unpredictable, and chronotopically layered aspects of the writing phenomena. I draw on ecological examples to discuss four entanglement propositions: becoming with others, turning to thickets of relationships, dwelling on unpredictable encounters, and following chronotopic figuring. Each of these propositions guide the analysis in body chapters.

Chapter 2 explores how Morgan's multilingual writing stayed in becoming with a campus river. I begin this chapter with an account of how an unexpected encounter with the Red Cedar River moved the multilingual writer physically, affectively, and imaginatively. The ephemeral encounter was so powerful that it invited Morgan into an intimate partnership with the river, which traveled into her drafting and revision of the Memoir assignment. Inviting nature back into Morgan's literacy landscape, I explore how her multilingual writing was co-constituted and co-emergent with lived spatiality that she traversed daily, life forms wittingly and unwittingly woven into her literacy landscape, and unpredictable encounters with nature, which also continued to gain reflective, affective, and imaginary possibilities with the writer through multilingual writing. A close analysis of the continuous reconfigurations of the river provides compelling evidence of how boundaries and binaries that arbitrarily separate nature/culture, writers/brokers, English/Chinese are constantly redrawn.

Chapter 3 turns to thickets of relationships and explores how relationships stitch patchworks of multilingual writing and living into meaning. Figuring spatially and temporally distanced episodes of translating, reviewing, and revising into a mobile assemblage, I trace the semiotic labor of writing the river into meaning across drafts, languages, and writers/readers, noting specifically how the river continued to gain expressive purchase and transformed by staying emergent through its movements. Following its mobile trajectory, I analyze how each textual, linguistic, and affective passing of the river was fraught with opportunities for innovation as well as needs for negotiation. I discuss how attention to relationships enriches our understanding of translation as rhetorical practices by demonstrating how meanings were subject

to open negotiation through collaborative efforts to manage cross-language relations, develop affinities, and retool semiotic repertoires.

In Chapter 4, I dwell on unpredictable encounters in Leo's multilingual writing as sites of meaning making. I begin by tracing the emergence of a calligraphy story, which served as the centerpiece of Leo's Memoir assignment. I describe how the theme of the story was repeatedly taken up in alternation or juxtaposition across real and (re)imagined times and observe how such iterations entered resonant and dissonant harmony as Leo continued to discover and articulate its meaning. In so doing, I pay particular attention to unpredictable encounters, surprising discoveries, unexpected detours, and unintended consequences, which not only generated multiple ways of reading and interpreting the story but also produced intense feelings of thrill and trepidation that redirected Leo's writing indeterminately. Paying attention to indeterminacy allows me to explore how streams of literacy and identity practices came together in sporadic but consequential coordination to shape seemingly idiosyncratic decisions Leo made as a writer. I look for ways in which stories, insights, and practices reverberated with their own histories, rhythms, and melodic lines to enter intended and unexpected coordination.

In Chapter 5, I draw on theories of rhetorical silence to further explore how Leo's strategic silences were negotiated across multiple temporal trajectories to perform and resist dominant narratives and social discourses around his class identity as a second-generation government official. Namely, I examine how Leo made strategic decisions to silence certain life experiences, hush personal and professional aspirations, and erase his own digital footprints. A chronotopic reading of strategic silence compels attention to Leo's multilingual writing as reverberating with narratives, controversies, and practices associated with his class identity, which was modeled and practiced in schooled, family-sponsored, and self-sponsored literacy activities, cultivated through years of familial training and warning, and reflected the ebbs and flows of social political circumstances in China. A chronotopic analysis of Leo's strategic silence shows it to be a strategy for those in positions of privilege to survive intensified public scrutiny and government surveillance against the backdrop of increasing social and economic disparity and intensifying social discontent in China (Jiang, 2013).

Chapter 6 points to gaps between multilingual students' lived realities and pedagogical practices that often perpetuate monolingual and monocultural ideologies and thereby impede student learning. Building on snapshots that reveal mismatches between student experiences and teacher practices and

expectations, I offer ideas for how entanglement could inform an asset-based pedagogy by supporting precarious relationships, enabling polyphonic conversation across academic units, contemplating and leveraging unpredictable encounters, and enabling chronotopic figuring. I then present concrete examples of curricular moves through assignments that enact an asset-based pedagogy, each complete with an overview, procedure, and analysis of exemplary student work.

Together, the ethnographic snapshots I provide throughout the book illustrate how conceptual and methodological attention to entanglement, rather than writers, reveals how dynamic, temporaneous, and improvised relationships direct the contours of multilingual living and writing. Placing shifting, contingent relationships at the center of analysis invites attention to the surprising energy and opportunities for innovation that emerge from the working of unintended coordination, unpredictable encounters, and indeterminate meanings. These relationships bring into partnership, conversation, and contestation worlds and lives with their own semiotic, material, and temporal histories. As much as indeterminacy manifests in fungal hyphal tips that fork and fuse in their search for a friendly tree root, multilingual writers/writing stay emergent as the outcome of precarious, surprising, and productive relationships that make up multilingual lives. Following chanceful encounters, improvised connections, and anomalous adventures that hardly fall within the purview of writing researchers' ethnographic gaze, I argue, allows us to notice the mess of working across biological, cultural, linguistic, and spacetime differences as a core feature of multilingual writing on the move. On one hand, unpredictable encounters set into motion dynamic semiotic repertoires and writing-related knowledge, strategies, and practices. Reciprocally, the movements of writers, resources, practices, and texts propel encounters as multilingual writers enter polyphony with the many others in their ongoing efforts to attune their rhetorical and semiotic repertoires to fulfill literacy, social, and professional purposes.