

OPENING UP SPACES FOR THEIR WHOLE SELVES: A CASE STUDY GROUP'S EXPLORATION OF TRANSLANGUAGING PRACTICES IN WRITING

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This paper describes the work of a study group comprising bilingual education university professors and English as a new language (ENL) teachers in incorporating translanguaging into writing instruction for recently arrived emergent bilingual students in a public secondary school. The study group members examined how translanguaging could be integrated into writing and considered their pedagogical practice through recollections, professional reading, and analysis of student work. Through this case study of our study group, we demonstrate how translanguaging pedagogy is not merely the use of home language resources as a scaffolding strategy to obtain a specific academic end in writing, but rather a powerful way to draw on the students' language practices so they can engage in deep and complex thinking. Through the findings and discussion, we offer practitioners and researchers practical implications to consider with regard to the value of translanguaging in writing instruction.

Keywords: emergent bilinguals, secondary school, study groups, translanguaging pedagogy, writing

I want to open up spaces and then let them—their whole selves—come in and bring both languages. You know? Otherwise, they are just bringing a little piece of themselves [to writing], which is in English this much (bringing her thumb and pointer finger together to signal a tiny bit).

—Diana, English as a new language teacher

Diana (all teachers, students and school names are pseudonyms), an English as a new language (ENL) teacher and one of the two ENL teachers who were members of our study group, voiced her commitment to ensure that her recently arrived emergent bilingual students¹ could access and leverage their entire linguistic repertoire, or *translanguage*, as they developed their writing in her classroom. Translanguaging refers to the practices of bilingual people as they draw upon their linguistic and social resources to engage in meaning-making (García & Li Wei, 2014). Although increasingly recognized as a powerful way to educate emergent bilinguals (Daniel & Pacheco, 2015; García, Johnson, & Seltzer, 2017), how teachers adopt and implement translanguaging in writing instruction within their contexts and how these

¹The term "emergent bilingual" was coined by García, Kleifgen, & Falchi (2008, p. 6) to refer to the potential of children to develop their bilingualism; it also refers to the advantage they hold over those students whose languaging practices are limited to English.

instructional shifts impact the ways recently arrived emergent bilinguals engage in writing needs further exploration.

The story of this study group begins at Rock Mountain High School, a large suburban educational institution that serves a growing number of recently arrived emergent bilinguals, where the two ENL teachers who participated in this study group worked. Most of the students at Rock Mountain hailed from Central and South America, with a small number of Haitian students. During the 2014–2015 school year, when this study was conducted, 24% of the student population was classified as English language learners (ELLs), a term designated by New York State to classify the results of a language proficiency exam. In addition, 56% of the students were eligible for free and reduced-price lunch. Students who were classified as ELL were grouped by language proficiency resulting from the exam: those who were deemed at the beginning levels of English language proficiency, like the ones in this study, were grouped into a stand-alone ENL program; emergent bilinguals who were classified at more advanced levels of English language proficiency were supported through push-in ENL teachers.

A year before the study group was formed, Ascenzi-Moreno (author 1) had provided professional development at Rock Mountain to teachers from a variety of disciplines. The goals of this support were twofold: (a) to introduce the concept of bilingualism as a resource through translanguaging strategies, and (b) to create a multilingual ecology at the school (Celic & Seltzer, 2011). A year later, the two ENL teachers at the school, Diana and Karla, still yearned to investigate how translanguaging could specifically be integrated into writing instruction. Although the professional development given the year before had inspired and motivated some teachers at the school, an unofficial English-only policy continued to influence many of the teachers' practices. As university bilingual teacher-educators and researchers, we were eager, alongside teachers who work with emergent bilinguals, to engage in pedagogical and theoretical projects that could facilitate reflection and collaboratively build knowledge about writing. We also hoped that focused, ongoing professional development tailored to particular teachers' needs, such as the study group we then proposed, would deepen a small group of teachers' translanguaging practices and consequently have an impact on students' work. Hence, once the study group was agreed to, it was formed around two questions: *What is the role of translanguaging in writing instruction? How can teachers create writing spaces for newly arrived emergent bilinguals that capitalize on their strengths?*

Diana and Karla, the two ENL teachers, who chose to participate alongside us in the study group, were eager for their emergent bilinguals to gain the English skills required for them to pass the state language proficiency exam and content tests all secondary students are required to take. At the beginning of the study, they had been relying heavily on scripted curriculum that was divorced from the students' realities. It is important to note that the study group's work reflects an intentional focus with teachers who work with emergent bilinguals within schools that are not ideal environments for meeting these students' needs in learning how to write in English. Because we were limited in the size of the study group (we ended up as a group of four—two ENL teachers and two researchers/authors), we were deliberate in designing it as professional development and to be collaborative and embedded within the local context (Dobbs, Ippolito, & Charner-Laird, 2016), so teachers could examine their pedagogical and ideological beliefs about home language use within their particular educational location (Kibler & Roman, 2013). Our commitment was to start with these complexities and engage in work about what the instructional potential might be (Haneda & Wells, 2000).

Given that goal, our purpose in this paper is to share how the work of the study group led to pedagogical insights about the role of translanguaging in supporting recently arrived emergent bilingual students as writers. First, we present an overview of translanguaging pedagogy and its intersection with writing. Next, we describe how the study group was organized and the methods we used to examine the group's work. Then, through the findings, we trace the work of the study group by highlighting teachers'

developing insights about writing instruction alongside student work, followed by a discussion of the findings in light of the implications they have for teachers and for researchers.

Translanguaging: A Transformative Pedagogy

Translanguaging is both *a lens* to view how individuals construct meaning by drawing upon their entire linguistic repertoire and *a pedagogical approach*. As a lens, it brings attention to the flexible, fluid, and creative ways through which students use their language resources (García & Li Wei, 2014). Within a translanguaging framework, bilinguals' varied language experiences are not separate, but exist as one unified linguistic repertoire (Soltero-González, Escamilla, & Hopewell, 2012). Language learning is dynamic; individuals use different language features in social interaction and to construct meaning. Viewing translanguaging as a lens, however, challenges the view held by some educators, including bilingual and ENL teachers, that language is a process that can be achieved and possessed (Faltis, 2013).

Translanguaging also serves as a pedagogical approach in which teachers create spaces for emergent bilinguals to leverage their entire linguistic repertoire in a learning event, rather than relying solely on English (Celic & Seltzer, 2011; Espinosa, Ascenzi-Moreno, & Vogel, 2016). As an approach, translanguaging encompasses a wide range of practices, including note-taking, reading, discussing in the home, and new languages. Although translating their work is one of the techniques that students may employ when translanguaging in the classroom, it is important to note that this is just one way that they can use their home languages. Another perspective suggests the importance of a dynamic interplay between languages as students draw upon their entire linguistic repertoire to be able to fully participate in the learning experience (Cummins, 2007; Escamilla, Hopewell, & Butvilofsky, 2013). For example, in the translanguaging classroom a student may read in English but keep notes or respond orally and in writing to the text in his or her home language. This learner can use the home language notes to compose a piece in English through the use of a dictionary or an online tool for translation.

Although in some instances translanguaging occurs naturally (i.e., without being encouraged by the teacher), the examples above reflect the teacher's planning to ensure students' full engagement in learning through the use of their linguistic repertoire (García & Li Wei, 2014). Such translanguaging practices stand in contrast to a classroom where instruction is marked by English-only practices, in which students are not encouraged to think, speak, or write in their home language during the learning process.

A translanguaging educational practice helps ensure students' growth in content and linguistic proficiency (Otheguy, García, & Reid, 2015). We agree with García (2009), who writes that translanguaging is an integral component of how multilingual students make sense of their worlds. We also concur with Horner, Lu, Jones Royster, and Trimbur (2011), who argue that language varieties are resources to be sustained, capitalized, and nurtured. From this perspective, the pedagogical focus in classrooms should be on what writers do with language—what their purposes are and the reasons why—and not solely on whether the writer has written what is considered "standard" English. We support a stance that positions emergent bilinguals as able to enact their own agency as they gain more control over their own language learning. On this issue, we side with Canagarajah (2011), who reminds us that "translanguaging helps us adopt orientations specific to multilinguals and appreciate their competence in their own terms" (p. 3).

From our perspective, translanguaging is a pedagogy that not only goes beyond the use of the home language resources as a strategy to obtain a specific academic end, but also shows a way to draw upon the students' language practices so they can engage in deep and multifold thinking. We view translanguaging as a powerful pedagogical stance, one that positions linguistically diverse students as effective language users operating within one linguistic repertoire (Espinosa et al., 2016). From this perspective, the teacher's translanguaging pedagogy begins with the linguistic resources the student brings. At this point, we believe that a critical role for the teacher is to support the student in leveraging

these linguistic resources for learning and expanding them through meaningful engagements with others and a variety of texts (García & Kleyn, 2016).

Translanguaging pedagogy is transformative because it emphasizes that all students are language learners and that all their linguistic resources—including multiple languages, dialects, and registers—are fundamental for “deep cognitive engagement and for development and expansion of new language practices” (García & Li Wei, 2014, p. 71). In this vein, Otheguy et al. (2015) call for teachers to reconceptualize “the deployment of a speaker’s full linguistic repertoire without regard for watchful adherence to the socially and politically defined boundaries of named (and usually national and state) languages” (p. 283). From the internal view of the speaker, translanguaging is not about alternating between one language and another but going beyond named languages (such as Spanish, Chinese, and Arabic) in learning to select features of their own linguistic repertoire based on the situation (García & Kleyn, 2016). Smitherman (2003) argues that when teachers take on a pedagogical stance toward translanguaging, they give permission to the emergent bilinguals’ language practices to come forth and ensure that the development of voice is afforded more opportunities. In a study done by Canagarajah (2011), his student was “able to represent her values and identities more effectively through translanguaging” (p. 20).

Translanguaging in Writing

Translanguaging in writing disrupts and transforms traditional monolingual approaches to writing instruction because it invites students to use the entire linguistic repertoire they possess as a resource important to the writing process. When a writer translanguages, as Canagarajah (2011) argues, the intellectually demanding activity of writing can be mediated by the linguistic repertoire that exists in the writer’s mind as an integrated whole.

Translanguaging pedagogy is aligned with a holistic vision of the writing process because of the focus on the learner’s agency within his or her contexts (García & Sylvan, 2011). Fu’s (2009) case study of Chinese newcomers demonstrates that when students are permitted to use their home language in writing, they are able not only to engage in class assignments but also to receive the message that their development as a writer does not exclude their home language.

There is developing research that documents the ways in which translanguaging aids emergent bilinguals in the writing process (Kibler, 2010; Velasco & García, 2013). Translanguaging practices in writing have been utilized to support and scaffold learning, to expand understanding, to enhance knowledge, to problem solve, and to develop metalinguistic awareness (García & Kano, 2014). There is evidence as well that students who utilize translanguaging in writing can access rigorous content and engage in critical thinking (Espinosa & Herrera, 2016). When students translanguange in writing, there are opportunities to bring together home and school multilingual social practices (Alvarez, 2014; Laman, 2014). García and Li Wei (2014) assert that “[T]ranslanguaging is the web that supports the students’ literacy development” (p. 86). To fully embrace a stance toward writing that integrates the students’ entire linguistic repertoire, Horner et al. (2011) remind educators to “confront the realities of language difference in writing in ways that honor and build on, rather than attempt to eradicate, those realities of difference in their work with their students” (p. 313).

Samway (2006) maintains that writing is the act of creating meaning and reminds educators that exercises such as copying sentences and filling in the blanks—which emergent bilinguals are often asked to do as the sole component of their writing instruction—do not fall under this definition. Despite the research that supports translanguaging within writing instruction as a pedagogical tool to the development of more complex thinking and voice, for the majority of emergent bilinguals, writing experiences are often constrained and limited to isolated exercises solely in the new language (Fu, 2009).

Other scholars point out that most writing instruction for emergent bilinguals focuses solely on grammar in the new language (Hedgcock, 2005), and students are rarely asked to generate longer texts (Campbell-Wilcox & Jeffery, 2014).

At the secondary level, the focus solely on English practices is intensified because of the pressure teachers feel for students to cover content and to get them ready to take standardized exams (Ortiz-Marrero & Sumaryono, 2010). Under this pressure, teachers may tend to teach to the test and fall into practices of over-correcting and of providing students with limited and controlled opportunities that lack authentic engagement in writing. These practices run counter to the evidence that students learning English benefit from writing experiences that are holistic and open-ended, such as freewriting (Wang & Zheng, 2014). Freewriting is a type of writing engagement developed by Elbow (1973) that creates a space for students to enact their agency as writers by writing without self-censoring. In the case of emergent bilinguals, it offers them the opportunity to write while capitalizing on their entire linguistic repertoire (Espinosa et al., 2016). In spite of the pressures regarding standardized exams, teachers have the power to be policy makers in the classroom and enact pedagogies that challenge monolingual ideologies (Menken & García, 2010). Canagarajah (2006) reminds us that “the classroom is a powerful site of policy negotiation. The pedagogies practiced and texts produced in the classroom can reconstruct policies [from the] ground up” (p. 587).

Over the years, as classroom teachers and now as teacher educators, our engagement with writing has been deeply influenced by the work of the National Writing Project (NWP) and of the researchers cited in this review of the literature, as well as of many others whose work has informed and transformed our perspective on writing over the years. Based on this framework and our professional experiences, we contend that writing experiences for emergent bilinguals need to be connected to their strengths: their cultures, their languaging practices, their lived experiences. We therefore propose the following core principles in designing writing instruction through a translanguaging frame. These core principles also framed the professional development activities in our study group:

- Writing is a tool for thinking. To fully construct meaning, the student needs to be invited to leverage his or her entire linguistic repertoire throughout all aspects of the writing process.
- Writing is writing regardless of the language. Although there are cultural- and language-specific conventions that mark writing, at the heart of writing is the construction of meaning.
- Writers need agency to draw from their entire linguistic repertoire to produce complex texts. To enact their own agency when accessing deeper and more complex thinking, writers need to make their own choices rather than relying solely on the teacher’s permission.
- Writers need to capitalize on their entire linguistic repertoire throughout the writing process regardless of the language the final product will be in. Emergent bilinguals benefit from engaging in literacy practices in their home language, such as reading, taking notes, conferencing and sharing, and translating to reach the goals of the final product.

Methods

To examine the study group and its impact on teachers’ practice with emergent bilinguals, we employed a case study methodology. Through this method, we focused on the experiences of the two ENL teachers, Diana and Karla, as they expanded and deepened their pedagogical practices to support their recently arrived emergent bilingual writers (Dyson & Genishi, 2005). Our intention was to make visible “what some phenomenon means as it is socially enacted within a particular case” (p. 10). In this paper, we describe what we call “critical instances” of our study group, as Diana and Karla grappled with how to support their recently arrived emergent bilinguals within a context heavily affected by testing, a scripted curriculum and a de facto English-only policy.

Between December 2014 and May 2015, the four-member study group met in six 50-minute sessions; the agenda for each meeting evolved from the previous session and was developed by the bilingual education faculty members in consultation with the teachers. The general structure of the study group included scheduled time for reflection, discussion about readings, practical applications, connections to conceptual issues and observations, and examination of student work, thus emerging as a multifaceted opportunity for professional development (Schon, 1996). Diana and Karla implemented translanguaging practices in their classrooms in between sessions. Though for the purposes of this paper we examine only the Spanish pieces, it is important to note that students who spoke Haitian-Creole were also invited to participate in these translanguaging spaces the teachers created as a result of the study group and received the appropriate support from them.

The Setting and Participants

As noted, our work took place at Rock Mountain High School, located in a diverse suburb in the Northeast. The two participating ENL teachers, Diana and Karla, had self-selected to be part of the study group. In her second year as a teacher, Diana, of Puerto Rican heritage, was committed to addressing the holistic needs of her students. As an adolescent, she had learned to read and write in Spanish first. Before participating in this project, she used Spanish to communicate with her students, mostly outside of class. Karla had more than 15 years of experience as an ENL teacher at the time of the study group, and had taught both at the elementary and high school levels. As the daughter of Italian immigrants, she grew up in a bilingual household. She also reported speaking French and possessing a working knowledge of Spanish.

Our role was to be participants in the study group while also its researchers. We are both bilingual-biliterate teacher educators. As a U.S.-born Latina, Ascenzi-Moreno (author 1) did not attend schools with bilingual education, but learned Spanish with family and through language classes in college. Espinosa (author 2) grew up in Ecuador, and learned English as an additional language while attending college in the United States.

Data Analysis

Our findings were formulated from analysis of transcripts of audio recordings of our study group sessions. We interviewed the two teachers at the end of the study and gathered artifacts, such as student work. We analyzed the transcripts through open coding, a method of analysis in which themes emerge from the body of data (Creswell, 1998). First, we—as the researchers and authors of this study—each read the transcripts, and identified initial codes and reread the data to refine and begin to cluster these before sharing them with each other. To ensure trustworthiness, we compared our chunks of clustered codes and identified similarities and differences. We then searched together for the larger themes that emerged. We reread the transcripts in light of these and searched for “critical instances” that illuminated our interpretive themes. To ensure consistency, we triangulated our data by reviewing the transcripts of the study group sessions and interviews, our field notes, notes regarding the examination of student work, and the substantiation of the two ENL teachers on our findings.

On the completion and verification of our data analysis, the following critical instances emerged: (a) starting points—examining our writing life; (b) inserting translanguaging into the scripted curriculum; and (c) opening up spaces for their whole selves: emergent bilingual writers and identities in the classrooms.

Findings

We present our findings across the three critical instances identified through our data analysis. In this section, each of these critical instances—examining the writing life, inserting translanguaging into the scripted curriculum, and opening up spaces for “their whole selves”—is described to give readers an understanding of the issues that the group tackled during our discussions and how these discussions framed our two teachers’ shifts in instructional practices. It is important to emphasize that these critical instances are reflective of the discussions that the study group had over time. Accompanying our findings, we incorporate meeting and field notes² and excerpted transcripts from the teachers throughout the study group’s discussions and interviews; in the appendices, we present the corresponding examples of student work.³

Starting Points: Examining Our Writing Life

We began our first session with recollections about the study group members’ experiences in writing. The purpose of engaging in reflection was to reconnect with our own writing experiences and to think about how these experiences have had an impact on our writing instruction. In sharing our stories, we rethought our own agency as teachers of writers, rather than letting our practice be shaped primarily by outside forces (i.e., testing or following a teacher guide). Examples of the questions we posed are: “How did you learn to write?,” “What were some pros and cons of the process?,” and “What has been your experience writing in a different language?”

Through our recollections, we discovered how little writing we all had done throughout our schooling. We also noted that the focus of the writing was on “correctness” over creativity, and not developing a unique voice as a writer. Rarely did we have the opportunity to reflect and revise. During this first session, we all concurred that it wasn’t until later in life that we experienced writing as a process that involved multiple steps, such as figuring out what we wanted to write and how we would approach the writing and revision leading to a final piece (Meeting Notes).

In sharing our stories, we faced the tension between our larger definitions of how we envisioned writing instruction to be—as a process in crafting meaning and voice—alongside our reductive experiences as students and teachers of writing. The experience of relating our writing histories and beliefs brought this tension out in the open, where we could address it professionally.

We also shared the struggles we faced when we began to write in a new language. Diana described her evolution as a writer in two languages and how it was connected to her self-confidence. She stated:

I learned to write in Spanish. It was a relatively easy process because I was in bilingual education here in the US and I went back and forth between Puerto Rico and the US, but even though I went back and forth, it [writing] was always in Spanish. So there [was] some flow to that. I don’t remember having difficulty writing in Spanish or thinking that it was difficult, so it must have been a relatively easy process and I was very literate in my own language. So, I learned to read and I was an avid reader in my own language, but learning to write in English was a much more difficult process. I felt insecure and unable to feel as though I had mastered the process. (Diana, Transcript)

In the above quote, Diana related her experience as a bilingual writer who moved across countries. She noted that even though in her childhood she alternated between Puerto Rico and the United States, because her writing was consistently done in Spanish she developed as a writer both in skill and

²Meeting notes were taken during the study sessions, while field notes were written by the researchers after the sessions.

³All data resulting from the study are kept under Institutional Review Board (IRB) guidelines.

confidence. However, when she began to learn to write in English she encountered difficulties because her abilities to write in Spanish were not tapped to nurture her developing writing skills in English.

Upon reflecting on Diana's recollection, we wondered what would have happened if her knowledge of writing in Spanish would have been integrated into her development as a writer in English. Her struggles as a writer in English intensified because she was not allowed to tap into her entire linguistic repertoire. We pondered how our experiences in writing, especially when writing in a new language, could impact our thinking and work with emergent bilinguals. This was our starting point for considering instructional changes.

Inserting Translanguaging into the Scripted Curriculum

Diana and Karla began to expand their repertoire of writing instructional practices by asking students to draft their ideas in Spanish, while staying within the boundaries of the ENL curriculum (Field Notes). During our fourth meeting, Karla described how she created spaces for translanguaging as she taught her students opinion writing:

We've been working on forming opinions with the Edge book [the textbook the teachers use that offers a scripted curriculum]. We learned about it [opinion writing] in English. I gave them sentence starters. They have the choice of selecting which one they use. My prompt was about cell phone use in school because I thought they could relate to that. I gave them examples, then I did everything [modeled writing] in English. But then I turned around and said, "Write it first in your native language." (Karla, Transcript)

In the above excerpt, Karla described how she structured and adjusted the teaching of the scripted curriculum with opportunities for translanguaging. Although she maintained the targeted skill—opinion writing—and the assignment—students' response to prompts—she changed the lesson by giving students permission to write their responses first in their home language. Karla brought the student work that resulted from this adjusted lesson to the next study group for reflection. We examined the work of one student, Santiago, in detail.

Figure 1, shown in Appendix B, demonstrates how Santiago, who was classified at the intermediate level of English proficiency, made a choice to write in his home language in responding to Karla's prompt about cell phone use. Writing in Spanish to answer this prompt allowed Santiago to organize his thoughts before moving on to this task in English. In the draft, he provided two personal reasons that students should have cell phones: to translate words from Spanish to English and to receive messages from family members—in this case, his sister—in case of an emergency. While Santiago drafted his reasons in Spanish, he used the structure for opinion writing that Karla provided, producing a translanguaged text. Figure 1 shows that Santiago's title, his headings for the paragraphs, and one transition are in English, while the rest of his writing is in Spanish.

As the study group reflected on Santiago's writing in Spanish, we considered what we learned about Santiago as a writer through it and how we could use what we learned to support him as he both acquired English and developed as a writer. For instance, Diana noticed that Santiago's "thought process wasn't so specific." She added, "Maybe targeting that [details] would then aid in his English rendition" (Diana, Transcript). Another study group member suggested that Santiago may benefit from teacher questions about his writing, which would assist him in being more explicit. Although Karla asked her students to translate their writing to English before the study group meeting in which we examined his work, the ideas that we generated provided Karla with an understanding of Santiago's writing abilities in Spanish and that these suggestions could be used in the future to help him improve his writing in general.

Karla reflected on how asking students to write in Spanish before writing in English changed the way in which students approached the assignment and what they learned from it. She said:

They did write it in Spanish, and then I went around the room and they read it to me or sometimes I couldn't decipher the words in Spanish and I would ask them, "Can you tell me in English what you mean by this?" And then after that I said, "OK, now you are going to take your piece and write it into English," which they did. It was actually really helpful to them to express it first in their language and then into English. I said to them, "If you don't know the word in English, that's OK; just leave it in Spanish." But a lot of them worked really hard at it, so you know they wanted to learn the words. (Karla, Transcript)

Through this experience, Karla saw that the students were able to engage fluidly in the writing process. When she asked students to translate their writing to English, she noted that students were invested in the translation and engaged in finding out how to say in English the words they had written in Spanish.

Our next step as a study group was to examine Santiago's English translation of this writing prompt (see Figure 2, Appendix B). Santiago's English text is a faithful translation of the writing he did in Spanish. In comparing the two pieces, it is evident that Santiago has the vocabulary and grammatical structures needed to translate his ideas, yet still needs to acquire some conventions in English. As a group, we considered whether he would have been able to produce this piece in English without first having engaged in thinking and writing about it in Spanish.

In creating the space for Santiago to use his entire linguistic repertoire, the study group allowed him to be able to compose his final piece in English. When writing in Spanish, Santiago's thought process may be more fluid and he may be able to connect to experiences that are personally relevant, as Fu (2009) suggests in her work. Motivated by learning about ways to support students like Santiago, the teachers began to provide opportunities for students to write texts that were not explicitly tied to skills dictated by the ENL curriculum (Field Notes). These were more open-ended and related to students' life experiences, as Fu advocates.

Opening Up Spaces for "Their Whole Selves": Emergent Bilingual Writers and Identities in the Classroom

As the study group sessions evolved, teachers began to fashion writing experiences that acknowledged and supported the critical role students' home language played in their development as writers and thinkers. In this section, we focus on Jazmín, a newly arrived student from Ecuador. She was high-achieving, a reflection of her educational history in which she attended and performed well in her school in Ecuador before emigrating to the United States.

Diana began her unit of autobiographical writing with her ENL students by inviting them to write stories from their lives in Spanish before writing a different autobiographical piece in English. She explained that she started with these types of stories in Spanish because she wanted to know what students could do and was also interested in knowing more about them (Field Notes). In Jazmín's first autobiographical piece, she wrote about an embarrassing moment in her life while in Ecuador, when she fell into a drain. Her Spanish writing was instructionally important for a variety of reasons. First, it presented Diana with information about Jazmín as a writer. Through an analysis of Jazmín's Spanish writing, it was apparent that she was able to write at length about a focused topic and that her writing is sprinkled with both simple and complex sentences (see the Appendix—Table 1 for a closer look at a section of her entire piece, and Appendix B—Figure 3 for the full Spanish text). Jazmín's writing also provided Diana, her teacher, with a window into her past experiences and sent a powerful message to

Jazmín that her memories from Ecuador and her thinking in her home language were valued and essential for her development as a writer in English.

Diana's next step was to engage her students in writing about themselves in English, so she asked them to respond to prompts to describe their lives in the United States. She noted that her idea for structuring her writing assignment through guided freewrites was the result of reading the article by Wang & Zheng (2014) about freewrites in the ENL classroom, which was one of the readings we discussed together. She stated:

I read the article and then I had those prompts: "living in a new country is," "I was most surprised by," "I never expected," and "now I think," and I wanted [my students] to develop paragraphs just to see that they could do this. I gave them the prompts and they were meaningful. (Diana, Transcript)

Figures 4 and 5 in Appendix B feature Jazmín's autobiographical writing in English (with Diana's edits and comments). In examining her work, we noticed that although Jazmín was still acquiring English, she was able to relate important details about her life in her new country.

Jazmín's writing in English contained some of the elements that were noted in her Spanish writing, such as her use of both simple and complex sentences. In this English piece, we also noted the same candor that she exhibited in her Spanish essay. For example, she wrote clearly and directly about her surprise at meeting her mother and father, and notes at the end of the essay that when she grows up, "I will help my aunt because she is my mom and I love her a lot."

Through her writing in both English and in Spanish, Diana, her teacher, was able to learn about Jazmín on multiple levels—for example, Diana learned about Jazmín's writing style alongside crucial information about her life experiences. In asking her students to step out of the bounds of the scripted curriculum, Diana allowed them to relate important perspectives and feelings about their lives, a critical piece of the writer that remained unexposed when students were asked to write just about controlled topics in English.

It is important to note that the two pieces authored by Jazmín, one in Spanish and one in English, are related to each other in complex and multidirectional ways. In this instance, the purpose of engaging in autobiographical writing in Spanish before writing in English was not for translating a given writing piece from one language to the other; instead, it was to send a message to students that their bilingual identities matter and that their thinking process in their own development as writers was essential (García et al., 2017).

When Jazmín was allowed to leverage her entire linguistic repertoire, she was able to not only grow as a thinker and writer but also expand her abilities in her new language (Cummins, 2007). Through the partnership of Diana and Jazmín, we see that translanguaging can be used by teachers to elicit ideas and thinking. It is also an opportunity for students to bring their lived and linguistic worlds into the classroom in a way that is intentional rather than incidental.

Discussion

The findings in this study detail teachers' collaborative work in which they tried out new instructional practices incorporating translanguaging and discussed how emergent bilinguals responded to the opportunity to draw upon their entire linguistic repertoire while writing. Tracing this journey sheds light on how the writing experiences that teachers craft for recently arrived emergent bilinguals can engage them in language learning as well as in the development of their students' identities and capabilities as writers. The study demonstrates as well the interconnectedness between teachers' growth as they learn how to integrate translanguaging into their ENL classrooms with their students' growth as language learners and writers.

The study group's discussions throughout the project reflected Diana and Karla's growing and collaboratively generated knowledge about how translanguaging in writing can support their students as they participate in learning about writing in different genres and acquire English. Translanguaging plays an important role in the writing process for recently arrived emergent bilinguals. Through the examples presented in the findings, we see that when the ENL teachers offered students opportunities to draw from their entire linguistic repertoire, the students were able to engage in writing both to deepen their skills and connection to writing and to advance their English abilities. For instance, as Diana designed writing experiences through the integration of translanguaging pedagogy, she created opportunities for students to talk, think, and write within the genre of autobiography, where students could utilize their entire linguistic repertoire. In doing so, Diana, as she expressed in the epigraph appearing at the start of this paper, opened up spaces to let students' whole selves engage in the writing process within her ENL classroom.

In a follow-up interview, Diana's clarification of what emerged in her approach with Jazmín and with her emergent bilinguals in general is illustrative of the teachers' shift in how they viewed writing instruction for their emergent bilinguals. While Jazmín is no longer in Diana's class, she and Jazmín still interact, and Diana noted that Jazmín consistently draws upon her strength and experience in writing in Spanish as a bridge to her writing in English. As Diana relates:

Jazmín is in the regular English class and she comes to me 8th period and we talk about what the tasks are and what they have to do. There's a lot of intense reading and writing. Jazmín first writes in Spanish . . . once she gets used to the thinking, she is then able to think while writing in English. (Transcript)

Throughout our conversations during the study group, Diana and Karla clearly maintained that their goal was to help students succeed by acquiring literacy skills in their new language. They began to discover, however, that the path to supporting students in English could be enhanced through students' engagements in their home language. As they became increasingly familiar with writing pedagogy that begins with the writer, the strategic use of translanguaging allowed for them to experience depth and complexity of thinking within the context of more authentic assignments (García et al., 2017).

The findings also demonstrate that teachers can create spaces for translanguaging in multiple ways. In the examples presented in this paper, Karla included translanguaging within the ENL curriculum used at the school and Diana created a new space within her ENL classroom in which students wrote about their lives. Both ways are valuable to students and teachers. We view the inclusion of translanguaging in the writing process as an opportunity for students to exhibit agency as writers. Translanguaging allows teachers to create an environment that is responsive to the actual language practices individual students bring with them (Daniel & Pacheco, 2016), while also focusing on English acquisition. If we think holistically of our students, we can't just solely view their bilingualism as an impediment but instead see it as a path to their full development as thinkers and writers.

This study shows that teachers interested in engaging in this work can begin by examining their own stories as writers, and place their insights first in making connections with implications for their own pedagogy. Then they can place these insights alongside the larger circle of their school's language practices to advocate for opportunities that harness and leverage students' linguistic repertoire (Hornberger & Link, 2012).

We advocate that this stance toward translanguaging is critical even if the teacher is not bilingual. We firmly believe that even in cases when the teacher does not speak the student's home language, translanguaging in writing allows the student to access ideas, memories, and thinking, and thus be able to participate more fully in all aspects of the writing process. To address these challenges, students might be

partnered with students who speak the same language, reading materials can be offered in the students' home languages, and students can have access to online translation tools at various stages of the writing process. What matters is that teachers plan for utilizing translanguaging in ways that are intentional, flexible, and student-centered (García & Li Wei, 2014). It is also essential that school leaders acknowledge that teachers develop knowledge of pedagogy in tandem with their understanding of who their students are (Ascenzi-Moreno, 2017).

Our study also has implications for researchers. For investigators who are interested in further exploring how students' translanguaging can impact student writing, it would be important to investigate from the emergent bilinguals' perspective how translanguaging aids them in both learning to write and in acquiring English. Another aspect of this work that merits further study is what happens when content and ENL teachers collaborate in intentionally planning for translanguaging in writing across the curriculum. Given the limitations on the number of participants of the present study, a research project with a larger sample would add insights to the field of translanguaging and writing.

Conclusion

Our study group engaged in critical reflection about writing instruction for newly arrived emergent bilinguals both to unearth assumptions about teaching writing and to identify promising practices that meet the challenges of engaging these students in writing. Translanguaging pedagogies were a means to move beyond reductive writing exercises in favor of ones that drew upon emergent bilinguals' full linguistic repertoire to support their development as writers.

Although this case study has limitations due to the small number of participants, it demonstrates that when teachers engage students in translanguaging in writing they offer them opportunities to develop as writers and bring forth their lived experiences in ways that would not have been possible if they had to write only in English. Opening up the spaces for the emergent bilinguals to tap into their entire linguistic repertoire allowed teachers to gain knowledge of their students as writers, thinkers, and above all as individuals. It is our hope that this case study spurs teachers to come together to think and create writing spaces for their emergent bilinguals in which the pedagogy of translanguaging can be central to providing a critical path for their students' authentic engagements in writing that are relevant and meaningful.

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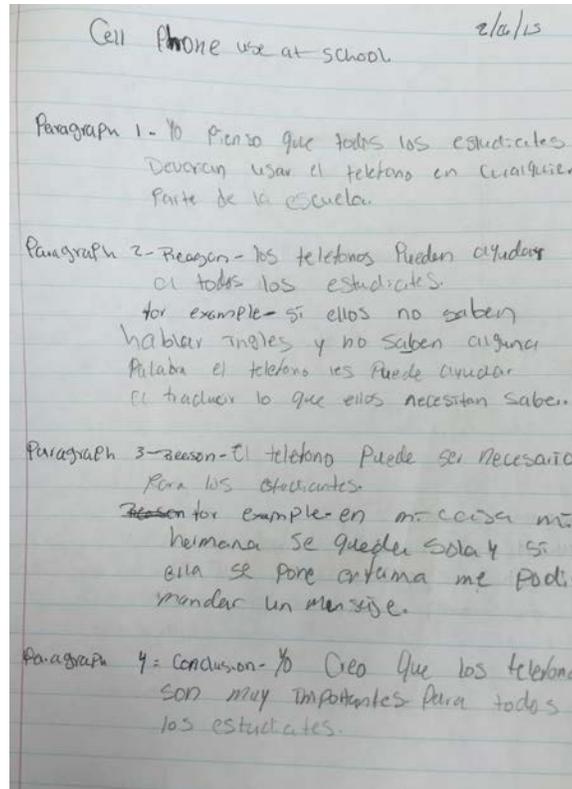
Appendix A—Table 1

Table 1. Excerpt of Jazmín’s Autobiographical Writing in Spanish, with English translation

El día más humillante	The Most Embarrassing Day
<i>Un día me sucedió algo muy vergonzoso, me caí en un desagüe. Cuando mi tía terminó de limpiarlo, se le olvidó cerrar aquel desagüe. Entonces cuando yo iba a salir me caí dentro del desagüe. Toda mi familia se burló de mí. Fue un momento tan humillante y vergonzoso.</i>	One day something really embarrassing happened to me, I fell into a drainpipe. When my aunt finished cleaning it, she forgot to close that drainpipe. So when I was leaving, I fell into the drainpipe. My entire family made fun of me. It was really a humbling and embarrassing moment.

Appendix B—Figures 1–5

Figure 1. Santiago's Writing Framework



Translation of Figure 1 (words in *italics* are in English in the student's original writing):
Cell Phone Use at School. Paragraph 1—I think that all should students should use telephones in any part of the school. *Paragraph 2*—*Reason*: Telephones can help all students. *For example*, if they don't know how to speak English and they don't know a word, the telephone can help them to translate what they need to know. *Paragraph 3*—*Reason*: The telephone is necessary for students. *For example*, in my house my sister stays alone and if she is sick then I can send her a message. *Paragraph 4*—*Conclusion*: I think that telephones are very important for all students.

Figure 2. Santiago's Final Piece

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Cell Phone use at school.

Paragraph 1 - I think ^{it} students should be allowed to use Cell Phones in class and all parts of the school.

Paragraph 2 - Reason - The Cell Phones Can help all the students.
For example, if they can not speak English and do not know some words the Phone can help translate for what they need.

Paragraph 3 - Reason - The Cell Phone can Necessary for all the students.
For example, in my house my sister is left alone and if she gets sick I could send a message to my mom.

Paragraph 4 - Conclusion, I believe the Cell Phones are very important for all the students

Figure 3. Jazmín's Full Text

El día más humillante

Un día me sucedió algo muy vergonzoso, me caí en un desagüe. Una mañana mi tía abrió el desagüe que quedaba justo en la puerta trasera, para limpiarlo. Cuando mi tía terminó de limpiarlo, se le olvidó cerrar aquel desagüe. Entonces cuando yo iba a salir me caí dentro del desagüe. Toda mi familia se burló de mí. Fue un momento tan humillante y vergonzoso.

Mi caída tuvo lugar en el patio trasero de mi casa. Una casa que era muy grande. El día que me caí se escuchaba el ladrido de mis perritos. Todo se veía tan ordenado y tranquilo dentro de mi casa. Al momento que iba a salir a comprar ya era de noche, el cielo se miraba oscuro y las estrellas brillaban. Cuando iba a dar un paso para salir de la casa, me caí en el desagüe. Lo único que escuché fue el sonido del agua al caer yo dentro. Al momento de salir del desagüe escuché la exagerada risa de mi familia.

Fue tan humillante haberme caído en un desagüe. Primero, mi tía abrió el desagüe que quedaba en la puerta trasera de mi casa para limpiarlo. A ella se le olvidó cerrar el desagüe cuando terminó de limpiar. Segundo, en la noche mi tía me mandó a comprar. Mi primo quería ir conmigo a la tienda pero yo no lo quería llevar. Tercero, para no llevar a mi primo, iba a salir por la puerta trasera. Entonces cuando yo iba a dar mi primer paso me caí en el desagüe. Finalmente mi familia se burló de mí.

Recordar un momento vergonzoso a veces es muy divertido, en cambio otras veces es humillante. Por ejemplo caerte en un desagüe. Es algo tan humillante. Un desagüe resulta ser un lugar tan desagradable. También puede ser peligroso cuando lo dejan abierto. Como sucedió con mi tía que en un descuido dejó el desagüe abierto. Como resultado de su descuido, yo me caí en el desagüe. Aquel día fue el peor de mi vida. Espero que la próxima vez que mi tía limpie el desagüe no se le olvide cerrarlo para que no ocurra lo mismo que me sucedió a mí.

Figure 4. Jazmín's Autobiography

Living in a new country is very strange because I don't know ^{any} ~~nothing~~. The new country is different ^{from} ~~to~~ my origin country. ^{and} all the places are interesting and wonderful. The school ~~is~~ in this country ^{is} very different. It has ~~is~~ a lot of students, security and teachers. The weather in the winter is very cold and in the summer ^{it} is very hot. The snow is very nice. But sometimes I spend most of my time very boring ^{and} because I only stay in my house.

I was most surprised when I ~~saw~~ ^{saw} that everything here is very different ^{than} ~~to as~~ I imagined in my mind. Everyone speaks a different language. ~~Someone~~ ^{Some} speak ~~speak~~ spanish, ~~someone~~ ^{Some} speak ~~speak~~ english.

Figure 5. More of Jazmín's Autobiography

someone speaks french and someone speaks chinese. There is only two high schools here. Everything is very costly here. I have a school bus here. I share the house with strangers. I hate it.

I never expected to come to this country. I never imagined to meet my mother and father. When I see my father and my mother I feel very happy and I cry a lot. I miss my family of Ecuador a lot. I never imagined that I would live in a new country. This experience is very wonderful.

Now I think that in three years I will return to my origin country. I will study in the university and I will be an engineer in systems. Then I will work and I have a lot of money. I will help my aunt because she is my mom and I love her a lot.