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New Media, Multiliteracies, and the Globalized Classroom

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Abstract

New Media, Multiliteracies, and the Globalized Classroom contends that changing demographic diversity in American higher education and increasing globalization call for curricular and pedagogical transformation of writing courses. The writing curriculum for “globalized classrooms” should be responsive to the resources students bring with them to the classroom and cultivate in them the multiple literacies—both old and new—needed to successfully navigate an increasingly global workplace and a complexly interwoven world. The scaffolding of students’ natural meaning making capacities, and teaching of multiple literacies, such as visual, academic, critical, digital, multimodal, and intercultural, should take place simultaneously in the writing classes for “new literacies are in a synergistic, reciprocal, and constantly evolving relationship with older literacies” (Swenson et al. 357). The interplay of new and old literacies in literate activities in the academy and professions can lead to productive interactions and work. In fact, this study is an experiment with and investigation into how diverse students in a sophomore level writing class in a large research university in the U.S. North East responded to a curriculum and pedagogical approach framed around the idea of multiple literacies. The pilot course drew insights and resources from some closely aligned fields of new media, globalization, World Englishes, intercultural communication, literacy studies, and media studies, exploring and exploiting the potentials these intersecting fields have for improving the practice of teaching writing to a diverse body of students. It took a multiliterate approach to teaching writing in its expanded sense with assignments in multiple media and modes— alphabetic and digital literacy narratives, rhetorical analysis of a digital artifact (music video, ad, cartoon/movie clip etc.), argument essay, remediation of argument essay into web forms for local and global audiences, collaborative documentary production, blogging, and small group presentations.

New Media, Multiliteracies, and the Globalized Classroom

By

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DISSERTATION

**Submitted in partial fulfillment of the requirements for the
degree of Doctor of Philosophy in Composition and Cultural Rhetoric
in the Graduate School of Syracuse University**

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1. Demographic Shift and the Exigencies for a Multiliterate Composition Pedagogy

1.1. Overview

This chapter traces the trends and patterns of demographic shift in American higher education, which has implications to how and what we teach in our composition classes. It also presents the exigencies and gaps, and research goals and questions for the study. The final two sections of the chapter review relevant literature and outline the chapter division.

1.2. Demographic Shift

American higher education is experiencing a demographic shift, which can be observed both at national and local levels. Statistics on student demographics at the national level attest to the fact that the U.S. college classrooms are increasingly diverse and globalized. About a million international students are enrolled in U.S. colleges and universities every year now, and the enrollment trend shows a steady growth of these students over the years. For instance, according to Institute of International Education (IIE), international students constituted 1.1% of total enrollment in 1948/49, which reached 3.7% in 2011/12. Even though the percentage increase of international students in the last 60 plus years may not look exceptionally large, the actual number has gone up significantly because the total enrollment in American universities has increased nine fold from 2,403,400 in 1948/49 to 20,625,000 in 2011/12. Only the combined growth calculation—growth in total enrollment and growth in percentage—over the years can give a sense of the enormity of increment. The actual number of international students was 25,464 in 1948/49, as opposed to 764,495 in 2011/12. IIE's figures show that the number of international students increased steadily every year ever since 1948/49 except for a brief period—2003 to 2006—immediately after the 9/11 terrorist attack in the U.S. While the total student enrollment growth in this country has gone up by around nine fold, international student

growth has skyrocketed with a 30 fold increase over the last 60 plus years. The annual percentage change of these students from year to year has been mostly positive, for instance, with 21.2 % between 1965/66 and 1966/67, 4.7% between 2009/10 and 2010/11, and 5.7% between 2010/11 and 2011/2012 (IIE, Open Doors Data—International Students: Enrollment Trends).

IIE's statistics also show that students attending U.S. colleges and universities come from all the regions and almost all the countries from around the world. In the 2011/2012 academic year, American colleges and universities received 35,502 students from Africa; 489,970 from Asia; 85,423 from Europe; 64,021 from Latin America; 27,210 from North America; and 56,664 from the Middle East (Open Doors Data—International Students: All Places of Origin). The table below shows the percentage of students (total 764,321) the U.S. received from different countries in academic year, 2011/2012:

Table 1: Open Doors Data--International Students: All Places of Origin

Countries	Percentage	Countries	Percentage
1. China	25.4	8. Vietnam	2
2. India	13.1	9. Mexico	1.8
3. South Korea	9.5	10. Turkey	1.6
4. Saudi Arabia	4.5	11. Nepal	1.3
5. Canada	3.5	12. Germany	1.2
6. Taiwan	3	13. U.K	1.2
7. Japan	2.6	14. Brazil, France, Hong Kong, Thailand, Indonesia, Nigeria, Iran, Malaysia, Colombia, Venezuela, Spain, Russia	±1

Given such a wide range of international students, U.S. classrooms have become remarkably cross-cultural, prompting us to rethink traditional notions of diversity to include the rising ranks of international students. Traditionally, diversity in the academy has been defined in terms of the plurality of races and ethnicities of domestic students. Needless to say, even in the traditional sense, U.S. classrooms these days are remarkably diverse. The last three years of domestic student enrollment data shows that the number of minority students in U.S. colleges and universities has remained consistently diverse over the years. The table below shows the actual enrollment of minority students over the span of three years between 2009 and 2011:

Table 2: Total Student Enrollment in the U.S. (Current Population Survey, 2009, 2010, 2011, U.S. Census Bureau)

Year	2009	2010	2011
Total (in thousands)	19,764	20,275	20,397
White	15,027	15,258	15,412
Black	2,889	2,889	3,146
Asian	1,231	1,322	1,204
Hispanic	2,434	2,879	2,953
Foreign Born	2,171	2,237	2,233
Children of Foreign Born Parents	4,685	5,065	5,168

The enrollment data in this table speaks to the fact that domestic student population is already diverse in American colleges and universities. But now that the number of international students is significantly higher in the academy, it has become necessary for the notion of diversity to expand and account for the plurality of races, ethnicities and languages of international students too.

The student population at the Northeast Research University (NRU), where this study was based, also reflected a similar pattern. In the Fall of 2012, NRU demographics included 7.6 percent African American students, 6.9 percent Asian Americans, 8 percent Hispanics, 0.6 percent Native Americans, and 2 percent of two or more races. Minority students at NRU represented 25.1 percent while international students made more than 10 percent of the total student population. Students here hailed from all of 50 States and 126 other countries from around the world. The freshman class that year had 3,392 students with 31 percent students of color, 16 percent first-generation students, 56 percent female, and 44 percent male students. A year earlier, NRU had 7.4 percent African Americans, 7.4 percent Asian Americans, 7.4 percent Hispanics, 0.6 percent Native Americans, and 1.6 percent of two or more races. Minority students for that year constituted 24.4% while international students made more than 10% of the total student population. SU students then hailed from all of 50 States and 128 other countries from around the world. A comparative reading of NRU's student demographics for 2011/12 and 2012/13 academic years shows that student population here is becoming more diverse year to year. Compared to last year, the number of minority students, students of color, and international students has gone up this year, projecting a similar trend for the coming years.

Mirroring the national and local trend of student population, my own writing class for the Spring of 2012, which I study in this dissertation, featured the same sort of diversity. In total of

twenty students, I had thirteen domestic American students while seven other students hailed from different parts of the world—two from Puerto Rico, one from South Korea, two from Mexico, one from Haiti, and one from India. There was diversity even among domestic American students in terms of race, class, and literacy traditions let alone among international students who were brought up in completely different cultural, linguistic and academic traditions.

1.3. Implications of Demographic Shift to Composition Curricula and Pedagogies

The numbers and figures cited above have great implications to writing curricula and pedagogies as they shed light on the present and future composition of our classrooms. Our classrooms are already “globalized” (Himley, Matsuda, You) or diverse in terms of cultural, linguistic and literacy traditions, and these data project that this heterogeneity is going to expand even further in coming years. Put it differently, the classrooms in American universities these days are interesting contact zones, variously characterized as “rhetorical borderland(s)” (LuMing Mao qtd in You 4) or “multilingual spaces” (Matsuda qtd in CCCC Reviews). This particular demographic shift in student population calls for corresponding shifts in other components of school, such as pedagogies and curricula. Allan Luke et al. argue along similar lines, noting that the shift in assumptions about “cultural and linguistic homogeneity” of student population, brought about by the globalized economies and cultures, call for analogous shift in many “core assumptions about 20th century education,” such as “about the relative stability of curriculum knowledge; about the absolute centrality of face-to-face classroom interaction, and about the pre-eminence of print as a mode of information and power” (12). Therefore, as Kevin Eric De Pew and Susan Kay Miller frame it, diverse students, who “bring global literacies to the university” (261) involve political discussions with pedagogical and policy implications. One apparent implication to instructors, and to educators in general, as Jennifer Pei-Ling Tan and Erica L.

McWilliam relate, is that “they [we] cannot ignore cultural and linguistic diversities in the classroom or treat them as incidental to the core business of education” (214). Another, even more important, implication is that they/we should be teaching multiple literacies to those diverse students because “[W]ith increasing cultural and linguistic diversity becoming a global phenomenon, higher and wider levels of literacy are expected from all students” (214).

1.4. Situating the Study: Exigencies and Gaps

The demographic diversity in our classrooms presents us with both opportunities and challenges. It affords us the opportunity to respond to and tap into the resources these students bring with them to the classroom, but scaffolding their natural meaning-making capacities and teaching them what they need and what they want is challenging. Reflecting on what students need, many literacy scholars maintain that the changed working conditions demand flexible but multiple skills/literacies—both old and new— in each one of our students as and when they join workforce. Irrespective of who students are demographically, or where they come from, they would require multiple literacies to succeed in highly globalized and mediated workplaces. Mary Kalantzis and Bill Cope, for example, highlight that students these days “need to develop the skills to speak up, to negotiate and to be able to engage critically with the conditions of their working lives” (‘Multiliteracies’: A Framework for Action” 221). Similarly, James Paul Gee adds that students need to learn multiple literacies to meet the changing demands and dynamics of the workplace: Jobs ‘fit’ for industrial capitalism, which required “relatively low-level skills and the ability to follow instructions” are “fast disappearing” and becoming “rare today—and will be rarer yet tomorrow” (“Literacies, Schools, and Kinds of People Educating People in the New Capitalism” 81-82). Stable management or professional jobs where “‘one rose through the ranks’ towards the top of the hierarchy...are scarce in the new capitalism, where hierarchies are

flatter, people are as liable to go up as down, and people are expected to change jobs and fields several times in a lifetime” (82). Gee further elaborates that workers in the new capitalism are

[s]upposed to see themselves as independent entrepreneurs, working for themselves and not for a business or institution. The business or institution now owes them no secure job. While on the job, they must be ‘eager to stay’—i.e., ‘totally committed’—but, once their project is over or times have changed, they must be ‘ready to leave.’ (82)

Such work environment definitely demands multiple literacies, Janet Swenson et al. concur, but, more specifically, it calls for both older print and critical literacies, and new digital and multimodal literacies—not the one or the other—in each potential employee. Therefore, they recommend that we teach our students both old and new literacies, particularly because “new literacies are in a synergistic, reciprocal, and constantly evolving relationship with older literacies, and the interplay of these processes in support of communication and knowledge construction must be perceived as social acts that build upon prior knowledge, literacy skills, and social literacy practices” (357).

This insight about multiple literacies could be productive for composition teachers for its suggestion that we need not necessarily focus only on new literacies, such as computer, new media, or multimodal in our curricula and pedagogies, but equally value and prioritize older essayist and critical literacies because the interplay of those literacies can lead to productive interactions and work dynamics. For essayist literacy’s role in old-new literacy interactions, and for its democratic, pedagogical and intellectual potentials (Badley, Bloom, Heilker, Hesse, Olson, Trimbur), many scholars advocate for incorporating essayist literacy in composition curriculum. Many others argue that, in the context of diverse student population, the essay form

we ask students to produce should be reimagined along lines of diversity of essay traditions around the world, recent flourishing of writing technologies and multimedia, and literacy traditions students bring with them to the classroom (See chapter 3 for detailed discussion).

Therefore, there is increasing agreement among educators that we should attempt to cultivate multiple old and new literacies in students through our pedagogical and curricular instruments. Some also suggest us to rethink the prevailing myth about students as digital natives and teachers as digital immigrants (Prensky) for, unlike the myth portrays, many of our students are just the learners of digital and other forms of new literacies, as many teachers are (Susan Kirtley). Computer and other technological skills of many students often reflect the digital divide along the axes of geopolitical locations, race, income, gender, and other socio-economic variables. Therefore, we as educators should not take any literacy in students for granted, nor should any educational institutions take any literacy-teaching capacity in teachers for granted. That being the reason, Douglas Kellner clearly articulates that as much as students need to cultivate multiple literacies for contemporary technological and multicultural societies, teachers also “need to develop a range of literacies of diverse sorts, including a more fundamental importance for print literacy, to meet the challenge of restructuring education for a hi-tech, multicultural society, and global economy and culture” (9). Therefore, Kellner asks for “robust forms of media literacy, computer literacy, and multimedia literacies” (16-17) both for students and teachers. In my understanding, Jay Bolter and Richard Grusin’s notion of remediation and Henry Jenkins’ theory of media convergence from media studies, in particular, appear to be promising concepts, whose pedagogical implementation are likely to sponsor all three forms of literacy that Kellner foregrounds. Those theories can also illuminate the relationship between old and new media and technologies, and speak to the contemporary genres

and forms of composition. For instance, Jay Bolter and Richard Grusin define remediation as the incorporation or representation of one medium into another, and claim that digital or new media are characterized by remediation because they constantly present the contents from old media like television, radio, and print journalism, in different forms and styles. A fascinating thing about remediation is that it does not just work in one direction, i.e. it is not always the case that only new media remediate the old, but, interesting enough, old mediums such as TV, and films also appropriate digital graphics and other features of new media. Therefore, it can be said that new and old media constantly interact with one another in a number of ways (For more, see a detailed discussion in chapter 4).

In that sense, remediation and media convergence as means and ends of media evolution can inform rhetoric and composition as much as they inform media themselves. They can also be instrumental in scaffolding the difference and diversity our students bring with them to our classrooms as they provide them with complex processes and modes of communication or composition. In fact, these phenomena along side recent innovations in communication, information and writing technologies, and their current or potential impacts in the ways we produce, or teach writing to our students are being extensively discussed in rhetoric and composition and literacy scholarship. For example, Yancey has spoken of Bolter and Grusin's idea of remediation in numerous occasions including her CCCC chair's address, "Made Not Only in Words: Composition in a New Key," when pressing for the redefinition of writing in light of emerging technologies and literacy practices. Recently, Steven Fraiberg, citing Paul Prior et al., has discussed semiotic remediation— "a concept that moves beyond an understanding of the ways that writing is coordinated with other semiotic systems to a fully dialogic understanding of all semiotic modes" (106), which speaks to Jenkins' notion of media convergence, New

London Group's (NLG) theory of multiliteracies, and Diana George's idea of composition as a design.

But as many scholars in the field of rhetoric and composition maintain, our current pedagogical practices are often limited in a number of ways in terms of teaching multiple literacies, which also include proficiency in multiple languages and English varieties (more below), and/or preparing students for the twenty-first century communication and composition challenges. Bruce Horner et al., for example, argue that "[T]raditional approaches to writing in the United States... 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" (304). Paul Kei Matsuda, Horner and John Trimbur, and Suresh Canagarajah contend that by assuming a homogenous student body and Standard English as the norms in our classrooms, we are adhering to the 20th century values about education (homogenous student body, print-based education etc.). By not foregrounding and recognizing the evident diversity in the classrooms, we are discriminating against and doing disservice to the majority of our students. Also, by adhering to the 20th century traditional values about print-based literacy, we are missing an important opportunity to learn from the diverse literate and academic practices that our students bring to the classroom (DePew, Hawisher et al "Globalization and Agency," Miller). Therefore, we need to teach them multiple literacies—print, digital, cyber, information, critical, visual, computer, and academic, among others.

My project is situated in this larger scholarly and pedagogical context and is motivated by the desire of improving the practice of teaching composition to a diverse body of students in a globalized pedagogical space that the U.S. composition classroom is. More specifically, this

project originates in response to the increasing agreement among scholars such as Geoff Bull and Michele Anstey that today's students need to be multiliterate in order to survive and flourish in a globalized world. As Bull and Anstey succinctly argue, "Globalization provides a contextual necessity for us to become multiliterate" (175). Becoming multiliterate is to have the ability to interact using multiple Englishes in English speaking contexts, multiple writing/communication styles across cultures and disciplines or, to be even more precise, becoming multiliterate is to have plural literacies such as visual, cyber, computer, academic, print, critical, information, digital, new media, and intercultural among other kinds of literacies (Bull and Anstey; Cope and Kalantzis; Hawisher and Selfe; New London Group; Selber). It also entails having the ability to critically evaluate information and resources and use them ethically across contexts. In short, becoming multiliterate is to gain or to have a rich repertoire of creative, critical, reflective and rhetorical skills needed to successfully navigate the complexities of the globalized world. Interestingly, the definition of literacy for the 21st century issued by the National Council of Teachers of English (NCTE) speaks to the idea of multiliteracies or multiple literacies in their statement about Twenty-First century literacy:

Twenty-first century readers and writers need to:

- ❖ Develop proficiency with the tools of technology
- ❖ Build relationships with others to pose and solve problems collaboratively and cross-culturally
- ❖ Design and share information for global communities to meet a variety of purposes
- ❖ Manage, analyze, and synthesize multiple streams of simultaneous information
- ❖ Create, critique, analyze, and evaluate multi-media texts

- ❖ Attend to the ethical responsibilities required by these complex environments.

(The NCTE Position Statement)

As is evident from this definition, the notion of literacy now already embeds the idea of multiple literacies or pluriliteracies. This change in the notion of literacy asks for corresponding change in instruction on literacy, too, which is to say that any approach to literacy instruction now should be an approach to multiliteracies, divided broadly as *tool literacies*, such as *computer literacy*, *network literacy*, and *technology literacy*, and *literacies of representation*, such as information literacy, visual literacy, and media literacy (Paul and Wang 306). This change in the instructional approach is mandatory, says Sheelah M. Sweeny, in order for schools to prepare their students “to function in a world where new literacies are the expectation and the norm” (122). Such a shift in instructional approach also fosters skills critical to student success after graduation: “Problem-solving and critical thinking, collaboration across networks and leading by influence, agility and adaptability, effective written and oral communication, accessing and analyzing information, curiosity and imagination” (Wagner as cited in Sweeny 122).

In more specific terms, this project is grounded in the intersection of a) the desired literacy outcomes of composition/literacy courses in the 21st century; b) the field’s acknowledgement that our students are not always being taught the full range of literacies or multiple literacies; c) my diverse students’ expectations for writing courses, i.e., what they want or expect a writing course to be about or what particular skills and genres or writing/rhetorical strategies they want a writing class to focus on (expressed during individual conferences/interviews); and d) my drive to experiment with the limits and possibilities of a multiliterate composition pedagogy in a diverse classroom. In an attempt to experiment with the multiliterate composition pedagogy, I actually drew insights and resources from some closely

aligned fields of new media, World Englishes, intercultural communication, literacy studies, and media studies, and framed a course for my sophomore level students with four units focused on different sets of literacies—critical, visual and rhetorical (Unit 1), essayist and information (unit 2), multimedia and intercultural (unit 3), and multimodal and global (unit 4). I also created my unit assignments—literacy narratives and rhetorical analysis of a digital artifact (unit 1), argument essay (unit 2), remediation (unit 3), and documentary film-making (unit 4), and class heuristics with twin purposes in mind: providing space for students’ cultural, linguistic and media resources, and cultivating multiple literacies in them along the way. I implemented this course in the Spring of 2012, and collected data for this study via multiple case-study interviews with fourteen of twenty students, observation of classroom dynamics and students at work across the semester, and by soliciting student artifacts such as unit projects, reflections, blog posts/responses and all four unit portfolios. I also collected and used students’ literacy narratives, my own curricular and pedagogical artifacts, and relevant insights from multiple allied fields as data sources for the study.

1.5. Research Goals and Questions

This study aims to analyze and work with the existing literacy and composing practices that students bring with them to the classroom in order to explore and assess where they stand in relation to the literacy skills that NCTE and other scholars within and beyond the field champion as desirable. It also purports to analyze the findings of an experiment I had with a pedagogical approach aimed at drawing upon and supporting diverse students’ existing literacy practices while helping them cultivate multiple literacies (academic, critical, visual, media, intercultural, global and multimodal) that they will need to successfully navigate the challenges of globalized world. Towards those ends, I pose the following as the research questions for the study:

- I. What are the limits and possibilities of a multiliterate composition pedagogy? What would be the potential conflicts and challenges around implementing such a pedagogy?
- II. What are the literacy and composition practices that 21st century students already engaged in and bring with them to the classroom? How do they use those resources to navigate college composition? How can we draw upon our knowledge of students' cultures, languages, literacy backgrounds, and composition practices to reach or teach them more effectively?
- III. How do students negotiate their cultural, linguistic and rhetorical differences while composing in English? How have we, as writing teachers, responded to the globalized classroom?
- IV. How do diverse students respond to a multiliterate composition pedagogy? What learning challenges and opportunities do they identify in such a pedagogy?

1.6. Literature Review

This study is an attempt to explore and exploit the potentials some allied fields, such as literacy studies, globalization, new media, intercultural communication, World Englishes, and rhetoric and composition, have for improving the practice of teaching writing to a diverse body of students. These fields are not as distinct and independent as they may appear to some, but intersect and overlap with one another in significant ways, particularly when it comes to addressing the literacy practices of a diverse body of students in the U.S. classrooms. In a way, this study demonstrates how each of these fields shares important insights with the other and how each one can inform and contribute in important ways to the exploration of curricular and pedagogical instruments for the globalized classrooms.

1.6.1. The Foundation: The Theory of Multiliteracies

The major theoretical foundation for this study comes from the theory of multiliteracies first introduced by a group of scholars known as the New London Group (NLG). I built my study on

this base particularly because it already encompasses a diverse student population component and has a multiple literacies objective.

The NLG acknowledged in 1996 that it was an opportune time for them to “extend the idea and the scope of literacy pedagogy to account for the context of our culturally and linguistically diverse and increasingly globalized societies, for the multifarious cultures that interrelate and the plurality of texts that circulate” (61). Critiquing “‘mere literacy’...centered on language only, and usually on a singular national form of language” (63) as severely limited, the Group advocated for the “pedagogy of multiliteracies” that “focuses on modes of representation much broader than language alone” (63). The cultural and linguistic diversity and global connectedness, the Group argued, requires of everyone the ability to “interact effectively using multiple languages, multiple Englishes, and communication patterns that more frequently cross cultural, community, and national boundaries” (63). Given the literacy demands of an increasingly globalized world, the Group concluded: “Curriculum now needs to mesh with different subjectivities, and with their attendant languages, discourses, and registers, and use these as a resource for learning” (72). In that sense, multiliteracies as a pedagogical framework is designed to work successfully with diverse student populations.

1.6.2. Multiliteracies, New Media, and Composition

As Jennifer Pei-Ling Tan and Erica L. McWilliam observe, “digitality,” a huge subject in composition these days “did not feature prominently in the New London Group’s early work in 1996” (214). Therefore, it is necessary to incorporate relevant insights from digital or new media and composition sub-fields in adopting multiliteracies approach to teaching composition.

Kathleen Blake Yancey argues that we need to re-conceive “composition in a new key” in the context of new media and technologies. According to her, such reconceived notion of

composition or writing includes print, but it also includes writing for the screen, that writing is textual but it is also visual, that writing is “not only about medium but also specifically about technology,” that writing is the “ability to move textual resources among spaces” but is also ability to interface, and that writing shapes and is shaped by its circulation and various modes of delivery (“Composition in a New Key” 299). Yancey’s view of writing reflects Gunther Kress’s ideas of changing landscape of writing and literacy in the new media age. Kress writes that given the “theoretical change... from linguistics to semiotics—from a theory that accounted for language alone to a theory that can account equally well for gesture, speech, image, writing, 3D objects, colour, music and no doubt others” (35-36), the language modes, such as speech and writing should have to be “dealt semiotically” as they constitute “a part of the whole landscape of the many modes available for representation” (36) now.

New media, in Cope and Kalantzis’s definition, have four primary dimensions: agency, divergence, multimodality, and conceptualization, which are also the qualities we in rhetoric and composition highly value. With the advent of new media, they assert, the binary between creator and consumer has blurred: “Consumers are also creators, and creators are consumers,” which, for them, is an indicator of a “shift in the balance of agency,” from a society of command and compliance to a society of reflexive co-construction” (“New Media, New Learning” 91). Another significant aspect of new media they highlight, which is also a crucial notion in my study, is the tendency of new media to give way to divergence in views and expressions. Articulation of diverse ideas has been possible because “the new media provide channels for differences to represent themselves” (94). Cope and Kalantzis also depict new media as the stimulators of transition from an era of homogenization to the era of divergence, where even composition and composition pedagogies are moving. New media, they continue, provide spaces for the

expression of identity and voice through micropublishing opportunities on various web-based platforms. In my view, this particular affordance of new media makes them the right fit for globalized classrooms where divergence rather than homogeneity needs to be encouraged. They contend that “[T]he old, one-size-fits-all, on-the-same-page-curriculum is no longer necessary in the context of new media” (98), for new media can work as instruments for scaffolding all sorts of differences that could be found in the globalized classrooms: “material differences (class, locale, family), corporeal differences (age, race, sex, and sexuality, and physical and mental characteristics) and symbolic differences (culture, language, gender, family, affinity, and persona)” (98). These and similar affordances of new media make them unavoidable tools for diverse composition classrooms.

New media can be a good fit for diverse classrooms also for their capabilities to support multimodal texts. Multimodality has been widely accepted and is being duly encouraged in composition classes. In fact, multimodality triggered by digital and cyber technologies has transformed the landscape of composition considerably by expanding the available mediums of expression and persuasion. Yet another dimension of new media that Cope and Kalantzis highlight and that can be instrumental for composition classes is conceptualization, which refers to users’ getting their heads “around new social and technical architectures” and being able to “read and write representational designs” of new media (96). Their idea of conceptualization is analogous to Stuart Selber’s notion of critical and reflective co-construction of meaning in digital or new media, the goal many of us regularly set for our writing courses.

1.6.3. Multiliteracies, Intercultural Communication, and World Englishes

The New London Group's theory also touches, though only tangentially, on the increasing need for theorizing and practicing literacy in cross-cultural communication contexts and in relation to the field of World Englishes. The fields of intercultural communication and World Englishes in the 90s were just beginning to take shape. Therefore, we need to take into account what scholars in World Englishes, intercultural communication, as well as in rhetoric and composition in recent years have to say about the role of language, language varieties, cultures, and students' past literacy traditions in shaping students' current literacy practices in order to teach effectively a class characterized by all kinds of demographic pluralities. Selfe and Hawisher, for instance, argue that cultural ecologies influence literacy practices. Similarly, Fraiberg contends that multilingual writing is a design like any other literate practice. Fraiberg is actually for mashing or the complex blending of multilingualism and multimodality as a new framework of composition which "calls for attention to 'convergence culture' or the point at which global scapes converge in local contexts" (117).

In fact, multilingualism and English language varieties (World Englishes) are long held to be great semiotic resources for composition as they contribute to increase what Selfe calls the bandwidth of semiotic resources for composition by making available all means of persuasion (Selfe, "Aurality and Multimodal Composing"). For instance, Yamuna Kachru notes that writers from Outer and Expanding Circles use different rhetorical organizations in writing because of "nativization of English" and "Anglicization of indigenous languages" due to increasing "contact between English and local languages" (379). She demonstrates that these contacts have resulted into the hybrid expressions and formation of micro and macro structures in writing and speaking that are neither completely indigenous nor completely anglicized. Kachru and Larry E. Smith in *Cultures, Contexts and World Englishes* further add that even "grammars differ across varieties"

and “genres and structures of texts in the written mode differ in world Englishes” (135). They also note that academic text types, such as expository and argumentative writing, differ across cultures and English varieties. They present the cases of structures of Japanese, Indian, Chinese, Arabic, and American argumentative texts in order to show that each of them has different logic (of) organization. Citing Miner, they claim that Japanese argumentative texts are characterized by “association and iteration in a progressive flow” (155) whereas Indian texts, on the other hand, are governed by “a direct and spiral structure” (155). British and American argumentative texts have different organization logic, Kachru and Smith further argue, that British and American writers compose thesis-driven essays—“state one’s thesis explicitly and marshal arguments to support that in a direct manner” (155). Chinese students, on the other hand, “are said to be taught to devote the opening paragraph of an essay to statements of universal truth; only after that it is appropriate to broach the topic of the paper” (Lisle and Mano qtd in Kachru and Smith 155). In Arabic culture, Kachru and Smith report, persuasion is measured in quite different terms: “verbal artistry and emotional impact” by the use of “rhythm, sound, repetition and emphatic assertion...than factual evidence” and organization of texts “depend more on metaphor and association than on linear logic” (Lisle and Mano qtd in Kachru and Smith 155).

Even though these descriptions remind us of contrastive rhetoric with their broad generalizations about and simplistic characterizations of cross-cultural composition styles, they nonetheless highlight the possibility of the varied literacy traditions our diverse students are likely to bring to our classrooms. This possibility has not been denied even by the fervent critics of contrastive rhetoric, such as Canagarajah, who argue that student writers schooled in multiple academic sites or raised in highly globalized cultures would be able to shuttle between styles but never be able to write in second language exactly like the native writers do. The shuttling quality

is rarely to be found among many student writers, both domestic and international, who are raised in relatively homogenous cultures and/or schooled in single academic sites in their countries of origin. There is every possibility that our diverse classrooms receive students from both of these categories. Therefore, we should all be prepared in every possible ways to respond to whatever differences and pluralities we might encounter in our classrooms. We should arm ourselves with the most recent pedagogical and theoretical insights from our field and allied fields with regards to teaching diverse student body the writing skills and strategies they need to succeed in their workplaces—academic or otherwise.

Canagarajah, for example, calls for composition teachers to introduce each student to rhetorical and composing strategies, which enable them to shuttle between linguistic and discourse communities in this age of globalization (“Toward...;” “Place...”). In a similar note, You maintains: “we should produce responsive and responsible users of multiple Englishes who will transcend the narrow interests of a particular group and will embrace justice and equality for all peoples” (176-177). He also calls the discipline of rhetoric and composition to “lift composition out of narrow nation-state bounds” because composition these days is “increasingly connected to global politico-economic dynamics” (x-xi). With reference to many of our students being the users of World Englishes, Min-Zhan Lu, another composition scholar, calls for composition studies and teachers to develop more responsible and responsive approaches to the relation between English and its various users in the world.

Some scholars even point to the creative possibilities that come when we recognize the composition classroom as a globalized space. As a ‘rhetorical borderland,’ LuMing Mao posits, “a creative understanding of cultural and rhetorical traditions” is a possibility in contemporary composition classroom (qtd in You 4). I can even see the possibility of cultivating intercultural

communicative competence in diverse study body in this dynamic space. Intercultural communication competence, as a rhetorical skill set, asks for respect for multicultural identities and differences, and have two major concepts at the core: effectiveness and appropriateness, which apply to both written and spoken forms of communication. Development of this ability is feasible in composition classroom because this space allows for interactions between people from different socio-cultural and linguistic backgrounds.

According to Guo-Ming Chen and William J. Starosta, this particular ability is necessary for everyone in the globalized world for the following reasons:

As we grow increasingly aware of the global interdependence of people and cultures, we confront ever shifting cultural, ecological, economic, and technological realities that define the shrinking world of the twenty-first century. The development of new ways of living in the world together is pivotal to further human progress; we must learn how to see things through the eyes of others and add their knowledge to our personal repertoires. Such a global mind-set can result only from competent communication among peoples from diverse cultures. (215)

In alternative terms, they theorize that we need to develop intercultural competence to “live meaningfully and productively in this world” (215). According to them, intercultural competence is necessary not only for cross-cultural interactions, but also for cross-ethnic interactions in multicultural or multiethnic societies like the ones in the U.S.

Intercultural communication competence is necessary also because cultures can have a complex set of communicative conventions and styles. For example, Sheila J. Ramsey in “Interactions between North Americans and Japanese: Considerations of Communication Style” shows that Japanese and American communication styles differ on three particular aspects as:

	North Americans	Japanese
Orientation to Interaction Locus of Self:	Individualistic	Interpersonal
	View of Reality: Objective	Subjective
2. Code Preference	Verbal (and nonverbal)	Nonverbal(and verbal)
3. Interaction Format	Persuasive	Harmonizing
	Quantitative	Holistic
	Pragmatic	Process-Oriented

Not only in intercultural context, intercultural communication competence is equally important in the intracultural context because intracultural differences are no less significant than the intercultural ones. In light of this fact, Ringo Ma along with other intercultural communication scholars pitch for “replacing the opposing categories, "intercultural "versus "intracultural," with "degree of interculturalness" on a continuum of heterogeneity/homogeneity” (Ma 201) because heterogeneity between similar cultures like Hong Kong and Mainland Chinese, and Anglo-Canadian and Anglo-American are no less significant than differences across cultures.

This discussion of intercultural communication style echoes deliberations on contrastive rhetoric or variation in composition styles brought into relief above. The intercultural communicative competence as a concept also looks analogous to the notion of ‘stylistic negotiation’ that Canagarajah asks instructors to focus on in their teaching. Given that parallel

between them, it could be possible to combine both of these notions in some assignments or units with cross-cultural underpinnings.

Another crucial idea that Ma forwards and that so well applies to writing as well is the notion of two-way or multi-way flow of population, and reciprocal adaptation of communication behaviors by people from across cultures in this era of globalization. Many current theories of intercultural communication assume “one-way flow of population and adaptation” (210) as we in rhetoric and composition as well tend to do, but Ma argues that the tendency to have one dominant group or form of communication, and all others accommodating to it, in intercultural encounters “will be no longer held true” (210) in the near future. So, she proposes a new theory of intercultural adaptation, in which “it is hoped that people on both sides will lower their expectation toward the behavior of each other, and that the pressure for outsiders to conform and hostility against them will be mitigated as well” (Ma 210). This idea of two-way adaptation is particularly relevant to American classroom in that it challenges a long held assumption that American students would be well off just learning the Western form of writing or communication, but international students are required to learn western model of communication as well in order to be successful writers and communicators.

1.6.4. Multidisciplinary Conversations to Teach an Expanded Notion of Composition

Integration of insights and ideas discussed above (or similar other pertinent concepts or heuristics) from allied fields into rhetoric and composition, or into composition pedagogies helps to expand the notion of composition or teach such expanded notion of composition to diverse students. For instance, NLG’s idea that meanings these days are “in ways that are increasingly multimodal” (“Multiliteracies” 6) clearly speaks to the conception of composition in forms more diverse than alphabetic. Similarly, Jodie Nicotra argues that changes in literacy practices—from

orality to writing, from writing to print, and from print to digital media—reflect the changes in the material technologies of literacy. Her notion of change in literacy practices helps us to make sense of the evolution of writing and writing technologies. She explains that new media technologies are not changing the fact that we write and speak, but only the ways we write and speak. An instance of this phenomenon in action could be seen in newspapers. Newspapers in the past and now do not differ in what they do but how they do it. Early newspaper page designs were dominantly text-based, but now many newspapers look like websites. Even television screens look more and more like websites now with hypertext technologies, such as buttons and flashing screens in their oral-visual reports. The evolution of newspaper design is testimony of the fact that innovations in media have bearing on composition practices and should have bearing on composition pedagogies as well.

In following Nicotra and Jenkins' line of argument, it can be said that we and our students still compose, but compose with different media technologies, and this fact challenges the ways we teach our students to compose, as Steven Fraiberg notes: "composition for the twenty-first century requires a shift toward conceptualizing writers as 'knotworkers' negotiating complex arrays of languages, texts, tools, objects, symbols, and tropes" (107). The trope of writers as "knotworkers" reverberates with both Bolter and Grusin's idea of remediation and Jenkins' notion of media convergence. Fraiberg even invokes Jenkins while speaking of the ways writers these days remix multiple modes or media as they "design" composition of different kinds. According to him, as the "flow of content across multiple media platforms" collides, intersects, crisscrosses, and interacts "in unpredictable ways" (Jenkins qtd. in 107), the 21st century writers naturally bring together content from those "multiple media platforms" (107) when they compose texts of diverse sorts.

So, the bottom line is that literacy practices in general and composition practices in particular have evolved from primarily print-based into hybrid, multimodal, multimedia, and plurisemiotic with the advent of information, communication, and new media technologies (Duncum, Fortune, Luke et al., Sweeny, Kress, Swenson et al., Williams). Similarly, the increasing availability of multiple means of persuasion are triggering corresponding shifts in the sites for literate activities (pages to screens or offline to online) and requiring of us all proficiency in plural semiotic systems (i.e., expertise in multiple literate practices). This evolution in mediums and sites of composition has diversified both the writing and writers (Yancey, “Writing in the 21st Century”). But most media, and rhetoric and composition scholars also agree on the point that this shift in literate practices has in no way reduced the value of one or the other form or mode of literacy. For instance, with regards to the value of alphabetic composition in this age, Gunther Kress says: “Writing is too useful and valuable a mode of representation and communication—never mind the enormous weight of cultural investment in this technology” (10). He, however, has reservation over the undue privilege given to alphabetic writing: “when meaning can as easily emerge in music as in writing, then the latter has lost its privileged position. Writing becomes equal to all other modes in a profound sense” (12). This unyielding stance of some, if not all, media and composition scholars about the equitable position of all semiotic modes paves way for and justifies the implementation of what I call a multiliterate composition pedagogy in writing and literacy classes because the altered scenario of media, literacy and composition has implications to how we view and teach composition and media to our students.

The first crucial implication, also briefly referenced in the implications section above, is that we need to teach our students the broader notion of composition, i.e., composition in its

expanded sense, which is to say that we should bring home to students the idea that composition these days is no more just alphabetic, but can be done with audio, visuals, graphics, animations, 3D images and such both in isolation and/or in combination. In that sense, composition can be monomodal or multimodal, solely textual or solely visual; it can be done in traditional mediums such as paper and slates, and it can be done equally well in new mediums such as website, iMovie, Flash, Photoshop, blogs, wiki, or popular interactive Web 2.0 platforms, such as Twitter and Facebook.

As such, the conversations about the expanded notion of composition already abound in rhetoric and composition or its sub-field, digital composition, even though it has yet to fully translate into pedagogical practice. For example, Yancey in “Made not only in Words: Composition in a New Key” proposes an expanded notion of composition, which “includes the literacy of print... and brings the notions of practice and activity and circulation and media and screen and networking to our conceptions of process” (320). Pursuing the conversation even further, Mary E. Hocks speaks out of her historical study of writing technologies and adds another layer to the definition of writing saying that, irrespective of time period, writing has always been hybrid—at once verbal, spatial, and visual. Often unacknowledged in the field, hybridity in all writings we do means that the relationships among word and image, verbal texts and visual texts, “visual culture” and “print culture” are all dialogic relationships rather than binary opposites (630-631). She further adds that producing any form of writing including in or with new media requires hybrid literacies. The hybridity of writing has been even more prominent with the advent of new media and hypertext, according to her, for new media texts “blend words and visuals, talk and text, and authors and audiences in ways that are recognizably postmodern” (Hocks 628-29). Hocks further states that our students bring similar hybrid

literacies to our classrooms and in order to scaffold those literacies in the classroom, “we need a better understanding of the increasingly visual and interactive rhetorical features of digital documents” (Hocks 631). Patricia Sullivan complements Hocks’ line of argument by noting that the definition of writing is not and should not be limited to alphabetic text in printed page anymore but should duly include graphics, screen design, and compositions in other media. To be precise, writing these days has been increasingly multimodal and multimedia (Lunsford, Sorapure, Williams, Wysocki, Johnson-Eilola, Selfe, and Sirc, Yancey, Faigley, Fortune), and we should communicate that sense to our students.

No wonder, composition scholars have already started introducing and theorizing new forms and sites of writing. Rebecca Wilson Lundin, for example, offers wikis as a new site of composition, which challenges traditional notion of writing based on the idea of single authorship by facilitating collaboration through its affordances like editability, page history and public hosting. Nicotra invokes Johnson-Eilola who discusses two unconventional forms of writing that might take writing teachers by surprise—database and Web search engine design. Supporting Johnson-Eilola, Nicotra argues that even computer programmers and engineers who design search engines use similar rhetorical tools including audience and rhetorical situation as any other writers do. In Johnson-Eilola’s frame, the conception of writing should also account for signifying practices on the web. Nicotra goes a step forward and proposes that even folksonomy is “a truly collective form of writing in that thousands of users are both creating and adding information to the network (often prompted by a collective, recursive process of invention) and organizing that information” (W273). Jeffrey T. Grabill and Troy Hicks propose even broader view of writing. According to them, from digital rhetorical point of view,

[w]riting concerns not only the words on the page (the product), but also concerns the means and mechanisms for production (that is, process, understood cognitively, socially, and technologically); mechanisms for distribution or delivery (for example, media); invention, exploration, research, methodology, and inquiry procedures; as well as questions of audience, persuasiveness, and impact. From this perspective, writing technologies play a significant role in meaning making- especially in terms of production (process) and distribution (delivery). Writing is immediately and completely restored as an art of communication. (304)

Writing reframed as “an art of communication” definitely incorporates digital video composing that Suzanne M. Miller portrays as multimodal literacy. Miller expresses equally broad view of writing or literacy in general by pointing at the technological and cultural contexts that “have produced a shift in the notion of literacy from the conventional sense of reading and writing only print text to an enlarged sense of reading and writing multiple forms of non-print “texts,” as well (e.g., IRA, 2001; NCTE, 2003). In this expanded view, more than ever, literacy is plural: “reading” and “writing” include literacies or multiliteracies (New London Group, 1996)” (61). With her, I come to a point of rearticulating the notion of composition—it is a signifying practice that can be produced in multiple sites and media; that composition is always a hybrid and plural entity; and that it requires of writers multiple new and old literacies in order to be able to practice it in its larger sense.

Taking up this expanded notion of composition in the writing classroom could involve different proactive approaches and strategies of teaching composition. That could also require a complete re-imagination and restructuring of curricular and pedagogical artifacts and policies, which could include course goals/outcomes, course description, course materials (such as

assigned texts/ readings, assignments, evaluation criteria), heuristics/class activities (such as collaborative work, peer review, conferences), student and teacher feedback system, teaching tools and forums (such as new media spaces, or computer programs), and outlook towards diversity—multiple Englishes, languages, communicative/discourse conventions, and writing styles. This essentially could mean formulation and implementation of a new writing pedagogy (Hocks, Yancey, Miller).

With regards to writing pedagogies to engage the expanded notion of composition in the classroom, Gale Hawisher et al. recommend that we stop privileging print in our teaching and “build on the literacies that students already have” and “open ourselves to learning new literacies that could teach us more about human discursive practices” (“Cultural Ecologies” 676). Similarly, a few other scholars strongly posit that a ‘new writing pedagogy’ should also account for the literacy practices students are engaged in outside the academy (Lee; Yancey “Writing in the 21st Century”; and “Made not Only in Words”) in order to bridge the gap between what students do in their private lives and what they are asked to do inside the classrooms. This move on part of writing teachers is necessary even to make our curriculum relevant to our students’ lives “who are communicating in increasingly expansive networked environments” (Selfe and Hawisher 233) outside the academy.

Multiliteracies as a framework that NLG describes could also be an approach to scaffold students’ existing literacies in the composition classes since different “subcultural identities” of students “find their own voices” (23) through multimedia, hypermedia and technologies that are used as pedagogical instruments under this framework. But Sweeny questions if all the teachers in rhetoric and composition are prepared to integrate technologies in their classrooms. Reflecting on that possibility, she suggests that the incorporation of new multimedia and hypermedia and

their associated new literacies into the curriculum does not have to be “all-or-nothing proposition” (124). It could well be a gradual transition for teachers who are not yet ready to take them all up in the curriculum right away.

One way to integrate technologies into curriculum, Stephanie Vie suggests, would be to include technologies students are familiar with but not critical about: online social networking sites, podcasts, audio mash-ups, blogs, and wikis etc. Another feasible way could be to include computer games into the curriculum for there has been a lot of research showing that computer games shape literacy practices (Alexander, Colby and Colby, Gee, Prensky, Selfe and Hawisher). Along similar lines, Brad Blackstone and Mark Wilkinson celebrate blog as the effective pedagogical tool to teach students multiple new literacies. They argue that students can get a sense of ownership and personal responsibility when they get involved in blogging. Their bottom line is that effective blog activities encourage reciprocity and cooperation with exchanges of posts and comments, and blog can prove to be “a venue for the development of digital and information literacy skills” (199).

These calls and suggestions are already receiving responses from composition teachers. There are some excellent precedents of pedagogical attempts to engage expanded notion of composition in the classrooms. Diana George, for example, takes up NLG’s literacy as design paradigm saying that it is absolutely relevant for composition in a visual age: “For students who have grown up in a technology- saturated and an image-rich culture, questions of communication and composition absolutely will include the visual, not as attendant to the verbal but as complex communication intricately related to the world around them” (32). By practicing design as a teaching trope, George wants to undo the privileging of print over other semiotic modes. Next, Dennis A. Lynch and Anne Frances Wysocki discuss a course, “Revisions: Oral, Visual, and

Written Communication,” they designed and implemented at Michigan Technological University in the Fall of 2000. The course aspired to teach three forms of literacy: oral, visual and written yet not a full range of literacies. Similarly, John Pedro Schwartz discusses a course he taught at American University in Beirut using a “Museum-based Pedagogy” with “the museum as a means for teaching the five literacies that are already or rapidly becoming central to our curriculum: verbal, visual, technological, social, and critical” (29). He sees museum as a feasible and potential site for “teaching students to understand multimodal ways of meaning-making in their social, technological, and institutional contexts” (29). He further adds that “the discovery and employment of the museum’s means of persuasion develop competence at analyzing and using forms of communication that are common to other spaces and texts” (29).

Furthermore, Dale Jacobs implements composition as a design trope by making comics the major resources and assignments in his composition classroom. He posits that media convergence—convergence of image and text—is evident in comics, and comics can be the sponsors of multimodal literacy. According to him, students’ engagement with comics both as classroom resource and the medium of composition could be a productive way to introduce them with the notion of multiliteracies and multimodality in action. Yet another instance of innovative pedagogical response is Rebecca Wilson Lundin’s “networked” pedagogy, which she believes “gives us an opportunity to make visible, and subsequently reevaluate, the received wisdom of our field concerning the definition of writing, models of authorship, classroom authority, and more” (433). She discusses and embraces Wikis as the productive site for practicing networked pedagogy as students interact with each other in the network in “a completely user-editable environment” (434) blurring the roles of author and reader, thus calling into question the traditional authority of writers and readers. Fraiberg’s multilingual-multimodal framework of

writing, which engages “students in activities involving juxtaposition, filtering, selection, and recombining” (118) adds another innovation in pedagogy. Under this framework, he suggests a number of potential assignments for students, as he puts it:

We can ask multilingual speakers or world language learners to use Gloria Anzaldúa’s *Borderlands* as one model of multilingual composing. We can also extend Tom Romano’s multigenre essay asking writers to incorporate multiple languages and design choices. In doing this work, we might ask native English speakers to collaborate with speakers of world languages to design and remix texts (broadly defined) targeted at a range of local and global audiences. Linked to such work could be reflective papers to articulate (or in Johnson-Eilola’s terms rearticulate) their linguistic and design decisions. (118-19)

Along similar lines, J. Elizabeth Clark adopts e-portfolio, blogging and digital storytelling as the assignments in order to prepare students for the future of writing which, according to her, will be “based on a global, collaborative text, where all writing has the potential to become public” (28). She calls it “an intentional pedagogy of digital rhetoric” (28) aimed to foster interactivity, collaboration, and sense of ownership and authority among students. And, in response to diverse student body with equally diverse cultural and literacy traditions, Louanne Ione Smolin and Kimberly Lawless propose a culturally relevant pedagogy as the framework for scaffolding the existing diversity in the classroom. Invoking Ladson-Billings, they explain that culturally relevant pedagogy “empowers students intellectually, socially, emotionally, and politically by using cultural referents to foster knowledge, skills & attitude” (18). Instead of marginalizing or even homogenizing student differences, it capitalizes upon the unique backgrounds, knowledge and experiences of students to inform a teacher’s lessons and

methodology.

Needless to say, all these pedagogical attempts and scholarly engagements have been worthwhile endeavors to teach the expanded notion of composition, or multiple literacies for that matter, to students of various demographics; however, the discipline of rhetoric and composition in general, and composition pedagogies in particular, have yet to foray into and draw insights from allied fields of globalization, intercultural communication, World Englishes, new media, and literacy studies in order to frame better pedagogical approach or approaches for cultivating multiple literacies in diverse body of students and prepare them for the communication and composition challenges that lie ahead of them. My study of and experiment with a multiliterate composition pedagogy in a diverse classroom is intended to begin a step in that direction.

1.7. Chapter Division

In the chapters to follow, I contextualize, present and discuss the findings of the study. The next chapter (Chapter two) describes the research methods and methodologies adopted for the study, and engages the methodological traditions in which the design of this research is based. That particular chapter also presents brief literacy bios of the research participants, and explains the rationale for recreating those snapshots. The following two chapters (chapter 3 and chapter 4) will be the major data analysis chapters. Chapter three primarily considers these two questions: Why teach essayist literacy in a composition classroom? How should it be taught in a diverse classroom in the context of multimediated world? It also situates a course unit on essayist literacy by invoking essayist literacy tradition in the Western world and positioning it against other essay traditions around the world or essay traditions students bring to the class from around the world. It then recounts a detailed process of the design of the unit (unit 2) on and assignments for essayist literacy in multiliteracy context, and analyzes the findings from the implementation

of those pilot materials. Chapter four has identical organization. It gives an account of how I crafted other three units of the course and their respective assignments—unit 1: visual and critical literacies (major assignments—literacy narratives, and rhetorical analysis of a digital artifact); unit 3: remediation and intercultural literacy (major assignment—remediation of unit 2 argument essays into a web form); and unit 4: media convergence and global literacy (major assignment—collaborative documentary film-making). While analyzing outcomes of implementation of those unit activities in the class, this chapter argues for expanding the notion of composition beyond writing essays in the print medium, and opening composition curricula to other types of literacies, such as critical, multimodal, information, and intercultural, as well. Finally, chapter five discusses the implications of this study for pedagogy in future composition classes and identifies some potential areas for further research and exploration.

2. Research Design

2.1. Overview

In course of collecting data for this teacher-research project, I looked into diverse fields for theoretical insights; interviewed research participants multiple times for their responses and feedback on each one of my course units and assignments framed around the idea of multiple literacies; recorded my own reflections on classroom implementation of pedagogy into a research journal; observed participants at work inside and outside the class; and collected artifacts ranging from blog responses, literacy narratives, argument essays and reflections to web design reflections, and documentary films and reflections they produced in each unit. I triangulated data gathered from all those sources and my curricular and pedagogical artifacts in order to make sense of the effectiveness of the pedagogical approach—multiliterate composition pedagogy—I adopted in this particular writing class.

2.2. Research Site and Participants

The site for this research was one of the sophomore level writing classes for the Spring of 2012 at a research university in the U.S. North East, and as teacher researcher, I solicited volunteer student participation for the research. Fourteen of twenty students participated in the research, and I interviewed them four times during the semester. Student participation was key to my research because the student figure in the globalized classroom was at the center of my inquiry, and, in terms of student population, my classroom was reflective of the national picture of diversity as it was composed of thirteen domestic American students including four minority students, and seven international students—two from Mexico, one from South Korea, one from India, one from Haiti, and two from Puerto Rico. Given the scope of my study, I was looking to interview diverse students in terms of nationality, language, culture, and literacy tradition, and,

as I wished, I could recruit, with their voluntary consent, the following fourteen research participants (bios to follow) representing diverse demographics and nationalities:

- One Haitian female student
- One Mexican male student
- One Mexican female student
- One South Korean male student
- One African American male student
- One African American female student
- Two Puerto Rican female students
- One Indian male student
- Two white American female students
- Two white American male students
- One mixed race (white and African American) female student

2.3. Research Methods

The multiple research methods, including interviewing, observation, and artifact analysis, adopted in this study enabled me to capture different sides and forms of participants' literacy or multiliteracy practices. For example, through literacy narratives of participants and follow-up interviews with them around those narratives, I could gather data on their "literacy sponsorship"

(Brandt) or on socio-cultural and economic contexts of their literacy development. Similarly, through implementation of subsequent assignments spread across four different units of my course —rhetorical analysis of a digital artifact (unit 1), argument essay (unit 2), remediation (unit 3), and documentary film-making (unit 4), and follow-up interviews on each one of them, I could collect additional data on how participants engaged and cultivated multiple literacies, such as critical, visual, rhetorical and media (rhetorical analysis), essayist and information (argument essay), multimedia and intercultural (remediation), and multimodal and global (documentary), as they worked through those projects. Interview data were complemented by other set of data that came from multiple drafts of student works and their reflections on the composition process, collected as portfolios at the end of each course unit. My own observation of students at work in course heuristics and assignments recorded in the form of research narratives worked as another data source for triangulation, particularly in cross-examining what participants had to say about working through the assignment or activity sequence across the course units.

While constructing interviews, and case study research, I drew on Ann Blakeslee and Cathy Fleischer's *Becoming a Writing Researcher*, T.N. Huckin's "Context-sensitive analysis," Russell K. Durst's *Collision Course: Conflict, Negotiation and Learning in College Composition*, and "Writing at the Postsecondary Level," and Peter Smagorinsky's "The Method Section as Conceptual Epicenter in Constructing Social Science Research Reports," and his edited collection, *Research on Composition: Multiple Perspectives on Two Decades of Change*. Other methodologists I turned to for productive methodological insights and ideas include Bob Fecho et al. ("Teacher Research in Writing Classrooms"), Robert E. Stake (*Qualitative Research: Studying How Things Work*), and Cindy Johaneck (*Composing Research: A Contextualist Paradigm for Rhetoric and Composition*). This body of scholarship helped me with

ideas to integrate multiple research methods, construct research instruments to effectively collect and analyze data, and to coherently report findings from the study.

Even though I employed multiple research methods, they were not mutually exclusive nor were they employed linearly. Instead, they were complementary to one another, and I used some of them concurrently to gather diverse sets of data on participants' past and present literacy practices. For example, interviews and artifacts collection took place side by side in almost every unit and, in most cases, one informing the other. Many of my interview questions referred to what and how participants did in their unit assignments and why they did what they did, and few others also spoke to what they stated in their reflection papers. In the similar fashion, observation and interviews informed one another. Observation was an ongoing process for the entire semester, but some of my interview questions were shaped by what I saw, heard or interpreted as happening in the class. A few other questions, however, originated from my experience as a transnational researcher in the U.S. and my reading in multiple interrelated fields. Therefore, my research design was a complex architecture. This architecture, however, was founded on the base of my positionality; after all, it was my research design. But that does not mean to say though that it sprouted from nowhere and evolved overnight in its current form. It took me years of study into the diverse fields associated with rhetoric and composition, my sustained quest for effective composition pedagogy for a diverse student population, and my extended experience as an international student and teacher in American academy to come up with my research questions and research goals, which, in turn, set stage for the choice of my research methods. One of my research goals was to learn from the multiplicity of linguistic, cultural and literacy traditions students bring with them to the class and to explore a pedagogical approach that would make the most of that multiplicity. Another but interrelated goal was to experiment with such a

pedagogical approach to see if it could also cultivate multiple literacies in students, ones that they require when they join the workforce. As such, my research questions, research goals and research methods were integrally interconnected.

As an intrinsic part of my research project, my research methods, like my research questions and goals, also evolved over time. Initially, I planned a survey as part of my research methods; I also had plans to engage multiple research sites, including the Writing Center of my university, and some other sections of sophomore writing class. But as the research design took final shape, I dropped the idea of the survey and multiple research sites. The survey idea became irrelevant because most of my students participated in the research, and I realized that sending survey questionnaires to other students in other writing sections operating under different pedagogical frameworks wouldn't yield any significant data for my research. Similarly, I had to give up the multiple research sites idea because I was assigned only one Writing section that semester; I also couldn't find any colleagues that were implementing similar courses like mine that were constructed around the idea of multiple literacies. Thus, when it came to the actual research, my primary research methods included case study interviews, observation, and artifact analysis that Blakeslee and Fleischer present as key tools for a qualitative research. However, my positionality was implicated in the entire research process, and this being a teacher-research project addressing my own classroom, the research context and research ethics were part of the way I interpreted or analyzed the data from my classroom study. Below I address each research method in further detail.

2.3.1. Interview

I conducted semi-structured case-study interviews in the form of student-teacher conferences with 14 of my twenty students from my own sophomore-level writing class, which

is the second of the two required writing courses for all enrolled undergraduate students at my current university. As the designated teacher for one of the sections of this class, I had framed my course around multiple literacies with four units devoted to different sets of literacies. I interviewed each one of these fourteen participants four times during the semester; the number of interviews corresponding with the number of course units, and each interview/conference followed the completion of each of the four units. My choice of the case-study interview as the primary research method is informed by its widespread use in qualitative research as well as by its unique affordances. As Ann Blakeslee and Cathy Fleischer maintain,

[I]nterviews are opportunities to explore with a participant, in an in-depth manner, a situation, experience, or issue. Interviews provide information both about the person being interviewed and from that person's perspective. They provide insight into the person's thoughts, perceptions, feelings, motivations, responses, and actions in relation to the issues or situations being explored in the research. (129)

Precisely, I chose case-study interview as the primary method given this possibility of in-depth exploration of student participants and their literacy practices—past and present. While recruiting the participants for interviews, I attempted to “represent different socioeconomic backgrounds, academic interests, and relationships to literacy” (Russell Durst 30) in the pool of my interview participants. Students' literacy narratives and follow-up interviews provided me with intimate details about their cultures, languages, past literacy practices, and even their socioeconomic backgrounds. Even though participation in the research was voluntary, I asked participants' consent well in advance. In an effort to represent classroom diversity, I interviewed African American, White American, Asian, Hispanic, and European male and female students. For some of them, English was a mother tongue; for others it was the second, third, or the

foreign tongue. Some of these participants were born to American parents; others were born in the U.S. to immigrant parents, while yet others were here just to earn a degree. This difference and diversity made my class a ‘globalized’ classroom, and, while collecting data, I tried to make sure that this special characteristic of my student body got reflected in my pool of data.

My interviewing, however, involved an ethical complexity, as I was interviewing my own students. Therefore, I had to work out a special way to interview the participating students. I had to use one-on-one conferences with them as my interview sessions in the interest of IRB protocol. The IRB protocol discourages interviewing students before the semester is over and the grades are posted because of the possibility that student participation could be motivated by their expectations for better grades or, conversely, the teacher’s grade could be influenced by particular student’s participation or non-participation in the research. However, video recording mandatory conference sessions built on syllabus and unit calendars upon student consent is permitted, as it avoids both of those potential risks, and conferencing with students is already integral to the course. But this accommodation was still complicated in my case for two particular reasons. One, I could not interview all of my twenty students, as planned, because not everyone consented (only 14 out of 20 students participated in the research) for recording the conference sessions. Secondly, even with the participating students, I struggled to integrate my interview questions in the conversations focused around particular assignments. Even though participants granted approval for asking additional questions as needed, and I, as a teacher, had the privilege to steer the conversation in any direction I wanted, I was worried that the flow of conversation could be disrupted or conversation would not be as focused on the issues in the assignment as it should be if I incorporated my interview agendas into the list of issues for the conversation. In an effort to minimize these potential hurdles to smooth conferencing, I adopted

a particular strategy. Instead of 20-minutes standard slots for one-on-one conferences with students in my regular writing classes, I provided students with 40-minutes slots for this particular class. With non-participating students, I had regular conferences at the regular time of 20 minutes, but with participating students, I had conferences in two segments. In the first segment, we had conversations focused around specific issues on their ongoing projects; in the following segment, we had extended discussion around the projects but I also asked specific questions related to my research study. I recorded the sessions with participating students, with their prior consent. With implementation of that particular strategy, I could do regular conferences with all the students but interviews as well with the participating students.

In order to maintain consistency across interviews, I used the same set of questions for each one of the interviewees and asked follow-up questions about his or her literacy, cultural and linguistic traditions, and strategies or methods used to complete a particular project at hand, as needed. My questions (questions are listed in the appendix #1) about students' literacy narratives/practices (first assignment for unit 1) revolved around their goals for the literacy narratives, process and challenges of composing those narratives, comparison of literacy narrative composition with other writing assignments, students' first, second or third languages and the influence of their native cultures or languages in their literacy narratives, and the level of their computer and Internet literacies. Similarly, my interview around their rhetorical analysis assignment (second assignment for unit 1) included questions (see appendix #1 for actual questions) about the digital artifacts (music videos, commercial advertisements, political cartoons, or clips from TV shows or movies etc.) chosen for analysis, and the reason/s for that particular choice; about critical and rhetorical concepts, terms and tools used in analyzing the chosen artifacts; about the use of shared texts from the class for drawing concepts or tools for

analysis; about students' (different) experience working on the assignment; about their evolving understanding of the ways in which popular culture is produced and consumed; about their impression of the assignment-specific shared texts; and about their overall evaluation of unit 1 as a whole. Needless to say again, I had some follow-up questions both in literacy narrative and rhetorical analysis assignments for each one of fourteen participants. The questions were specific to what they did and how they did on the assignment. These additional questions were meant to get the participants to speak about their "literacy sponsorship" (Brandt) and to address the influence of socio-cultural and economic contexts on their past or present literacy practices. For instance, for the literacy narrative interview, I had the following additional questions for Camila, a Hispanic female student from Puerto Rico who speaks English as a second language and whose entire high school education was done in Puerto Rico at a Spanish medium school:

1. What kinds of feedback about your English (written or spoken) do you get from your professors here in the U.S.?
2. How much influence do you feel of your first language has on your second language?
3. How different or similar is the academic/Standard English you use in school from the English variety you use in your daily life?
4. You say at one point in your narrative that you are proud of being a bilingual. Any specific reason/s for that "bilingual pride"?
5. Can you tell me something more about your family? Where do your parents come from and what do they do for living?
6. Where did you go for your elementary, middle and high school education?
7. What kinds of writing have you done so far? What writing assignments?
8. How were you taught to write essay in your previous schools?

For the unit 2 argument essay, I had questions (see questions in the appendix #1) around their chosen topics, their research and composing processes, their source use including primary data source, their stylistic and linguistic choices, and challenges and values of working in this assignment. As in unit 1, I had participant or assignment-specific questions in this unit too. In some cases, these questions naturally followed the conversations; in others, depending on the participant's positionality, I asked additional questions related to the chosen topic, the ways she or he engaged the topic and developed argument, and the English variety, writing style and/or cultural references she or he used in her/his particular essay. For instance, for Andre, an African American male student who comes from the United States, speaks English as a native tongue, and whose entire education was done in the U.S., I asked just one additional question: "In your essay, you argue that overemphasis on digital literacy could be detrimental to the well being of students. How so?" But for some other participants, I asked different follow-up questions specific to their positionalities, assignment topics, or their composing processes.

Similarly, for unit 3 remediation projects, I had questions (see Appendix #1 for actual questions) to each one of participants on their digital composition (blogging, Wiki and website design etc.) experiences before joining my class and the contribution of those existing practices in completing remediation projects; about the changes (diction, audio, visual etc.) they made while remediating a print based argument essay into a website form and the reasons (audience, media etc.) for those changes; and on the process involved in the act of remediation. I also had questions on the cultural and linguistic resources (first language, English variety, images, audios, videos etc.) used in the remediation projects; on the opportunity afforded to them by this assignment in terms of learning new skills or practicing their existing skills; on the differences in the first version and second version of remediated websites (they were required to produce two

versions for two different audiences—general American public, and the community of their student peer) and factors triggering those differences; and on their evaluation of assigned texts for the unit, and overall unit as a whole.

And for unit 4 documentary film making group project, I had questions (see appendix #1 for actual questions) about comparing various modes and mediums of composition (documentary, web text, academic paper, audio, blog etc.); about their experience with collaborative work mode, and work with sources; about challenges they encountered while putting together the documentary; and about the ways they resolved those challenges. My list also included questions about the contribution of their past literacy practices towards the completion of this assignment, and about their experiences with and learning from this assignment.

Finally, I also had some questions pertaining to my course as a whole, which I asked each participant at the end of the fourth interview:

1. What expectations did you have for this writing course when you first joined it?
How did you form those expectations? Were your expectations met by the course content and its teaching?
2. What do your friends in other classes say about their writing classes or composition in general? How do you compare your composition experience with theirs?
3. What do you think should a writing class focus on? Why?
4. Do you have any other thoughts on this course? Any suggestions or critique?

I am detailing this whole process of interviewing here in keeping with Peter Smagorinsky, who, citing Chin (1994), asks researchers to be “explicit about who conducted the interviews, whether

or not multiple interviewers were involved and if so, how consistency across interviewers was achieved (e.g., relying on a uniform interview protocol or set of prompts and providing the text of such scripts), and other factors that help to reveal the specific nature of the data collection” (“The Method Section as Conceptual Epicenter” 395). And finally, I got the video-recorded interviews transcribed later by a trained transcriptionist for using them as a data source in analysis process.

2.3.2. Observation

In a qualitative study like this one, Robert E. Stake argues, “most good data come from observations researchers make about processes, products, and their artifacts” (26). Following Stake’s dictum, I maintained a reflective research journal throughout the semester recording my thoughts and perspectives on the course, and educational praxis in the class: What worked and what did not work in the class? Why didn’t the activities, assignments or teaching approaches work as well as they might have? What changes should be made to the course artifacts, assignments or pedagogical approach for the future classes?

Maintaining the research journal afforded me the opportunity to keep track of emerging meanings, perspectives and interpretations; to reflect on the connections across sources; and to “uncover the patterns and explanations needed to answer your (my) research question[s]” (Blakeslee and Fleischer 184). This method also allowed me to record students’ informal or oral feedback on my course component and delivery style. I could also capture details of the class in motion and students in action through this medium. In addition, as a separate data source, the research journal enriched my triangulation process too as I used it in combination with other research strategies and data sources to make claims out of or about them. I used observation data particularly in cross-verifying claims participants made about their learning or achievement in

particular units or in specific assignments. In short, my observation helped me to read between the lines of what participants stated in interviews or assignment reflections as their accomplishments, and what their end products spoke to me about their actual performance. All in all, this helped me to be a more reflective teacher researcher.

2.3.3. Artifact Analysis

Rhetorical artifact analysis constitutes the core of my research methods. For analysis, I collected multiple sources of data—student papers and portfolios, their reflections, in-class writings, formal/informal notes, blogs or other online postings, and their websites and multimedia compositions. I then triangulated those data with data from other sources, such as participant interview transcripts; course/unit goals; course materials including syllabus and assignment descriptions, assessment criteria and writing prompts or heuristics; and my personal reflections and observation. I made triangulation the central part of my analysis because it is highly valued in qualitative research for its function of cross-verifying interpretations and research findings with additional testimonials. Many research scholars like Stake laud triangulation as an analytical tool. In his words, “triangulation is a form of confirmation and validation” as much as “a form of differentiation (Flick, 2002)” for “giving more respect to multiple points of view” (123). He further argues that triangulation

may make us more confident that we have the meaning right, or it may make us more confident that we need to examine differences to see important multiple meanings. You might call it a win–win situation. If the additional checking confirms that we have seen it right, we win. If the additional checking does not confirm, it may mean that there are more meanings to unpack, another way of winning....With triangulation, our research can be improved either way. (123-124)

His point is that data triangulation increases the validity and accuracy of our interpretations. That is precisely so because triangulation is a rigorous process of looking at a thing, individual or data from multiple vantage points. Blakeslee and Fleischer reinforce this idea by adding that triangulation involves the process of examining the same object, person, meaning or situation in multiple ways to “determine if each way reveals the same or similar information—to see, in other words, if the multiple ways of looking at an event or situation confirm what you are seeing. If they don’t, which sometimes happens, you need to consider what might be causing the discrepancy” (105). The merit of triangulation lies in that it points out and accounts for disconfirming data too. As the above duo suggests, triangulation of multiple sources of data also helped me explore the factors causing discrepancy in my research findings. I duly accounted for any disconfirming data causing discrepancy in meanings or giving way to new themes or interpretations, which is to say that I took into consideration both evidence and counterevidence to emerging themes and interpretations. The special significance of disconfirming data is underscored by a number of other scholars such as Smagorinsky as well, who says that, first, such data “may disrupt neat interpretations of the trends and complicate conclusions available from the analysis” and “[S]econd, disconfirming data may serve as a separate focus of analysis” (397-398).

In addition to accounting for disconfirming data, I also focused on the context in which my students produced their artifacts, in an effort to examine them rhetorically. In Blakeslee and Fleischer’s words, the “context includes the author, the author’s purpose in writing (the exigence or rhetorical situation for the document), the manner in which the document was written (e.g., collaboratively, with reviews by higher ups), the audience(s) for the document, the mode of delivery, and so on” (120). In other words, I looked at the rhetorical situation of writers or, in

Stake's terms, the "situationality" of composition while examining context closely for potential meanings. I foregrounded situationality in my analysis because "[S]ituations are extra important for qualitative research. The theorists invented the word "situationality," referring to the attention given to particular places, times, social backgrounds, communication styles, and other backgrounds for the activities and relationships being studied. The situation provides part of the meaning for qualitative phenomena" (Stakes 52).

Similarly, I studied linguistic or discourse features of artifacts as part of rhetorical analysis, which "entails looking at language use" in general and "taking into account the setting and situation in which the text was created or is functioning (see Huckin, 1992)" (Blakeslee and Fleischer 122). In the analysis process, I closely examined "the register of various words and phrases in the student's text: Are they formal or informal; are they Standard English or dialect?" (Blakeslee and Fleischer 123). In addition, I analyzed student texts thematically, focusing on their content and keeping a particular eye on whether "a particular idea or subject recurs in the writing or if there are particular places where contradictions arise" (Blakeslee and Fleischer 124). The discursive met rhetorical as I looked into discourse features and registers side by side with context and "situationality" of artifacts being analyzed.

Other factors that played into artifact analysis are my personal and theoretical lenses. According to Blakeslee and Fleischer, "[T]he personal and theoretical lenses you hold will determine both what artifacts you choose to collect and how you choose to analyze them. These lenses will ultimately also influence what you find in your analyses and what meaning you make of what you find" (125). My personal lens, I must acknowledge here, is one of a transnational student researcher in the U.S. (for detailed discussion—see next section). So, revealing my institutional affiliation and ideological orientation can serve two functions. One, disclosing my

positionality is a part of my research ethics, and two, such a disclosure puts personal biases and values up front so that readers won't be misled and, therefore, can make informed decisions or judgments about my ideas or values.

As an international graduate student and a writing instructor in a U.S. research university, my positionality is implicated in this research. Not only mine, but each one of researcher's "positionality" becomes implicated in research because, as Blakeslee and Fleischer explain, "[E]ach of us brings cultural, ethnic, gender, class, theoretical, and occupational biases to our work, which create certain lenses through which we view what we observe and hear... [we] cannot ignore or suddenly eliminate such biases. Rather, we need to be very aware of these stances and awake to their implications for our research" (12). As such, positionality, subjectivity or location of researcher and its implication in research is being consistently taken up in rhetoric and composition scholarship too. In that regard, Blakeslee and Fleischer report:

[c]omposition scholars have increasingly addressed the issue of bias and its place in research (e.g., Borland, 1991; Kirsch & Ritchie, 1995; Moss, 1992; Yagleski, 2001).

Many of these scholars talk about bias in terms of personal subjectivities that arise from our own perspectives and that influence how we view and interpret situations. They argue that subjectivities are always present in our research. What we need to do, they say, is reflect on and acknowledge them. (29)

As stated above, acknowledging biases is also being ethical in research. So, researcher's positionality and perspectives should not go unacknowledged.

In addition to acknowledging researcher's personal biases and positionality, another aspect of being ethical is disclosing the theoretical lens informing the research project being undertaken. In that respect, I bring particular theoretical lens to this study. Multiliteracies and its

associated issues such as globalization, intercultural communication/composition, new media, and World Englishes inform my study, and I use them as theoretical grounds while analyzing research artifacts. In other words, I base this study in the theoretical discussion of relevant insights from interconnected fields of multiliteracies—World Englishes, new media, intercultural communication, globalization, and rhetoric and composition. When appropriate, I draw on pertinent ideas from the published literatures and accounts from these allied fields to seamlessly interweave the theory and praxis in my research report.

In artifact analysis, I particularly focus, among other things, on topics students choose to work on, their composing or research processes, their cross-cultural composition styles including a remix of personal and academic styles, their organization patterns, their use of World Englishes or multiple languages in their compositions, effectiveness and appropriateness of their source use in their alphabetic or digital composition/s, and influence of their cross-academic and literacy traditions in the artifacts they produce. But following Cindy Johanek's call that "those who engage in inquiry through research are "critical truth seekers" (281), not merely defenders of their own preferences, ideologies, or writing styles" (105), I do not remain blind or orthodox to any of my biases but, instead, critically engage them while scrutinizing research artifacts from multiple standpoints.

2.3.4. Researcher Positionality

As briefly referenced above, my positionality, to a certain extent, influenced my choice of research questions, research goals, and research methods for this study. It also was implicated on the ways I interpreted or analyzed my research data. Therefore, unfolding my positionality here is warranted. I am currently a transnational doctoral student at a research university in the northeastern U.S., and I had all my schooling up until my Masters in a small South Asian

country, Nepal. As an international multilingual student, I am one of the million of international students in the U.S. and one of the thousands at my current university. In my early years as an international graduate student in a school in Louisiana (for a semester in the Spring of 2008) and here in my current school after that, I struggled to step up and participate in group discussions or seminar-format classes. I still remember that I never spoke up except as an in-class presentation leader in the first composition practicum I had to take in Louisiana, not because I had nothing to say, but because I could not follow the conversation and identify the right time to intervene or take turns partly because I was not yet accustomed to an American accent and seminar class format. That had a direct impact on my grade, and overall performance in the class, if not in the learning. Even though the course instructor had forewarned me about the impact of my non-participation in the final grade, I remained silent the entire semester. In other lecture-based classes though, I could do pretty well because that format was something I was used to, and it did not require regular participation in conversation other than during occasional group projects inside and outside the class. I should mention here that my story is not unique. Like me, many international students struggle to participate in class discussion, and group work not because they are incapable or deficient, but because they are systematically discouraged from speaking up in classes in their home countries. In lecture-based British model classes, particularly in Asian and African countries, speaking up or expressing different viewpoints in the class is interpreted as disruption or, even worse, as a challenge to the teacher's authority in the class; therefore, maintaining silence in the class is seen as a virtue.

Another challenge I faced as an international student was composing assignments in the style expected in the American academy. I had done a number of term papers and an independent study in my Master's degree in Nepal, but those projects were not necessarily thesis-driven and

based on appropriate source use. So, when I was required to produce thesis-driven argumentative essays with proper source documentation all at once, I struggled to meet the demands. It took me few years of training and immersion in the American academic system before I could compose something close to what professors saw as persuasive academic writing.

So, my cross-border academic journey has been characterized by learning by trial and error, and frequent intercultural, inter-linguistic and inter-academic adaptations. As a degree-seeking student away from my place of origin, I have been to the classes where the student population was very diverse, and I have also been to the classes where I was the only international student. And, as a writing instructor, I have had a similar experience. I have taught classes with really diverse student bodies, and I have also taught classes with few international students or none at all. Both as a student and as a teacher, I, therefore, have a personal investment in this project and, given my unique positionality and point of view, I can see that my positionality has been, and will be, fully implicated in the whole process of the research and its findings.

I believe that my positionality speaks particularly to the position of many international students in American higher education, but my ‘double vision’—as an outsider and an insider in relation to the American academy—can inform my research into the struggles and challenges both domestic American and international students face in engaging in writing curricula that engage multiliteracies. Based on my experience of schooling and teaching in multiple academic sites (Nepal, Louisiana, and New York) and in multiple academic systems (British and American), and my reading and research into diverse but closely interconnected fields of globalization, intercultural communication, media/new media studies, literacy studies, World Englishes, and rhetoric and composition, I can say that there are plural forms of academic

writing, that there are multiple ways of organizing ideas in academic writing, that there are multiple forms of old and new media writing, that writing is done in multiple languages and English varieties, that writing now is done in multiple media and modes, and that writing now crosses borders and cultures like never before. My experience as a student and a writing teacher at multiple sites also tells me that there should be a better way to do and teach writing to a diverse body of students. My current project is dedicated to exploring one such approach to teaching writing.

2.3.5. Contextual, Interpretive, and Ethical Teacher Research

Even though interviewing, observation, and artifact analysis were the core methods of data collection, and analysis for this study, it, nonetheless, has been characterized by some other important methodological features: that this study is a teacher research, that it is a contextual research, that it is an interpretive research, and that it is an ethical research.

Since mine is a teacher-research project, I took into account the complex dynamics in the classroom—the interactions between the teacher (me) and students, students and students, and students and texts. According to Bob Fecho et al., “teacher research grows out of complex classroom contexts” and that “[I]t is often the very particular complexities of teacher/students, student/student, or student/text transaction within dynamic sociocultural contexts of classroom, school, home, and community that prompt teacher research questions” (p. 119). As I describe in chapter one, my research was also triggered by the changing classroom composition and dynamics. And like Blakeslee and Fleischer note, “Teacher research is the systematic study of a teacher’s own classroom based in a question of concern that arises from that setting” (102). My research questions also arose out of the diverse student body and their equally diverse literacy and cultural traditions that I briefly describe in a separate section later in this chapter. Actually, I

use students' writing or literacy practices as a way to understand them better, and like many other researchers who have "investigated the needs, concerns, and cultures of students to teach them" (Fecho et al. 115), my investigation into the globalized, multiliteracies-focused classroom is meant to devise a better way to teach diverse students more effectively the composition/communication skills they need to navigate the complexities of the globalized world that they inhabit. Similarly, along the same lines as other teacher researchers who "focused on the dynamics of writing...on how their students developed as writers, and...on understanding what their students already did as writers and how that knowledge might inform their teaching" (Fecho et al. 116), my study also looks at students' literacy narratives in order to get insights into their existing literacy practices, and develop strategies to scaffold those practices while also teaching them the additional literacies required of them to survive in the complex world. Therefore, my approach is one of "learn[ing] about students through student work, talk, and writing" (Fecho et al. 117) to serve them better or reach them effectively.

As a teacher research, my project complements and builds on the "compelling body of teacher research" on "how students develop as writers, as well as how teachers use writing to learn about students in order to teach them, create literate environments, and help students make meaning and act upon their worlds through writing" (Fecho et al. 131). My study, like any other teacher research, demands, "emic perspectives" of students, and accounts for "the processes and potential, the idiosyncrasies and evolving identities, and, above all, the stories...of students as they write the word and the world" (Fecho et al. 133).

Apart from that, as briefly stated above, my research is also informed by a contextualist research paradigm. According to Johanek, a contextualist paradigm upholds the notion that research methods for a project should be "based not on politics or on personal preferences, but

on the contexts in which our research questions arise” (111). She also argues that, in terms of research methods, researchers “make the decisions they do, guided by their understanding of the intersecting rhetorical and research issues present in the context of their work” (115). In that sense, the methodological choice is a complex rhetorical decision guided by the context and nature of research, and my research is not an exception. Smagorinsky also emphasizes context in research as:

[w]ith greater attention to the relational nature of research, researchers were called on to explain more about the context of the investigation: the social and cultural experiences of the participants; the physical, social, and political setting of the research; the assumptions at work in the environment; the researcher’s relationships and interactions with the participants; and much more. (392)

Durst seconds this contextual consideration saying that “social, political, and economic considerations have become more and more central in all areas of composition studies, and scholars increasingly have tended to define student writers in light of such considerations” (“Writing at the Postsecondary Level” 79). In line with or in light of these conversations, my research accounts for contextual considerations while interpreting data or making meaning out of diverse set of data sources.

In addition, while this is a qualitative study—interpretive, empirical, and situational, I make some reasonable inferences and generalizations for parallel situations based on the findings of the study. Even though my study does not reflect all the characteristics of a qualitative research that Stake describes—interpretive, experiential, empirical, situational, personalistic, emic, and well-triangulated, it nonetheless embodies some—more than others—of those characteristics. For instance, as a qualitative interpretive research, my study represents multiple

viewpoints of participants; it is open to multiple meanings; it welcomes unexpected developments; it upholds the views that reality is human construction; it treats research participants and data sources ethically; its interpretations and findings are well-triangulated with multiple sources of data; and it aims at pedagogical and policy changes both in short-terms and long terms (Stake 15-16). As “interpretive research” that “relies heavily on observers defining and redefining the meanings of what they see and hear” (Stake 36), my research, like any other qualitative research, “draws heavily on interpreting by researcher[s]—and also on interpreting by the people they [I] study and by the readers of the research reports” (Stake 37).

As a study involving human participants, I have completed an IRB protocol for the study, which has been duly approved by the board. In the spirit of the IRB protocol, this study attempts to treat or represent the student participants and other data sources as ethically and fairly as possible both in the research process and research report. I have asked written consent from the participants for interviews as well as for using their artifacts in my research. In the consent form, I have mentioned that I will use pseudonyms for all of my participants when making this research public in any form. But in terms of involving research participants in the research, I chose the middle path between two ends of the spectrum:

At one end of the continuum, some researchers seek to co-construct meaning with their participants and to make them true collaborators in the research, at times even asking them to be coauthors (the latter, in practice, is still pretty rare). On the other end of the continuum, some researchers uphold their own expertise and limit the roles their participants play (participants are sources of data to these researchers). Of course, most researchers fall somewhere in the middle—involving participants in various ways at

different stages of the research. For example, some of us like to have participants, if they are willing, read and respond to drafts of our work. (Blakeslee and Fleischer 217)

I did not ask my participants to collaborate in this research nor did I treat them just as data sources. I involved them as peer reviewers by sending them my drafts of chapters and asking them for their feedback on how I represented them in the final research report. By using their reflections and blog posts in triangulation process, I have also given their views and angles due space in my research. Moreover, I have considered participant students' past and present literacy practices while triangulating data sources or while making inferences about their composing processes or styles.

2.4. Participants' Literacy Bios

Since I used data from participants' literacy traditions in my research, I offer brief literacy bios of my research participants that readers can refer to as they make their way through chapter three and four. These literacy bios provide contextual information about each of my research participant's literacy practices. These data are crucial for triangulation or artifact analysis of student works in chapter three and chapter four, as they provide clues about some of the rhetorical moves that the student participants make in their compositions. Without this contextual information, artifact analysis would be less grounded or decontextualized from participants' actual literate practices.

These bios are constructed from the literacy narratives students produced in response to my very first assignment—Alphabetic and Digital Literacy Narratives, and data gathered from follow-up interviews/conferences with the participating students. In that particular assignment, I asked them to compose a story about reading and composing in print and/or digital media, and gave them the following prompts:

When and how did you learn to read or compose texts on papers and (or) screens? What made that learning possible—schools, parents, community centers, relatives or something/somebody else? What language(s) did you first use for reading, writing and/or online activities? Is English your first language? When and how did you learn to speak, read and write in English? What about computers and the Internet? When and where did you first encounter them? What did you begin with? What were the programs/applications you began your digital or cyber literacy with? Where did you stand in relation to alphabetic literacy or digital literacy and where are you now?

I had also given them choices in terms of language of composition and aspects of their literate lives they want to focus on, with this excerpt in the assignment description:

If you speak more than one language, you can write your story in the first language and then translate it into the second language and reflect on the difference in the story itself because of the language. You can also talk about literacy in the first language and the second language and the degree of proficiency in each of them. Similarly, you can shed light on the cultural or linguistic differences and literate practices, or talk about digital divide and literacy learning (for example, English as the default language in computers, or access to Internet or computer programs etc.) if that speaks to your situation.

After the alphabetic and digital narratives were submitted, I conducted follow-up interviews/conferences with the participating students, with some shared and some participant-specific questions (see interview section above for elaborate discussion). Many of my questions for participants were intended to draw information about their cross-language, cross-cultural and/or cross-stylistic literacy practices, if any. From both the sources, I attempted to draw information pertaining to students/participants' past and present literacy or multiliteracy

practices in multiple languages and media. I also tried to gain insights into the forces shaping their literacy traditions, particularly with the interview questions about their families; previous schools; access to computers, Internet and libraries; their native tongues, and composing experience in English; and their current standing with regards to digital or cyber literacy.

These data were vital in constructing these bios, but even more important was Deborah Brandt's theory of literacy sponsorship. Her framework allowed me to select and present here the most useful and relevant information for artifact analysis from the data I collected.

Brandt contends that "literacy abilities are nested in and sustained by larger social and cultural activity" (3), and that "literacy learning is not confined to school settings or formal study" (7-8). Rather multiple sponsors support people's literacy learning. Such sponsors, in Brandt's opinion, could be "any agents, local or distant, concrete or abstract, who enable, support, teach, and model, as well as recruit, regulate, suppress, or withhold, literacy" (19). Instances of such sponsors could be individuals, such as "older relatives, teachers, religious leaders, supervisors, military officers, librarians, friends, editors, influential authors" (19), forums for literacy activities, such as "magazines, peddled encyclopedias, essay contests, radio and television programs, toys, fan clubs" (20), and/or organizations, such as schools, colleges, church, and state. Tracing sponsorship in each individual's literacy learning is important for Brandt because, "[A]nalysis of sponsorship exposes the ways that individual acts of literacy learning partake of social and economic conditions around them and pinpoints the changing conditions of literacy learning across time" (27). Here are the bios of participants (names used are pseudonyms) thus constructed:

Stephanie

Stephanie was “born and grew up in a country outside of the United States, to a mother whose first language comes from Haiti” (literacy narrative). English was her first language because her mother did not teach Stephanie her native tongue for she “wanted me [her] to be able to speak, read and write in English so that I [she] would have an easier time in school and in life” (literacy narrative). Not only English, her mother wanted her to speak proper English. More than her father, a U.S. citizen, her mother was particular about her English learning “because when she came to this country, she had such a hard time figuring things out” (literacy narrative). Her mother spoke Krio, a Haitian language, and learnt English later in her life with an accent always bothering her. Stephanie had her high school education from within the United States, and her computer literacy began in her third grade. She was also introduced to the Internet in the same grade. By that time, she was already good at reading and writing basic sentences in English. Even though Stephanie credits her family, her mother in particular, for encouraging her to learn and practice English language, she credits her first grade teacher, who always had her read out loud stories to her parents, and school resources in general, for improving her other literacy skills as:

My family definitely had a huge impact on me learning English due to the fact that my mother does not speak English as a first language and wanted my brothers and me to grow up and be able to live in an English speaking country without problems. Not only did I have my family to turn to for education, but I also had many resources in my school setting. (Literacy Narrative)

But she acknowledges that she did not enjoy the print-based literacy a lot. Rather she preferred working with computers or in digital forums. About her literacy choices, she writes: “I always found the learning activities to be rather boring and irritating because they were so repetitive. I

found more joy in using the computers because there were so many more things that could be done with them, such as games and the internet (sic.)” (literacy narrative). Her literacy narrative speaks to her multiliterate and multimodal orientations to learning.

Martha

Martha is a Mexican female student. Her father comes from Mexico and her mother from Nicaragua. Spanish is her mother tongue, even though she is good at speaking and writing in English. Her first sponsors of literacy were parents, particularly her mother, as she reports: “As a child my parents forced me to read, I always had to summarize the story to my mother so that she would know I read it” (literacy narrative). Her family stressed on her education so much so that “when I [she] went to my [her] cousins, instead of having play date we [they] had reading dates” (literacy narrative). Other sponsors of her literacy included third and fourth grade teachers, state law, her sixth grade English teacher, her sophomore year English teacher, high school in general, and her current university. Her third and fourth grade teachers introduced her to computers; state of California, her home state, passed the law that elementary students read a textbook every morning and they be tested every week for their progress. Similarly, her sixth grade English teacher fueled her interest in creative writing whereas a sophomore year English teacher taught her argumentative writing and ways to use rhetorical tools to persuade people. It was in her high school year that she “really learned how to write and read analytically” (literacy narrative), and also “encountered many literacy terms and different styles of writing” (literacy narrative). And, it was in her current university that she got acquainted with blogging and other digital writing practices. Thus, it becomes evident that her literacy sponsorship involves a strong family influence as well as the influence of teachers and academic institutions she has been a part of. Writing is at the heart of her literate life and she credits teachers’ feedbacks on her writing as

triggers for improvement in her writing: “Feedback is something I believe has helped me become a better writer, with good feedback a writer can correctly identify what they need to improve on” (literacy narrative).

Martha is bilingual now, and thinks that her bilingualism has benefitted her in a number of ways. For instance, while she was volunteering in different places in California, people used to look for her when interpretation help in Spanish or English was needed.

Jihun

Jihun was born in Korea but came to America in his teen years. Because he was growing up speaking and writing in Korean, “learning and familiarizing myself [himself] with the English language took a longer period as compared to those who were only around the English language growing up” (literacy narrative). Even in the U.S., he continued his bilingual literacy practices for quite some time: “While I was going to school on the weekdays to learn the English language, I was also going to the local high school on the weekends to take Korean classes; this, along with the fact that the household language of use was Korean, brought about my development of Korean at a higher rate than the English language” (literacy narrative). But to his own dismay, he gave up literacy practices in the Korean language completely at one point in order to “avoid judgment” from American students in his high school. After that he surrounded himself “with technologies and reading materials which were English-based” (literacy narrative). He initially “chose to be around those who were more familiar with the Korean language that I [he] was more familiar with than the English language.” Eventually, though, after going “through a period of being ashamed of being different from others and in an attempt to fit in more and be accepted socially, I [Jihun] decided that had to adapt and adjust to be more “American”” (literacy narrative). He found his high school environment “really judgmental” (interview) and capable of

portraying people in a “different image” (interview) if they don’t fit into the mainstream expectations. After that he stopped taking Korean classes and also stopped writing and speaking in Korean. After this radical decision to stop speaking and reading Korean, his “literacy in English began to improve sharply as I [Jihun] was diverging myself [himself] in everything English and completely turning away and shunning the Korean side in me [him]” (literacy narrative). Over time, with readings and conversations in English, and with technologies, videogames in particular, he gained a good grasp of English language and equally strong digital skills. Based on his own literacy journey, he makes a claim about literacy in general that it could be “naïve to think that literacy is brought about only by schooling” (literacy narrative). Rather, to be more than competent in the target language of literacy (digital or cultural), “it is necessary to immerse oneself technologically and culturally” (literacy narrative) in that language. His statement reminds us of Brandt’s point that literacy does not have to be sponsored by formal academic institutions. Formal schooling is just one among many sponsors of literacy. So far, Jihun has done “a range (of writing) from reflective papers to responses to readings, to research papers” (interview). It emerges from his literacy narrative that Jihun made a difficult choice—to stop speaking and reading Korean and focus solely on English literacies so he could better fit into U.S. culture.

Kasey

Kasey enjoyed writing poetry early on in her life. It’s her hobby even now to write poems. As a child she was an advanced learner. As she recounts, “When I was in the fifth grade, my teacher would give me books on an eighth grade reading level because she thought I wouldn’t be challenged enough with the books the rest of my fifth grade class was reading” (literacy narrative). Kasey credits her parents and teachers as the primary sponsors of her

“reading and writing capabilities” (literacy narrative). She is an African American female student and her first language is English. She has been learning Spanish since 2000, but confesses that it is extremely difficult to learn language that is not a native tongue. Her mother was an English major and father a Maths major, but she is stronger in reading and writing, but not so much in Maths. She started her acquisition of digital literacy in elementary school years both at home and in school. “A turning point” in her literate life came when her church “chose me [her] to be the youth speaker at one of our [their] fifth Sunday retreats” (literacy narrative). As a youth speaker, she was supposed to “speak about a certain scripture and incorporate it in daily life” (literacy narrative). This appointment boosted her confidence as a public speaker and writer because she had to constantly write speeches and deliver them to mass gatherings.

Andre

Andre’s first language is English, and he is an African American male student. His first significant experience with writing began with story composition in the fifth grade. His most intense writing experience, however, began with his International Baccalaureate program. He had to do some writing intensive courses in that program in his high school. The biggest essay in that program was called the Extended Essay, which “had to be a minimum of 4000 words and was supposed to critically analyze a novel from a recommended list” (literacy narrative). Regarding his writing experience in general, he states, “I’ve experienced the growth in my writing. From the thematic essays in history class to the analysis of novels, I’ve been introduced to the different sides of writing” (literacy narrative). He also sees himself as being digitally literate: “Being born in the generation that I am, I was forced to become accustomed to the digital literacy” (literacy narrative). He began his digital literacy with typing and games but later worked up to assembling and disassembling the hardware of his desktop computer. He also

learned to work with the Internet soon after. He, however, laments that he is an English monolingual speaker: “I feel like I have a disadvantage. So many people come from different places and they have two languages or more...I feel if I was born somewhere else... I would [also] have two languages” (interview). His parents and his teachers were the sponsors of his alphabetic literacy in early years, but social media and the Internet facilitated his learning of digital literacy. And the international baccalaureate program triggered his interest in academic writing.

Michael

Michael is a White, American male student, with English as his first language. He was “placed in the advanced reading groups throughout elementary school and middle school” (literacy narrative). When it came to writing, he reports: “the physical mechanics of writing were a challenge for me when I was younger. I had trouble holding the pencil and replicating the letters, words, and numbers I saw in my favorite books. I was told my pencil grip was not correct and that the muscles in my hands were weak” (literacy narrative). That’s why his “ability to compose my [his] thoughts took some time” (literacy narrative). He also faced similar challenges while speaking. His family hired a speech therapist to work with him. Even though it took time, he eventually could talk like other children and overcame challenges with speaking and writing. He also used to keep a journal when he was younger, where he recorded his reflections day by day.

His digital literacy began in fourth grade when he had to use computer to complete his assignments. As a child he also played computer games, had online chats via AIM, and used Netscape to find information for his projects at home. He strongly believes that computer literacy is essential these days, “for not just doing homework, research, and interfacing with the Internet

but also to interact and communicate with... friends, family, and gain information from the world” (literacy narrative). Regarding his overall literacy level now, he says: “I can write essays about any given topic, and I can express my ideas and beliefs that I have gained through reading. With the acquisition of literacy, I can compose my thoughts whether in print or in digital form to share my knowledge with others” (literacy narrative).

Michael credits his parents, teachers, local libraries and tutors for fostering his early years of literacy development:

The reading learning process was done with the help of my parents, my teachers, and many visits to the local library. Every night as far back as I can remember, my parents read bedtime stories to me, and my mother would let me try and read the stories to her. With the confidence that was instilled in me, I remember reading basic words from children’s books. It was my parent’s high value of education that was present in my family and upbringing that helped me to thrive and learn.... My reading techniques were perfected through tutors and I was placed in the advanced reading groups throughout elementary school and middle school. (literacy narrative)

Thus, Michael overcomes the literacy learning challenges he had in his early stage of life with the help of family and resources such as speech therapy he had access to.

Camila

Camila is Hispanic female student coming from Puerto Rico, and her first language is Spanish: “I learned how to write, speak, and read in Spanish before I did in English” (literacy narrative). She also started to learn English in Kindergarten. Her English literacy got better with video games that her father brought home for her, and with English TV networks, such as

Cartoon Network, Nickelodeon, or the Disney Channel. She learned to play video games from her sister, who was three years older than her. She started learning English formally in middle school, but Spanish was still the medium of instruction in her school. Thus, she grew up bilingual, shuttling between Spanish and English in both her writing and speaking. Such a bilingual education system “motivated us [them] as students to be bilingual, [and] it made us [them] proud” (literacy narrative).

Even today, she “still read[s] and write[s] in Spanish since all of my [her] family still lives in either Puerto Rico or Colombia. Spanish is my [her] first language and sometimes it is easier for me [her] to write my [her] ideas in Spanish and then, after organizing myself [herself], write my [her] essays or compositions in English” (literacy narrative). Spanish is more natural to her than English. So, literate activities in English for her involve a lot of translation, and she struggles with that task, as she explains: “I find it sometimes frustrating when I have the perfect word for a description or a sentence in Spanish and I cannot find the exact translation in English, this happens often since the Spanish language has many more words than the English language” (literacy narrative). Her computer literacy began when she was in the fourth grade, with her father introducing her to computer hardware and office programs, and her grade teacher helping her in typing. She gradually strengthened her grasp of digital literacy with games, ICQ and MSN—instant messaging programs, and social networking sites.

Jennifer

Jennifer is a White American female student. Her mother is a British native, and her father is an American citizen, thus, her first language is English. Her parents were the first sponsors of her education. About that she says: “My parents are the real reason why I was successful at reading and writing before most children could at my age then. They did not push

me to read, but encouraged me in a positive way that made me see the importance of literacy as something enjoyable rather than as a task” (literacy narrative). Her parents took her to the library frequently, and she read different varieties of books.

Her computer and digital literacy journey, however, began in elementary school years with playing educational games at home:

When I was also starting elementary school, I broadened my horizons and reached out to using a computer...I learned how to play educational computer games. When I was young, we only had one main computer in my house, but then my parents realized that technology was becoming extremely popular among children, so I got my own computer to use for educational and recreation purposes. I owned a lot of computer games, and still have some in the present because they are somewhat of sentimental value now. (literacy narrative)

A college student these days, she thinks that she is “just as technologically advanced” as she was in the past but is also “able to read more critically now and focus more” (literacy narrative). She had passion for reading in her middle and high school years: “In middle school and high school I read so much in my spare time. I would read about four books every week; there was one point where I would go to the library and had trouble picking out which book to read because the chances were that I read the majority of books in the young adult section” (literacy narrative). She also used to keep journals and occasionally write in them. In the second grade, her teacher challenged her to do “creativity shops”, and Jennifer wrote stories about the interests of an eight-year-old girl. But coming to college, she accedes that her interest in creative writing has disappeared due to time and study pressure. Her love for reading, however, has increased, even though print is her choice over digital format. She wishes she were bilingual: “Sometimes I wish

that my parents were bilingual so I could have grown up speaking two different languages, but the fact that my family only speaks English helped me into mastering the language as a very young child” (literacy narrative). Her bilingual wish is testimony of her growing realization that multilingual and multiliterate capabilities have their values.

Kyla

Kyla is a domestic American female student. Her mother is white, and her father is African American. She is an English monolingual speaker and had all her education in the Central New York area. She started writing four to five paragraph essays in third grade. She also composed other kinds of writing ranging from character analysis to analysis of symbols or images in fiction in her middle school. She began writing research papers in high school for which she had to look for resources online and in the library. Her digital literacy started a little later than others her age: “I had a computer when I was around 11 or 12. I learned Internet like going straight on to it. I did not learn anything previously. They just talked to us there when we were using it, hands on experience” (Interview). Only in ninth grade did she start using the computer for writing assignments. Prior to that, she used computers only for entertainment—to play games, listen to music and to search for information on the Internet. Only with formal classes in computer programs did she become confident in using the computer for academic purposes.

Her first year writing class prepared her for writing in other courses. She feels that she did better in her Women’s Studies course because of the analysis techniques she learned in her writing class. She had to write four analysis papers for a Women’s Studies course, which she completed successfully because of her experience in her writing class.

Raaz

Raaz was born in India but moved to the U.S. in his early childhood. His literacy began in English language and he was spoken to in English all the time even though his parents are Indian nationals who speak multiple Indian languages. His whole elementary education was in English because he “went to an American school in the United States Virgin Islands” (literacy narrative). About his literacy in English and not in his mother tongue, he writes:

I never got the chance to speak my mother tongue, primarily because my parents barely spoke it themselves, and [they] did not feel it was necessary to educate me in *Sindhi*, which is a foreign language spoken and originated in India. Still though, I would pick up a few Sindhi words occasionally, when I heard my distant family members speaking the language, however never took the interest in learning it further to a degree of proficiency. (literacy narrative)

And, with respect to literacy sponsors, Raaz finds his parents, family members and his school as the primary ones:

It was my parents, family members, and All Saints Cathedral School that made my education possible and overall played an important role in providing me with knowledge and engaged me in different forms of literacy. My parents sent me to a small private school during the week and also an after-program community center to learn and gain a good education. As I entered the second grade, I learned how to read and compose texts mostly on paper. This was also the time when I first began to use computers, which essentially led and became my guide to composing texts on screens. (literacy narrative)

When he was nine years old, he also maintained a journal for reflections, and wrote short stories on screen. He also used various computer applications and the Internet in particular for his “own pleasure...and to engage in various forms of entertainment” (literacy narrative). Soon after, he

got involved into social networking sites, and started using some advanced computer applications like Adobe Illustrator, which enhanced his computer and digital literacy in particular, and literacy as a whole in general.

Sophia

Sophia is a Hispanic female student from Puerto Rico. She had her entire high school education in Puerto Rico. Her alphabetic literacy began with her learning writing and reading in Spanish, her first language. From first grade on, she also started taking English and Math classes. Her computer literacy began from grade one from home and school, even though intensive classes on computer skills began in high school. Her Internet literacy, too, began in her high school years. Her literacy narrative details her preliminary literacy education as:

The first language I started using for writing was Spanish, a year after I also started writing in English. I began reading in English and Spanish when I was about five or six years old, yet I have always made use of the English language when it comes to working on a computer. I come from Puerto Rico, making my first language Spanish, and English my second language. I learned to speak English because my mother and grandmother would always play Disney sing along videos and movies for me, and the books they bought me were usually in English, so that I was able to learn it more quickly and have a better core or base in this language than what was taught in school. (literacy narrative)

At present, she is proficient in computer use for study and research purposes but also is critical of its use:

I have made great progress when it comes to making use of a computer for finding interesting articles or videos, research topics, and even editing pictures. Unfortunately, just like many people my age, I struggle with staying focused and not wasting my time on

‘Facebook’ and ‘Twitter’. I want to improve my habits when making use of a computer, yes! I enjoy communicating and doing research, but it cannot keep dragging me away from school work and other extracurricular activities. (literacy narrative)

As an English as a second language speaker, she struggles to switch between her first and second language while writing in English: “Having to switch languages back and forth also makes my writing experience confusing and limited” (literacy narrative). Translation for her is problematic at times due to structural differences in Spanish and English. When she translates her thoughts in Spanish into English, translation does not come out in correct grammar and structure in English.

Remembering the sponsors of her literacy in different stages of life, Sophia says this: “All this learning was made possible by my parents giving me a good education, the school taught me how to read and write properly, and my parents used to help me with anything I struggled when I was little, as well as my grandmother” (literacy narrative). Sophia’s literacy narrative is interesting from the point of view of her bilingual challenge and her parents’ emphasis on English over their own native language.

Jasmine

Jasmine is a White American female student. Her entire education was completed in the U.S. Both of her parents are journalists. Their careers influenced her literacy development, as Jasmine says in her narrative:

As I grew, my parents’ love of reading and writing encouraged a similar love in both my brother and me. Consequently, I remember having an intense appetite for books. Family vacations consisted of a summer week spent on a Rhode Island beach, our noses in books. At night, we would fight for a seat on the porch chairs, silently enjoying one another’s company while reading. (literacy narrative)

For her, her brother was a competitor and teacher. Two years older than him, he set the stage for her early development of literacy because, as she writes:

He continued working as my “teacher” through his elementary-aged career, pushing me to understand academic curriculum that I would not encounter for two more years. When I became a kindergartner, he had me writing short essays that summarized and expressed my opinions toward stories. I began third grade math in first grade. Perhaps this is why I thought I was not good at math – Mike expected me to be at his level. In hindsight, his expectations, and my eagerness to make him proud, are almost entirely responsible for my somewhat early literacy development. (literacy narrative)

Growing up in this atmosphere, she started writing fiction and poetry from eighth grade on. She has authored a number of them and some of her poems have appeared in newspaper like the *Syracuse Post-Standard*. Along side her creative writing talent, she also has interest and proficiency in digital and Internet literacies.

Benjamin

Benjamin is a White American male student, and English is his first and only language. From his early childhood, Benjamin was attracted to drawing. He started drawing even before he began to write. As he grew up, he “began making all sorts of books that combined my [his] drawings (since I always loved to draw) with text that went along with and explained the drawings” (literacy narrative). His early creativity shaped his entire literacy journey. His creativity with drawing and text has just changed its form. He still uses a lot of that creativity as a music and industrial design major. His computer literacy also began early on, around ages 4-5, with computer games, but his actual computer class began in 4th grade.

In terms of Internet access, his family was a little behind. It was only in 2000 that his parents got a dial-up Internet connection. But he learned both digital and cyber literacies quickly thereafter and now, like any other college student, is into social media and regularly uses digital and Internet resources for research and entertainment purposes.

Madison

Madison, as a child, was an advanced learner. She learned to read during her toddler years and “in 2nd grade I [she] was reading at a fifth grade level” (literacy narrative). English is her first language “like most Americans who are pushed through the school systems” (literacy narrative). Her father is American and her mother is Puerto Rican. Though her mother was from Puerto Rico, her mother “decided not to teach her children Spanish. Instead my [Madison’s] secondary language was tossed around and eventually picked up at home and “proper” Castilian was later learned in school” (literacy narrative).

She learned computer and Internet literacies in her middle and high school years—Computer literacy with video games and typing practices, and Internet literacy with research practices on the web. The Internet impacted her so much so that her “work cited page became more about website links then [sic.] encyclopedias and documents” (literacy narrative). She hardly sat down and read a book after she was introduced to looking for information on the Internet. In her literacy narrative, she raises some serious issues about the impact of digital literacy:

In terms of alphabetical literacy I find that people are becoming less proficient in being able to effectively read, write, analyze and effectively using America’s first language, English. It’s slowly being drained by the overwhelming sources of technology. I used to be all for digital literacy, but as I get older I find myself

enjoying phone conversations and writing letters far more than I do scanning facebook and texting 24hrs out of the day. I find that my proficiency in both alphabetical and digital literacy allows me some great opportunities. (literacy narrative)

At the moment, she is proficient in both English and Spanish languages, yet English is more natural to her than Spanish. And, in contrast to many students today, she values print literacy over digital literacy: “a lot of people have lost their ability to communicate especially in person. I think it’s a lot easier for someone to write something, how they feel which is great but when you are in a job interview or represent yourself in paper, its [sic.] valuable” (interview). Her ‘return’ to print literacy after a period of departure from it points to an evolution happening in her thoughts about the value of different forms of literacy. She has gotten to a point where she has started to see the merits of traditional literacy over new literacies. Therefore, it won’t take her long to realize that both traditional and new literacies are equally valuable for a literate life.

Eric

Eric is Hispanic male student from Mexico, and Spanish is his first language. He spoke Spanish as a boy but as he was “immersed into the schooling system of the states [the U.S.], that language slowly disappeared.” He, however, was exposed to computer literacy only in middle school. His journey began with typing and interactive gaming programs and continued towards Internet and social networking sites (interview). Regarding the influence of gaming programs on his overall literacy, he says: “I owe my skills in typing, reading, and writing, to the genius who created these forms of programs” (literacy narrative). A native Spanish speaker, “Moving into high school, I [he] had fully immersed myself [himself] into the English language, having won the DARE competition, Gettysburg Address competition, typing competitions, and etc.” (literacy

narrative), but it was also around his high school time that he realized that his expressions in Spanish were limited. He joined Spanish class to regain his language ability but could never fully do it. By the end of his high school years, he notes that: “Spanish and English literacy, for me rather, were different in their own ways, forcing me to learn and understand them differently. Spanish was better absorbed and understood visually through film and movies, meanwhile, English was perceived easier through reading and writing” (literacy narrative). At this point in his life, Eric accepts that his Spanish is not as good as English both in speaking and writing even though he conducts literacy activities in both languages.

2.5. Conclusion

Thus, my research engaged multiple interconnected research methods to study the practice and learning of multiple literacies by diverse students in a sophomore level writing class. Those multiple methods supported both data collection and analysis process; they enabled data gathering from multiple sources, which, in turn, enriched artifact analysis process thereby optimizing accuracy and credibility of the study. The multiple research methods also helped to execute this research design successfully, which was imperative to fulfill the larger goals set for the study. A complex architecture built on the researcher’s positionality, this research design also accounted for the complexities of a teacher-research project, including ethical dilemma that surfaces in classroom-based research where the researcher is also the teacher for the class.

3. (Teaching) Essayist Literacy in the Multimedia World

3.1. Overview

As discussed in Chapter 1, there is general agreement among literacy scholars that traditional and new literacies do not mutually exclude one another; rather, in this age of multimedia and globalization, they interface and interact closely and consistently in the literacy practices of our students. Given that context, it has become increasingly difficult, and indefensible, to separate traditional literacies from new ones, on the one hand; on the other hand, it has become necessary to revisit the way we teach literacies—both traditional and new—to diverse students.

This chapter primarily deals with “traditional” essayist literacy, and considers how we can make essayist literacy instruction and writing assignments steeped in that tradition inclusive and pertinent to a diverse body of students in this age of multimedia. To that end, the whole chapter revolves around one central question: What does a multimediated essayist literacy look like in the 21st century classroom? In other words, how do we better teach essayist literacy to our diverse students? Essayist literacy particularly within the framework of multiliteracies refers to our students’ acquisition of skills and the ability to choose, practice, and negotiate different forms and levels of essayist literacy as and when the writing context or occasion calls for them (More in section 2). Therefore, similar to the data collected for the larger study, for this chapter as well, I collected all fourteen research participants’ argument essays (from unit 2 of the course—more on unit division, see curricular design below), their essay and portfolio reflections, their blog posts and responses, and their unit two portfolios, which included everything they produced in the composing process, and the sources they used in the essays. I also interviewed each one of them immediately after the unit was over, and video recorded all of those interview

sessions. In addition, I used the literacy narratives of these participants, and interviews around their literacy traditions from unit 1 also as another set of data. Additional data included my own curricular artifacts for unit 2, such as unit syllabus, calendar, assignment descriptions, evaluation criteria, class heuristics, unit objectives, and relevant theoretical insights from scholarship in essayist literacy and other closely connected fields—intercultural communication, World Englishes, rhetoric and composition, and new media.

While creating the curricular and pedagogical artifacts for this unit, among other things, I had taken into account the theory that each one of our diverse students does not write entirely differently despite differences in their places of origin or linguistic or cultural traditions. Many of them might know to shuttle between different composing styles given the fact that they are already schooled in multiple academic systems and in more than one location across the continents. Besides, the globalization and the resultant necessity of communication across languages and cultures make it necessary for each one of them to learn to communicate in different styles across diverse cultures. This shuttling quality (Canagarajah) is what this unit on essayist literacy aimed to develop in students as it emphasized academic writing and language while allowing space for the play of difference and diversity (of student's home culture, language, or writing style). Finally, the unit had a special focus on students' ability to choose credible and relevant sources from an avalanche of sources available both in the library and in the online world. While allowing students to use as many, as diverse and as multiple sources as available off or online, I wanted to ensure that students also become astute and skillful in selecting and deploying just the right sources or right amount of sources in and for their essays/arguments (more on this in curricular design section below). This essayist literacy unit and its assignment for my sophomore class echoes Suresh Canagarajah's essay assignment for

his multilingual graduate and undergraduate students (“Codemeshing in Academic Writing”), and his extensive scholarship in codemeshing, codemixing, and coping strategies of multilingual writers (“The Place...”; “Lingual Franca English...”; “Mulilingual Strategies...”), but my assignment/course was being implemented in a different context. As opposed to Canagarajah’s elective course for multilingual students, mine was a required course for all enrolled undergraduate students. This contextual difference had bearing on the outcome of the assignment or unit as a whole. Different demographics of students meant different dynamics of composition, which resulted in somewhat different outcomes for each one of the students. This difference in my context also meant I did not have research precedence to turn to, and the findings could not be predicted with any degree of certainty.

Through triangulation and analysis of all those data collected through multiple sources and methods, I found a complex negotiation happening in students’ process of essay writing from topic selection to location and evaluation of sources to adoption of particular essay form or style. I also discovered similar negotiation in place with regards to students’ past and present linguistic, cultural and literacy traditions, and their personal and academic “selves.” Even though the degree of negotiation varied across students as expected given their different positionalities, they nonetheless demonstrated that exploratory and academic essays are not watertight compartments as some scholars tend to imply, but complementary to one another (detailed discussion in the next section). The findings from this study also challenged prevailing assumptions about diverse students’ linguistic and stylistic negotiations during composition of essays in English for academic audiences. Scholarship in rhetoric and composition, applied linguistics, and literacy studies (Canagarajah; Young; Lu; Pennycook; Horner, Trimbur and Royster; New London Group) maintains that if provided with appropriate assignments,

instruction, and resources, international multilingual students can negotiate multiple languages, writing styles, essay forms and literacy traditions much more actively and effectively than domestic American students. But findings from this study complicated that assumption, and challenged us to re-evaluate any preconceived notions we have about any group of students. An analysis of student artifacts showed that domestic American students also negotiate, but negotiate differently, and because their positionalities and negotiating factors are different, they negotiate slightly different things at different degrees than their international multilingual counterparts. As the select case studies analyzed extensively below demonstrate, domestic American students do not (or do not have to) negotiate linguistic or cultural differences as complexly as international students while writing in English for American institutions; they nevertheless negotiate, for example, formal and informal tones, personal and academic “selves,” and thesis driven and exploratory essay forms if their composing and research processes are supported with relevant resources and instruction. Thus, on the one hand, this study challenged a prevailing assumption about the composing processes of some groups of students; on the other hand, it also demonstrated that the strategy of teaching diverse students to negotiate a number of factors, such as linguistic, cultural, and stylistic differences, and binaries in essay forms, if they do exist at all, encourages them to save the foundational values of the essay such as ‘personal,’ ‘exploratory’ and ‘situated’, while also being rhetorically persuasive to their intended audiences, including the academic ones. The findings from this study suggest that we can productively foreground negotiation, or shuttling (Canagarajah, “Toward...”) on multiple fronts of language, culture, dialect, style, and media, as the major goal while teaching essayist literacy in a diverse 21st century writing classroom. Thus, the traditional essay has merits and pedagogical value for a globalized classroom.

It, however, took a long and winding road to get to these outcomes. I pondered the question posed above before writing assignment descriptions and also while gathering artifacts for this unit, which took up essayist literacy in a multiliteracy context. I also dug into the scholarship in essayist literacy, which is complex with its various forms of essays ranging from academic to personal to literary to scientific, and each of those forms with an equally complex history attached to it. In particular, the question I approached this scholarship with was this: How can we teach the essay to a class characterized by linguistic and cultural diversity?

3.2. Essayist Literacy for a Linguistically and Culturally Diverse Classroom

Many scholars argue that the older print or essayist literacy is still too valuable to be removed from the composition curriculum for its historical and current role in knowledge production, preservation, organization, and dissemination; for its flexible form, which can sponsor its writers and readers' space for critical reflections and conversations with other genres and text forms; for its pragmatic value in numerous occasions ranging from the college admission process to a job search; for its humanistic and democratic values; and for its merit as the medium of inquiry, argument, or pursuit of knowledge (Badley, Bloom, Heilker, Hesse, Olson, Scollon and Scollon, Trimbur). Therefore, as the argument goes, the essayist literacy should be given the due space it deserves in the composition curriculum, even though the form we ask students to produce should be re-imagined within diverse essay traditions, multimedia contexts, and students' multiliteracy practices.

This 're-imagining' is necessary because the typical essay forms our students are being asked to produce now are far removed from the original notion of essay introduced by Michel de Montaigne as well as from the "facts on the ground," such as the plural literacy traditions our students bring to the classroom and the increasing trend of multimodal essay composition inside

and outside the academy. In the Montaignean sense of the term, subjectivity, pursuit of truth, exploration and the multiplicity of truths characterize an essay as opposed to objectivity and neutral tone associated with a ‘standard’ academic essay. Like Montaigne, many other thinkers and scholars foreground subjectivity, exploration and search for truth as the major qualities of an essay. One among them is Georg Lukacs, who argues that “[T]he essay...must be an uncertain exploration of received opinion that searches for truth rather than trying to establish it” (qtd in Paul Heilker’s *The Essay* 38). Essayists advocating for the Montaignean line present the essay as antithetical to science or logic or even the rational order imposed by disciplinary conventions. Highlighting the associative qualities of an essay, Paul Heilker actually draws parallelism between an essay and Michael Bahktin’s idea of novel as centrifugal, “dialogic,” and “carnavalesque” form (*The Essay* 54), which allows for the celebration of heteroglossia which, he bets, was “apparent since its inception, since Montaigne’s inclusion of both “high” and “low” discourse in his essays” (*The Essay* 56). Heilker further states that “the essay is epistemologically skeptical, a manifestation of the spirit of discovery at work in an uncertain universe, an exploration of a world in flux” (*The Essay* 17-18) and that it “rejects the norms of traditional composition in an effort to better represent movements of the writer’s skeptical mind that cannot be effectively portrayed using Ciceronian rhetoric” (*The Essay* 20). With “norms of traditional composition” Heilker is speaking to thesis-driven static academic essay writing conventions enforced in many college composition classrooms. Like Heilker, Kurt Spellmeyer also foregrounds the personal situatedness or subjectivity in essays as antithetical to impersonality or neutrality emphasized in typical academic writing (264-65).

However, a typical thesis-driven academic essay, Ron Scollon and Suzanne Scollon contend, is particularly a western communication pattern “carefully inculcated through processes

of socialization.” (9). Therefore, it could be wrong to assume that everyone across the world has this same pattern of writing or speaking, as it is not an “automatic outcome of maturation” (9). After examining the Athabaskan and English discourse patterns for some time, they conclude that since “the Athabaskan must adopt discourse patterns that are identified with a particular ethnic group, identified in Alaska and Canada as English speakers” (53), learning academic essay, or “essayist literacy” in Scollon and Scollon’s terms, for an Athabaskan “is experienced as a change in ethnicity as well as a change in reality set” (42). In that sense, essayist literacy can be seen as a historical and cultural construct of the Western world. According to Scollon and Scollon, the essayist literacy is a “relatively datable phenomenon” which began with “a general reorganization of European knowledge structures”(42-43) in the seventeenth and eighteenth centuries. The European knowledge by two hundred years ago “had been reorganized in such a way that nature was taken as lawful, orderly, and interdependent of human activities [and that]...language was seen as the clear reflection of the orderliness of the natural world” (Scollon and Scollon 44). They claim that it was in this intellectual atmosphere that “the English essayist prose style, which certainly had older roots, became enshrined as the natural means for the expression of truth and knowledge” (44).

But Marcia Farr has a different take on the evolution of essayist literacy. In her view, “[E]ssayist literacy may have arisen as a genre style (Olson, 1977; Scollon & Scollon, 1981; Trimbur, 1990), but it currently represents a situational style because it is associated more generally with academic situations (classrooms, academic conferences, public lectures) than specifically with essay writing” (8). Farr makes another striking observation about essayist literacy that it is a particular type of *register*. As a *register*, she notes, the essayist literacy “as it is taught in most schools and universities is grounded in practices and beliefs that have evolved

historically with Western literacy itself” (10). As a Western historical and cultural construct, as Farr puts it, “[E]ssayist literacy can be understood as one way, or style, of “speaking” among many. Here “speaking” refers to both oral and written uses of language, as it does in Bakhtin’s (1986) work on “speech” genres” (7). If we were to go with Farr’s position on essayist literacy, it raises a critical question: what happens if we teach or attempt to teach this genre of discourse to a diverse body of students? Paul Heilker states that through that practice we “impose strict limits upon the various discourses students bring to class—their regional, racial, ethnic, and socioeconomic jargons...” (55), whereas Linda Brodkey, citing Edward Said, posits that such a practice rejects “minorities and women...as either scholars or subjects” in the name of maintaining “the processes of disinterested, intellectual inquiry” (13). Farr herself contends that many groups of students are discriminated as they “use spoken and written language in ways that contrast sharply with the implicit model of language use underlying much writing instruction in this country” (5). Our current model of instruction privileges some over other groups of students, continues Farr, because “[T]hose who already know and use, at least in some contexts, discourse that resembles this taught model relatively closely have less difficulty learning to produce texts that conform to it than those whose naturally acquired discourse differs from it” (5). This implies that students from other cultures and discourse conventions are disadvantaged within current model of instruction on essayist literacy. These students have to struggle a lot because, as Farr says, they do not come to our classrooms as “blank slates” but

[b]ring with them knowledge of the sociolinguistic repertoires of their home communities. Those not from middle-class, mainstream communities bring knowledge of discourse conventions that differ from those expected in school, especially those expected

in written texts.... Ultimately this privileging of one discourse style over others contributes to lower levels of academic achievements. (6)

So, while discussing essayist literacy, we should be mindful of the fact that our classrooms are rife with the “multiplicity of discourse styles” which in no way are the “deficient versions of the Western European (male) tradition of rational discourse but simply may differ from it in some, though, perhaps not all, ways” (Farr 7). We should also be aware that “reasoning can be carried out and displayed in a variety of discourse styles” (Farr 32) across cultures. “A text that may appear “illogical” through the lenses of essayist literacy may be quite logical when looked at through other lenses. The logic may become clear (to outsiders) only with an understanding of unstated cultural assumptions” (Farr 32). The implication of this to our instruction is that “[S]tudents whose “ways of speaking” may differ significantly from the ways of essayist literacy are not taught effectively by instructors who do not understand and appreciate the sociolinguistic repertoire they have brought to the classroom with them” (Farr 33). Hence, the re-imagination of this literacy form and the ways it is being taught to diverse students in composition classes is imperative.

3.3. Curricular Design

Taking into consideration this rather interdisciplinary conversation about essayist literacy, I designed the second unit of my course for five weeks with an extended argument essay as the major assignment. The other three units, however, took up different set of literacies. The first unit, for example, was dedicated to learning from students about their literacy traditions, and cultivating in them critical and visual literacies (literacy narratives, and rhetorical analysis of digital artifact were the major assignments) whereas the third unit was meant to introduce students to the notion of remediation (Bolter and Grusin) with some hands-on training with

“repurposing” media (remediation was the major assignment). Students were asked to remediate their unit 2 argument essays into web forms in this unit. They actually produced two versions of the website in response to my assignment, which asked them to gear one version towards the general American public while the other one was geared towards the community of the students’ peers. For this assignment, students worked for three weeks closely in a group of two, and I tried to pair students from somewhat different backgrounds into a group so that they could interact with one another and tailor their remediated websites to the expectations and the values of the community of his/her peers. Another important point is that they were asked to design the general websites first, share those with their peers and only then redesign the website based on their peers’ feedback. This particular project was intended to put students to work with multiple media or modalities, introduce them to convergence culture (Jenkins) and make them cognizant of the rhetoricity of different media (e.g. website vs. print) or the dynamics of intercultural/interracial communication. Unit four was dedicated to documentary production (collaborative documentary film-making project), where students in groups of three collaborated to produce a movie on controversial contemporary topics like Occupy Wall Street or the Trayvon Martin (shooting) case or the Democratic Movement in the Middle East. This unit encouraged students to work in collaboration with each other, work with multiple media, and learn multiple digital skills (camera work, editing, script writing) and presentation skills (they presented the projects to the class).

While sequencing units and assignments this way, I followed four particular organizing principles:

1. The first principle was to help students transition from passive consumption of media and knowledge to critical and reflective consumption, and then eventually to actual

production of media and knowledge for others. The rhetorical analysis assignment, which asked students to critically and rhetorically analyze the chosen digital artifacts, was intended to make them critical and reflective users of media or knowledge, while the argument essay assignment shifted the focus from consumption towards production of knowledge. The argument essay assignment was also transitional in that it required careful evaluation of sources for use in the essay and production of knowledge through claim-making and argumentation. But the remediation and documentary film-making were full fledged media or knowledge production assignments in that they were either created (remediated websites, in particular), or their end products (documentaries) hosted on different new media interfaces, such as Wikispaces, Google Sites, Wix or YouTube.

2. The second organizing principle of the course was multiliteracies within designated (official) course outcomes. Each unit was dedicated to some set of literacies that we in rhetoric and composition value, such as critical, visual and media (unit 1), essayist and information (unit 2), multimedia and intercultural (unit 3), and multimodal and global (unit 4). Of the eleven official outcomes, unit 1 and unit 2 were built around the following:

Students will investigate a topic of inquiry and engage the complexities (social, political, ideological, economic, historical) of and current debates about that topic.
(Outcome 1)

Students will learn multiple research strategies, including primary research, and deepen their knowledge of library resources to identify sources appropriate to their research. (Outcome 2)

Students will read and evaluate sources rhetorically, considering authors' positions in relation to audiences, recognizing points of connection and difference among texts, and establishing a critical dialogue with others' ideas. (Outcome 3)

Students will practice and produce analysis, argument, synthesis, and summary as central components of researched writing. (Outcome 7)

Students will practice the strategies of incorporating the research of others into their own texts in a variety of ways (including summary, paraphrase, quotation) and provide textual evidence of where, how, and why sources are being used. (Outcome 8)

Interpreted in light of these outcomes, while completing rhetorical analysis for unit 1, students practiced and produced analysis and argument whereas in writing argument essay for unit 2, they engaged the topics of their choosing; learned multiple research strategies; practiced and produced summary, synthesis, analysis and argument; critically evaluated different sources; and took part in ethical conversation with other authors and sources. Unit 3 on remediation, and unit 4 on collaborative documentary film production, on the other hand, were based on other sets of outcomes as listed below:

Students will understand the role of genres, styles, and technologies in communicating with particular audiences and for specific purposes. (Outcome 4)

Students will critically examine how digital media shape all stages of the research and writing process--invention, composing, revision, delivery--and consider how the effects of digital media vary according to audience, genre, context, and purpose. (Outcome 5)

In remediating their unit 2 print-based argument essays into website forms for the general American public and the community of their peers, students learned to work with multiple media or modalities, participated in convergence culture and became cognizant of the rhetoricity and/or affordability of different media (e.g., website vs. print), or the dynamics of intercultural/interracial communication. Similarly, in producing the documentary films in small groups, students recognized the complexities of working in collaboration with classmates from diverse backgrounds; worked further with multiple media; and learned multiple digital, academic, and delivery skills such as camera work, editing, script writing, and presentation techniques (the documentaries were presented in the class).

And all four units in isolation or in combination fulfilled other outcomes of the course namely:

Students will engage in informal writing as part of their composing processes and produce at least two to three sustained, finished texts that respond to specific rhetorical situations. (Outcome 6)

Students will produce texts that demonstrate a nuanced understanding of and an ethical relationship with source texts and research participants. (Outcome 9)

Students will develop revision strategies that reflect an understanding of audience and rhetorical situation. (Outcome 10)

Students will edit for organization, prose style, and technical control as they produce finished texts. (Outcome 11)

Towards these outcomes, students produced multiple drafts or versions of each major project in their composition process. They also revised and edited those drafts/versions

keeping in view the audience factors and rhetorical situations at hand. Taken together, students produced more than three “sustained, finished texts” during the semester.

3. The third organizing principle for the assignments in particular and course in general was building on and scaffolding students’ natural capacity of meaning making with linguistic, cultural, and media resources they already possess. Guided by this principle, while crafting each one of the assignments and class activities, I tried to create space for resources students bring with them to the classroom, hoping that they would be able to begin from or build on those resources they already own as individuals with different positionalities. My first major assignment, for example, asked students to narrate their own literacy stories in languages they were proficient in (the final version, however, had to be in English or accompanied by English translation for my comprehension).

Similarly, in the rhetorical analysis project, students could choose any digital artifact—a music video, an advertisement, or a movie clip—from any culture or in any language (as long as translation or explanation was provided). In the argument essay assignment description, I brought to students’ attention the need to think about World Englishes and diverse essay or communication traditions around the world as well as a consideration of the variety and diversity of research sources they could use in their projects. And in the final two assignments—the remediation assignment and the documentary film making assignment—students were asked to work closely or in collaboration in small groups and exchange feedback while exploring the potential resources from within their culture and language, or beyond, to make their projects rhetorically effective and aesthetically pleasing to their targeted audiences. While working in small groups for the second version of remediation projects in particular, students could discuss World Englishes, the

global flows of ideas and information, intercultural communication challenges, and different stylistic and design conventions across cultures, or any other relevant aspect/s of their cultures, languages and communicative conventions, while providing specific feedback to their peers. In this collaborative process, each student was expected to be the resource for the other in triggering the development of intercultural competence and two-way adaptation of communicative behaviors. Even in the documentary film project, students could look inward and outward for resources for the topic they choose to work on. There were some suggested topics, but groups could also propose potential topics and use any resource in any language or from any culture as long as the resource in question was carefully evaluated and effectively used. The topics suggested for the documentaries were contemporary ones with global implications, which is to say that students could draw resources from class-discussions or course materials on globalization, new media, cross-cultural communication, and World Englishes as well. Similarly, given the fact that the student population in my class was fairly diverse, international students in groups could provide crucial input with regards to transnational flow and cross-cultural impact or reception of their documentaries as they go live via YouTube or other web forums. Thus, my curricular and pedagogical artifacts were constructed in such a way that students could begin any assignment from what they already knew or had command over, and then build on from that foundation.

4. The final organizing principle for my assignment sequence was “curriculum ascending the ladder of abstraction” (Moffett) i.e., beginning with narration and getting to argument via the route of analysis. As such, my students began their curricular journey with narration (alphabetic and digital literacy narratives), followed by visual analysis

(rhetorical analysis of digital artifacts) and ended with arguments—both written and visual/multimodal arguments. Argumentation was the complex of all discourses in my assignment arc and, as a complex discourse construction, it encompassed, or built on the narrative and analysis techniques/skills students learned or cultivated in prior course units. As the culminating discourse in my assignment spectrum, students produced some complex arguments both in written and multimodal forms in unit two, unit three, and unit four of my course; unit two essays students produced were argumentative texts primarily in alphabetic or written forms, but remediation and documentary projects they did were argumentative texts in multimedia forms. In fact, the latter two texts made more sophisticated and complex arguments than the argument essays themselves did. The remediated websites largely made the same arguments as the argument essays (students were specifically asked to make similar arguments), but in different modes and with different set of resources and media. In the similar fashion, documentaries made arguments but again in different medium i.e. in complex visual and multimodal form this time around.

Given this sequential relationship, each unit and assignment in my course had a specific focus, and was intended to cultivate a specific set of skills, but unit 2 had an important place in the curriculum for the fact that it was the longest unit (5 weeks), with the longest assignment (10-12 page research paper) and can be called ‘traditional’ (print-based) but preceded and followed by more recent multiliterate, multimedia or multimodal assignments.

While designing unit 2 on essayist literacy, in particular, and the course itself in general, I had to negotiate a number of things—my research agenda/s, my program requirements/course learning objectives, current scholarship in essayist literacy and multiliteracies, and my own

evolving sense of the composition curriculum for a diverse classroom. While writing the assignment for essayist literacy, I wanted to make sure that students could come up with topics from a broad range of areas, but from within a designated topic of inquiry. I had to put some kind of limits to student topics in compliance with the course outcomes offered by the program, which says that in this course, “students will investigate a topic of inquiry and engage the complexities (social, political, ideological, economic, historical) of and current debates about that topic.”

I took up multiliteracies as a topic for the course because it was broad enough to let students choose something they are interested in or want to explore further. I settled on this topic also because of the approach I was taking in this course. I thought multiliteracies as a topic in a course informed by a multiliterate composition pedagogy should be a logical match. Moreover, this topic was multifaceted and closely aligned with other productive research areas, such as globalization, information and communication technologies, World Englishes, new media, and intercultural communication. Students were allowed to choose any issues associated with multiliteracies, but they were required to narrow down the focus around one or two central research question/s. My assignment description had specific directions about avoiding broad topics or research questions. In terms of source requirements, I thought I should put limits and show flexibility at the same time for the same reason that sources, in this age of multimedia, are available in digital mediums as much as they are in print mediums; that information is available in popular sources as much as they are in scholarly sources; that each medium (such as image, text, and sound) has its own unique affordances, and these mediums work more productively in combination than in isolation; that compositions, even essays, now are increasingly multimodal and/or multimedia; and that information abundance is both a boon and bane at the same time. In order to ensure that students actually get acquainted with and use both scholarly and popular

sources in different formats, I specified the potential types and number of sources to be used in the essay accompanied by the description of the evaluation process for locating and selecting the credible and relevant sources for the essay. I also put a separate note regarding English language varieties and styles of writing or literacy traditions on the assignment description, aiming to encourage plurality and originality in students' work.

That particular note on language and style was intended to make students aware of the fact that communities across the world compose texts in different styles; they do speak different languages, even if not entirely different languages, they possibly speak different varieties of the same language, and that privileging one language or language variety over another or one writing style above another could prove discriminatory to some groups of students in the class while some other groups could feel at home and, as a consequence, may have unintended advantages. Next, I made it clear in the assignment itself that academic writing and academic language is what I value, but I also stated that there is no single universal academic writing style or academic language. This is another instance of negotiation in action. Academic writing in a general sense is what the Writing Program wants instructors to teach students. But neither course description nor the learning outcomes speak specifically about the form of the essay or the type of sources, or the writing style or the language variety to be used or adopted in the class. The course description says that this "focuses on the rhetorical strategies, practices, and conventions of critical academic researched writing," which implies plurality of academic writing with the term "conventions," but, in terms of source use, one of the outcomes says that the course is all about teaching students to use "library resources" and some methods of primary data collection. With that, the course leaves aside the popular and many multimedia sources found on the web. But I expanded it to include other kinds of sources as well. I could see the rationale for limiting source

use to “library sources” because it is an academic essay and sources in the library are already carefully selected and evaluated, but I was also aware of the limitations of library sources. The library sources are mostly academic texts and, in some cases, a few years old, which is not a bad thing in and of itself. But I believe that if scholarly and credible library sources are complemented by up-to-date outside and multimedia sources, student essays could come close to how essayist literacy is conducted in many forums inside and outside the academy in this age of technology and multimedia. I also believe that if we teach students to carefully evaluate sources, there is no reason to limit source use to the library. They can consult a number of sources from multiple sites including the library, and use any that serve their purpose better.

I faced challenges also while putting together materials and activities for the unit. The negotiation was hard with multiple interests colliding with one another seeking their dominance in the calendar. Striking a fair deal among those competing interests and priorities took a large amount of my time and energy. On the one hand, there is no denying that a course driven by multiliteracies as an inquiry should reflect ‘multi’ in its course materials too, which means the course materials should ideally be an assemblage of texts in multiple media, multiple modalities, and multiple forms; on the other hand, this particular unit was dedicated to essayist literacy, which, in a traditional sense, is print-based literacy. There were also programmatic priorities to be mindful of as much as strong traditions of academic writing instruction in the field.

But the negotiation was productive. As my unit calendar in the appendix #4 shows, I gathered three videos, one online news article, one website, three print texts, a set of handouts on different aspects of writing and research, and some sample documents as unit texts. I also planned a number of classroom and homework activities, which consisted of a lot of in-class

writings, heuristics, discussion sessions, presentations, library and field research, reading responses, peer review and so on in and out of the class.

3.4. Case Studies

In the sections below, I closely look at the data specific to six of my research participants—Sophia, Andre, Stephanie, Eric, Jasmine, and Jihun. I settled on that number for analysis because no less number than that would do justice to the range of my data. My participant pool was diverse, and was characterized by all kinds of demographic pluralities--male and female; domestic and international; White, Black, Hispanic, Chicana, and Asian; native and non-native speakers of English; and monolingual, bilingual, and multilingual speakers. Therefore, in order to portray that diversity and range, I decided to examine at least one from each of those categories.

My analysis is specifically focused on the kinds and degrees of negotiations they engaged in their writing and research processes. I particularly examine the moments and instances of negotiation in action with respect to participants' choice of topics, languages and/or English varieties, their decision on "personas" and writing styles, and their determination of sources and forms for their respective essays. For instance, I analyze how participants explored and narrowed down topics for their research; how they evaluated and selected sources for their essays; how they settled on writing styles including the use of tone, diction, languages and/or English varieties; and how they decided on the form/s for their particular essays. These are not distinct steps or categories and do not feature in students' writing processes that way; rather, their relationship is organic. Therefore, even in my analysis of participant artifacts, I do not treat them as independent, but as closely associated rhetorically significant moments in their recursive composition process. I use them only as convenient analytic lenses, which are appropriated from

scholarship in essayist literacy, intercultural communication style, World Englishes, and multilingualism in rhetoric and composition.

Sophia

As her literacy bio in chapter 2 reflects, Sophia is a Hispanic female student from Puerto Rico, and her alphabetic literacy began with her learning writing and reading in Spanish, her first language. From first grade on, she also started taking English and Math classes. Her computer literacy also began from grade one even though intensive classes on computer began only in her high school years, around the same time her Internet literacy began. Her mother and grandmother were the major sponsors of her English literacy with their emphasis on English songs, videos and movies for her entertainment. She also reveals in her bio that she struggles to switch between English and Spanish languages while composing in English.

In her argument essay for unit 2, Sophia discusses language policy debate in Puerto Rico at some length, exploring larger cultural and historical issues associated with this high-stakes topic, and presenting her position on the debate. Initially, she had planned to talk about English language policy in Latin American and Caribbean countries, but later narrowed down her focus only to language policy in Puerto Rico. She discusses this narrowing down process in her essay reflection this way:

I had the curiosity of learning about how the English language is presented and taught in Latin America and the Caribbean, but this topic resulted to be too broad and I was not able to find many good articles or specific books on the topic since these countries have a wide range in culture, and laws and policies on language. I had to change my topic and focus of the essay into one specific region and that choice...was the English language in Puerto Rico.

My research into her source use found that Sophia used some sources composed in Spanish language. “*IV Congress of the Spanish Language*” by *Eugenio Besnard-Javaudin*, and “The Spanish of Puerto Rico” by Centro Virtual Cervantes are the sources in Spanish language and available only online. Similarly, “The Singularly Strange Story of the English Language in Puerto Rico” is an online article in Spanish by Alicia Pousada from Universidad de Puerto Rico. Sophia also used the Spanish print article, Manuel Alvarez Nazario’s “Historia de la lengua española en Puerto Rico” (History of the Spanish Language in Puerto Rico). Moreover, some of her sources like Gustavo J. Bobonis and Harold J. Toro’s “Modern Colonization and Its Consequences: The Effects of U.S. Educational Policy on Puerto Rico's Educational Stratification, 1899-1910,” a chapter from *Puerto Rico between Empires: Population and Society* by University of Puerto Rico, were published in places outside of the United States. Of course, she also had sources from images to videos in English language produced within the United States. In that sense, there is diversity in her source use, and her sources come from scholars and publication forums (both print and web) from across borders. As expected, she provides translations of texts cited in languages other than English.

Sophia is aware that her native language and culture influenced her writing style in this essay. With regards to that, she says: “because my main language is Spanish.... I was translating from Spanish to English, my thoughts, ideas and opinion and at the same time I would read books in Spanish and would translate them” (interview). True to her words, she uses some quotes in Spanish in the essay but accompanied by English translations. She, however, regrets that translation did not come as naturally and good well as the original: “translated stuff...does not sound like an English” (interview). In that sense, even though her essay is submitted in English, she actually composed it in Spanish, which means her writing has the style of a Spanish essay.

Sophia's literacy narrative reveals that her entire schooling up to high school was done in Puerto Rico in Spanish medium. She was taught to write essays both in Spanish (from 5th grade on) and English (from 8th grade on). Structurally, Sophia says, Spanish and English essays are different and she was taught to compose them differently: "Spanish essays begin with an introduction and they really do not talk much about [a] thesis statement" (interview). Even though she claimed that she was taught to write essays in both languages and differently for each one, organization of her essay is more Spanish-like than English. Right at the beginning of her essay, she had a long section that traced the historical accounts of language policy in Puerto Rico, as she states: "I provide a summarized history of Puerto Rico since the Spanish colonial times until the colonization of the United States and how these various establishments have affected the people of Puerto Rico" (from her essay). She states that at the beginning of her essay, but does not give a reason why that historical survey was necessary. Only after that long section follows her thesis, which she reinforces time and again in the essay except for in the conclusion. Instead of reinforcing or circling back to her claim, she ends her essay with a call to language teachers of Puerto Rico: "Teachers have to work with motivating students to appreciate the Spanish language more and learn it with passion as part of their culture, and also encourage them and teach that it is also important to learn English, and many other languages to expand their knowledge and become better intellectual human beings" (from her essay). In her call to language teachers, she is advocating for multilingualism, linguistic diversity, and cross-linguistic literacy as the bases for Puerto Rico's language policy.

Apart from that, one more striking thing in her essay that I want to point out here is that she begins her essay with an epigraph in Spanish: "Un idioma debe servir como herramienta de paz. Nunca para oprimir. Siempre para liberar. –Ivelisse Rivera," which she translates as: "A

language should serve as a tool for peace. Never for oppression. Always for freedom.” Her epigraph worked as an organizing principle in her essay since it is about language policy not implemented by force, but by the consent of people. With her vote for non-coercive language policy, she is arguing that multilingualism and language diversity as reflected in Puerto Rican culture should underwrite language policy for Puerto Rico, not a monolingual English imposition by some outside forces. In addition, she invokes data/sources very current to the time she was composing her essay, such as the GOP presidential primary election campaign, and republican language policy for Puerto Rico. She also has a dominant personal voice present in the essay about which she references in her reflection: “I included my perspective” because “I care about this topic... it has directly affected me, my family, my community and everyone around me” (reflection). Her strong personal presence in the essay has to do with her personal investment in the topic: “I personally support the idea of learning another language to expand our horizons, yet it should not be done by force, but because the people actually have an interest and a need to be more intellectual in terms of learning the language” (from her essay). She also has an engaged voice in that she directly addresses her audience, for instance, in this excerpt from her essay: “I think that language creates and helps shape the culture of a country or region. When you take away something as unique as language from someone, you are taking away their culture, their identity, their way of expressing without limitation and direction” (from her essay). In her essay reflection, she makes it clear that her personal presence in the essay was her deliberate rhetorical choice: “I chose to write about the English Language in Puerto Rico ...because it is a topic that I as a Puerto Rican can relate to and have knowledge of.... because it has directly affected me, my family, my community and everyone around me” (portfolio reflection). She also translates ideas from Spanish into English. Her style, therefore, has direct impact of her Spanish language. Since

she is more proficient in Spanish than in English, she says that she has to “switch languages back and forth,” which makes her “writing experience confusing and limited” (literacy narrative).

This confusion and translingual challenge of hers is reflected in her style. Her challenge reminds us of Canagarajah’s observation about some common features of what he calls “plurilingual competence.” According to him, with people having plurilingual competence i.e. literacy skills in multiple languages, “Equal or advanced proficiency is not expected in all the languages” (“Multilingual Strategies...” 23) that they speak. Exactly as he says, Sophia does not have equal proficiency in English and Spanish, which makes composing in English challenging for her. If we were to borrow Canagarajah’s another term, Sophia’s composition challenge is an instance of “codemeshing” where her Spanish language or writing style is seen interfering with her writing process in English. Canagarajah actually distinguishes between “codemeshing” and “code switching” arguing that in “code switching,” a writer or speaker is expected to be equally proficient in both or multiple languages he or she speaks whereas in “codemeshing” that individual in question is not or does not need to be competent necessarily in all the languages he or she speaks, therefore, codes in his or her repertoire spontaneously mix up making literacy practices in a less proficient language increasingly difficult. This also underlies the challenges Sophia experienced composing in English. With this challenge notwithstanding, Sophia, however, concedes that the research for this project was very productive for her since she “got more information and learned more in detail” (interview) about language politics in Puerto Rico.

From this case study, it becomes apparent that bilingual negotiation is a challenge, which is manifested in her translation ordeal that she describes in her essay reflection. Similarly, from her description of English being the only language she uses for computer use, the dominance of English in the domain of science and technology becomes evident, which, in turn, speaks to the

necessity of learning English along side computers and technology. For her, English and the computer were synonymous, that one required the other, and she could not do without one or the other even in her birthplace outside the United States.

Another interesting aspect in her literacy is the bilingual education and her simultaneous exposure to both Spanish and English as the content and medium of education. She was educated in both mediums in her high school, that's expected in Puerto Rico. However, her family's prioritizing of English observed in their attempt to socialize her in American popular culture through English learning resources, such as books, videos, movies and animations, speaks to another deep-rooted dimension of English—a widespread acceptance of the hegemony of English. This should remind the teachers of composition to the need of, what Aya Matsuda and Paul Kei Matsuda say, teaching students Standard English and also teaching them World Englishes.

Sophia's composing process is notable for a number of reasons. She uses an epigraph from a Spanish text and also cites a number of sources produced by Spanish-speaking authors outside the United States. Her practice is ideal from a democratic source use point of view; yet it nonetheless raises a number of questions about translation and its complexity—how close to originals are her translations or the translated versions of originals she cites? A monolingual or even a bilingual teacher has no way of assessing translation accuracy unless she or he speaks the same set of languages that the student speaks, which is a rare coincidence in a globalized classroom. Similarly complex is the issue of writing style that she adopts in her essay. She notes that she is aware of the differences in organization patterns of typical English essays and Spanish essays, yet her essay organization does not reflect her adherence to English essay writing style. Even though she explains the difficulty of writing in English and her composing process involves

a lot of translation from Spanish to English, it is reasonable to expect her to write in an English academic writing style for the American academy given her awareness of stylistic differences in English and Spanish academic essays. However, she does it otherwise, and despite her awareness, succumbs to what she is accustomed to doing—composing her essay in a pattern slightly different from majority of students in her class. My goal of making students able to shuttle between discourse communities and academic systems was challenged despite my efforts through explicit notes about writing styles, English varieties, expected outcomes, and instruction on producing thesis-driven and exploratory essays for the American academy to inspire her to negotiate styles and languages for particular audiences and situations. Needless to say, her essay is exploratory but her essay form does not reflect her awareness of American stylistic preference translated into practice. This begs an answer to a particular question: Should we be contented with students' presentation of ideas in any fashion as long as that is comprehensible to us, or should we be looking for students' ability to present ideas in multiple forms and styles depending on the demands of the rhetorical situation? The latter is the ideal, of course, but it appears that it is hard to achieve that ideal both for students and teachers. My experience working with Sophia and other multilingual students tells me that awareness of multiple styles of academic writing alone does not guarantee that students will be able to produce essays in any or all of those styles. The ability to shuttle smoothly and swiftly between styles and languages or language varieties could come only at a greater cost, or only with years of immersion and practice with different genres in multiple languages, cultures, and academic traditions. But this immersion or fluency has to begin somewhere, and my take is that lower division writing courses should be those points of departure for both domestic and international students. Therefore, I would argue, writing teachers should aspire to the ideal of creative shuttling, but be realistic in their

expectations from students in a semester, which basically means that the writing teachers' expectations for each student should ideally be informed by that particular student's period of immersion and past experience with the style, language or academic practice of the genre that is being asked from her or him. That is the reason why considering each student's past literacy practices is important for curriculum development and implementation. If students' literacy narratives do not reveal enough about their past literacy practices, teachers should find other ways to converse with them around their academic or technical preparedness for the class. One-on-one conference or individual meetings with students especially in the first few weeks of classes could be ways to glean more insights about their cultural, linguistic, and literacy past.

Andre

Andre's literacy bio in chapter 2 highlights that Andre's first language is English, and he is an African American male student in his sophomore year. His writing began with story composition in the fifth grade, but it was only in his international baccalaureate program that writing began to be a regular part of his life. The bio also shows that Andre is literate in common digital and cyber practices, but regrets that he is a monolingual English speaker.

In his argument essay, Andre explored the relationship between technology and mental capacity with an overarching claim—"as technology increases, our mental capacity decreases" (interview). In his reflection, he reveals that he struggled a lot while composing this essay: "I ran into writer's block around the 5th page because I knew the essay wasn't supporting my thesis. Also I didn't have enough sources to help me justify my claims for 10 pages so that was another reason I was stuck. But once I change my thesis for the better, I was able to find sources for my argument and the oppositions" (reflection). His strenuous process including his evolving thesis

shows that he evolved as a writer and learned new things in the process of researching and writing this essay.

Andre's source use is not so much different from many other students in the class. He has used print sources, such as Plato's *Phaedrus* and Ziming Liu's "Reading Behavior in the Digital Environment: Changes in Reading Behavior over the Past Ten Years," and multimedia sources including some YouTube videos, Rachel Dretzin's documentary *Digital Nation*, and some videos on multiliteracies taken from Bill Cope and Mary Kalantzis' New Learning website. However, when it comes to his writing style, Andre reports that he consciously chose to represent himself and his topic in a particular fashion:

[f]or writing style, I had to think about how I wanted the tone of the essay to sound, because in unit 1 it was very communicative/funny and it was like to get the audience to laugh a little bit and this is research paper, I want it to be stern, I want it to be like this is my voice and this is what I am saying, you guys should believe this, but also at the same time I did not want to scare the reader away. I want the people to have the comedic side: a couple jokes, metaphors so that people could actually have fun reading so I combined more of humorous side to what's really stern and what an academic paper is all about. So I leaned more towards my academic part of it but I was still able to slide my humorous side too.

(interview)

From this extract, it becomes apparent that he deliberately chose two different approaches to two different assignments for two different units of the same course. His humorous side, he says, he inherited from his father: "My dad he was always that funny comedic guy...always tells jokes and never stops. I put that into my writing and push it a bit too much so which is my downfall, so

I got to pull back... because I am serious but my tone could come out as not serious because of the comedy in the paper” (interview). As he claims, his style in this essay actually is a fusion of humorous and academic tones. Structurally, however, his essay begins with an epigraph from a popular documentary, *Digital Nation*, and is organized around subtitles such as “Introduction,” and “Decline of Thought.” He has a thesis in the very first paragraph: “As technology increases, our ability to think critically suffers” (from essay), and offers local as well as global examples—a primary research result, and transnational (Korean kids’ addiction to video games) case study. He also has a section devoted to opposing arguments where he presents some potential arguments people in opposition to his claim might present. This clearly shows that he is adhering to the idea of a thesis-driven essay—refuting the opposing arguments in order to establish his own point. In that sense, his essay is well organized. Conforming to a conventional academic essay, he closes his essay by offering a potential solution to the issue he raises, thus reinforcing his claim. All through the essay, his tone is mostly neutral, detached and formal, yet it is blended well with his ‘humorous side’. The only instance of his personal side brought into the essay is when he mentions his own writing class to further his argument that technology should complement the human brain, but not rule over it: “The style of teaching is changing. For example in my Writing...class at [...] University, students are requested to blog about readings that are done outside of class” (from essay). He is arguing that blogs or any other teaching technologies should facilitate actual interactions in the class but not substitute them. Thus, stylistically speaking, his essay is primarily thesis-driven with little personal touch.

Andre informs me that he learnt, among other things, “about cross referencing [of] sources working on this paper” (interview). He is happy that despite challenges of researching and writing this paper, he benefitted a lot: “honestly I learned with the research.... I like[d]

making analogies, making connection between pieces (sources)” (interview). He is also glad for the fact that he could get insights into things like the decreasing SAT scores and reading comprehension ability among American students, and the overtake of our classrooms and pedagogies by technologies—an example of what he says, “how things get evolved into the learning process” (interview).

Andre’s is an interesting example of an essay being a catalyst for pursuit of knowledge, and he writes in a form that involves a carefully crafted style of presenting ideas. As he mentions in his literacy narrative, essay and portfolio reflections, and interview with me, his essay writing has been a journey of exploration about a number of interrelated issues pertaining to his topic. His evolving thesis that he describes when talking about his writer’s block speaks to the fact that his essaying was tantamount to learning and discovery. His essay form is thesis-driven—something expected of a domestic American student schooled in the American academic system all his life, but, in his case, it is something carefully chosen to fit the academic audience. Another interesting thing about his style is that, even within traditional thesis-driven form, he could incorporate his “humorous side” and some personal reflections, which corroborates the idea that the academic essay is not necessarily a stilted form, and should not be treated as such as it is malleable to the writer’s rhetorical decision, as is evident from his stylistic choice of a particular tone for the essay. He displayed a similar capacity to control his writing style in the literacy narrative assignment for unit 1 as well by adopting a humorous tone. And the notable thing about that capacity and its manifestation in his projects is his awareness of his choice of particular style for particular assignment towards some specific rhetorical purposes. Compared to other students, I found Andre to be more sensitive and articulate about his stylistic choices and decisions. Adaption of style and tone to writing situations characterizes his writing process.

Stephanie

As per her literacy bio, Stephanie was born in Haiti and English was her first language because of her mother's preference for English over her native tongue. Stephanie's mother emphasized on 'proper English' for Stephanie because her mother believed that she had a hard time in America because she had an accent in her English. Stephanie's bio also brings to light the fact that she enjoys practicing digital and Internet literacies over traditional essayist literacy.

For this particular project, Stephanie researched "how the media has such a huge impact on younger generations...[and] how children today have very disrespectful behavior towards others" (reflection). She notes that she had a personal reason to explore the topic on media's influence on children's behaviors and she makes that clear right at the beginning of her essay:

Three years ago, I worked for popular toy store...[and] often saw very young girls coming in wearing tight jeans and revealing shirts with heavy makeup covering their baby faces. As for the pre-teen boys, they would run in with their group of friends and terrorize the aisles. Even though these kids, who were visibly under fourteen, ran in and out of the store texting on their own cell phones, disorganizing toys or whining to get what they wanted, their behavior was not as appalling as the behavior of kids, the same age, now. As an employee at the movie theaters, I see a lot more inappropriate behavior from even younger kids. Recently two prepubescent boys...walked out of the lobby and stood chatting about something while looking back at the girls. A few seconds later, one of the boys approached the girls saying "My friend wants to have sex with you!", to which the girls giggled and one of them blurted out "OKAY! WHEN?!" I could not help but think wonder [sic.] where they could have possibly gotten their

attitudes from. The answer to that would have to be from what is portrayed in the media. (from her essay)

She restates her personal reason also in her essay reflection: “I wanted to write about this because I think it is a shame how children today have very disrespectful behavior towards others” (reflection). From that vantage point, Stephanie’s writing style is distinct. She begins her essay with an anecdote based on her personal experience of working in a toy store and later in a movie theatre and seeing children behaving notoriously up to the extent of being engaged in pre-teen sexual activities. But soon after the anecdote, i.e., right at the second paragraph and first line of third paragraph, ‘she has her claim stated as:

Because children are ultimately influenced, the media must be held accountable for the intolerable styles, behaviors and choices of younger generations.

Although there are positive aspects found within popular media, there are many negative impacts when children are exposed to too much of it. (from her essay)

Among the outstanding features of her essay, the most prominent is her personal voice, which dominates her entire essay. She integrates her personal experience with scholarly sources, and that way forwards her argument quite effectively. The last few paragraphs of her essay discuss some alternative media programs for children, and the very last paragraph is particularly well-rounded, and fit for an argument essay:

What children fail to see is how the media has taken advantage of their personas to be used for its own selfish promotion. Kids do not realize that there is more than one accepted image, and they do not need to dress “sexy” to fit in. With the media brainwashing the youth into thinking that in order to be socially acceptable, they have to dress, act and behave like everyone else, children get the wrong impression and dress too

provocatively for their age, behave inappropriately and become attached to their materialistic items. The media, more than parents, is responsible for how provocative, rude and ignorant younger generations are today. (from her essay)

In that sense, her essay is in a hybrid form that combines the qualities of traditional academic essay and a strong personal voice of the writer. Even though her essay could look rather stereotypical based on the excerpts I quoted here, in her full-length essay though, she has looked at and analyzed some concrete media sources, such as TV shows, magazine articles, ads, and sitcoms, to support her argument. She could have better qualified her claim to avoid stating the familiar, yet what she did within limitations (limited time, limited space, and limited sources—interviewees, articles, and other multimedia assets) was still commendable.

As we know from her literacy narrative, Stephanie had a complex relation with her mother tongue and native culture. This fact about her speaks to the fact that literacy traditions of our students could be complex, and so could be their writing styles. Despite the fact that she was born outside the U.S. and was raised by parents who spoke different languages, and observed different traditions, Stephanie claims that her literacy learning was not influenced by any of her parents' culture and languages. Instead, she was raised as an American child. Her claim holds true to her writing style too as it does not show any trace of her parents' culture or language. Her exclusively American background manifests in her source use too. Her sources for the essay are all drawn from within the U.S. and composed in the English language.

Hegemony of English is evident even in Stephanie's literacy development and her mother's extreme emphasis on English language learning. More specifically, Stephanie's literacy history speaks to the real-life consequences of the dominance of so-called Standard varieties of English, and impact of that dominance on literate activities in other languages. Her mother's

decision not to let Stephanie learn any languages other than “proper English” shut Stephanie’s potential window into learning a whole new set of resources for literate practices in other languages. She was actually doing it for ensuring her daughter’s smooth life in the United States. Stephanie’s mother’s mentality and struggle are testimonies of the fact that American society and the academy are not friendly to multiple languages and language varieties. I would add that this is the case with most of our composition classrooms. They are yet to be friendly with multiple languages, writing styles, and English varieties.

In terms of essay organization and writing style, her essay is an instance of a good essay. It is thesis-driven, yet includes a lot of her personal experiences. She interweaves her experiences with ideas from scholarly and primary data sources to present a coherent argument about the topic she chooses to explore.

Eric

Eric’s literacy bio tells us that he is a Hispanic male student from Mexico and Spanish is his first language, but he confesses that his immersion into the American school system since high school has adversely affected his literacy practices in the Spanish language. He tried to regain Spanish proficiency by joining Spanish classes but could never fully recover his past proficiency level. At this point in life, he says that he uses Spanish and English literacies in separate spheres even though his Spanish is not as good as English both in speaking and writing.

For the essay assignment, Eric chose to compare civil engineering designs and constructions in Dubai and the U.S. with reference to involvement of women in engineering on these sites. In his essay, aside from typical print and online sources, he cites Michele Acuto’s “Baking the Global City: Notes on an Emirati Recipe for Global Significance,” University of Cambridge Department of Engineering’s “Women in Engineering,” Pardis Mahdavi’s “Gridlock:

Labor, Migration, and Human Trafficking in Dubai,” and Abdul Kalam’s “Dr APJ Abdul Kalam's Speech: A Must Read.” My research on these authors shows that Acuto is a PhD candidate at the Australian National University and a visiting fellow at the National University of Singapore’s Global Cities Cluster University; Mahdavi researched sex trafficking in UAE for quite some time even though she is from California and a graduate of Columbia University; and Kalam is past president of India. So, in terms of authorship, Eric’s sources are diverse even though all of these sources were published in English medium journals.

In terms of organization, Eric’s tentative thesis can be found at the first page itself: “As an American society with social norms, religious ignorance and prejudice we are limited, meanwhile Dubai’s culture values the importance of open-mindedness which allows them to flourish in the art of hybridization in engineering and architecture, amongst other areas” (from his essay). His essay has some sections, which stand out to me as totally irrelevant. One section, in particular, about women migrants to the U.S. for employment is only distantly connected with the status of women or women involvement in the field of engineering in Dubai. Only through associative process can we see the link (contrastive function) between his discussion of migrant women and women in engineering in Dubai. He does not speak explicitly about the connection between his sections on migrant women in the U.S., women Engineers in Dubai, and sex workers brought to Dubai from entire Arab world, but that connection gradually unfolds to readers upon close reading of those sections. With those disparate sections, he appears to be saying that Dubai, a Muslim country, is not as oppressive to women as is the U.S. with reference to migrant women, or other Muslim countries from where women are trafficked to Dubai for sex tourism. Rather, Dubai is supportive of women in engineering, who have been instrumental in the unique design of Dubai as a city. But Eric’s reflection does not show that he is aware of his associative process.

He talks about his organization plan in detail in his reflection, which does not have any mention of the moves he makes. For example, about his conclusion plan, he says, “I summed up all my arguments and presented them together in my final paragraph, along with a personal statement that would get the reader thinking. Towards the end, I included a quote from the Doctor [APJ Abdul Kalam] with a purpose to motivate the Indian background audience” (reflection). He actually does that and ends his essay with a quote from an author, and not with his own take on the issue. Not only is his conclusion non-traditional, but, as a reader, it is also hard to make sense of his intention to motivate the Indian background audience by quoting an Indian author. Neither was he asked to address such an audience nor is that particular quote employed appropriately. Kalam is an Indian author and his text is about India and not about Dubai, but Eric uses it in a new context without explanation or contextualization.

In addition, Eric uses strong language and is also emotionally involved with the topic he chooses to explore. His comment on his survey result is an instance of his strong engagement with the issues he discusses in his essay:

After conducting a survey with the [...] University population, I saw a pattern....

As an American student, we are clueless when it comes to the world around us. It is understood that we have the freedom to do whatever we want, and yet we are unaware of the knowledge that can be obtained about countries like Dubai. One of the reasons behind our ignorance is the media and our governments need to advertise things based off of money and profit. This way of life creates a society that has a uniform mind and is socially conformed. (from his essay).

He also expresses a strong reaction against the American attitude towards Muslim religion:

As Americans we are narrow minded when it comes to the true potential of what those of Muslim faith are capable of. We don't really know, so we make an assumption, which then creates a stereotype.... In all reality, the foreign Muslim religion should be seen as more liberal due to the fact that in Dubai those working on the design and intricateness of the structures are Muslim engineers, not to mention the number of women involved in the operations as well. (from his essay).

His expression at another point in the essay shows that he truly cares about his topic: "We now understand how the United States is deprived of women in engineering, which limits the potential for us to use the female mind [to] grow creatively." His personal situation is also implicated in his essay. He himself is an engineering student and is aware that engineering in the U.S. draws very few women compared to engineering in Dubai even though women in Dubai, a Muslim country, are said to be always put under veils. I think, Eric's statement: "The challenges migrants, if not women, faces are a product of the difficult choices they have had to make for immediate economic survival, combined with political economic structures of a rapidly changing and globalized world," (from essay) is related to his own experience as Mexican immigrant in the U.S. Though he does not acknowledge it anywhere, his Spanish roots seem to be shaping his writing style significantly. In his literacy narrative, he accepts that Spanish language and culture surrounds him wherever he goes: "For me, as a young boy, I spoke Spanish. As an American Hispanic, I grew up around the language." He had education both in Spanish and English mediums, and even though he does not mention that anywhere, in his essay, his Spanish and English languages and cultures are grappling with one another as he attempts to put his thoughts

into perspective. Though he claims that English and Spanish are different in a number of ways and he learns and uses them differently, his essay shows that he is, in fact, mixing those codes.

Eric's literacy development also indicates that U.S. higher education environment is not conducive to the growth of literate activities in multiple languages. For the most part, he finds U.S.'s monolingual academic policy responsible for the disappearance of his Spanish literacy. Through American academic system just for few years (He came to the U.S. for his high school education. His elementary and middle school education was done in Mexico), he found that his proficiency in his mother tongue was seriously compromised, and even his prospect to regain it did not look so promising. Why did he have to suffer such a loss despite his willingness to pursue literacy in both languages? It appears that the "English Only" educational policy in U.S. high schools and colleges put limits on his literate activities in Spanish. That limitation seems to have impacted his overall literacy skills. He conducts literacy activities both in English and Spanish but due to monolingual educational policy both in Mexico and the United States, he is not fully proficient in either of them. His education in two different academic systems and mediums over the years has influenced his writing style and organization pattern in his argument essay as well. He, however, appears to be struggling to negotiate different stylistic conventions. He begins his argument essay with the thesis statement, but rambles around issues only remotely connected to the topic without explicitly stating why he goes to those directions.

Eric's writing style is quite different from typical English academic writing style tightly organized around thesis and support details, and characterized by neutral tone. His essay is emotionally charged and he himself personally implicated in the essay. His essay shows that he is still learning to mix codes and negotiate styles for effective rhetorical outcome. His 'code mixing' and negotiation challenge is clearly reflected on his essay's organizational features. His

essay is neither in completely thesis-support format nor is it entirely in exploratory form. It is hybrid in style, but the mixing of multiple patterns of composition, as is apparent in the essay, is not executed smoothly, which makes the essay stylistically and structurally confusing. He has begun the essay with a thesis, but the subsequent paragraphs wander into different directions, prompting readers to question the underlying logic of those organizational moves. His challenge with stylistic negotiation can be connected with his bilingual-monolingual literacy dynamics in the past, which he discusses in his literacy narratives and reflection papers. His intermittent bilingual literacy and his unequal proficiency in Spanish and English, like that of Sophia, has made his writing process strenuous. As he accounts for these challenges in his literacy narrative and reflection papers, his essay demonstrates how those challenges impact his literacy practices, and how hard it could be to successfully overcome them.

Jasmine

Jasmine's literacy bio tells us that she is a White American female student in her sophomore year and both of her parents are journalists. English is her first language and she was educated in the U.S. throughout her life. These facts had influence on her literacy learning. Moreover, we also know from her bio that her parents and brother were the major sponsors of her literacy, and some of her writings have appeared in print and online journals.

For this assignment, Jasmine chose to explore the "misunderstandings that come about due to cross-cultural communication particularly that are diplomatic in nature" (interview). She was looking to see the instances of misunderstanding between cultures like China and the U.S. while writing the proposal but by the time she wrote the paper, she ended up "focusing more on interpretation and translation and the simple differences of styles and... cultures" (interview). So, she is aware that a lot happened in the research and writing process that significantly changed the

direction and focus of the paper. She also strongly believes that she got some invaluable insights from this research—“I never thought about different negotiation styles or interpretations could impact as much as it (sic.) does...simple things that can cause great misunderstanding or misinterpretation” (interview). In her essay reflection, she writes that her essay was truly exploratory:

While I cannot say that this was the clearest and most focused paper I’ve written, my thoughts definitely became more focused as I wrote the paper. I was able to use the paper as a means to reflect on my experiences at the 2012 New York Conference on Peace and Cooperation in Northeast Asia. The assignment – while an exercise for [this course] – helped me put my personal experiences into perspective, solidifying communication challenges I’ve personally encountered and giving me the opportunity to read about challenges I may encounter and address in my future cross-cultural interactions (whether formal and career-related or purely social). For these reasons, I am pleased with the topic I chose, and I appreciate the opportunity to explore a topic of personal interest and great use. (essay reflection)

Jasmine is aware that the location she comes from (the U.S.) helped her “to understand the negotiation style” cross-culturally better (her essay topic) such as that “Asian nation’s negotiation style was very different as in we want very concrete things to come out like in the conference (she attended), that’s probably what... people [were] frustrate[d] about” (interview). She also felt that “there was not anything concrete that came out of the conference, I guess that reflects how I have been culturally brought up” (interview).

In terms of organization, her essay begins with an anecdote (actually the myth of tower of Babel). The myth of Babel is used as an analogy, which speaks to the idea of cross-cultural and

cross-linguistic gaps among people. Her title “Rebuilding the tower of Babel” therefore signifies the need of constructing cross-cultural and cross-linguistic bridges to facilitate smooth communication across the world. Her first page is dedicated to the myth and some follow-up paragraphs are devoted to extending that myth to intercultural communication scenarios. She says that in the essay itself:

Regardless of one’s religious beliefs, the story of the Tower of Babel speaks volumes about cultural division. Namely, the tale emphasizes the importance of human unity in mankind’s happiness and achievement. In a globalizing world, the question of this unity and international cooperation is increasingly relevant. (From her essay)

Her first two paragraphs are introductory in nature as opposed to being about stating claims or thesis. After introduction follows “two recent examples of unsuccessful cross-cultural communication” (from her essay). Then her subsequent paragraphs analyze those two examples from cross-cultural communication and interpretation/translation point of view. Only then she posits the questions for her research: “To what extent do we, as private citizens, have the responsibility to act as diplomats? And how can we work best to avoid cross-cultural miscommunication?” She thus sets out to explore those questions. As she moves forward, she makes her inquiry narrower and more focused. While discussing cross-cultural negotiation styles, and interpretation and communication breakdowns, she also relates her own experience of going to 2012 New York Conference on Peace and Cooperation in Northeast Asia attended by participants from 8 different countries including North Korea and the U.S. So, she includes her first-hand experience with cross-cultural communication challenges:

Through personal observation, I found that the Americans and Germans were significantly more likely to speak directly about their desired policy goals and were also more likely to speak in general. The Japanese, South Koreans, and North Koreans present usually spoke in response rather than initiating conversation. The East Asians were relatively silent. While all participants maintained a level of formality in dress, the North Koreans and select South Koreans remained dressed in formal business attire after conference hours. (from her essay)

Thus, her essay evolves page after page. In that sense, her essay is exploratory. Her essay grows literary towards the end, and she wraps up the essay with a sound claim: “I argue that every cross-cultural interaction – regardless of whether between presidents or between young students – serves as a diplomatic exchange. As such, every interaction deserves the utmost respect and consideration.” She even uses the word “argue” in the conclusion.

In terms of source use, Jasmine has used most of the sources in English, and published in the U.S. She only has a few sources from outside the U.S. She cites from “The Myth of Cultural Miscommunication” published in *Savage Minds*, a web zine, and composed by Kerim Friedman, an associate professor in the Department of Ethnic Relations and Cultures at National Dong Hwa University, in Taiwan, where he teaches linguistic and visual anthropology. She also uses “Use of Language in Diplomacy” by Stanko Nick from *Language and Diplomacy*, an essay collection edited by Jovan Kurbalija and Hannah Slavik and published in Malta. None of these sources were used as course materials even though I had a couple of readings by authors who reside outside the United States.

Compared to many students in the class, Jasmine has a more engaged and intimate tone. For instance, towards the middle of her essay, she brings in her personal account of attending the

conference, also discussed briefly above, relating how that particular conference provided her the first hand experience with cross-cultural communication and its stakes as: “participants from eight different countries met in New York City....I served as an assistant at this event. Chatham House rules and the overall shroud of secrecy over the event forbid me from offering many details. However, I can relate many of the theories [of intercultural communication] aforementioned to the conference” (from her essay). In her reflection, Jasmine reveals that she also has a personal investment in this topic: “As a political science and international relations student, I’m interested in diplomacy and my personal role within it. Furthermore, I thought this project would be a good way to learn more about effective cross-cultural communication techniques, which I anticipate using in the fall semester when I study in Beijing” (essay reflection). In other words, her essay embodies both her personal and academic sides but, in terms of organization, it is purely exploratory. Through exploration of her chosen topic, Jasmine says she got the opportunity “to look into something that I could use in my career... this project [also] allowed me to incorporate stuff that I was taught in international relations courses and my job” (interview).

Jasmine’s profile and essay analysis highlights some salient points about the relations among literacy sponsorship, literacy traditions, essay form, and writing instruction. Her essay itself reveals certain values about globalization, culture, and communication. Her family—her parents and brother—directly influenced her literacy practices. I know from my interview with her that she was publishing her poems in newspapers since her early high school years because her parents were journalists and her father in particular was/is an editor of a popular regional newspaper in upstate New York. The imprints of her literary background are visibly present in her argument essay—the use of analogy of Tower of Babel to describe cross-cultural

communication gap, and her treatment of cross-cultural communication as a diplomatic exchange are instances of her effective deployment of literary tools in service of an academic argument essay. This analogy also speaks to the need of global literacy in this era of interdependence and interrelationships. Only global literacy would help rebuild the Tower of Babel and conduct intercultural communication in an effective manner. Similarly, her exploratory essay form challenges some existing stereotypes about writing styles, and cultural and linguistic traditions. If we were to go with general characterization of Western academic essay form, a white American girl like her, educated in U.S. schools all her life, is expected to produce a “thesis-support” linear essay as opposed to an exploratory essay that she composes. In my perspective, this variance in her essay form was triggered by two particular factors. First, the expectation from her in terms of some culture-specific assumptions about writing style is misguided, and second, my course artifacts and resources encouraged her to take an exploratory route, and negotiate multiple writing styles and traditions, which she so successfully did in her essay. In that sense, hers is an instance of the impact that an instructional approach can have in students’ literacy practices.

Jihun

As we know from his literacy bio, Jihun was born in South Korea but came to the United States in his teen years. Because he was growing up speaking and writing in Korean, he notes that learning and familiarizing himself with the English language took a longer period of time for him compared to those who were only around English language. Even in the United States, he continued his bilingual literacy practices for quite some time, but gave up literacy practices in the Korean language completely at one point in order to “avoid judgment” from American students in his high school, and be accepted socially. The painful part of this decision was that he

surrounded himself with everything that was English, and completely turned away from and shunned the Korean side in him (see chapter 2 for further details on his literacy past).

I knew about Jihun's literacy past early on in the semester from his literacy narratives, which were due the second week of the class. Therefore, I was curious to see how he would approach the assignments I had for the course. He completed his first assignment (Alphabetic and digital literacy narratives) on time but was a few days late for the second assignment, a rhetorical analysis of a digital artifact—an ad, music video, movie clip etc., but did pretty well on that too. But when it came to the argument essay, he surprised me by appearing in my office hours and expressing his intent to drop the class. I was taken aback since I was sympathetic to him and was trying to create a safe environment for him in the class. We were pretty close already for we had met twice before for one-on-one conferences cum interviews for my study. The reasons he had for dropping the class were the challenges he had with writing long papers. This argument essay was supposed to be 10 to 12 pages long with multiple sources in multiple modes and submitted within five weeks after the unit began. He admitted that his decision to forego the Korean side in him did not translate into his higher proficiency in writing in English. In fact, that decision became counterproductive for him. He said that he now struggles to write both in English and Korean, and he usually misses deadlines. I could quickly relate to him with my own experience writing in the second language as well as what I had learned reading scholarship in second language acquisition and writing. I knew it was not because of any disability in him, but because writing in second language takes more time and energy than doing it in the first language. I asked him to give up the idea of dropping the class, and worked with him in two consecutive office hours to help him choose the topic and research questions for his project. I also guided him to look for sources and draw outlines. Due to my assignment's

flexibility with topic choices, I suggested he look for a topic he was comfortable writing about even if it was just tangentially related to the course inquiry of multiliteracies. That openness comforted him, and he came up with “Information Literacy as a Privilege” as a topic for the essay, particularly with reference to North Korea, China, and Iran where strict censorship prevents common people from having access to the Internet and the wealth of knowledge they otherwise would have access to. He looked at some censorship cases and compared that with a right to information in the United States and South Korea. Jihun, in fact, draws a parallel between print literacy and information literacy, claiming that as much as print literacy was controlled by elites in the past centuries, information literacy is being controlled by ruling elites now in countries like North Korea, China, and Iran through censorship and other control mechanisms.

In terms of source use, Jihun uses many sources from outside the U.S. The article, “Information-communication Technologies Open Up Innovation” is collaboratively written by authors—Yukika Awazu, Peter Baloh, Kevin C. Desouza, Christoph H. Wecht, Jeffrey Kim, and Sanjeev Jha—who come from diverse places, such as U.S., Switzerland, and India. Jihun’s other citation, “An Evaluation of the Impact of Information and Communication Technologies: Two Case Study Examples” from *International Business Research* is composed by [Idisemi Apulu](#) and [Ann Latham](#) and both of them come from [University of Wolverhampton, U.K.](#) His next citation, “Teaching Intercultural Communication Competence to Business Students” by Dennis O Durocher Jr was published in *Journal of International Business Education*, a journal that comes out of Scotland. Some other sources, particularly multimodal sources, however, come from within the U.S. Therefore, his source use is diverse in terms of geopolitical location of authors and publication outlets even though all of those sources were composed in English. I think that

this source diversity in his work has to do with his topic, which has international resonances and covers wider ground.

While his source use is varied, his essay structure is still traditional. He has presented the thesis in the very first paragraph, and his tone throughout the essay is impersonal, formal and disengaged. Moreover, his essay is tightly organized and coherent. Ideas are logically connected and issues develop in anticipated directions. For instance, discussion of information privilege and control leads to censorship in China, North Korea and Iran. But a good thing is that his essay includes a specific and detailed observation of issue of censorship in some select countries. One exception to the traditional academic essay form is that his final paragraph does not reinforce his claim/thesis. Rather, it concludes with a call as: “In China and North Korea, new media are censored and controlled by the government and its people are restricted in more ways than ever. It is up to the countries that have more freedom than ever with new modes of spreading and gathering information to help countries which are severely repressed by their governments.”

Though Jihun’s essay displays a detached persona, it is persuasive, and engages a very current issue of censorship, or what he calls, “maintenance of information privilege.” His essay, however, does not show any traces of his Korean culture and language. This disconnect likely has to do with his decision to give up Korean language and culture to be, what he says, “American.” As he recounts in his literacy narratives and essay reflection, it was his peers in his high school, who pushed him to give up or devalue his literacy traditions. Out of humiliation and reactionary determination, he suppresses his traditions so much so that his writing is stripped of any traces of Korean conventions and cultures; it reads no different from any typical English essay. This essay form could have been an ideal given the audience and context and had it been his deliberate choice for this particular assignment, but his reflection and literacy narratives

reflect that he sacrificed his proficiency to compose texts in other languages and forms in his race to be like American and to practice literacy skills in the ways Americans do. Jihun's case, however, speaks to the important idea that our students are capable of learning or practicing any composing style if they are genuinely invested in it. But his case is an important reminder for us that not only high school but even the university atmosphere is not very conducive for growth of literacy practices in multiple languages and multiple forms, and we should try our level best to create an environment in the classroom such that students do not feel alienated and intimidated to practice or build from what they already know or have. That would be a crucial step to building a safe space for diverse students or publics in general in the university and in community, where individuals like Jihun can practice their cultures, conventions and literacy practices without any fear of social stigma in terms of their languages or cultural backgrounds.

3.5. Conclusion and Implications

These six case studies are not representative of all fourteen research participants in my larger study, let alone of all domestic and international students in American higher education. Therefore, generalizing anything based on these studies would be immature, even illogical, but it could be safe to say, though, that each student writer (research participant for that matter) labored or labors at the crossroads of multiple forces including language, assignment requirements or expectations, and her/his past literacy practices. This composing situation makes negotiation a skill so important to each one of our student writers. It also corroborates the notion that each student writer needs to learn to negotiate multiple languages, communication/writing styles, and modes of communication in order to successfully fulfill the assignment requirements and to successfully live a life in this complexly interwoven world. My study into each one of my fourteen research participants' composing processes gives the insight that all of our student

writers, not only multilingual student writers, are capable of negotiating for assignments, and for life, if they need to, or if they are triggered to in that direction. It also demonstrates that even domestic American students like Andre and Jasmine negotiate a number of factors while composing essays despite the fact that they are using their native language as the medium of writing. But this study also indicates that negotiation is not a competence that is quickly acquired, but is earned with a lot of labor, time, and energy investment. Acquisition of that skill in some of our students could be partial, and incomplete, while some others could be in the middle of acquiring it. International multilingual students, in particular, could be in the process of learning to shuttle between languages, English varieties, and writing conventions as they could be attempting to adapt to new academic contexts. Negotiation skill even among domestic American students could vary widely given the disparity in their academic preparation and learning curves. This potential range makes teaching negotiation skill in the class a challenge. Therefore, we should gradually take our students on board, and then incrementally engage them in the challenge of negotiating multiple factors for completing course requirements, and for living a productive life. Through curricular and pedagogical artifacts, our attempt should be to create occasions or situations, rhetorical or otherwise, in the class whereby students get an opportunity to be engaged in negotiating multiple languages or language variants, writing styles and organizational patterns, essay forms and communication modes, and personal and academic “selves,” in order to decide and choose from among them the ones that are rhetorically effective to deliver their arguments or messages to their intended audiences. Through sustained and immersed practice in such an environment, our students should be able to negotiate for multimodality, multilingualism, and multiliteracies-- the skill set which lay at the center of my

essayist literacy assignment, and which also constituted an overarching goal of my writing course.

Another aspect this study highlights is that writing teachers can have roles in student writers' learning and practice of this negotiation skill. However, supporting the growth of this quality in them involves redesigning both curricular and pedagogical artifacts we use in or for the class. An essayist literacy unit or assignment is just a case in point, which I redesigned, keeping in view the changing nature of student demographics, the complex tradition of academic or essayist literacy, and increasingly multimediated forms of writing, both inside and outside the academy. Other composition teachers can consider other factors in their curricula, but I strongly believe that we can and should no longer overlook the linguistic and cultural diversity in our classrooms, nor can we ignore the increasing global interactions of people and ideas, and the unprecedented influence of media and technology in our and our students' literacy practices. It could be counterproductive for our students, rhetoric and composition as a discipline, and for American academic institutions for us to police the western essayist textual form in our classrooms, for doing so would be tantamount to imposing a norm from one particular culture or context on to the other. It would also mean privileging some group of students and their stylistic conventions above other groups and their textual conventions. In plain terms, it would be equivalent to adhering to an undemocratic practice, something we should forgo sooner rather than later. Relinquishing this practice would involve expanding the boundary of course, unit or assignment on essayist literacy in order to create spaces for multiple languages, literacy conventions, and subjectivities or positionalities of the essayists. It would also involve extending the breadth of course materials by including texts in multiple media and modalities, in multiple languages, from different geopolitical locations, yet also in response to local contexts and

constraints. This all would essentially mean expanding the narrow bounds of essayist literacy, writing, and rhetoric and composition as a discipline. In addition, this would mean adopting a global outlook to writing by incorporating into our curriculum, among other things, how writing is done and taught around the world and how its practice is shifting with the change in writing technologies. Or, in broader terms, it all would mean the needs of the co-evolution of curriculum with technology, media, and global literacy practices.

In addition, these case studies also speak to another dimension of pedagogy that curricular artifacts are the primary tools composition teachers have to enact any change they want to see happen in their students' writing processes and products, or in their writing classrooms. As much as students negotiate their choices and constraints, teachers also need to negotiate their choices and constraints, such as pedagogical goals, designated course objectives, and available resources in order to implement their philosophies of teaching in the classrooms. Their curriculum and assignment sequence need to reflect an emphasis on scaffolding and cultivating in students diverse literacy practices, global and cross-cultural sensitivity, and proficiency in multiple languages and English varieties.

Similarly, they highlight some salient points about the hegemony of English and its materialistic consequences. Literacy narratives and composition practices of most of my multilingual research participants, including case-study participants discussed above, spotlight the tendency among these students, their families and communities to highly value "proper" English, and "standard" writing style. Given these expectations and preferences populating our teaching spaces, it would be morally indefensible for us to discount those aspirations, yet we should be aware that while attempting to respect them, we should make no mistake of overlooking the value of scaffolding students' native literacy practices or their linguistic and

cultural traditions. Not just scaffolding, we should even encourage students to learn literacy practices in other languages and from other academic traditions. For writing teachers, this basically means identifying what students want from a writing class, what they need to succeed in the academy and the world outside, and how pedagogical goals, whatever they are, can be achieved. Therefore, it is a lot of balancing work—accommodating students’ personal, familial, and community expectations; their current literacy and linguistic practices; the composition and communication needs of the global world; and our and our program’s curricular and pedagogical goals. These could sound like few handy steps, but putting them into practice entails a lot of research, planning, reflection, re-organization, re-design, and re-thinking of entire course artifacts and course goals. This would also mean making composition classes relevant to students and the world outside by shifting our outlook towards ‘other’ Englishes, ‘other’ languages, ‘other’ writing styles, ‘other’ composition media and technologies, and ‘other’ student population.

4. Remediation, Media Convergence, and the Expanded Notion of Composition in a Writing Class

4.1. Overview

In chapter 1, I briefly discussed that the notions of remediation, and media convergence speak to the changing face of media, communication, and literacy including composition or writing. In this chapter, based on the data from my study, I argue that in engaging these theories of media in composition classrooms in concert with some other productive concepts (e.g. ‘two-way adaptation,’ ‘global and local audiences’) from closely aligned fields, such as intercultural communication, World Englishes, and new media, students understand the evolutionary nature of media, discern the interactive relation between old and new media or literacies, engage the expanded notion of composition through active production and reflective consumption of an array of old and new media compositions, and gain insights into the rhetoricity of different mediums of composition. In order to elaborate on my contention, in the following several sections, I discuss the notions of remediation and media convergence in further detail, and also recount how I developed curricular and pedagogical artifacts incorporating those notions, and resources from some other pertinent fields. I then delineate how I implemented those artifacts in my class in an attempt to support the growth of students’ existing literacies along side cultivation of multiple literacies in them by involving them in the practice of composition in its expanded sense.

4.2. Remediation and Media Convergence

I use theories of remediation and media convergence as key theoretical frameworks for designing two major units and assignments for my course. In common terms, remediation relates to an act of correcting something, particularly the deficiencies among lagging students, but in a

broader frame, it refers to the incorporation or representation of one medium into another. In broader terms, it also relates to the evolution of media and technologies of communication, and the consequent impact of those innovations in the ways we exchange our thoughts and ideas. Looking historically, it can be said that not much has changed in the communication world but the media, and even change in the media has never been radical. Orality was complemented (not replaced) by print, and print now is being augmented by digital or new media. In their book, *Remediation: Understanding New Media*, Bolter and Grusin argue along similar lines claiming that digital or new media are characterized by remediation because they constantly present the contents from their predecessors, such as television, radio, and print journalism, in different forms and styles. In that sense, new media are not entirely new but evolved forms of the old. This is not to say, though, that remediation is just an adaptation of the old, for it is not. Sometimes, new media present old media in entirely new ways without any clue to the old. For example, Jane Austen films hardly ever refer to or acknowledge the novels they are based on because doing so would “disrupt the continuity and the illusion of immediacy that Austen’s readers expect, for they want to view the film in the seamless way in which they read the novels. The content has been borrowed, but the medium has not been appropriated or quoted” (Bolter and Grusin 44). This kind of remediation is being termed “repurposing” in the entertainment industry these days and only audiences aware of both the old and new media can recognize the remediation. Such instances of remediation also remind us of what Marshall McLuhan in *Understanding Media* had noted long ago that “the ‘content’ of any medium is always another medium. The content of writing is speech, just as the written word is the content of print, and print is the content of telegraph” (23-24). McLuhan’s example suggests that a medium is already incorporated or represented in another medium (Bolter and Grusin).

As such, Bolter and Grusin contend that “remediation is a defining characteristic of the new digital media” (45) and they remediate old media in “a spectrum of different ways” (45). Another crucial aspect related to the phenomenon of remediation is that it is not only that new media remediate the old but it works the other way around too. As much as new media remediate the old, the old media such as television and films also “appropriate and refashion digital graphics” (48) or other forms of new media. So, it becomes evident that new and old media constantly interact with one another. An instance of this reciprocal interchange is the co-existence or coming together of old and new media in contemporary media platforms: “Many web sites are riots of diverse media forms: graphics, digitized photographs, animation, and video.... Televised news programs feature multiple video streams, split-screen displays, composites of graphics and text—a welter of media that is somehow meant to make the news more perspicuous” (Bolter and Grusin 5-6). Seen from that perspective, remediation is a complex process involving multiple old and new media in their varying degree of transformation. New media use old but not always in their original forms and often in concert with other various new media assets. A website, for instance, can have alphabetic text, but not in exact order or organization as in a printed book and the text often co-exists with sound, images, graphics, videos, animated cartoons and such in cohesion. Contemporary media landscape shows that different media forms are increasingly working in association with one another rather than in complete isolation. Digital media in particular display varying degrees of remediation of older media—sometimes being aggressive with them while letting them stay original at other times. But one distinct feature of new media is that they tend to maintain “a sense of multiplicity or hypermediacy” (Bolter and Grusin 46) which is to say that they employ multiple semiotic modes in their meaning-making processes.

Similarly, another dimension of remediation worth mentioning here is the one that happens within the same medium—a film borrowing from an earlier film or a novel that incorporates another novel. This kind of remediation reminds us of the fact that digital new media have not and will not bring a radical break from the past as many advocates of digital revolutions had claimed that they would. Media theorist, Steven Holtzman, for example, had declared that repurposing was instrumental only in the early phase of new media development, but would be forsaken as soon as new media find their authentic expressions:

Repurposing is a transitional step that allows us to get a secure footing on unfamiliar terrain. But it isn't where we'll find the entirely new dimensions of digital worlds. We need to transcend the old to discover completely new worlds of expression. Like a road sign, repurposing is a marker indicating that profound change is around the bend. (15)

But as Bolter and Grusin observe, Holtzman was way off the mark in his prediction. Twenty plus years of new media development shows that new media is set to follow suit their predecessors and will work in constant dialectic with earlier media as did the earlier media when they were first invented.

Similar to the concept of remediation, Henry Jenkins' idea of convergence culture stands for media dynamics “where old and new media collide, where grassroots and corporate media intersect, where the power of the media producer and the power of the media consumer interact in unpredictable ways” (2). This definition speaks to some forms of remediation such as the one where old and new media co-exist and interact with one another in complex ways. In that sense, convergence culture can be said to be a manifestation of remediation in action. Like Bolter and Grusin, Jenkins also declares that the digital revolution enthusiasts were inaccurate in their

speculation that “new media would displace old media” (6), for that apparently did not happen. Rather the old and new media these days are seen interacting “in even more complex ways” (Jenkins 6). This “emerging convergence paradigm” (6) challenges the media revolution paradigm, attesting to the fact that—“old media never die—and they don’t even necessarily fade away” (13). In Jenkins’ view, changes that we see mostly happen at the level of delivery technologies which “become obsolete and get replaced; media, on the other hand, evolve” (14).

This widespread convergence culture has left a lasting impact at the end of media consumers. It has created a participatory culture, which has potential worth fighting for. Never before in history could grass roots people speak back to mass media corporations as they do now. This affordance has been empowering to our students as they write over the commercial culture now “adding greater diversity of perspective, and then recirculating it, feeding it back into the mainstream media” (Jenkins 257).

But this power is not delegated to all our students automatically. In order to make sure that different groups participate well, Jenkins suggests that we “confront the cultural factors that diminish the likelihood that different groups will participate. Race, class, language differences amplify these inequalities in opportunities for participation” (258). As composition teachers, we need to create such an environment in the class that all our students “can come to think of themselves as cultural producers and participants and not simply as consumers, critical or otherwise” (Jenkins 259).

4.3. Remediation and Media Convergence in a Composition Class

In an attempt to create such an environment in the class where students could become “cultural producers” and not just the passive “consumers,” I translated the tenets of remediation and media convergence into curricular and pedagogical instruments for some course units (Unit

1, 3 and 4). My aim in doing that was to facilitate students' transition from passive consumption of media or knowledge artifacts to critical and reflective consumption, and then into active production of those artifacts. I was also intending to engage students in multimodal composing, and sensitizing them to cross-linguistic and intercultural dynamics of composition (For extensive discussion of organizing principles of the course units and assignments, refer to curricular design section in chapter 3).

4.3.1. Critical and Reflective Consumption of Media Artifacts

The title for unit 1 was “Visual, Critical and Media literacies,” for these literacies all overlap, and I had course materials and texts, and in-class and homework activities in the unit capable of supporting cultivation of those set of literacies. I had the documentary *Miss Representation, 2011*; chapter 1: “Semiotic Analysis,” chapter 2: “Marxist Analysis,” and chapter 3: “Psychoanalytic Criticism” from Arthur Berger’s book *Media Analysis Techniques*; and chapter 5: “Analyzing Written Arguments” and chapter 6: “Analyzing Visual and Multimedia Arguments,” and chapter 20: “Documenting Sources in MLA style” from Faigley and Selzer’s *Good Reasons* as course materials for this unit. The in-class, and homework activities consisted of tasks ranging from blogging, and responding to classmates’ blogs on course materials before class; intense discussion on different dimensions of course materials and their contributions to critical and rhetorical analysis of digital artifacts; and step-by-step composition of analyses beginning with location of appropriate artifacts for analysis followed by description of chosen artifacts, identification of properties (signs, symbols, values, ideologies etc.) leading to rhetorical analyses, determination of analytical tools or concepts from the shared texts or outside sources, peer-review/feedback, one-on-one interview with me, and final review and editing of the analyses.

I had the rhetorical analysis assignment as one of the two major assignments for unit 1 (literacy narrative was the second one) of my course. For this assignment, I asked students to compose a 3-4 page of rhetorical analysis of a digital artifact (a music video, digital advertisement, documentary or movie clip/s, animations or cartoon clip/s) of their choosing. This assignment was intended to make students the critical and reflective consumers of media, and speak back to the mainstream media (Jenkins). Therefore, I explicitly stated in the assignment description that the text for analysis should be carefully chosen, and should not be necessarily related to the course inquiry for asking for something related exclusively to my course inquiry—multiliteracies—would have put limitations to student choices. But I set some conditions for the selection of the artifact for analysis: it should be rich in alphabetic, audio, visual, graphic or spatial resources, or, in other words, it should be good enough for analysis.

As for the resources supporting their analysis, I encouraged them to borrow critical and rhetorical tools and concepts from course materials, such as Arthur Berger's book *Media Analysis Techniques*, Jack Selzer and Lester Faigley's *Good Reasons: Researching and Writing Effective Arguments*, and the documentary *Miss Representation*. I pointed out that the first three chapters of Berger's book ("Semiotic Analysis", "Marxist Analysis", and "Psychoanalytic Analysis"), and Chapter 5 and 6 of *Good Reasons* could be particularly pertinent. I had taken special caution while assigning students the theoretical texts to support their analyses. I was aware that having them to read only one particular analytical approach, such as semiotic or Marxist, and use that for analysis could be counterproductive. A heavy emphasis on only one worldview could make minds oriented towards a particular ideology thereby making them theoretically biased in their analysis. Cognizant of that possibility, I assigned them texts on rhetorical, feminist, Marxist, psychoanalytic, and semiotic analyses and also shed light on the

overlaps and gaps in those outlooks. This broader array of outlooks was expected to help them to observe their chosen artifacts from multiple viewpoints.

I also clearly stated that those resources were just suggestions, but I was open to them using other productive analytical frameworks, such as rhetorical appeals (ethos, logos, pathos), stereotypes, status quo, gender or racial discrimination and/or normalcy. Similarly, I had some firm instructions about the structure of their analysis paper. I stated that analysis should have at least two parts: The first part should describe the text/artifact in specific detail. The description should be vivid and minute to the point of replicating the artifact in words. The second part was the key to the assignment—analysis of the artifact. They could, however, pick a symbol, sound, shape, color, image or any other property of the text and begin the analysis from there, and they didn't have to say that what they were doing was semiotic, Marxist or feminist analysis (they had enough exposure with these concepts through course readings), but just do the analysis. Once they were done with the analysis part, they were asked to make an overall argument about the text.

Accompanying the analysis, students were also asked to submit a page-long reflection paper which would explain their choice of particular artifact for analysis, their choice of one set of analytical tools over another and also recount their analysis process: Why did they begin where they began? How did they come to their argument?

4.3.1.1. Critical and Reflective Consumption Case Studies

In response to the rhetorical analysis of a digital artifact assignment, students picked a variety of digital artifacts for critical/rhetorical analysis, which included:

1. Music Videos: I. Stephanie: Britney Spears' *Hold it Against Me*
II. Krista: Ray J's Sexy Can I

III. Jihun: “Rack City”

IV. Kasey: Lady Gaga’s “Bad Romance”

V. Michael: 3oh3’s “STARSTRUKK”

VI. Kyla: Nicki Minaj’s “Super Bass”

VII. Raaz: Lady Gaga’s “Judas”

2. Video Advertisements:

I. Madison: “Kobe System” —an advertisement for Kobe Bryant’s latest sneakers

II. Benjamin: Teleflora ad from Super Bowl, 2011

III. Zack: Jaguar-”Gorgeous” Advert

IV. Camila: Macklemore’s “Wings”— a Nike shoes ad

V. Sarah: Axe ad—“Clean your Balls”

3. Movie Clip: I. Eric: a climactic clip from Wolfgang Peterson’s movie *Troy*

4. A Still Advertisement: I. Martha: Dolce and Gabbana’s ad for clothes

5. Clips from Cartoon Episodes:

I. Andre: a character analysis of Popeye in “Patriotic Popeye”

II. Jennifer: Opening scene of episode 10 “Model Misbehavior” of season 4 of *Family Guy*

6. Dance: I. Jasmine: Kayla Radomski and Kuponon Aweau’s dance to Sara Bareilles’

song titled “Gravity” at Season 5 of FOX Network’s *So You Think You Can Dance*

7. A Documentary Clip: I. Sophia-- Dreamworlds 3; and

8. A Clip from Comedy Show: I. Morgan: a clip from an episode of *Desperate Housewives*.

On these chosen artifacts, students performed critical and rhetorical analysis at different levels, exploiting analytical tools and concepts derived from critical theories suggested to them. Most of the students located fascinating artifacts and analyzed them thoroughly, getting into the composers' ulterior motives, their rhetorical choices, and their intended effects, thereby discovering interesting meanings out of or in hitherto overlooked commonplace artifacts. Thus, they critically examined the chosen artifacts, digging new and different meanings out of everyday artifacts. For instance, Jasmine examined a clip of a popular dance show—*So You Think You Can Dance*—using exclusively a Marxist approach, which she says was her strategic choice. Closely looking at Kayla and Kuponon's "Gravity" dance, she claims that the dance "exemplifies how popular media can subconsciously perpetuate the unequal duality of the capitalist class structure. Ironically, this performance expresses the pain of the masses in a television show that preserves the masses' false consciousness" (from her essay). To come to this claim, she undertakes an analysis of different aspects of the popular show. She interprets "the relationship between dancers Kayla and Kuponon" as the "relationship between the oppressed and her oppressor" (reflection) and connects the Marxist concept of addiction "with economic dependence and a rigid class structure" (reflection). She analyzes movements and visuals of the dance and observes "another power struggle present in the clip: the social and economic relationship between the dancers and the judges" (reflection). This she says is frightening because "the dancers are powerless to the hegemony of the show's decision-makers" (reflection) and that, seen from how the show functions, it does not promote the art works, but "subconsciously perpetuates the illusion of the American Dream" (reflection).

Jasmine further argues that the whole process of choosing the dance phenomenon beginning with rehearsal to performing original choreography in front of panel of judges, and final declaration of the winner is nothing more than the formation of “bourgeois heroes” (from her essay) which “represents modified and televised version of the American Dream” (from her essay). In her critical analysis, she finds that “[T]he show gives viewers the impression that dancers have endless opportunities for success. In turn, *So You Think You Can Dance* inspires younger dancers to pursue their unrealistic dreams” (from her essay). She spots bourgeois-proletariat relations even in the decision-making procedure:

[t]he procedure for decision-making on *So You Think You Can Dance* reflects the system of a dominant, ruling class and the subordinate masses. Until the final episode, viewers do not decide which dancers remain on the show and which are eliminated from the competition. Instead, the judges...have the final decision. Like the class system according to Marxist theory, *So You Think You Can Dance* places power in the hands of a few who then determine the future of the masses. (from her essay).

She comes to an even more critical point when she presents another observation that the future course of competing dancers in the show is not “necessarily based on competitors’ talent and potential” (from her essay), but on their potential to attract more viewers, which is connected with the commercial success of the show that pays judges the checks from its profits. Backed by this commercial motive, Jasmine adds, “Judges may therefore choose a beloved or controversial dancer over a more talented contestant” (from her essay). She digs into the sponsorship and internal workings of the show to come to this claim. She finds that “Nigel Lythgoe is the leading judge, the show’s creator, and CEO of 19 Entertainment Ltd., which produces the show (“About

Nigel Lythgoe”)” (from her essay), and, as the producer of the show, his “interests lie mostly in the success of the show rather than the success of the most deserving dancer” (from her essay).

Given this conflict of interests in judges, she further says:

The viewer voting system acts as an illusion to fairness. While viewers believe that their weekly votes will protect the most talented dancers, they do not have control over the final decision, leaving them subservient to the judges. Viewers and contestants do not protest their subservience because they do not recognize it, nor do they realize the conflicts of interest inherent in the judges’ power. This system reinforces the class structure of a capitalist society. (from her essay)

From there, Jasmine moves to make another claim that the relationship of viewers and show organizers is the relationship of inequality. According to her, the show

[p]rovides viewers with what appears to be an entertaining escape from an oppressive capitalist society that perpetuates the masses’ economic subservience to the ruling class. Subconsciously, the program and this dance in particular work to reinforce viewers’ oppression as acceptable. The program supports viewers’ belief in the American Dream; with hard work, perseverance, and skill, the dancers will succeed. Viewers of the television show, however, are trapped in a false consciousness much like Kayla is trapped by Kuponon’s supremacy. Until viewers regain consciousness of the show’s underlying message, performances like “Gravity” will continue to tug at our heartstrings without triggering thought toward the prospect of a different society. (from her essay).

Jasmine thus speaks back vehemently to the hegemony of mainstream popular culture, exactly as Jenkins and many critical pedagogues want their students to be able to do. She dissects both on-screen and behind-the-scene workings of the show and exposes some shades of reality not visible to or hidden from the general public.

Andre, another student, chooses Popeye, an “icon” from popular culture in order to, what he says, make viewers “re-evaluate their views on Popeye and start to focus on the underlying messages that the comic presents” (reflection). He particularly wants viewers to sit back and “think about how many years they’ve celebrated a holiday (Fourth of July in Popeye’s case) and never questioned why they are supposed to” (reflection). In order to have that rhetorical effect on the readers, Andre combines rhetorical, semiotic, psychoanalytic, and Marxist concepts to dissect his chosen artifact. Popeye is known as a Spinach-eating funny character, who amuses the audiences with “pun-like jokes” (from his essay) but, in his analysis, Andre wonders: “is there something behind the comedic spinach eating cartoon?” (from his essay), and then sets out to “peel back some of the comedic layers of the famous comic strip turned cartoon and analyze the ideologies that Popeye conveys” (from essay).

Andre then observes a number of things in his chosen artifact—“Patriotic Popeye” episode takes place on the Fourth of July; the grass that Popeye waters is in the shape of American flag; Popeye and his nephews fight over fireworks; Popeye’s nephews play a baseball game; the atomic sky rocket that Popeye’s nephews ignite blows up in the sky and “resembles America’s founding fathers,” and “the episode ends with Popeye blowing up red, white, and blue balloons while he allows his nephews to try and pop every one of them” (from his essay). Andre interprets his nephews’ attraction toward fireworks as an id force in play and Popeye’s sustained attempt to avoid them from lighting or playing with the fireworks as superego counteracting

against id, and the constant fight over the fireworks between these two parties as balancing act of the ego. As a chaotic id, his nephews eventually blow up the fireworks but Popeye, as superego, saves them from potential harm and the ego coordinates that entire struggle between the two.

In the baseball game that Popeye's nephews play in the episode, Andre uncovers an interesting meaning. He says that baseball game is a great American pasttime and it is "an American dream to grow up and play baseball for the major leagues" (from essay). But this dream like any other American dreams "is just another way for the bourgeois to rule over the proletariat" (from the essay) and "Popeye suggesting that baseball is a good game to play is the case of the bourgeois reinforcing their ideas" (from essay). Pursuing this dream, Andre explains, causes alienation in the prospective players because not everyone becomes a league player but, instead, on the run to that goal, one becomes self-observed, toilsome and productive and also frustrated at the same time because in the capitalist system not everyone can become the winner.

Andre even takes up the time the episode takes place—the 4th of July, and discusses shades of meaning out of that. The 4th of July is national holiday in the US provided by the government and companies to their workers to "celebrate freedom, the freedom of this country, the freedom of man" (from his essay). Andre views the idea of holiday as the idea of ruling class to keep the workers' alienation away, thereby letting them engage in mundane pleasures and be oblivious of the fact that they are being exploited. He also digs into some outstanding signs and symbols in the episode. Children being the primary audience of this cartoon episode, Andre sees that grass in the shape of American flag at the opening scene of the episode and the image of Popeye watering the grass sends "a message to children saying that they want America to grow" (essay). Similarly, Andre notices that the title of the episode—Patriotic Popeye—also reinforces this idea of growth of America, and American sentiment among children. He interprets fireworks

as symbols of power and Popeye, and his nephews' fight over them as the struggle for control of power. He stretches this interpretation even further—"This symbol ties into the message that the episode portrays of wanting America to grow. If everyone (even children in this specific example) tries to achieve and gain power, then that shall raise the bar for what it means to be powerful in the U.S. Overall making America more powerful and helping it grow on the national level" (from essay). This move appears to be a bit of overstretch, but still shows his critical mind at work.

As these samples of student works in this class show, majority of students chose digital artifacts, and were engaged in critical and rhetorical analysis of their visual and multimodal elements in isolation or in combination. In completing this assignment, they at once used their critical, rhetorical, visual, digital and multimodal literacies as media consumers, but not yet as media producers. This assignment/unit nonetheless oriented them towards looking at media commodities with analytical eyes.

4.3.2. An Active Production of Media and Knowledge Artifacts

The unit 3 complemented unit 1 by introducing media production elements into the curriculum. For unit 3 named "Remediation and Intercultural Literacy," I had remediation as the major assignment for which students had to remediate their unit 2-argument essays into multimodal forms for two different audiences—general American public, and the community of student's peer with whom s/he closely worked throughout the unit. My decision to have them design two versions of remediated text for two different audiences, and have domestic students collaborate with multilingual students was inspired by Fraiberg's idea of remixing texts for 'local' and 'global' audiences, and Ma's conception of two-way adaptation (see chapter 1 for more details). Though Fraiberg and Ma come from different disciplinary backgrounds (Fraiberg

belongs to rhetoric and composition, and Ma to intercultural communication), their frameworks or theories are highly productive for a globalized composition classroom. Fraiberg proposes multilingual-multimodal framework of writing whereas Ma advocates for two-way or multi-way adaptations of communication behaviors by interactants in cross-cultural communication situations. I did not embrace these theories in their entirety but appropriated only Fraiberg's multiple audience idea and Ma's reciprocal adaptation of communication behaviors concept for this assignment.

The project culminated into a classroom presentation of both versions of remediation and each student also composed a three-page long reflection on various dimensions of remediation from audience to semiotic modes, diction, and style to selection of various design elements for different versions of remediated text. I specifically asked them to consider how the media they chose for remediation shaped the messages/contents or, more explicitly, what changed or did not during their remediation process, and why. I wanted them to engage the dynamics of media and message, content and forms, audience and rhetorical choices, relationship between old and new media, and media convergence in practice. Therefore, I asked them to explain their projects' targeted audiences, contexts and their purposes for different designs, if any, for different audiences. Their blog posts were also supposed to talk about the differences in terms of site design, and resources and language variety choice between two remediation projects. While explaining the differences in rhetorical choices, they were specifically asked to answer why those choices and why differences in choices for those projects.

In order to assist them in their remediation process, I had in the calendar relevant activities and resources meant to provide them with theoretical insights and hands-on experiences of remediation in its different stages and forms. We watched a few videos on

immediacy, hypermediacy and remediation in the class; I asked students to read chapter selections from Bolter and Grusin's book, *Remediation: Understanding New Media*, and Jenkins' book, *Convergence Culture*, and few chapters on web site and document design from Anderson's *Technical Communication*. I also had them read some articles on intercultural communication styles and differences, and World Englishes. In addition, I had time allocated for exploring and playing with some new media spaces like Wikispaces, Wix, Wordpress, and Google Sites. Students were divided into two groups of bloggers and responders who switched their roles every other week. I also divided the whole class into small groups of two, each group consisting of students from different cultural, linguistic or literacy backgrounds as far as possible intending to encourage 'two-way adaptation' of stylistic preferences and design features between them.

Students were required to design two versions of their website—the first for a general American audience and the second for the communities of their peers. Most students had peers from quite different backgrounds, but a few did not have distinct partners because of an uneven number of domestic and international, multilingual and/or minority students in the class. Of the twenty students in the class, I only had seven multilingual students, which means only seven domestic American students could work with peers from different backgrounds while six other domestic students either had to work with somebody from similar backgrounds or with multilingual partners who were already collaborating with other domestic students. The collaboration in this less than ideal situation had different impacts (more discussion on this later), which affected the outlook of the second version of the websites they designed.

Yet the remediation assignment, as a whole, was productive in that it engaged students in digital, Internet, visual, technical and intercultural literacy practices and sensitized them to a

number of vital aspects of media and composition, such as the affordances and expectations of different media; the relationship between media and audiences, old media and new media, and media and semiotic modes; rhetorical choice of design elements in light of audiences and purpose; and cross-cultural difference in design conventions. This assignment was fresh for everyone in the class, and students stated that they learned useful digital and multimedia skills in addition to all those rhetorical and stylistic dimensions of remediating an academic essay into a multimodal website. Almost all of the students stated in their reflections, and interviews with me that they enjoyed working digitally on a website, and for most of them website design proved to be a valuable experience. Many expressed their excitement that they learned something useful for their lives, and for many of them this was their first encounter with website designing applications like Wikispaces, Wix, Wordpress, and Google sites. Many were even not aware that those applications existed and that they could design their own websites. Students, however, encountered some issues while working in peer groups for second version of the website. For the lack of equal number of domestic American and international multilingual student writers, the peer feedback system key to re-design of first version of website for “global audience” (second version) did not work fully to intended effects, which had ramifications unforeseen for this assignment (detailed discussion to follow in the next section).

4.3.2.1. Remediation Case Studies

A closer look at some of the student remediation projects would help us get a sense of the concrete outcomes of this assignment. Therefore, in light of data gathered from multiple sources, I analyze two projects by two particular students—Andre and Camila, who also worked as peers for each other for the second version of remediation.

Andre and Camila come from different literacy, linguistic, and cultural backgrounds.

Andre is African American male student and his first language is English. A monolingual English speaker, his entire education was completed in the US (For more details, see his literacy bio in chapter 2). Camila is a Puerto Rican female student with Spanish as her first language. She is bilingual and completed her high school in Spanish medium school in Puerto Rico, with English as a subject in the curriculum.

As required, Andre designed two versions of remediation—first directed to general American public, and second targeted to a community of his peer, Camila. While remediating his argument essay into a web form, Andre considered a number of things: “viewers look briefly at a website and try to look for something that catches their eye without having to read a lot of content. Once that attention is caught, then the reader will actually dive into that portion of the website and it’s content” (from his reflection blog post). Considering the general audience for the website as opposed to scholarly audience for the argument paper, he reports that he “changed the wording from academic to the average dialect” (blog post) for the website. He says that he also “placed pictures and videos into my [his] site to capture the attention of the “browsing” viewer” (blog post). About other design choices, he says he chose blue background for the site, for that particular color “brought a calm and inviting vibe to my [his] website” (blog post).

For the second version of remediation, however, his peer, Camila informed him that Puerto Rican people are mostly bilingual and speak both Spanish and English. Andre states that knowing the fact that Puerto Rican people also speak English was “a sign of relief” for him because he then learned that he didn’t have to “translate my [his] website in Spanish” (reflection). He did not want to translate the entire website because doing that would have “changed the meaning of my [his] website because certain idioms in English can’t be translated

over and I'm [he was also] poor in Spanish" (blog reflection). Camila in her reflection blog writes that based on her learning in her high school in Puerto Rico, she suggested that Andre make some particular changes on his first version of the website in order to make it look appealing to her community in Puerto Rico. She wanted the font color to be made black from blue for the sake of contrast. She also wanted him to move links/menus in the page from right to left because titles in left is considered "formal" design in her culture. Another change she wanted to see happen was replacing comic pictures in Andre's first website with real pictures of real people. For demanding this change, Camila had this rationale: "even though comics convey messages in a fun way, pictures actually shows [sic.] the persons, like the readers, and the readers can relate to those people in the actual pictures" (Camila's reflection blog). Her revision suggestions to Andre are more focused on interface design and color scheme. She, however, does not link them explicitly to any aspects of her culture. Therefore, she has left some space for us to be skeptic about her claim that certain color combination and interface design represents her culture. That space required triangulation, but my attempt at cross-verification did not go anywhere. My effort to locate sources—scholarly and popular—that could corroborate her claim yielded virtually nothing leaving me still wondering whether her claim is justified or not.

In an interview with me, Andre says that he had some rudimentary experience working with website and could make some basic websites with template available online, but he had never worked with wikispaces or Google sites to make websites. So, designing a full-fledged website was completely a different experience for him. He, however, knew that audience was the "biggest factor when it comes to media" (interview), therefore, "added on to the visuals because it's website and everyone wants to look around for the things that pop up and catch their attention. I [Andre] tried to add a few images on each page that really catches the person's

attention and also bring my [his] humor into it” (interview). Moreover, Andre and Camila had some interesting moments working in collaboration, as Andre recounts:

I put my title to the right, I had a blue background, which is not common, as it’s a bit hard to see. I could see it, but she (Camila) changed it. She put it to her culture, put everything in the left hand margin, which is ironic. When I went to her website I changed it to how my website kind of looked and she changed mine to how hers looked so when we looked at them together it was like every title I had in the middle and I took hers from the left and put it in the middle. We changed each other’s and how our cultures affected our choices. (interview)

Andre further says that remediation assignment was eye-opening in the sense that often times we do not “think about how different people communicate with each other; you [we] are always in your [our] own niche or society so you [we] are used to how people talk, but to think about how other people talk to each other is eye opening so it makes you [us] think of the website, how they want it to look” (interview).

Like Andre, his peer, Camila also produced both versions of the remediated website. Obviously, the first version was targeted to American general public while the second version was tailored to the design preferences of her peer’s community. In the remediation process, she says that she left the introduction from her argument essay as it was in the website as well because she “wanted people to know that the claims and proofs given were real” (reflection blog). For general American public, she chose a “neutral color” and font. In terms of design, Camila says, she used a formal pattern: “The basic stuff as in the header goes in the top left corner; indent when starting a new paragraph, and consistency in the font color, size, and style. A pattern I followed was making an index on the left side bar with the topics touched throughout

my essay where one could click and the website would direct you specifically to that topic (like the Wikipedia style)” (from her reflection blog).

Camila also reflected on the impacts of medium on the content and presentation style, and made necessary adjustments for the medium of website, as she says:

When one writes a research paper in a blank word document one has to be formal because it is normally going to be handed in as a professional work, and also because the reader (teacher) is expecting formality....But when one is transmitting the information through a website one has to remember all the distractions that exists [sic.]...This is why the colors, images, videos, and links play such an important role, because in the websites there are no expected readers other than the ones who are interested...when you create a website you have to retrieve your readers by making your website intriguing and interesting. (reflection blog)

The second version of her remediation was targeted to Andre’s community. Andre, an African American male student, comes from New York State, and he suggested that she add a video in the introduction. The video was Apple’s first commercial, and that was added there, what Andre says, to “spice up the intro a little bit” (Andre’s blog reflection). In Andre’s view, that addition “makes sense because the whole context [Camila’s essay topic] is how the media has changed our lives and certain aspects (examples given: film industry and humanitarian ways) but it is interesting to see how we started, with this adding humor to the website” (Andre reflection blog). Andre suggested another change on the Kony page in her website—adding a picture of Africa with the colors and a fist in the middle. In Camila’s words, “The reason of this specific picture is because Andre comes from an African American background and the colors represent his past and heritage, while the fists represent the unity and how Andre is unified with his past, or how

African nationalism works as a symbol system for African Americans. This fits right in because the Kony movement is about Africa and Unity of all the nations through the social media” (Camila’s blog reflection). Another change suggested was the font color. The original font color in her website was white as contrast to black background, but Andre asked her to change it to blue “because they stand out and seem more inviting to the reader” (Andre cited in Camila’s blog reflection). “The last change made was the addition of the picture in the conclusion...that says “the end” concluding with all the information provided” (Camila blog reflection). Unlike Camila’s claim about her culture, Andre’s design preferences were verifiable. Blue color and image of Africa with fists have symbolic and political significance for African American community that Andre is a part of. In African American community, blue color stands for protection and success (Zora Neale Hurston qtd in Stine et al. 63), and this symbolism is widely used in their literature and popular culture. In addition, “[I]n studies of quilts made by African Americans in North Carolina, researchers found that strong, contrasting color choice was an important aesthetic” (Stine et al. 63). Many African American novelists including Toni Morrison have referred to color blue as something “that don’t hurt nobody” (qtd in Stine et al. 63). This discussion of color symbolism in African American discourse shows that Andre’s revision suggestions to Camila are informed by some cultural currents from within his community.

According to Andre, while providing feedback to Camila’s website, he was confused because he “thought it was great the way it was and also I [he] really didn’t know what audience I [he] come[s] from” (Andre’s reflection Blog). So, he says, he had to turn the mirror onto himself in order to reflect where he comes from and how he perceives media. He further adds:

But I actually saw in this project how different certain audiences are. My audience or at least I’ve grown up doing is putting the title of a section in the middle of a

page, whether it is a website, or just classroom notes. But my partner, she was taught to always place her titles on the left hand margin. So when we traded websites I found myself taking all of her left handed titles and placing them in the middle and she took my centered titles and pushed them to the left. I found that a little humorous and interesting how the audiences we belong to really control what we think is aesthetically pleasing. In the end, the audience has the power over remediation and how media is displayed to them. (Andre's blog Post)

Looking at Andre's comment here, it becomes evident that remediation assignment leveraged Andre's self-actualization as well as his intercultural competence (Chen and Starosta). He had to self-introspect and study his own community to see what specific language or cultural characteristics define him and his community. Even though he learned a lot about his own cultural values in course of working for this project, his representation of his culture to his partner can have limitations. Similar would be the case with his partner explaining her culture to him. There is always risk in treating a person from a particular community as spokesperson for that culture. Their characterization could be stereotypical and essentializing at worst, and simplistic and generalizing at best.

His peer, Camila, gained similar insights about media, audience and cross-cultural design conventions working on this assignment, as she writes in her reflection blog post:

[t]his unit made me realize the importance of the channels where we portray our context and the difference in each different media. Even though it was the same context everything else changed, from the font color and size, to the pictures, and even the way it is read. I enjoyed this project because I did not only learned [sic.] about creating a website or how the information should be portrayed differently but I also learned about

Andre's background and how to adapt a certain website to a certain cultural background.

In addition I learned about my culture because while I was trying to figure out how to explain it or how to portray it I actually learned more about my culture and the standards back home.

So, it emerges as the outcome of the assignment that it also encouraged self-reflexivity and introspection in students. While explaining their culture or community's design preferences, they looked into themselves to see what cultures or traditions they come from and what different values they as cultures hold.

These gains notwithstanding, it is, however, challenging to verify whether what they described to their partner as cultural aspects of their design conventions are, in fact, unique to their cultures or prevailing textual conventions in their cultures. Many students, including Andre and Camila, seem to have taken culture in a more broader and monolithic sense, as something that every one in a particular community invariably observes or follows. In addition, they seem to be discussing conventions of text/discourse organization without linking them explicitly to aspects of their cultures. As that link is missing, it could be contested that their revision suggestions could have come unconsciously from some other sources—their academic training, some abstract rules of typography, or their own sense of interface design.

It also emerges from student reflections and interviews with me, which is also reflected on their second version of remediation, that for some students collaboration did not work to the intended effect of two-way adaptation or intercultural literacy. Only the domestic students who got an opportunity to collaborate with multilingual students or students from different cultural or literacy backgrounds benefitted the most from the feedback or input they got from their peers. Since domestic students got some specific suggestions from their peers regarding the design

preferences or expectations of their (peers') communities, they could understand the different values and worldviews of different communities and tailor their websites accordingly. This process brought home to domestic students the insights that not all communities across the globe operate with the same logic, that differences are the norm in this age of heterogeneity, and that they, as global citizens, should respect those differences. But domestic students who worked with other domestic students due to the less number of international or multilingual students in the class, and the multilingual students who collaborated with mainstream domestic American students for the second version of the website did not benefit as much in terms of intercultural or global literacy, and design conventions across cultures or communities for some particular reasons. One among them is that domestic students did not have much to offer in terms of specific design feedback to other domestic students because both of them were a part of mainstream American public and did not have entirely different language, culture or design conventions. So, their second version of the website could not be significantly different from their first version geared toward the general American public even though some students found ways to work around that issue. Some, for instance, made design adjustments in view of the fashion, music, food or other popular cultures of the places their peers come from. Interestingly, for these students, the cultural theme became a question of style. Similar were the issues international multilingual students faced while collaborating with mainstream domestic students. Their first version was already targeted to the general American public and the design elements were also already employed to their interests or expectations. Almost all domestic students (other than few minority students like Andre discussed above) were a part of general American public, and they did not see the need of any changes in the design of first version (by international students) in order to make it friendly to their communities. That was counterproductive for

international students in that they did not learn anything new from peer feedback and that their second version could not be significantly different from the first version.

This less than ideal outcome of collaboration in remediation projects raise some questions about the practicality of, what Fraiberg says, asking domestic students to collaborate with multilingual students to design projects for local and global audiences. It appears that “local” and “global” audiences could mean different things to different students. The shortcoming could also lie in my interpretation of those terms. Given our location in New York, I interpreted ‘local’ to mean the city in New York, where our school is located and asked students to design the first version for general public in the city, but that confused students who were from outside the U.S. or those who were collaborating with students from within the U.S. while designing the second version of website. There could have been a better way to have more productive outcomes from peer feedback for the second version. I could have asked everyone to design their first version for their local communities even if that means international students would be targeting their first versions to communities outside the U.S. That could have done justice to international students for they would get some concrete feedbacks for the second version from domestic American students. Even with that adjustment, the issue of domestic students working with other domestic students could be a problem. The take away from this experience is that the two-version remediation idea would not work in every classroom. For this idea to work, either student demographics should be very diverse or an instructor would need to find a way to pair students from somewhat different backgrounds to collaborate for the second version or perhaps draw in others outside the class who come from diverse backgrounds. The outcomes also indicated at some potential confusion around how I constituted the notion of “culture” in my assignment description. I described in some broader terms the expectations from the assignment that the

second version of the website should be catered to the cultural preferences and design conventions of the community of one's peer, but did not speak in much detail what could count as "culture" or how to best connect cultural aspects to design and organizational conventions of a web site. This clarification would have guided student projects better. I could also have explained in some explicit details the nuances of intercultural and intracultural differences so that students would be more thoughtful about describing their cultural values in some absolute terms thereby avoiding the risk of sounding essentialist or stereotypical in their characterization of their cultures.

As becomes clear from the general examination of all the remediation projects, and closer look at some specific student projects, the remediation assignment yielded mixed results. Students practiced multimodal and intercultural literacy even though the latter was not very tangible for the domestic students who worked with other domestic students for lack of international counterparts. Some international and multilingual students also got impatient with not getting solid feedback from their domestic counterparts for redesigning the second version, but that dissatisfaction can be looked in a positive light too. It can be argued that international multilingual students are already adapted to mainstream American design conventions so they did not get much feedback from their domestic counterparts because their websites were already on par with the expectations of domestic students. This could speak to the fact that adaptation thus far is happening just one-way, but this assignment initiated the process of two-way adaptation—learning by domestic American students of design conventions of some other cultures and communities, and the ways of tailoring their web designs to those conventions. The adaptation process, however, was supported by resources drawn from multiple fields, such as intercultural communication, new media, World Englishes, and technical communication, and

assigned to the class as unit/course materials. The videos on mediation and remediation, book chapters on remediation (Bolter and Grusin), media convergence (Jenkins) and website design (Anderson), articles on intercultural communication style (Ramsey) and World Englishes (Bhatt), together with student research and collaboration provided useful frameworks for students to understand the process of adapting communicative style to different rhetorical and/or cultural context/s.

4.3.3. Media Convergence in Motion

Unit 4 provided students with additional opportunity for production of media assets. It also afforded them space for multimodal literacy practices, hands-on experience with media convergence, and collaboration. For unit 4: “Multimodal Literacy and Media Convergence,” I had collaborative documentary film production as the major assignment, which was to be accompanied by the group reflection on the group work dynamics, and composing process and challenges. During the whole unit, students worked collaboratively in a group of three and produced an 8-10 minutes of documentary film. For the documentary, they were asked to choose a movement or event (current or historical) that they would find relevant and interesting and that also connected with some aspect/s of course theme: multiliteracies and its associated issues. I suggested some potential topics for them: the Occupy Wall Street Movement, social media and protest (e.g. in Middle East and Africa), various civil rights movements (including LGBT issues), gaming and politics, gaming and learning, indigenous land rights issues etc. I specifically stated in the description that their documentaries should incorporate a good amount and variety of primary and secondary sources—alphabetic texts (books, articles, newspaper editorials etc.), interviews, audios, videos, still images, among others—and be organically composed. They should also have to demonstrate the group’s knowledge or learning of a number of techniques,

such as handling a video camera, still camera, interview techniques, script writing, and incorporating voice over into the film, and/or editing skills. I also made it clear that the juxtaposition of different texts and narrative voices, and their organic unity would be the key evaluation criteria for the project. I further added that their projects should also reflect their understanding of audience, textual cohesion, and ethical treatment of sources, among other techniques and dimensions of multimodal video composition. The documentary was to be accompanied by a 2-page group reflection paper. On that particular document, the groups were asked to reflect on each and every choice and decision they made during the whole process of documentary production. In the reflection, they could talk, among other things, about the collection or selection of source materials, decisions on English variety or other language/s to be used, narrative voice, work division and other critical dimensions of collaborative research and composition.

In order to scaffold their documentary production process, I had a number of closely related materials and in-class and homework activities in my unit calendar. I had some sample documentaries on Steve Jobs and Occupy Wall Street, some web and journal articles on making documentary films, some chapters from Henry Jenkins' *Media Convergence*, and some videos on multimodal composition as major unit materials. More than artifacts, I had allocated a lot of studio times for students to experiment with the gadgets, programs and techniques of documentary filmmaking. I also had time for discussing relevant unit materials and watching sample documentaries and videos on multimedia composition together in the class. Similarly, I had some sessions dedicated to script writing, interview techniques, composing and editing audios/videos on programs like GarageBand and I-movie/Windows Movie Maker. Since the

projects were to be done collaboratively, I also allowed groups time to work together both inside and outside of the class.

4.3.3.1. Media Convergence Case Studies

In response to the assignment, different groups produced different documentaries around topics ranging from the Egyptian revolution to the Vietnam War and peace movement; the documentaries produced diverged in complexity and persuasiveness. For instance, Jasmine and Morgan, as a group, made a documentary, “Gated Community: Trayvon Martin in Context,” and is on the Trayvon Martin shooting story, which was “sweeping across the nation as a racially affiliated crime” (reflection) at that time. Beginning with Trayvon Martin shooting case, they also surveyed race relations at their own university—an instance of localization of a national incident. As resources for the documentary, they found and collected a local news clip of the vigil for Trayvon Martin that students organized at their university. In the clip they saw that the chair of multicultural affairs at the university was also present at the vigil. So, they “contacted him and scheduled an interview” (reflection). In order to get student perspectives on the incident, they conducted individual interviews with some students using the same set of three questions “related to race relations on campus and how they were affected by the Trayvon Martin story” (reflection). They also used some breaking news clips of the incident from mainstream media like CNN in order to provide background information on the incident. Regarding their decision on the format of the documentary, they state that they

[w]anted the demographic of our [their] viewers be young adults, preferably the students...[of their university]. We [they] wanted to appeal to their sociological thinking about race relations and target their emotional appeal towards the case. We [they] believed that the news clips and audio of the 911 call would trigger them. To make the

opening more dramatic and clenching, we [they] played the call with a dark screen. We [they] also wanted to follow the correct format of a documentary. We [they] had many different forms of video content. For creative appeal, we [they] took random shots of people on campus so that we [they] could show the school's diversity. We [they] did not place ourselves [themselves] in the documentary other than the voice over that Jasmine recorded at the beginning. We [they] thought that we [they] should stick to a third person narrative style so that we [they] would not [sic.] the focus off of the chosen subjects because their input was what mattered. (Their documentary group reflection)

Their interview questions for participants were about race relations on campus and ways to deal with racial issues both on campus and in the larger society. Looking at the interview scripts, they found that the interviewees "had valid points;" that the interviewees were "passionate about the subject;" and, in particular, that the chair's (of multicultural affairs on campus) "outlook on the topic was indeed insightful" (reflection).

In terms of composition, their documentary begins with a black screen but with the 911-call (someone reporting the shooting) in the background. Narrative voice, images, and videos were juxtaposed very well, and they alternated the interviews around some set of common questions. But this product was not easy to come by, the group members agreed. They faced the major challenge while editing the documentary. Both the members in that group did not know video making program/software. They had to learn the whole editing and composing skills from the scratch for this project. Regarding that challenge, they write:

We used iMovie to cut and add clips. During the interviews, we were having trouble choosing sections that correlated with the questions that we asked the students. We had to make sure that the wording was understandable and that the main points were clearly

stated. There was a problem with the lighting and sound in some of the videos, so Jasmine figured out how to enhance those features. In the end, our video's length 8:21 in total encompassing all of our points that we were aiming for. (Group reflection)

But despite these and similar challenges, the end outcome for them was productive; each of them learned many of the skills required to make a documentary. They also learned the process and dynamics of multimodal composing for a wider audience. In addition to technical aspect of movie editing, camera work, and layering audio, video and voiceovers, they practiced and learned to make precise audio, image, and footage choices, frame interview questions, and select and evaluate sources for a new media composition.

For Morgan, one of the two group members, documentary production was “easier, more fun but it's also harder in the same way” (interview). It was hard because it involved a lot of technical skills like editing and camera work and its subject also had to be presented in an interesting way: “don't just say the general thing, you have to go beyond for documentary” (Morgan documentary interview).

Another group, that of Krista, Jennifer and Martha, worked on the theme of Vietnam War and the peace movement of 1960s for their project, therefore, according to them, “The overall style of the video has a Vietnam war protest and peace movement vibe” (Group reflection). They divided the workload evenly and thoughtfully among them, as they report:

We each searched various sites for information, pictures, videos, and music that is relevant to the Vietnam War and peace movements. After collecting data we individually took notes to prepare for our voiceovers. Once we had data from sources and had the notes, we did our voiceovers. The voiceovers ended up being anywhere from around two to four minutes. We decided to split the voiceovers because we thought it would be more

entertaining to the audience if they did not hear the same person doing the voiceover for the whole video. (reflection)

This was a good decision on their part because different voiceovers added variety and diversity in the video. The editing of documentary was generally done well with rightly placed images and transitions, and juxtaposition of images and voiceover. But their end product demonstrated some shortcomings on the group's source collection work and in their composing/editing process. The documentary's conclusion is casual and not very striking. Even the story-telling is not energetic and, above all, documentary does not include any primary sources like interviews and surveys, which would have added originality to the content of the documentary. They were, in fact, required to include primary data in their documentary, as primary data collection lies at the heart of any documentary. But they cited their inability to locate any Vietnam War experts on campus or in their locality. The unavailability of Vietnam War experts on campus (which I seriously doubt) should not have deterred them from including some primary sources. They could have conducted surveys or interviewed students on campus or people in the History Department or International Relations. Anyway, this group did not perform in the way expected, therefore, their end product could not be as rhetorically effective as it could have been had they followed the assignment thoroughly and worked sincerely to give the best they were capable of.

Thus, the quality and rhetorical impact of documentaries different groups produced varied, but all the groups shared similar views about their preference for multimodal compositions over traditional academic essays. In their reflections and interviews with me, most students said that they preferred documentary or web design assignment over an academic essay even though many of them also agreed that documentary film-making in particular was much more complex and labor intensive than writing an essay because it involved technology, and

multiple semiotic modes of composition. Students' preference of digital assignments to essay writing speaks to the fact that students these days are more into technology than into alphabetic literacy practices. They are immersed into digital and new media technology since early childhood, but their alphabetic literacy practices, in traditional sense of the term, has become mostly limited to academy. This has raised some serious questions about disconnect between our students' literate practices outside and inside the academy. Another observation I had about group work of my students in general is that they mostly used electronic media and forums for communication among group members. More than face-to-face meetings, they interacted more often online and met face-to-face only if it was irreplaceable by any electronic communication. Similarly, next observation I had about the outcome of documentary making project is that students who had prior digital skills enjoyed and benefitted more from this assignment than those who were new to this composition practice. In addition, the group work was characterized by some complex and mixed outcomes. Each group divided work among members and each member did his/her part, but while performing allocated specific task, each one of them did not and could not learn all the skills needed to complete the project. Each one chose a part one was comfortable doing it and did that part well, but that kind of work arrangement had some downfalls— each one gained proficiency only on one component part of the project, not in all the skill sets required to make the project work, and, except for some members and groups, each one sharpened existing skills further practicing them while working on the project, but hardly ventured to learn new skills. For example, many in the groups did not know video composing prior to this project and did not learn that skill even when putting the documentary together because they chose or were assigned different tasks, such as script writing or locating and collecting sources during work division. This loophole manifested, for instance, in Michael, Kyla

and Camila's group work, as Camila in their group reflection says: "Michael edited the documentary because neither Kyla nor me (Camila) knew how to work the editing programs and he actually informed us that he is really good and enjoys editing as well" (reflection). Kyla, another member in the same group, also attests to that fact by saying this in interview with me: "One did all the technical stuff as he was good at it and then we (other members) did not know how to do it. We did research... and try [sic.] to find new stuff" (Kyla documentary interview). One could, however, defend this outcome as well arguing that this is how the world functions now, that not everyone knows everything, and that this is the time of assembling, collaboration and conglomeration. But to me personally, something is wanting in this work arrangement. There should be a way to make groups work better and more productively. One potential way would have been an inclusion of an explicit instruction in the assignment description regarding expectations about group work such as equitable work division not just in terms of labor but also in terms of holistic skills required to accomplish the task. I could have also required students to teach other students how to do something they were unfamiliar with. In that way, I could have turned some students into "coaches" or "mentors" for other needy students.

Even with these challenges notwithstanding, this particular assignment was instrumental in scaffolding and cultivating multimodal, visual and information literacies in students by involving them into active meaning making process employing plural semiotic modes.

4.4. Conclusion

Through these three units and assignments, students as the critical and reflective consumers of digital media artifacts in unit 1 were transformed into the active producers of such artifacts in unit 3 and 4. Collectively, rhetorical analysis, remediation, and documentary film-making projects engaged students in composition practices that challenge the traditional notion

of composition. In working through this assignment sequence, they also questioned the division of media or literacies into some neat categories such as ‘old’ and ‘new’ or ‘traditional’ and ‘21st century,’ and learned to see them into an evolutionary continuum or in complex relation to one another. In remediation and documentary production assignments in particular, they practiced and learned to make meanings in multiple semiotic modes and in multiple sites of literacy. In addition, they could reflect on the affordances and limitations of a number of literacy modes both in isolation and in combination. Through hands-on practice, they could understand how media and literacies shape and are shaped by rhetorical situations of literacy or communicative practices. That, in turn, has brought home to them the idea that literacy practices, including composition, should evolve with the advancement in media and technologies, and one way to evolve with media and technologies of composition is to appropriate them for composition purposes. The remediation and documentary production projects also afforded students opportunity to have conversations in their small peer groups about cross-cultural differences (or similarities) in design conventions across places. They, for instance, discussed and reflected on the impact of audience on medium, content, and the manner in which information is presented. With “local” and “global” audiences in view, and with resources coming from places near and far in multiple semiotic modes, students learned to negotiate a host of complex contextual factors that shape multimodal composing as much as they do composing in a traditional form.

5. Implications and Future Research Directions

5.1. Overview

This study argued that demographic shifts in student population in American classrooms as well as increasing global connectedness call for radical re-imagination of college writing pedagogies and curricula. It specifically contended that a multiliterate writing pedagogy, informed by developments in World Englishes, information technologies, new media studies, literacy studies, and intercultural communication, can help teachers better respond to the diverse linguistic, cultural and literacy traditions students bring with them to the classrooms. Through triangulation and rhetorical analysis of data sources—interviews, student artifacts, curricular artifacts, research reflections, and scholarship in aligned fields— this study examined the limits and possibilities of a multiliterate composition pedagogy implemented in a diverse classroom of sophomore level students, and demonstrated that this particular approach can cultivate multiliterate writing and thinking in students, combining traditions such as essayist, multimodal, rhetorical, and intercultural literacies, among others —the qualities highly desired in individuals looking to join a work force shaped by globalization.

In that sense, this study calls for a shift in the ways we frame our curriculum and conduct teaching of writing in diverse classrooms. It also calls for reimagining our student writers, and reconceiving language and culture for composition. But, for the shift in writing curriculum and pedagogy to realistically happen, professional development of teachers would be imperative. Equally important would be decent working conditions for them, their access to resources, and their acquisition of skills to use those resources effectively to cultivate multiliterate capabilities in students. This is where the writing programs (WPs) or writing program administrators (WPAs) become implicated in the successful implementation of a multiliterate approach to writing at the

local institutional level. As major actors in professional development, and resource mobilization and allocation decisions, WPAs can affect change by steering their programmatic orientations toward multiliteracies, even though many WPAs themselves might need appropriate training and access to resources pertaining to multiliteracies.

WPAs will be implicated also in re-designing both undergraduate and graduate curricula to make multiliteracies a regular part of pedagogical and research practices within their programs/departments. Thus, WPAs have ways to make a contribution to making multiliteracies a reality at the local institutional level at the least, even though we should be aware, and not overestimate the actual influence or agency WPAs can have within the programs/departments or larger university structures to make radical changes or decisions with regards to curriculum, pedagogy or administrative structure within or outside their units. These administrators usually have limited authority, and have to work with other units, groups or individuals (curriculum committees, faculties, department heads, deans, and so on) in order to initiate any larger changes that they want to see happen in their units, let alone outside their units. Even under those limitations, WPAs can launch conversations around multiliteracies or around ways to respond to diverse student population and plurality of language and style for composition that they bring to our classrooms, and set the ground for curricular and pedagogical reforms. Therefore, they can act as catalysts for change at the local level, if not as absolute agents of transformation at a larger scale because for the shift to happen at a larger and wider scale, larger disciplinary conversations around all those issues are also necessary. It is, therefore, vital that scholarly engagements in rhetoric and composition center on curricular innovations, pedagogical experimentations, and development of assessment systems for evaluating curricular instruments developed around the multiliteracies framework. It is equally important for the field to further intensify discussion

around new and emerging media of composition, multi/trans-lingualism, and stylistic plurality as they relate to the literacy practices of diverse student/professional writers.

In the several sections below, I discuss each one of these implications separately, relating how future research can explore them in some greater depth. I also engage three scholars doing some innovative pedagogical work in their respective units—Selfe, and Scott DeWitt (Ohio State University, and Matsuda (Arizona State University)— who I had the privilege to speak with personally around issues surrounding a multiliterate approach to teaching composition, and also draw on scholarship in the field as and when relevant and necessary.

5.2. Programmatic Transformation

Both domestic and international student enrollment trends over the last 60 years forecast that our classrooms are going to be even more diverse in terms of cultural, linguistic, and literacy traditions in coming years. This projection has implications for how we prepare for future classes—curriculum, faculty development, assessment system, and fair working conditions.

5.2. 1. Curriculum Development

This study finds that the students in my classroom prefer new literacy practices over traditional ones. Traditional essayist or critical literacies are not in their list of favorites, but digital, cyber, visual, and social media literacies are, even though, to many of them, these new literacies mean hard work, and rigorous learning process. But students' preference of new literacies does not mean that traditional literacies have lost their value and relevance. My study into essayist and critical literacies traditions reaffirms the value that traditional literacies have for life, for professions, and for the world. Not just essayist literacy advocates, but even new media scholars like Selfe (see below for detailed discussion) reinforce the value of traditional literacies for intellectual development of our students. As much as traditional literacies are, new literacies

are equally valuable for life and professions in this high-tech world. The associated values of traditional and new literacies aside, these literacies are, in fact, not separate and separable in their actual manifestations. Rather, they are stages of media in an evolutionary continuum, which interact closely and constantly with one another in different media platforms.

This study also debunks the idea that only multilingual international students negotiate or need to negotiate their linguistic, cultural and literacy traditions while composing in English by revealing that even domestic American students negotiate a number of factors while composing in English. This finding, combined with the increasing agreement among rhetoric and composition scholars that negotiation, as a skill, is necessary for everyone to successfully navigate the challenges of the globalized world, should be a reminder for composition teachers that they, too should, have this component incorporated into their curriculum. But how could be a pressing question for many teachers since negotiating factors tend to differ by student demographics and classroom locations, and teachers can have their own teaching agendas. This study, however, foregrounds the ability to negotiate global, digital, cross-cultural and cross-linguistic issues in composition process as crucial for students looking to join the increasingly diverse workplace. Therefore, it is advisable that teachers integrate these dimensions of composition in their curricula.

In addition, this study indicates that negotiating factors for students in each assignment could be different based on their positionalities, and this insight can inform our future pedagogical practices. It also emerges from the curricular and pedagogical experiment conducted for this study that whether or not students learn to negotiate depends largely on how creatively or thoughtfully teachers craft their curricular and pedagogical artifacts. Therefore, teachers need to research, study and decide what areas they want to prioritize in their curricula. Their decision

about the course content and pedagogical approach should be guided not just by their preferences or inclinations but also by classroom, institutional and global exigencies. At a time when classroom demographics reflect national or global demographics, and students' composition and communication needs resonate with those at the workplace, teachers can not afford to overlook classroom diversity and dynamics nor can they ignore institutional priorities and global complexities while framing their curricula, or while implementing them in their classrooms.

Taking into account those exigencies, however, involves redesigning every assignment we have for the composition classroom, including the traditional academic essay assignment. As I attempted to do for my class, an academic essay assignment, or any other assignment for that matter, should be re-imagined along the lines of diversity of that genre's traditions around the world, recent development of technologies associated with it, and the literacy traditions students bring with them to the classroom. A major part of this re-design venture would be being flexible and open to hybrid or innovative textual forms diverse students in our classrooms are capable of producing.

Another implication of this study pertaining to curricular innovation is that curricular artifacts are the primary tools composition teachers have to enact any change they want to see happen in their students' writing process or in their classrooms. In terms of their curricular/pedagogical tools, as much as students negotiate their choices and constraints, teachers also need to negotiate their choices and constraints, such as their pedagogical goals, designated course objectives, material conditions, and available resources, in order to implement their philosophies of teaching in the class. Each individual teacher can have his or her own specific teaching philosophy, but in order to put it into praxis, that particular philosophy needs to be transformed into small tangible and executable curricular instruments, such as calendar, course

materials, assignment, daily lesson plan, and classroom heuristics. I don't want to suggest that everyone needs to make multiliteracies their curricular goals, nor do I push that they need to prioritize the same set of literacies in their curricula that I did in mine, but I would say that if they want to see their teaching philosophies actualize, they should articulate their expectations, goals, and requirements explicitly in their curricular and pedagogical artifacts. The bottom line of this all is that writing teachers need to negotiate constraints, and make the maximum out of available resources. They need to negotiate, for example, the location of their academic institutions, resources available on campus, the medium of instruction, program and course requirements, assessment system, and even the curricular and academic conventions. They need to learn to mobilize the resources they have available on-campus or off-campus, online or offline, in the department or across the department, in the discipline or across the disciplines, and in the country or out of the country to the benefits of students. For example, they can invite experts from across the departments, or from other academic or professional units or institutions for guest lectures or workshops in the class. They can even use students from the class as resources when that is feasible and appropriate. Similarly, in order to encourage democratic source use in students' projects, teachers can invite reference librarians to give workshops on strategies to locate sources within or beyond the library: That could be a way for teachers to sensitize students to source availability in multiple languages and media from across places and cultures. A new media expert, an ESL scholar, and a communication or literacy scholar can make similar contributions in the class. This might not be possible in all situations; therefore, teachers should go for whatever is feasible within constraints.

In the similar vein, this study signals that we can draw as much insights, ideas, heuristics, and theories from other disciplines as from the scholarship and conversations within our own

discipline. Rhetoric and composition as a discipline already has a lot said and written about writing/composition in its various subfields—digital rhetoric and new media composition; global rhetoric; intercultural rhetoric; technical and scientific communication; race, class, gender and sexuality studies; cultural studies; critical theories; and linguistics, and each of these sub-fields can make notable contribution in terms of framing cutting edge syllabi for writing courses.

Matsuda in a personal communication with me, for instance, offers an instance of pedagogical experiment that the Writing Program at Arizona State University is carrying out in line with this disciplinary and interdisciplinary borrowing and appropriations of productive ideas. He recounts that they have developed a textbook that embraces global and multilingual realities; the textbook itself is multiliterate, multimedia and multilingual, and they are already piloting that particular textbook in second language writing sections, and have plans to extend that to the mainstream composition classes in the near future. The crux of the idea here is that teachers should be on the constant lookout for resources in the discipline or across the disciplines, that is to say that they should be perennial researchers, experimenters, innovators, interdisciplinarians, and learn to keep up with time and change in the domain of knowledge production, and in technology.

In addition to these general implications, this study has specific implications to graduate curriculum development or program design. Since the nation's rhetoric and composition graduate programs train future teachers for most of undergraduate writing classes, these programs need to incorporate into their curricula the issues and areas of studies like globalization; inter and intra-cultural communication; academic writing conventions across places and cultures; multilingualism and World Englishes; media and technology development and their impact on composition, communication or literacy practices; cross-cultural variation in communication genres; and students' literacy practices inside and outside the academy. Such a curriculum may

begin to help the field recognize/legitimize different discourse conventions and expression patterns, as well as composition styles that international students draw from in their composition practices. Such an approach is important, in Horner and Trimbur words, to develop a transnational perspective “capable of understanding the study and teaching of written English in relation to other languages and to the dynamics of globalization” (623). This revamping of existing graduate curricula also help make them relevant to the times and also prepare their graduates to take up challenges of a diverse classroom when they join the workforce. With reference to graduate program’s role in preparing graduates for undertaking a multiliterate pedagogy, Selfe, in a personal communication with me, relates how Ohio State University’s graduate students get to practice with different media and technologies in the classes that they take as graduate students. Graduate students there get first hand understanding of, among other things, video, audio, alphabetic, and photographic compositions in the graduate courses that they take for the program, which means that they can take that first hand knowledge into their own courses in the first year English and into the lower division courses that they teach. Therefore, the graduate curriculum is the place for innovation, which can eventually trickle down into the undergraduate curriculum as these graduate students eventually become faculty members and drive curricular innovations in the undergraduate curriculum both as teachers and as program directors.

The bottom line with regards to writing curriculum development, therefore, is that the teachers of composition should re-design their curricula keeping in view the global, cross-cultural and digital forces shaping our students’ literacy practices, which is to say that our curricular and pedagogical artifacts should ideally be in multiple media and modalities, in multiple languages, and from different geopolitical locations. Similarly, the objective of

composition curriculum should be engaging students' multiliteracy practices and/or cultivating multiple literacies in them. However, for fulfilling that objective, we need to learn to strike a balance between scaffolding students' existing literacies and cultivating in them the range of literacies valued in academy, and in the 'real-world' outside the academy. Focusing just on scaffolding students' existing literacies would sometimes mean doing disservice to some of our students, as they need to be able to compete with the rest of the world for future employment opportunities. Therefore, each composition course should strive to cultivate a range of traditional and new literacies in students separately, and together, as these literacies interact, interplay or interlace in students' actual literacy practices as well as in communication practices of organizations that would employ our graduates in the future.

As Selfe also highlights in her personal communication with me, the WPAs or the department chairs can play a critical role in curricular and pedagogical innovations within their academic units. Selfe observes that if the department chair or the program administrator doesn't believe in all means of persuasion--video, audio, alphabetic, photographic, animation, then the people who work under that administrator are also going to have a difficult time with it. So, it's incumbent upon both program administrators and department leaders to understand how communications are changing shape in an increasingly technological and digital world. Selfe suggests that, whenever possible, program administrators and departmental chairs do the hard work of providing support and instruction for individual instructors who want to incorporate these new modalities into their composition classrooms for that kind of support is essential if they are going to succeed at the task. She further states that the primary investment has to be in people who have to know how to work with technology and machines, and new composing modalities. Only then comes the integration of these modalities into the classes in an increasingly

effective ways. Therefore, it is going to take some commitment on part of program administrators to allow for that kind of experimentation and work toward excellence when teachers integrate media into classroom.

WPAs, thus, can have a great role in helping composition teachers make the transition from being teachers of traditional writing to teachers of literacy and communication, and in encouraging and supporting them to take up the interactive dynamics of new and old literacies in their curricula.

5.2.2. Faculty Development

This study is a testament to the fact that a multiliterate composition pedagogy poses challenges both for students and teachers of composition; therefore, professional development of faculty through periodic workshops, training, guest lectures, and refresher courses is mandatory to equip them with necessary skills and expertise to take up and implement a multiliterate composition pedagogy in their classrooms. Primarily, professional development programs should give teachers a snapshot of potential challenges and situations that they might encounter while implementing a multiliterate composition pedagogy in their classes. Along side some intense workshops and engaged conversations around multilingualism, global Englishes, plural stylistic conventions—academic writing or otherwise, multiple modes of signification, and democratic source use, teachers should also be encouraged to be co-learners with students, and welcoming of the unexpected and unknown in the class. This position of teachers is not one of comfort, but the one which is likely to increase teachers' anxiety and uncertainty, as it can undermine their authority in the class, if not challenge the traditional teacher-student hierarchy. For example, when students cite sources in their native language and provide translations, it could be hard for teachers to assess whether translations are accurate or near accurate. Similar situations could

arise if students produce texts in the mediums or modes teachers are not proficient in. Therefore, professional development activities should suggest teachers that there are no fixed solutions to these challenges other than to make students co-learners, and be eager to learn from them. There could be a number of ways to open conversations with students on their rhetorical choices and decisions, such as asking them to write reflections on their choices, and conferencing with them around those choices.

Pushing teachers to be flexible and willing to accept the unexpected and unknown from students, however, can have positive impacts on self-development of many motivated writing teachers. With the prospect of encountering the unfamiliar in the class, they will be perennial researchers. They will explore, claim and experiment with new forums and forms of writing as they become available with advancement in communication or composition technologies. That way, they will attempt to keep up with evolution in media, digital and writing technologies. In short, in the run up to implementing multiliterate composition pedagogy, teachers should be willing, prepared and trained to engage composition in its larger frame in their classrooms. They should be reminded of the insight that expanded notion of composition includes traditional essayist writing, but it also encompasses signifying practices in other available media and modes of composition. Selfe in a personal communication with me expressed similar ideas about composition, which is something widely published in the field through her scholarship in digital media, multiliteracies, and multimedia in relation to students' literacy practices. She particularly wants teachers to understand that we need a multiplicity of modalities of expression integrated into our classroom, arguing that we need to do or learn to do not only alphabetic composing, but also video composing and audio composing, and photographic composing and animation in this era of multimedia. Invoking Aristotle, she maintains that it is desirable for composition teachers

to use and teach their (our) students to use all available means of composing for persuasive purposes (“Aurality and Multimodal Composing ...”). She specifically highlights the point that we should not leave the alphabetic behind; rather we should acknowledge the importance of alphabetic literacy in the education of young people. Given that we are living in a culture that is accumulating literacies partially because we are having to communicate across geopolitical, cultural, and linguistic borders, Selfe states that we need all the semiotic information we can layer into a message to make that message understandable across these borders. Similarly, she adds that people should think of composition pedagogy as a matter of “addition,” not that of “subtraction.” Teachers can build on the base of alphabetic composition, and then add a video composition, audio composition, photographic composition, multimodal composition and so on as the semester progresses. The crux of her argument, in our conversation in particular, was that teachers should be able to provide students with as many choices in resources for composition as is possible. She thinks that the more choices students have, the more effective they become in composing for the world that is increasingly digital and technological and global in its setting, reach and scope.

Selfe’s own institution, Ohio State University (OSU), is working to train its faculty to take up an expanded notion of composition. Scott DeWitt, a former WPA at OSU, in a personal communication with me, recounts that the professional development program for the incoming TAs there entails an extensive orientation to the undergraduate curriculum. According to him, each new incoming TA goes through an intense two and half week workshop, and the support for them continues for the whole academic year. These teachers are also ensured access to human and non-human resources, which also includes a dedicated staff of full-time faculty and graduate students. OSU’s support system reminds us that composition teachers should be given an

extensive training and workshop in teaching composition in its expanded sense even before they enter the composition classes. Along side training and orientation, writing teachers also need an environment of immersion in order to make these media a regular part of their lives.

In addition to training and logistical support, writing teachers also need a lot of encouragement in undertaking pedagogical experimentation in their classes. They need to be reminded that while experimenting with a new pedagogical approach, it could be sometimes challenging to execute curricular artifacts and heuristics in the class; these artifacts and heuristics may not work to the intended effects at other times, but that should not deter them from further experimentation. With respect to challenges surrounding implementation of an innovative pedagogy, Selfe speaks about a particular challenge that can surface while experimenting with a multiliterate approach in the composition classroom—access of students from around the world to writing technologies, for digital technologies and networks are not evenly distributed; they are distributed along the lines of wealth and power both in the United States and around the world. Another related stumbling block on the way to multiliteracies is, in Selfe's terms, "our own profession's commitment to the written word as the *sine qua non* of knowledge or understanding" (personal communication). This is a stumbling block for multiliteracies because it keeps us away from opening ourselves to different ways of knowing in different types of composing. Another challenge for her remains undoing the kinds of education we receive as teachers of English composition. She examines the graduate curriculum of rhetoric and composition and remarks that it is only recently that graduate students have started to receive the kind of training they need to teach undergraduate writing courses and understand such tasks in their graduate preparatory work. In making that observation, she is implying that until fairly recently graduate curriculum was disconnected from the 'facts on the ground' and was short of preparing teachers for the

multiliterate approach in the classroom. Therefore, the challenge for us now lies in identifying the kind of support our teachers need, and in making sure that they get that support in incorporating multiple literacies into their courses. And it is incumbent on program administrators and department to provide the needed support for teachers willing to implement multiliterate approach to composition in their classes. For Selfe that support means having not only equipment that students can check out and teachers can use, but also having people—the human resources, who can help teachers integrate technology into their classes. Selfe thinks that providing those human resources to help teachers integrate technology into their classrooms is not an easy task and is probably the most underestimated task that programs need to account for if they are going to integrate technology, because it is those human resources that will make the difference between success and failures (personal communication).

DeWitt seconds Selfe in that regard, and maintains that challenges in implementing multiliterate approaches rests with respect to access to a variety of technologies, and resistance and support to using those technologies (personal communication). He characterizes the lack of classroom-based research to be another major challenge in implementing a digital pedagogy, or a multiliterate pedagogy for that matter. He, however, lauds the amazing scholarship being produced in the field, which has all kinds of potential to inform our teaching and what we are doing in our classrooms. For him, it is urgent that we start producing more research that is based on classroom practices: “actually designing and conducting studies about our students' practices and how they are responding to the pedagogy” (personal communication). The sense we get from this discussion is that there are all kinds of challenges and impediments to making multiliterate composition pedagogy a success, but that in no way should discourage teachers from experimenting with this approach. Even a partial success with curricular or pedagogical

experiment in the first go could give useful input for making it more effective in the subsequent implementation; it can at the least help garner necessary feedback on the appropriateness and effectiveness of the approach being undertaken.

One other thing that the professional development sessions should underscore is that we need to have an individualized syllabus for each composition class depending on its student demographics and location; a shared syllabus or a curricular blueprint for all composition teachers or for all composition classes is not an ideal.

5.2.3. Material Conditions

Since implementation of multiliterate approach demands regular study, and research by, and professional development opportunities for, writing teachers, the program they belong to should devise a way to motivate them to learn things as they evolve, including the theory and technology of literacy. That basically means their respective programs must ensure fair working conditions for all their faculty members—tenured, non-tenured, adjuncts, graduate students, and part-timers. The teachers operating under deplorable and grueling working conditions (Ianetta; Crowley; Wardle; O’Neill; Bousquet; Schell; Scott; Ede), and required to teach large-size classes, won't have time, energy, and motivation to individualize course syllabi or assignments for any of the classes they teach, nor would they have obligation to attend any professional development sessions planned for them or publish scholarship in the field. Given the current hierarchy between tenured and non-tenured, full-time and part-time, and English and composition faculty, maintained through discrepancy in remuneration, benefit package, and job security, it could be challenging for any WPA or department chair to engage all their constituencies in any departmental or inter-departmental conversations or initiatives, including curricular and pedagogical transformations.

Therefore, for the successful implementation of a multiliterate approach to composition, a decent working condition—which includes pay, benefit package, manageable workload, and job security, among others—for all teachers should be a priority. Improving the material conditions of adjuncts, part-timers, graduate teaching assistants, and non-tenure faculty in particular involves politics and economics beyond a department or a program, yet the action should start from the unit where the issue lies i.e. the writing program or the English department itself. There have been numerous proposals in the rhetoric and composition scholarship for ways to improving curriculum and appropriately responding to labor issue of writing teachers (Wardle--“Writing about Writing” approach; Crowley—eliminating First-year composition; Harris—faculty at all ranks teaching First-year classes; Debra Dew—“writing with specific content” (qtd in Wardle); Bousquet—agitation and protest against unfair labor conditions; and Marback, and Miller et al—improvement in graduate program in rhetoric and composition and English studies). The fundamental idea underlying all these proposals is that writing teachers should be given a decent salary, reasonable teaching load, stable job, and a full benefit package—a fair pay in return to good teaching. In addition to fair pay, the writing program should also provide writing teachers with professional development opportunities by allocating funds for conference presentations, and research and publishing activities. In the same vein, these individuals should be entitled to research leave and occasional refresher courses inside and outside the department. In a personal communication with me, Matsuda underscores such activities in the department as critical for a pedagogical shift, stating that conversations, engagements, and workshops are key to implementing gradual changes in people’s assumptions about language, literacy as well as the goals of composition classes. Therefore, the demands are that WPAs, and chairs encourage these kinds of conversations in the departments to discuss specific issues writing teachers are facing in

implementing multimodal or multiliterate pedagogy or in working with diverse students in writing classrooms.

Along side professional development opportunities, teachers also need to gain access to resources necessary to implement curricular and pedagogical plans in the class. A department or program alone might not be able to provide all kinds of resources to its faculty. Therefore, inter-departmental cooperation should be made a part of academic culture. Given the range of disciplines we can draw on or have already drawn on to expand our pedagogical purview, closer work with allied departments, such as linguistics, information technologies, education, communication and rhetoric, and such could benefit our faculty members by giving them access to both human and non-human resources, as well as by affording them opportunities for academic exchanges.

A lot of these preparations for future diversity in our classes falls onto the shoulder of program administrators, even though the major share of the burden falls into structures larger than programs or departments in the university hierarchy. Yet program administrators can do some crucial things with regards to the implementation of a multiliterate pedagogy. They can, for instance, allocate funds for faculty and infrastructure development. They can foreground multiliteracy objectives in their program missions, and encourage faculty members to incorporate both traditional and new literacies into their curricula. At times, they can also arbitrate between multiliterate enthusiasts and non-enthusiasts, and compensate for the amount of labor writing teachers put to work in order to upgrade themselves to take up multiliterate approach to composition. No wonder, Matsuda sees WPAs as people having latitude to steer the program in a particular direction. According to him, one of the things WPAs do is to create and implement policies, and he demands that their policies reflect the classroom realities and realities of their

teachers. Similarly, he argues that WPAs can and should provide resources for teachers' professional development and encourage teachers to use those resources to make multiliteracies a reality in the classroom. He also wants WPAs to be role models for other teachers. He notes that in order to inspire others to embrace multiliteracies, WPAs themselves need to understand multiliteracies in its complexities, as far as is possible. They, then, should create an administrative structure where a multiliteracies specialist can inform various decisions and policies, assess classroom practices and curriculum structures, and provide resources and professional development opportunities that are necessary for teachers to embrace multiliteracies in curriculum and pedagogies.

5.2.4. Assessment

Assessment of projects produced under multiliterate composition pedagogy and curriculum could be a challenge for teachers. Students could produce projects in different modes and in varied forms based on the type of assignments and students' own positionalities. Therefore, standard traditional assessment criteria would fall short in providing evaluation guidelines for that range of projects. I revised traditional criteria for evaluating the argument essay by adding components of cross-cultural, cross-linguistic, and cross-stylistic negotiation. I did not punish translingual or multimodal practice even in the argument essay, nor did I discourage transnational source use or the evolving thesis in the spirit of an exploratory essay form. For the multimodal assignments in particular, I drew ideas from Cheryll E. Ball's *Technical Communication Quarterly* article "Assessing Scholarly Multimedia," which underlines some smart ways of assessing rhetorical and design elements in multimodal compositions. She puts her criteria in a formulaic form as Kuhn +2; she appropriates Virginia Kuhn's four parameters of assessment: 1. Conceptual core; 2. Research component; 3. Form and

content; and 4. Creative realization, and then adds two of her own in the list: audience and timeliness. In short, I looked at the rhetorical efficacy of web design and documentary making projects by focusing on idea, source use, relationship between form and content, creative approach to the topic, and sensitivity to audience and socio-historical context. But, an area that future research should focus on is to develop appropriate criteria for evaluating projects in multiple media and in hybrid languages and modes of representation. Selfe also finds assessment a very tricky job because she does not want assessment to be an assessment of students' "selves," but of their works. Therefore, she tries to design the projects in such a way that students have as much access as possible to the resources they need in order to make a project succeed. She also makes sure that there is a clear rhetorical purpose, a clear rhetorical audience, and a clear sense of what information needs to be included in the project. Similarly, she makes sure that each assignment she designs has a clear sense of genre because we have to cover genre, especially in multiliterate projects. If we can do that, then she thinks that assessment could be easier for us (personal communication). Matsuda, on the other hand, maintains that while assessing students' projects, we need to take into account what is valued outside the academy. Given the multilingual reality of today's classroom, he argues that grammar assessment should be reconsidered. In fact, he speaks against grammar assessment—no points for the grammar and mechanics at the least, if not complete abandonment of grammar correction. Therefore, he advocates for point addition system as opposed to point subtraction in assessment. That, he thinks, is the best way to go about assessing students' multiliterate and multilingual projects (personal communication). In his *WPA* article, he speaks about what he terms instructional alignment as part of assessment strategy, which he describes as:

The intended outcomes defines what students are supposed to learn in the course or the program; instructional processes provide knowledge, skills, strategies and awareness that are necessary for students to reach the intended outcomes; instructional assessment measures whether students have achieved the kind and degree of learning stipulated by the outcomes. (“Let’s Face It...” 143).

With this statement, he suggests writing teachers only assess the skills that we explicitly teach in the class. What this means in relation to diverse students and their plural writing and linguistic conventions in the class is that teachers should assess language/grammar issues to the extent taught in the class, and not punish them for what we do not teach or can not teach in a semester.

Assessing multimedia is still a challenge we need to tackle sooner or later. Therefore, future research should come up with more specific and tangible evaluation criteria so that our assessment encourages multiliterate practices rather than discourages innovative and experimental spirits in our diverse students.

5.3. Reimagining Student Writers and Reconceiving Language and Culture for Composition

Another crucial knowledge teachers should have or should gain is that students in a diverse classroom come with a varied learning abilities and literacy levels. As Matsuda, in a personal communication, mentions, and as I discuss in Chapter 1, American higher education is experiencing a huge influx of international students and increasing number of resident students, who come with a varied levels of English proficiency. It is, thus, obvious now that the traditional mold we have does not work for these students. Therefore, it is desirable that our teachers be made aware that composition classes today are populated by diverse students and their equally diverse literacy levels and learning orientations. The classroom diversity also reminds us that it is

virtually impossible to reach any fixed conclusion about any aspect of our students' literacy practices or abilities. For example, international multilingual students in my sophomore writing class in the Spring of 2012 negotiated multiple languages and writing styles at a varying degree—some more effectively than others. Some could make appropriate rhetorical decisions and adopt tones or styles appropriate for rhetorical situations they responded to or created in different assignments across the semester while others adopted the same style across all assignments. Similar diversity was observed amongst domestic American students. This range in student literacy skills manifested in and impacted collaborative as well as individual assignments in the class. For that particular reason, some groups functioned better than others, and some group members contributed more to the group work than the others. Matsuda warns that traditional teachers are not prepared to work with these diverse students with diverse literacy levels, particularly around their language issues. But he also notes that there is no escaping for teachers from these students because “all writing teachers are *de facto* language teachers” (personal communication). In Matsuda's view, many people still struggle to talk about language issues, and we hardly ever get to the substantive language issues in our discussions in conferences and workshops. Given these challenges, he maintains that it is imperative that composition teachers learn to talk about language more professionally—how language works socially; how languages change; how languages or language varieties differ across places; how people negotiate languages; how power structures determine language use, and so on. They should also learn to see language issues as the windows to understand what is happening in the world, and what our students are experiencing, and to think of ways to address those issues creatively. For this all to happen, Matsuda is cognizant, it takes time, but he is also unequivocal in his statement that the process should begin here and now (“Let's Face It...”). In his published

scholarship (“Linguistic Homogeneity...”), Matsuda challenges prevailing assumptions about English monolingualism and domestic American students as the norms in English composition classrooms. He rather presents diverse student body, and multiple languages and cultures as the norms in today’s composition classes.

Given this context, it is necessary that teachers be prepared to offer individualized instruction to each and every student in the class. Individualizing assignments and instruction for each student could be difficult and would require of teachers to learn about students’ past and present literacy practices and identify their strengths and needs early on in the semester. This early diagnosis would help them to build into curriculum the activities that can capitalize on students’ strengths while catering to their literacy or composition needs. Asking them to submit their literacy narratives or having an extended conversation around their literacy development early on could be a way to assess those literacy strengths and needs. Teachers should be encouraged to do this diagnosis also because students’ past literacy practices and habits could have been sponsored by a number of individuals and/or institutions. It makes sense to take into account the relationship among literacy sponsorship, literacy traditions, and composition forms that students produce because tracing that relationship for the past literacy habits and sponsors of literacy can give composition teachers a sense of a right time to intervene in a student’s composing process. The teachers can also get clues to the kinds or amount of instruction a particular student needs in order to complete the particular assignment in question.

The variation in literacy levels and skills of students are challenges not just for teachers, but also for students themselves. Unless teaching instruction is completely individualized, which could be impossible at all times, students’ diverse degree of learning needs are not addressed by a general instruction in the class. Similarly, unless a teacher already knows the literacy levels of

all students in the class and has made corresponding accommodations in his or her instruction, a general instruction is sure to leave some students behind. This happened with one of my students in my writing class that I studied for this research. As I noted in chapter 3, Jihun struggled in each and every stage of writing for his argument essay even though I offered him sustained personal support in the process. With my support and encouragement, he completed the assignment, but only after two weeks of deadlines. By the time he made his submission, we were towards the middle of unit three and its assignment—remediation. I had paired Jihun with Morgan, a domestic American student, to work for the second version of remediation. But because Jihun's argument essay was not complete, that hampered his work in remediation. In the meantime, he also missed quite a few classes. He had excuses—family emergencies and such, but I knew that he was missing classes to avoid my inquiry about his argument essay. His absence and his delayed work submission affected his peer's work. He somehow managed to work with his peer and provided feedback on her second remediation project, but he never had his project ready to get feedback from her. He even sat for interviews with me, but never turned in his remediation projects. We moved past unit 3 and started to work on the collaborative documentary project for unit 4, but Jihun still did not submit his unit 3 projects. I reminded him about my attendance policy and the potential impact of not completing a unit project on his final grade. He was regular in the class after that and actively contributed to the unit 4 group project—production and presentation of a documentary in the class, yet he never submitted those remediation projects. He asked for extensions in response to my email reminders about those projects, but never submitted them even on the last day of the class. This inability to complete course assignments negatively affected his course grade. Reflecting back on this student's performance in the class, I see that my hesitation to make adjustments in the length of the

assignment, source use, or in other requirements for the argument essay assignment could be partly held responsible for his less than desired outcome for the course. I hesitated to make larger adjustments (other than relaxing deadlines) for him for the sake of impartiality and uniform standards for the class, and he did not ask for any adjustment other than deadline extension for the same values. Jihun's case reminded me that we might have to learn to make accommodations in some particular course requirements for students if they are struggling, or if they are being left behind in the class. It would be wise for us, though, to make corresponding adjustments also in evaluation of their projects and give them lower grades (for doing less work compared to others in the class) than to fail them for not completing a particular assignment. This kind of adjustment is particularly necessary for students who are new to the literacy practice being taken up in the class at the moment. This is specifically true with new literacies, which demand some level of technical skills in students. However, if instruction is individualized with adequate groundwork with students' prior literacy levels and necessary adjustments in curricular and pedagogical artifacts are made, students' minimal or no prior knowledge or proficiency in a literacy under question should not discourage teachers from taking it up in the class because most of our students are self-learners; what they need is a well-crafted assignment and access to resources. Needless to say, students are self-learners and self-teachers in this age of Internet and new media. They can search and research many of the issues pertaining to both traditional and new literacies, and resolve them. Therefore, the role of a teacher now is more of a planner, organizer, or facilitator than that of an authority figure in the class. Students, for instance, can look for and follow instructions available on the web on making movies or designing web sites; they can also find what programs, applications or softwares are available for those purposes. The teacher need not know everything in advance, but she or he should clearly know the target objectives and the

activities that can fulfill those objectives. Thus, what lies at the teacher's end is a framing syllabus, assignments and heuristics in such a way that they create an environment of learning and collaboration in the class. However, while framing syllabus and crafting artifacts, teachers should make sure that those artifacts are capable of engaging students in multiple literacies—both traditional and new—not the one or the other. What this all means is that teachers need support or ideas on how to design engaging artifacts for the class rather than step-by-step instruction on each and everything that should go into the syllabus or in the class activities.

Teachers also need to be honed to value the literacy practices of students. They should be reminded that the purpose of composition courses are served better if their teachers become mindful of the fact that while some students in the class could be tech savvy, some other students could be in a dire need of basic digital and multimodal literacies. Students would be better served if teachers could find out students' literacy levels in advance, for some students could be totally unprepared to carry on new literacy assignments without some guided instructions. Taking into consideration all these factors while creating curricular and pedagogical artifacts or while implementing them could be challenging, but being able to negotiate all of them successfully could be productive for the class. But for successfully accommodating and responding to these diverse interests would require of teachers hard work with continual update, training, and education in and about both old and new literacies and technologies. Since teachers should be able to teach students whose needs and expertise in old and new literacies vary considerably due to their diverse positionalities, they should be introduced to a number of strategies of working with diverse students. One among them could be the strategy of making students in the classroom a resource for one another, which basically means encouraging collaboration, partnership, and co-learning in the class. Such a pedagogical approach makes the classroom a

productive learning space; collaboration and reciprocal learning—between students, and student/s and teacher—could be most productive in cross-cultural, cross-linguistic, and digital literacy learning situations, where students and teachers from different socio-cultural backgrounds can be resource for one another. Another strategy could be allocating enough class time for students for actual technology workshops and hands-on experience with both old and new media.

Teachers also need to learn to respect students' expectations and preferences in writing classes. For example, my study, particularly into the literacy narratives and writing process of international multilingual students, highlights the need of teaching students the standard variety of English along side other varieties. Students' literacy narratives specifically speak to the fact that their families and communities value English language literacy very highly and so do these international students, pressed by the expectations of their families or communities. Given this context, composition teachers should be prepared not to discount their expectations, but should be warned that while respecting those aspirations, they should not overlook the value of scaffolding students' native literacy practices and their linguistic and cultural traditions. They should instead be asked to encourage students to learn literacy practices in other languages and from other academic traditions. This basically means teachers need to identify what students want from a writing class, what they need to succeed in academy and the world outside, and how their pedagogical goals, whatever they are, can be fulfilled. In other words, teachers should devise strategies to do a lot of balancing act—accommodating students' personal, familial, and community expectations, their current literacy and linguistic practices, the composition and communication needs of the global world, and pedagogical goals of a teacher, course or a curriculum. These could sound like few easy steps, but putting it into practice would entail a lot

of research, planning, reflection, re-organization, re-design, and a re-thinking of entire course artifacts and course goals. This would also entail larger shifts in the mission of composition courses, rhetoric and composition disciplines, and American academy, and professional development of teachers is key to making those shifts happen. Professional development of teachers can help make the American academy open to multiple languages, language varieties, and literacy traditions, and conducive to the growth and flourishing of plurality in language, literacy traditions, and composition modes, which are conditions for making a multiliterate composition pedagogy a reality. If composition teachers are willing and capable of implementing this particular pedagogy, there is a high chance that composition classes become relevant to the lives of diverse students and the world outside. It would also put pressure on rhetoric and composition as a discipline to reflect on its current state of English monolingualism, Standard “English Only” policy, print dominance, and nationalistic framework in terms of its assumption of student body, and academic writing style.

5.4. Expanding the Borders of Rhetoric and Composition as a Discipline

This study also has implications for rethinking rhetoric and composition as a discipline. The primary implication is that it should strive to achieve a global outlook—encompassing how writing is done or taught around the world, and how it is changing with the change in writing technologies. Rhetoric and composition should also expand its boundaries by opening it to insights, ideas and theories from allied disciplines and fields, such as globalization, literacy studies, intercultural communication, new media, World Englishes, and communication and information technologies. Integration of insights from these areas would help give the rhetoric and composition a global outlook, and composition/writing a more realistic meaning.

In alternative terms, expanding the bounds of rhetoric and composition could entail interdisciplinary collaboration or import and appropriation of relevant ideas, insights and theories from other disciplines. Composition scholars and teachers need to look for, claim and adapt any productive ideas, heuristics, and assignments they find effective for teaching composition in its broader sense. As I discussed and demonstrated some ways to engage ideas from pertinent areas, such as globalization, intercultural communication, new media, literacy studies, and World Englishes, future research can look at other potential areas that can enrich our scholarship and pedagogy. Whatever areas we draw on or borrow from, we should, however, make sure that those imports enrich our teaching experience and contribute to our students' learning of real-life and academic skills, and humanistic and social values.

As a follow-up to my research on the case-study students' writing and research processes, future research can also examine the composing process of some focus groups of students formed on the basis of students' similar positionalities. The research designed along that line can, for instance, trace the similarities, differences, or complexity in types, forms or degree of negotiations those groups do while composing diverse texts. My sample was not big enough to make generalizations about any group of students; therefore, it remained more an exploration into some case-study students' individual composing process, and conclusions drawn from this study went somewhat like this: each individual composes differently and negotiates different factors in different degrees based on his/her positionality and rhetorical situation. But this affirmation still leaves another question unanswered: Could there be differences in composing or negotiation processes of different groups of students divided along lines of different languages, cultures, or literacy traditions? Conversely, could there be similarities in those processes of students within a particular group formed on the basis of common language, culture or literacy

traditions? And another potential area for future research, as pointed out above, could be assessment guidelines for projects produced under multiliterate approach to composition.

5. 5. Conclusion

Thus, as discussed above, this study has implications for curriculum and faculty development, for writing assessment systems, for the working condition of teachers, for writing program administration and their understanding of a diverse student body and their culture and language, and disciplinary conversations and future research directions. This research shows that both undergraduate and graduate curricula need multiliterate orientations whereas faculty need decent compensation, and continual support and professional development opportunities in order for them to be willing and able to implement multiliterate approaches to teaching composition. This study also indicates that assessment systems need to be aligned with the multiliterate curricular and pedagogical approaches, i.e. traditional evaluation tools needs to be reviewed and complemented by new criteria for evaluating multimodal and multilingual projects that students produce under multiliterate framework. Similarly, given the wider range of literacies that diverse students are capable of bringing to our classrooms, a review of the current outlook towards them is necessary. It should be established that linguistic, cultural, and linguistic diversity is a new norm in the composition classrooms, which has direct bearing on the kinds of curricular and pedagogical tools and approaches we take for those classes. All these factors combined, it is time that the field of rhetoric and composition encourages conversations and scholarship pertaining to teaching diverse students the skills they need to navigate their writing curriculum and the world that is increasingly multimediated, networked, and interconnected. That way, future researchers and teachers can work to bridge the gap more effectively between what writing teachers and

writing curricula teach and what students are expected to do in their workplaces and in their lives in an increasingly multimediated and multilingual world.

Appendices

Appendix 1: Unit-wise Interview Questions

Unit 1: Literacy Narrative and Rhetorical Analysis

Alphabetic and Digital Literacy Narrative Assignment

1. What were your goals for the literacy narrative? Were your goals different for the alphabetic narrative from the digital one? If yes, how or why?
2. Can you explain the process in which you started each of the narratives? What kinds of revisions did you undertake, if any? Why?
3. Did you encounter any challenges while composing them? How would you describe them? How did you resolve them?
4. How was assignment one different from or similar to the ones you were used to doing? How would you describe this assignment in relation to other writing assignments you have done so far?
5. How many languages do you speak? Is English your mother tongue/first language? Did your exposure to other languages and cultures in any way affect the way you composed your narratives? How?
6. Where and when did you learn to work in or with computer? When and how did you encounter Internet?
7. Anything else you want to share about your literacy narrative?

Rhetorical Analysis Assignment

1. What digital artifact did you choose for rhetorical analysis? Why?
2. What critical and rhetorical concepts, terms and tools did you find helpful in your analysis of the digital artifact? What concepts and terms from the assigned texts were useful?
3. While composing rhetorical analysis of your digital artifact, did you do anything new or different than what you would do in similar assignments in the past?
4. How do you view or approach that or similar artifact now? Did you always think that way?
5. What readings or texts did you find particularly productive or revealing in this unit? Why?
6. How do you evaluate rhetorical analysis assignment or the unit as a whole?

Unit 2: Argument Essay Interview Questions

1. What topic did you choose for the argument essay and why?
2. How did you narrow down the topic or research question/s?
3. How did you decide on your scholarly and popular sources? How did you decide what images to use in your essay?
4. Can you tell your experience of primary data collection? Who did you interview or what site did you visit for data collection?
5. Did the direction or focus of your essay change after you wrote the proposal? When, how and why?
6. How is this assignment similar to or different from unit one assignments (rhetorical analysis and literacy narratives)?

7. In responding to this assignment, did you draw on your language/variety, culture, and/or writing style? In what ways?
8. Did this assignment teach you any skill that you think will be useful—for life, for your career?
9. What did you like or did not about this assignment?
10. Do you have any other comments on this assignment?

Unit 3: Remediation projects

1. What writing and digital composition (blogging, Wiki and website design etc.) experiences did you have before joining this class? Did those practices and skills help you anyway to complete unit 2—argument essay and unit 3—remediation projects? How?
2. While remediating unit 2 argument essay into a digital form, what kinds of changes did you make? Why? Did ideas about audience and media lead to those changes? Anything else? (diction and other resources, e.g. textual, audio and visual)
3. Tell me the composition and revision process of your unit 3 projects?
4. What kinds of cultural and linguistic resources (first language, English variety, images, audios, videos etc.) did you use in your unit 3 project? How?
5. What opportunity did this assignment (remediation projects) provide you in terms of learning new skills or practicing your existing skills?
6. What factors guided/shaped your first and second version of your website?
7. How do you explain the differences between the argument essay and the remediated website? And how do you explain the differences between the first version (for the general American public) and the second version (your partner's community) of your website?
8. What assigned texts from this unit did you find significant and why?
9. Do you have any other comments on this assignment?

Unit 4 Interview Questions

Documentary Film Making Group Project

1. How do you compare the processes of making a documentary film, composing a web-based text, and writing an academic paper?
2. How do you describe the experience of working in a group? Did you encounter any challenges while working with your collaborators?
3. How did documentary filmmaking compare to other kinds of composition?
4. How did you collect and decide on the resources to be used on the documentary film?
5. What kinds of cultural, linguistic, and other resources did you use in your project? How?
6. While composing the documentary film, did you encounter any challenges? How did you resolve them? What literacy or composition practices from the past helped you with this assignment?
7. Did you do anything new or different in the assignment than what you would do in similar assignment in the past?
8. How do you evaluate this assignment? Could it have been replaced by other assignment/s? If yes, what kinds of assignment/s?
9. Any other comments on this assignment?

Overall,

1. What expectations did you have for this writing course when you first joined it? How did you form those expectations? Were your expectations met by the course content and its delivery?
2. What do your friends in other classes say about their writing classes or composition in general? How do you compare your composition experience with theirs?
3. What do you think should a writing class focus on? Why?
4. Do you have any other thoughts on this course? Any suggestions or critique?

Appendix 2: Assignments**Major Assignments****Unit 1:****A. Alphabetic and Digital Literacy Narratives: 1000 words (100 Points)****Due on Jan. 24, 2012**

Literacy narrative is composing a story about reading and composing in print and/or digital media.

Step 1: Alphabetic Literacy Narrative

Compose your literacy narrative in alphabets—using letters and words. Consider the following questions as you compose:

When and how did you learn to read or compose texts on papers and (or) screens? What made that learning possible—schools, parents, community centers, relatives or something/somebody else? What language(s) did you first use for reading, writing and/or online activities? Is English your first language? When and how did you learn to speak, read and write in English? What about computers and the Internet? When and where did you first encounter them? What did you begin with? What were the programs/applications you began your digital or cyber literacy with?

Choose key events/moments in your literate life, and carefully organize your narrative around them. You might want to consider these questions as you compose: Where did you stand in relation to alphabetic literacy or digital literacy and where are you now? If you speak more than one language, you can write your story in the first language and then in the second language and reflect on the difference in the story itself because of the language. You can also talk about literacy in the first language and the second language and the degree of proficiency in each of them. You can also shed light on the cultural or linguistic differences and literate practices or talk about digital divide and literacy learning (for example, English as the default language in computers or access to the Internet or computer programs and digital literacy etc.) if that speaks to your situation.

Step 2: Digital Literacy Narrative

Video or audio record the narrative. Camera on your computer or your phone should be fine. If you don't have access to camera, talk to me.

Step 3: Upload the recorded narrative to a computer.

Step 4: Submit me both the narratives in a CD and/or via email.

Step 5: I will host the narratives on a public website. So, offensive or inappropriate language discouraged. You can choose to remain “anonymous” when published.

B. Rhetorical Analysis Assignment (100 Points)

Due on Feb. 7, 2012

This assignment asks you to compose a 3-4 page of rhetorical analysis of a digital artifact (a music video, digital advertisement, documentary or movie clip/s, animations or cartoon clips) of your choosing. The text for analysis should be carefully chosen, and should not be necessarily related to the course inquiry. It should be rich in alphabetic, audio, visual, graphic or spatial resources, or, in other words, it should be good enough for analysis. I encourage you to borrow critical and rhetorical tools from course materials such as Arthur Berger’s book *Media Analysis Techniques*, Jack Selzer and Lester Faigley’s *Good Reasons*, and the documentary *Miss Representation*. The first three chapters of Berger’s book (“Semiotic Analysis”, “Marxist Analysis”, and “Psychoanalytic Analysis”), and Chapter 5 & 6 of *Good Reasons* are particularly pertinent. You can employ one or all of those approaches or use other productive concepts or insights such as rhetorical appeals (ethos, logos, pathos), stereotypes, status quo, gender or racial discrimination and/or normalcy. We will do some sample rhetorical analyses in the class too so I want you to keep note of critical and rhetorical terms and concepts discussed in the class and use them in your analysis. Structurally, your analysis should have at least two parts. The first part should describe the text/artifact in specific detail. The description should be vivid and minute to the point of replicating the artifact in words. The second part is the key to the assignment: analysis of the artifact. You might want to pick on symbol, sound, shape, color, images or any property of the text and begin the analysis from there. You don’t have to say that it is semiotic, Marxist or feminist analysis but just do the analysis. Once you are done with the analysis part, you also should make an overall argument about the text. Is the ad reinforcing the status quo? Or does the movie clip objectify the women’s bodies?

C. A page-long reflection paper (50 Points)

Due on Feb. 7, 2012

In this paper, you explain your choice of the particular artifact for analysis, your choice of one set of analytical tools over another and also recount your analysis process. Why did you begin where you began? How did you come to your argument?

Unit 2:

A. 10-12 pages of argument essay on course inquiry (150 Points)—multiliteracies (and its allies described in the course syllabus). **Due Tuesday, 20 March, 2012.**

More specifically, in this unit, you will investigate an issue, debate, problem, controversy or a question about multiliteracies in relation to other attendant issue such as globalization, information and communication technologies, World Englishes, new media or intercultural communication in some length and depth. You are required to use primary and secondary,

scholarly and popular, and print and digital (online) sources in your essay. You are also expected to treat your research participants and sources ethically. When you research and develop your argument, you do a number of things simultaneously: extend a conversation, historicize, make a new claim, complicate an existing claim or established fact, find a gap in the studies done and propose a solution or offer an alternative perspective. As a college-level student writer, you also make moves that academics make in their essays: state your thesis or theses at some points in the essay, make general or specific claims, and furnish evidences for the claims made. I am aware that it is almost impossible to come up with some grand universal claims or some irrefutable thesis or set of theses in a paper of this length but you can and have to attempt to present a tentative claim or set of claims in this paper corroborated by the data or sources you retrieve through different research methods. Even though it is an academic essay and you might have been schooled to avoid personal in your academic essays, I am open to you implicating yourself in the essay i.e. using “I” or bringing in relevant personal narratives or experiences from your life. In other words, your essay should ideally be a combination of personal and academic, experiential and empirical, and facts and narratives. Rather than a prose in mechanical form, it should be a record of lively and deep dialogue between yourself, your personal location, carefully chosen sources and the ongoing conversations in the area or topic of your research. So, make your essay an exploration or journey into an unknown and try to make it known to an academic audience using the strategies and techniques (such as narrowing the focus, evaluating print or online sources, or dialoguing with sources) you learn in this unit.

A Note about English Varieties and Styles of Writing

As we are all aware, our classroom is diverse in multiple ways and as a diverse class, we speak different languages or, more importantly, different English language varieties. We also come from different cultural and literacy backgrounds. As a writing teacher, I am aware that while requiring you to compose academic essay in academic English, I should not privilege one variety of English or one particular literacy tradition over other English varieties or literacy traditions (or writing styles). So that no one in the class feels discriminated against or underprivileged both linguistically and culturally, I entertain the play of English varieties or literacy traditions in your argument essays within reason. No doubt, I want you to compose your essay in academic language, the language that other scholars in the academy use, but I also know that there is no single universal academic language across disciplines or cultures. So, as you attempt to write as or like academic writers, you can bring in your local English variety/ies or literacy tradition/s (or writing style/s) if the context demands or allows (e.g. while citing the local sources or authors, while remixing your original writing style with the academic writing style or while offering examples of local/different argumentation pattern or information presentation style). I won't even have problem with you citing sources in an/other language/s as long as you make the sense clear to your audience either through translation/s or discussion/explanation of cited text/s in English.

Source Requirements

1. Primary research data (gathered through interviews, field visit, questionnaires, survey or observation)
2. 3-4 scholarly sources (books, journal articles, book chapters etc.)
3. 2-3 relevant still images

4. 2-3 popular sources (videos, blogs, songs, cartoons, documentaries, websites, magazine articles or recorded TV or radio programs/talk shows)

The sources should be carefully chosen. I will provide you with some guidelines/criteria (such as relevance, currency, authority, credibility etc.) to evaluate both the online and print sources. I want you to follow them strictly as you decide on the sources for this assignment.

Your essay should be carefully edited; it should include accurate and consistent MLA citation, and it should reflect your perspective, viewpoint or position, your voice, your active presence, and deep and genuine engagement with your chosen topic.

B. Reflection Paper (50 points): 2 pages of reflective writing on research methods and writing process. Must focus on the rhetorical choice of sources and methods and even the issue for the research project.

In this paper, you reflect on a number of choices you make during the selection of the topic for your research, while conducting actual research on your chosen topic, while composing the essay and while revising the essay for or before final submission. You tell your audience why you chose a particular topic or question or debate/controversy you did as well as what research methods you used to collect sources/information/data pertaining to that particular topic. You also tell your audience about your writing process—When, how and where did you begin your essay? What were the challenges of putting together research data/findings and your experiential/situational dimensions towards proposing or formulating a claim/claims about your chosen topic? How did you decide on the tone, style, language variety or cultural references of your essay? How much time did you spend on composing or revising the draft? Why did you revise if you did? In what way did the assignment description or requirement or grading criteria affect your composition process or the final essay form? What is your overall experience of working on this particular assignment?

C. Portfolio: (50 Points): Your portfolio should include every thing you do during the process and period of composing your unit 2 essay assignment—class notes, drafts, sources, interview questions, interview tape or transcription, field notes, class works/ activities, peer review drafts, email exchanges, blogged texts, blog responses etc., and **1 page reflection** on portfolio content/s.

Unit 3

A. Remediation of Unit 2 Essay and Presentation (100 Points) (Web site preferred; Power Point not allowed).

Due April, 3 or 5 depending on the day of your presentation

Remediation is the incorporation or representation of one medium into another. In their book *Remediation: Understanding New Media*, J. David Bolter and Richard A. Grusin argue that digital or new media are characterized by remediation because they constantly remediate (present in different media) the contents from their predecessors such as television, radio, and print journalism (old media). Remediation, however, is not just an adaptation of the old. Sometimes, new media present old media in entirely new ways without any clue to the old and only people familiar with both know that remediation is taking place. And another significant fact about

remediation is that it is not that only new media remediate the old but it works both ways. Television screens and newspaper designs these days look more and more like websites with convergence of multiple media and modes in those platforms. Remediation and media convergence therefore are the major phenomena characterizing the media and composition landscapes in this time of major technological change.

As a tribute and response to this ongoing media and composition trend, in this unit, you will remediate your unit 2 print-based argument essay in a new medium. I encourage you to remediate it in a well-designed web site. The assignment is intended to give you an understanding of relationship among audience, medium, content and style. Upon completing the assignment, you will see, learn and experience how audience and medium shape the content and style of presentation. It is up to you to decide what media assets you want to use for composition and design ranging from videos, songs, audio interviews, images, alphabetic text (from your argument essay or additional texts), graphics to animations. Only limitation is that all those assets and resources should be rhetorically (effectively) used to represent (remediate) your unit 2 essay, which is to say that you should attempt to present similar argument that you made in your alphabetic argument essay.

You will remediate your essay for two different audiences: One for local audience (general American public) and another for your peer's community (cross-cultural or global audience). You should have been aware that the peer you are collaborating with comes from different cultural and literacy backgrounds and should be a good resource for you to know what cultural values, communication styles or language/s or language variety people of his community hold dear. Those insights should help you shape and design your medium (website) better. You can also ask your peer to provide you with a thorough oral or written feedbacks or you can agree to collaborate in all stages of composition from resources gathering to composing to interface design. Through this practice, you will see how the consideration of audience impacts the design of the site, choice of the content as well as other stylistic elements.

B. Connected with the remediation project, you will also compose and post a 3-page long blog post (100 Points) on your profile in the course site about the rhetorical situation and composition style; audience factor and source and language variety choice; audience and document or web design, and media and composition patterns or forms. You must consider how the media shape the messages/contents or more explicitly, you must talk about what changed or did not during your remediation of the unit 2 essay, and why. In other words, in your blog post you must engage the dynamics of media and message, content and forms, audience and rhetorical choices. You should also explain your projects' targeted audiences, contexts and their purposes. Your blog post should also talk about the differences in terms of site design, content or resources inclusion and language variety choice between your two remediation projects. While explaining the differences in those rhetorical choices, you should also try to answer why those choices and why differences in choices for those projects.

Unit 4

A. Collaborative Documentary Film Project and Presentation (100 Points).

Due May 1

In this unit, you will work collaboratively in a group of 3 and produce an 8 to 10 minutes of documentary film. You will choose a movement or event (current or historical) that you find relevant and interesting and that also connects with some aspect of course theme. Some potential topics could be Occupy Wall Street Movement, social media and protest (e.g. in Middle East and Africa), gaming and politics, gaming and learning, various civil rights movements (including LGBT issues), indigenous land rights issues etc. You might want to emulate the documentaries on Steve Jobs and Occupy Wall Street Movement we watch together in the class. Your documentary should incorporate a good amount and variety of sources—alphabetic texts (books, articles, newspaper editorials etc.), audios, videos, still images, among others- and be organically composed. It should also demonstrate your knowledge or learning of a number of techniques such as handling video camera, still camera, incorporating voice over into the film or editing skills. The juxtaposition of different texts and narrative voice and their organic unity will be the key evaluation criteria for your project. Your project should also reflect your understanding of audience, textual cohesion, and ethical treatment of sources etc.

B. 2-page reflection paper (50 Points). In this paper, your group must reflect on each and every choice/decision made during the whole process of documentary production. You might, for instance, talk about the collection or selection of source materials, decision on English variety to be used, narrative voice or work division or other critical dimensions of the process of collaborative research and composition.

Other Assignments:

Blogging (100 Points)

I will divide the whole class into two groups. Group one blogs about the assigned course materials on Tuesday and Group two responds to the posts. The Groups switch their roles every other week. For Tuesday class, the blog posts must be up for comments by Sunday midnight and must be commented on by Monday midnight. For Thursday class, the blog posts must be up by Tuesday midnight and commented on by Wednesday midnight.

The blog posts must summarize text/s first and then pass analytical comments or questions. The posts can also show connections between the texts and the course themes, class discussions, personal lives of the writers, and/or their individual or group projects.

Small Group Class Presentations (50)

Small groups will be assigned class presentations on course materials for the particular day/s. The group in question should do extensive preparation (handouts, discussion questions, activities, videos or other relevant materials) and divide the presentation evenly among members as far as possible. The group should also allocate some time for in-class writing and Q & A session.

Appendix 3: Course Texts or Materials

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- Berger, Arthur Asa. "Marxist Analysis." *Media Analysis Techniques*. 4th ed. Los Angeles: Sage Publications, Inc., 2012. 45-74. Print.
- . "Psychoanalytic Criticism." *Media Analysis Techniques*. 4th ed. Los Angeles: Sage Publications, Inc., 2012. 75-106. Print.
- . "Semiotic Analysis." *Media Analysis Techniques*. 4th ed. Los Angeles: Sage Publications, Inc., 2012. 3-44. Print.
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- Bolter, Jay David, and Richard Grusin. "Introduction." *Remediation: Understanding New Media*. Cambridge, MA and London: The MIT Press, 1999. 2-19. Print.
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- Jenkins, Henry. "Democratizing Television?: The Politics of Television." *Convergence Culture: Where Old and New Media Collide*. New York and London: New York University Press, 2006. 240-260. Print.
- . "Worship at the Altar of Convergence: A New Paradigm for Understanding Media Change." *Convergence Culture: Where Old and New Media Collide*. New York and London: New York University Press, 2006. 1-24. Print.
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- Kalantzis, May, and Bill Cope. Victorian Department of Education Series, Video 1—

- Considerign Multiliteracies. 2012.
 < <http://newlearningonline.com/multiliteracies/videos/#CM>>.
- .Victorian Department of Education Series, Video 2—Exploring Multiliteracies. 2012.< <http://newlearningonline.com/multiliteracies/videos/#CM>>.
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<http://corinamaclean.suite101.com/make-your-own-documentary-film-a7923>
- Miller, Richard E. “The Future is Now: Presentation to the RU Board of Governors.” Rutgers University, New Brunswick. In 24Jan. 2008.
 <<http://www.youtube.com/watch?v=z65V2yK0XxM>>.
- Miss Representation*. Dir. Jennifer Siebel Newsom. OWN: Oprah Winfrey Network, 2011. Documentary.
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 < <http://www.youtube.com/watch?v=adHqO7IMuR4>>.
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 < <http://www.youtube.com/watch?v=OC3qFtgeogE>>.

Appendix 4: Course Calendar

Unit 1: Visual, Critical and Media Literacies Calendar

Week 1

Jan 17, Tuesday

We meet in Computer Cluster

In the class: Introduction to the course syllabus. Signing up in the Google course site. Formation of blogging groups.

Distribution of Alphabetic and Digital Literacy Narratives Assignment

Homework:

1. Work on the Step 1 of Literacy Narratives Assignment. Compose the alphabetic narrative at this point. You might want to look at the prompts in the assignment description for the jumpstart.
2. Complete your profile on the course site.

Jan 19, Thursday

In the class:

We will watch and analyze the documentary: *Miss Representation, 2011*

Homework:

1. Complete Step 2, 3 and 4 steps of Literacy Narratives Assignment.
2. Group 1 blogs on Chapter 1: “Semiotic Analysis” (Pdf on Blackboard) from Arthur Berger’s book *Media Analysis Techniques*, and Group 2 responds.

Week 2**Jan 24, Tuesday****We meet in Computer Cluster**

Alphabetic and Digital Literacy Narratives Assignment due.

Distribution of Rhetorical Analysis assignment

In the Class:

1. Generating key critical concepts from “Semiotic Analysis”
2. Semiotic Analysis and *Miss Representation*:
Possible Topics: media and representation, media and gender, media and capitalism, media and status quo, media and hypervisibility, media and new colonialism, media and appropriation, signs, symbols and ideologies in *Miss Representation*
2. Get online and locate a digital artifact for critical and rhetorical analysis. Read the assignment description carefully and look for the appropriate artifact (music video, movie/documentary clips, digital advertisement etc.).

Homework:

1. Group 2 blogs on the second chapter, “Marxist Analysis” (Pdf in Blackboard) from Arthur Berger’s *Media Analysis Techniques* and Group 1 responds.
2. Write a one and half page description of your digital artifact. Try to be specific, accurate, and attempt to re-create the artifact as closely as possible in and through words.
3. Bring your laptops and your digital artifact to the class.

Jan 26, Thursday**In the Class:**

1. Discussion of the key critical concepts from chapter 2 of Berger’s book.
2. Critically examining your digital artifact: What do you see in your artifact? What signs, symbols? What values or ideologies are being communicated? Whose values or ideologies are those? Who is communicating those values or ideologies? Who is benefitting and who is losing?
3. Does your artifact echo any aspect/s of *Miss Representation*?
How?

Homework:

1. Group 1 blogs on chapter 3 “Psychoanalytic Criticism” (Pdf on Blackboard) of Arthur Berger’s book *Media Analysis Techniques*, and group 2 responds
2. Start composing the analysis part of the essay. Refer to the second part of the assignment description for guidance. Bring your digital artifact to the class

Week 3

Jan. 31, Tuesday

We meet in Computer Cluster

In class:

1. We will discuss the key concepts of psychoanalytic criticism, particularly the symbols and defense mechanisms
2. You will work on pairs. You will also look at each other's digital artifact and share your critical observations.

Homework:

1. Group 2 blogs on Lester Faigley and Jack Selzer's chapter 5: "Analyzing Written Arguments" and chapter 6: "Analyzing Visual and Multimedia Arguments" (Pdfs on Blackboard) and Group 1 responds
2. Keep working on your analysis. Add rhetorical edge to your analysis now. What can you use from Faigley and Selzer's chapters?
3. Bring a draft (digital or printed) to the class. Also bring your digital artifact and laptop.

Feb. 02, Thursday

In the Class:

1. Generating and discussing useful rhetorical terms with reference to digital artifacts and visual arts
2. Work in pairs. Share drafts and share observations and feedbacks. You might want to view the artifact one more time and see it from both critical and rhetorical lenses.

Homework:

1. Revise and finalize your analysis. Edit carefully. Make sure sources are cited in MLA format. You might want to consult chapter 20: "Documenting Sources in MLA style" from Lester Faigley and Jack Selzer's book *Good Reasons*. (Pdf on Blackboard).
2. Email me the draft before the class on Tuesday, Feb 7th. I won't accept late work and it's your job to make sure email gets through. No excuses.

Unit 2 Calendar: 5 weeks (Academic/Essayistic Literacy)

Week 4:

Feb 07, Tuesday

We meet in Computer Cluster

In-class:

1. a. Watch A Vision of Student Today: <http://www.youtube.com/watch?v=dGCJ46vyR9o>

 b. Multimedia and Multiliteracies in the composition classroom: <http://www.youtube.com/watch?v=c4zSDOQ9mVY>

 c. Epic 2014: <http://www.youtube.com/watch?v=eUHPuHS-7s>
2. Writing in-class response to these videos. Sharing the responses to the class.
3. Discussion: What is "multiliteracies"? Why do we need to be multiliterate?

Homework:

1. Group 1 blogs and group 2 responds to Howard Gardner's (2008) The Washington Post article:
"The End of Literacy? Don't Stop Reading" (http://www.washingtonpost.com/wp-dyn/content/article/2008/02/15/AR2008021502898_pf.html)
2. Go online and research some of the other issues associated with "multiliteracies". Keep a running list of them. We will come back to them in the next class.
3. Bring your laptops to the class

Feb. 09, Thursday,**In class:**

1. Review the assignment for the unit
2. Engaging Howard Gardner's Washington Post article: Has the literacy ended? Or the end of literacy has changed? Or the meaning of literacy has shifted? What are the forces behind this transformation?
3. Your research: What did you find as the associated issues of "multiliteracies"? How are they related to "multiliteracies"?

Homework: 1. Group 2 blogs and group 1 responds.

Read Victoria Department of Education's web page and watch Video Series:

a. Considering Multiliteracies and b. Exploring Multiliteracies

<http://newlearningonline.com/multiliteracies/videos/#CM>

2. Everyone please start exploring your essay topic or research question/s. Remember your essay topic or research question/s should or could be any dimensions of multiliteracies: information and communication technology, new media, globalization, intercultural communication, World Englishes or different composing styles in relation to multiliteracies. Try to look for something you are interested in and want to research further. Be ready to share your tentative topic/research questions to the class on Tuesday.

Week Five**Feb. 14, Tuesday:****We meet in Computer Cluster****Rhetorical Analysis Assignment due****In class:**

1. We will watch some videos from the website and discuss further the different dimensions of multiliteracies.
2. Reporting on your research questions/topics.
3. Tour of library databases and indexes

Homework:

1. Group 1 blogs and Group 2 responds:
Chapter 1 from Jack Selzer and Lester Faigley's book *Good Reasons* "Making an Effective Argument" (pp. 2-12), (Pdf on Blackboard).

2. Locate at least three scholarly sources (journal articles, book chapters or books) for your essay topic. I would recommend using library databases and indexes or Summit search to locate sources.
3. Read abstract or introduction of those sources and be ready to share with the class what you found and whether you found what you were looking for.
4. Bring those sources to the class.

Feb. 16, Thursday,

In-class:

1. We will unpack “Making an Effective Argument.” What constitutes an effective argument? Role of analysis and sourcing in effective argument.
2. We will look at criteria for evaluating print and online sources (I will have Handouts for you). You will evaluate in the class the print sources you brought to the class. You will also use criteria for evaluating online sources for locating popular sources for your essay/topic.

Homework:

1. Locate at least 3 popular sources (videos, blogs, songs, cartoons, documentaries, websites, magazine articles or recorded TV or radio programs/talk shows) for your essay topic or research questions. Keep in mind the evaluation criteria for online sources as you look for the sources. Bring those sources to the class.
2. Start looking also for primary research data sources (potential interviewees, research sites, survey groups or any other sources to gather first hand data)
3. Also locate at least 2 images related to your research topic.
4. Blog in your profile page about experience locating and selecting these sources.

Week Six:

Feb. 21, Tuesday

In-Class

1. A brief 1 min. reporting on your progress.
2. We will discuss the components of research proposal (I will have handouts for you). We will also look at some sample proposals.
3. We will also do narrowing the focus exercise.
4. **Research proposal Assignment Distribution**

Homework:

1. Please **write** a 250-word research essay proposal.
2. Bring all the sources with you to the class

Feb. 23 Thursday

We Meet in Computer Cluster

In-class:

1. We will share our research proposals in the class: claim/ thesis, sources, research methods etc.
2. Dialoguing with sources exercise: What do the sources have common about your topic? What are the contradictions? What issues or questions they raise about your topic? Do they support your thesis or is thesis being challenged?

3. Sign up for appointments with Santosh (groups of three).

Homework

1. Complete data collection (interview or field visit or site observation or location of scholarly or popular sources).
2. Group 2 blogs on and Group 1 responds to: Yamuna Kachru's "Speaking and Writing in World Englishes" (pdf on Blackboard)
3. Start drafting your essay. Draft 2 pages.
4. Bring your laptops or download and bring printed copies of sample student essays from the Blackboard

Week Seven

Feb. 28, Tuesday

In-class:

1. Evaluation Criteria Distributed and Explained
2. Evaluating Sample Student essays
3. Work on your draft

Homework:

1. Prepare the first draft (6-8+pages) of the essay
2. Also start writing your reflection essay (see the assignment for the guidelines)
3. Print and bring the draft for peer review the next class.

March 01, Thursday

In-class:

1. Peer review (Peer Review sheet distributed)
2. Work on e-portfolio

Homework:

1. Complete the draft and email me an attachment (.doc or .dox) by midnight Saturday, 3rd March
2. Also keep in mind that e-portfolio is also due together with the essay

Week Eight

March 06, Tuesday

Conference with Santosh at his office

Homework:

1. Read chapter 4: "Drafting and Revising Arguments" (pdf on Blackboard) from Faigley and Selzer's book *Good Reasons*. Your revision should reflect that you actually read the chapter.
2. Make final revisions to your essay

3. Also finalize your reflection paper

March 8, Thursday

Final questions about the assignment

Work in your essay, e-portfolio and reflection essay

Homework

Finish essay, e-portfolio and reflection paper

All these assignments are due before the class on Tuesday, March 20th

Unit 3: Remediation, and Intercultural Literacy (3 Weeks)

Week Nine

March 20, Tuesday

We meet in Computer Cluster

In-class:

Essay, E-portfolio and reflection due

1. Watch Immediacy, Hypermediacy and Remediation Class Presentation

< <http://www.youtube.com/watch?v=ZE167KUiM5E&feature=related> >

Discussion. Examples—can you think of any?

Also watch: Castlevania: Harmony of Despair (Remediation)

<http://www.youtube.com/watch?v=efCbdL-EjTg>

Discussion

2. Introducing cross-cultural/intercultural communication, Global-local dynamics/globalization

Homework:

1. Group 1blogs and Group 2 responds to:
Chapter 1: “Immediacy, Hypermediacy, and Remediation” (pp. 20-51) from Jay David Bolter and Richard Grusin’s book *Remediation: Understanding New Media*
2. Explore Wikispaces <http://www.wikispaces.com>, Google sites <<https://sites.google.com/>>, and Wix <http://www.wix.com/>. These could be potential spaces for your remediation projects.

March 22, Thursday

In-class:

1. Unpack Chapter 1 of *Remediation*. Why remediation? Reference to sample videos from YouTube.

2. Brainstorming and planning the remediation of unit 2 essay. What would be the potential resources for remediation? What can be used from unit 2 essay? What re-fashioning or re-working would the essay or the resources require for remediation projects?

Homework:

1. Group 2 blogs and Group 1 responds to:
 - a. Chapter 2: “Mediation and Remediation” (pp. 52-63) from Jay David Bolter and Richard Grusin’s book *Remediation: Understanding New Media*
 - b. Chapter 20 “Creating Reader-Centered Websites” Part 1 and 2 (on Blackboard) from Paul V. Anderson’s *Technical Communication*
2. Decide on the medium/media for remediation projects. Also start locating additional sources required for the remediation.

Week 10**March 27, Tuesday,****We meet in Computer Cluster****In the class:**

1. Designing the Wiki sites, Google sites or Wix for the remediation projects.

Homework:

Group 1 blogs on “Ramsey, Sheila J. “Interactions between North Americans and Japanese: Considerations of Communication Style” and Rakesh Bhatt’s “World Englishes” and Group 2 responds.

March 29, Thursday**In the class:**

1. Reporting from the students about their choice of (local and global) audiences for the remediation projects. Why those audiences? And what the implications? Language variety choice for each remediation? What writing style and why?
2. Work on the projects. How differently do you want to design two projects (for local and global audiences)? Why?

Homework:

Work on the projects. Your presentations could be on any of two upcoming classes. Research/explore the prompts/questions in the blog post assignment. Your research about audiences and composition styles in particular could be productive for your website design.

Week Eleven**April 3, Tuesday,****We meet in Computer Cluster****In the class:**

Presentation of remediation projects

Homework:

Keep working on remediation projects

Research/explore the prompts/questions in the blog post assignment. Also start composing the blog. You don’t have reflection paper in this unit.

April 05, Thursday

We meet in Computer Cluster

Presentation of remediation projects

Homework

Complete the blog post. Look at the assignment sheet for specific requirements. Blog post is due to your profile in the course site before the class on Tuesday.

Unit 4 : Documentary Film-making

Calendar: 4 Weeks (Media Convergence and Multimodal Literacy)

Week Twelve

April 10, Tuesday

We meet in Computer Cluster

In-class:

1. Presentation of remaining Unit 3 projects
2. Group Formation
3. Watch clips from documentaries on Steve Jobs and Occupy Wall Street
 - a. BBC Documentary on Steve Jobs *Steve Jobs: Billion Dollar Hippy*
 < <http://www.youtube.com/watch?v=OC3qFtgeogE> >

Homework:

1. Read “Make your own documentary film”

<http://corinamaclean.suite101.com/make-your-own-documentary-film-a7923>

2. Also read “How to create good documentary Film: 5 Steps

<http://www.wikihow.com/Create-a-Good-Documentary-Film>

3. Meet as a group and decide on the topic for your film

April 12, Thursday,

We meet in Computer Cluster

In class:

1. We will watch:
 - b. Occupy Wall Street Documentary by KnowTheTruthTV
 < <http://www.youtube.com/watch?v=adHqO7IMuR4> >

Then also discuss:

2. What is a documentary film? What skills are required? Choice of topic and feasibility? Instruments and collaborative work?
And

3. As a group, watch some documentary films, lay out steps of making a documentary, divide work, brainstorm the potential sources of information/resources like interviewees, local site, websites or libraries

Homework:

1. Group 2 blogs and Group 1 responds to:

Henry Jenkins' *Media Convergence*: "Introduction: "Worship at the Altar of Convergence": A New Paradigm for Understanding Media Change" Part 1 and 2 (pp. 1-24)

2. Research your topic, collect relevant sources, set up interview times
3. Acquaint yourself with the equipments like movie camera, still camera, recorder etc.
4. Bring your sources and laptops

Week 13:

April 17, Tuesday

No Class. Work in Groups at a place of your convenience

Write the script for the documentary, locate more sources, discuss organization, juxtaposition, voice over and narrative sequence

Homework: 1. Finalize your script. Interview people, finish collecting sources

2. Familiarize yourself with computer programs such as I-movie, Windows Movie maker.

April 19, Thursday

In-Class:

We meet in Computer Cluster

Intro to I-movie and Windows Movie Maker

Work in your group. Start composing the documentary

Homework: Keep composing

Week Fourteen

April 24, Tuesday

We meet in Computer Cluster

In-class:

1. We watch

a. Richard Miller (2008) Video on Multimodal Composition—New Humanities:

<http://www.youtube.com/watch?v=z65V2yK0XxM>

2. Keep working on the documentary

Homework: Work in Group, put the documentary film together and get ready for presentations.

April 26, Thursday

We meet in Computer Cluster

In the class: Meet with your groups to work on the final presentation and reflection. Try to divide the work evenly among yourselves during presentation.

Homework: Work on both projects—presentation and reflection.

Homework: Work in Group, put the documentary film together and get ready for presentations. While doing that don't forget that a 2-page long reflection paper is due on May 4th, Friday.

Week Fifteen

May 1, Tuesday

We meet in Computer Cluster

In the class: Group presentations and individual comment/appreciation

Homework: Work on reflection paper. Don't forget that a 2-page long reflection paper is due on May 4th, Friday.

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