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Codemeshing in Academic Writing: Identifying Teachable Strategies of Translanguaging

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Studies on translanguaging of multilingual students have turned their attention to teachable strategies in classrooms. This study is based on the assumption that it is possible to learn from students' translanguaging strategies while developing their proficiency through a dialogical pedagogy. Based on a classroom ethnography, this article describes the translanguaging strategies of a Saudi Arabian undergraduate student in her essay writing. Her strategies are classified through thematic coding of multiple forms of data: drafts of essay, journals, classroom assignments, peer review, stimulated recall, and member check. The strategies are of 4 types: recontextualization strategies, voice strategies, interactional strategies, and textualization strategies. The study describes how the feedback of the instructor and peers can help students question their choices, think critically about diverse options, assess the effectiveness of their choices, and develop metacognitive awareness.

THE ABILITY OF MULTILINGUAL SPEAKERS to shuttle between languages, treating the diverse languages that form their repertoire as an integrated system—labeled *translanguaging*—has received recent scholarly attention. We have many studies on multilingual communicative strategies outside the classroom—that is, *codeswitching* to negotiate meanings and identities in rural and urban contexts (e.g., De Fina, 2007; Eastman, 1992); *crossing* to borrow an out-group token to adopt new community relationships and identities (e.g., Hill, 1999; Rampton, 2009); and street signage in linguistic landscapes where multilingual and multimodal resources are deployed with rhetorical effectiveness (e.g., Gorter, 2006). The question that educators have now begun to ask is how to develop in classroom contexts the intuitive communicative strategies multilinguals display in everyday life. Although we have fascinating studies of translanguaging outside school contexts, we have not developed pedagogical strategies for developing such practices in the classroom. In a recent study on translanguaging practices in bilingual classrooms, Creese and Blackledge (2010) emphasized "the need for further research to explore what 'teachable' pedagogic resources are available in flexible, concurrent approaches to learning and teaching languages bilingually" (p. 113). In making this call, they echoed what other scholars like Lin and Martin (2005) have also considered important in order to move multilingual language acquisition forward.

The studies we do have on school contexts show translanguaging to be a naturally occurring phenomenon. In the majority of these studies, acts of translanguaging are not elicited by teachers through conscious pedagogical strategies. They are produced unbidden. In fact, in many of these cases, translanguaging occurs surreptitiously behind the backs of the teachers in classes that proscribe language mixing (see the studies from diverse communities in Heller & Martin-Jones, 2001; Lin & Martin, 2005). In the more proactive

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situations, teachers have provided safe spaces for students to adopt their multilingual repertoire for learning purposes, and teachers themselves have collaborated with students in using the repertoire as a resource, as in the study by Creese and Blackledge (2010) (see also Canagarajah, 1995). Pedagogical approaches such as the *biliteracy workshop* (Garcia, 2009) and *continua of biliteracy* model (Hornberger, 2003) theorize how students may shuttle between languages and modalities in their learning. However, we still have a long way to go in developing teaching strategies out of these broadly conceived models.

What current classroom studies show is that translanguaging is a naturally occurring phenomenon for multilingual students. Translanguaging cannot be completely restrained by monolingual educational policies. It can occur with minimal pedagogical effort from teachers. However, such studies might give the impression that translanguaging does not have to be taught. It might be argued that if it occurs naturally in the most unbidden contexts, translanguaging is so fully developed among multilingual students in their home and community contexts that there is nothing further for the school to add, other than provide a context for it to be practiced. Such studies are bolstered by cognitive orientations to competence that posit that translanguaging is "natural" to multilinguals (Bhatia & Ritchie, 2004, p. 794; see also Franceschini, 2010). This line of thinking leads to the tendency of multilingual scholars and researchers to romanticize the translanguaging practices of students. Most such studies do not identify any limitations or errors in the multilingual practices of the students. What may appear as grammatical deviations or idiomatic novelties are explained as a positive case of transfer from the other languages in one's repertoire rather than a negative case of interference, in keeping with the multicompetence model of Cook (1999).

I would argue that there is still more for multilingual students to learn in translanguaging. Departing slightly from the cognitivist models to competence adopted by the above-mentioned scholars, I would adopt a practice-based model to explain the way such competences arise from the socialization of multilinguals in contact situations (see Canagarajah, 2007). From this point of view, practice is necessary for the development of competence and proficiency. There is always room for more effective reading and writing practices, not to mention artful and persuasive oral communication. To envision such improvements, we have to go beyond sentence-level concerns to consider discourse issues. Additionally, we have to go beyond a focus on the communication of meaning to consider rhetorical effectiveness. Some would argue that grammar cannot be separated from discourse, and meaning from rhetoric. Most of the studies on multilingual classroom communication have not considered discursive and rhetorical issues. They have largely interpreted the types of language mixing and social negotiations to demonstrate communicative functionality and metalinguistic competence. We have to consider discourse and rhetorical strategies to judge translanguaging appropriateness and effectiveness and to develop a critical orientation to assessment and instruction.

In this study, I address translanguaging in writing. Composition brings discourse and rhetorical issues sharply into focus. Effective writing is not a matter of stringing well-formed sentences. Authors have to do so with rhetorical effectiveness. Furthermore, unlike the relatively spontaneous speech act, the monitored and somewhat detached activity of writing involves strategic options and choices. Students have to develop a critical awareness of the choices that are rhetorically more effective. In fact, writing is largely developed in schools, unlike speech. Beyond possessing linguistic competence, one has to learn the relevant textual and rhetorical conventions for literate activity. However, translanguaging in literacy is more challenging than in speaking. Because formal writing is a high-stakes activity in schools, with serious implications for assessment, translanguaging is heavily censored in literate contexts.

There are very few studies on translanguaging in writing. The studies we have are product-oriented (i.e., textual interpretation) and do not explore the process in order to identify writing or discourse strategies. Blommaert's (2008) study on the writing of two Congolese in French produces some interesting observations on translanguaging (which he called heterography). However, he interprets the hermeneutical problems in the written product, not the development of this proficiency. Gorter and Cenoz (2010) have also interpreted the translanguaging that occurs in student writing (with a mix of Spanish, Basque, and English) for their sentence-level significance. Others have theorized the possibility of translanguaging in literacy. Hornberger (2003) has theorized this as *continua of biliteracy*, Garcia (2009) in terms of *pluriliteracy*, and Gutiérrez (2008) as textual *third spaces*. These scholars show fascinating examples of translanguaging in literacy to bring out their social and linguistic significance. However, they did not assess their rhetorical effectiveness

or provide insights into the strategies of production and reception. In the field of rhetoric and composition, some studies discuss the ways African American students and scholars mix their vernacular with standard written English (Canagarajah, 2006b; Young, 2004). These studies have adopted the term *codemeshing*. Whereas codeswitching treats language alternation as involving bilingual competence and switches between two different systems, codemeshing treats the languages as part of a single integrated system. Unlike translanguaging, codemeshing also accommodates the possibility of mixing communicative modes and diverse symbol systems (other than language). In this article, I use *translanguaging* for the general communicative competence of multilinguals and use *codemeshing* for the realization of translanguaging in texts.

THE STUDY

I report on a graduate student's codemeshing in a literacy narrative, which was part of a university course on the teaching of second-language writing. The choices the student makes, which are interpreted in the light of ethnographic data on her attitudes and opinions throughout the course and triangulated through stimulated recall and a member check procedure, as evident in the multiple drafts of the article, enable us to understand her translanguaging practices and identify teachable pedagogical strategies. The Saudi Arabian student (who wishes to be called Buthainah) mixed Arabic and French in her primarily English essay, in addition to incorporating diverse visual symbols and auditory effects. I refer readers to my article in the *Journal of Advanced Composition* (Canagarajah, 2009) for detailed examples of Buthainah's codemeshing.

This report is part of a larger ethnographic project on the development of teacher identities and literacy awareness in a graduate course on the teaching of second-language writing. The class was made up of roughly half Anglo/North American students and half foreign students (from China, Taiwan, Korea, Japan, United Arab Emirates, and Saudi Arabia). An important assignment in the course was the writing of a literacy narrative. The objective was to learn from our own literacy development so that we can devise useful pedagogies for classrooms. Peers and the instructor read multiple drafts of the literacy narrative for critique and revision. The course thus adopted a practice-based, collaborative, and dialogical pedagogy. Students learned about writing by engaging in writing themselves, teaching writing, and revising their drafts in relation to readings on writing, instructor feedback, and peer criticism.

In addition to the successive drafts of essays (abbreviated hereafter as D1, D2, etc.), I enjoyed access to other materials from this course. The students kept a weekly journal of their responses on readings and writings (abbreviated as J). Their contributions to the more formal activities (A) related to the course and their peer commentary (PC) on the literacy narratives of others were also available to me. The students also answered surveys and interviews (I) on their literacy development during the course. In selected cases, as in the situation of Buthainah, I conducted a stimulated recall interview (SR). I pointed to instances in the essay to query Buthainah's attitudes, objectives, and expectations. I also gave Buthainah a draft for her response on my interpretation of her codemeshing practices. This served as a form of member checking (MC). My references to the prior draft are abbreviated as DFT. Consent was obtained from students to quote from their interviews and artifacts from the course.

I adopt an emic approach (i.e., insider perspective) to understand Buthainah's own interpretations and explanations of her writing strategies and communicative objectives. To this end, I am generating constructs ground up through an interpretation of the multiple forms of qualitative data from my classroom research. I did a thematic coding, adopting the procedures in grounded theory (see Clarke, 2005) to come up with teachable strategies. The detailed data analytical procedures are as follows:

1. Open coding of data into emerging categories that reflect as far as possible the participants' perspectives;
2. Axial coding that refines categories by reflecting the constant comparison of incoming data with previously gathered data;
3. Continuing data collection up to saturation—a point at which incoming data no longer suggest necessary additional categories and at which a theory accounting for the data emerges.

My reference to an emic perspective should not be construed to mean that my own perspectives as a multilingual speaker and my understanding of published literature on multilingual communicative strategies have not influenced my theorization. However, through triangulation I am able to approximate the subjects' perspectives on their writing strategies. The stimulated recall and member check procedures were especially useful for this purpose. I interpret the ramifications

of Buthainah's writing strategies in relation to the strategies multilinguals generally use in oral communication in English-as-a-lingua-franca (ELF) situations (for a review of emerging findings, see Canagarajah, 2006a, 2007; Seidlhofer, 2004). Although writing is different from speaking, I identify connections between translanguaging in both modalities.

Buthainah's statements are edited minimally for clarity. The typographical mistakes are explained by the fact that many of these statements were written or emailed. I am also leaving intact the linguistic peculiarities in Buthainah's essay excerpts, as the point of this article is that such features will be negotiated for meaning by multilinguals.

STRATEGIES OF CODEMESHING

I discuss the strategies Buthainah adopted according to four broad types:[1] (a) recontextualization strategies: gauging the congeniality of the context for codemeshing and shaping ecology to favor one's multilingual practices; (b) voice strategies: basing communication on one's own positionality and making textual spaces for one's linguistic strengths and resources; (c) interactional strategies: negotiating meaning on an equal footing with readers and helping them negotiate effectively; and (d) textualization strategies: orientating to the text as a multimodal social practice and adopting process-oriented composing strategies for effective text development. Coincidentally, these four types cover the basic components of writing (and, in fact, any communication)—that is, contextual, personal, social, and textual. These types do not occupy airtight compartments. As we will see, there are interrelationships and interconnections.

Recontextualization Strategies

The first type also constitutes strategies that are some of the earliest temporally. Buthainah gauges the communicative context to figure out if she can codemesh in this writing project. When I gave the impression in DFT that multilinguals always codemesh in their spoken and written activity, Buthainah corrected me. She observed:

> It is important for me to point out that what you see in my literacy autobiography is not how I commonly write. I may have written something similar to it before—but it is by no means how I write my academic papers because if I did that, than my writing would not be welcomed as it would be seen by some as informal, uneducated, and simply "bad" writing. It is when I get a "green light" from a professor, that I would write in the way I presented my autobiography. (MC)

She elaborated on the clues that encouraged her to codemesh. Among them are the facts that the instructor was friendly to the activity of translanguaging; he had himself codemeshed (Canagarajah, 2001, 2006b); he held a philosophy of writing that encouraged voice; he provided writing models with codemeshing for analysis (such as Smitherman, 2003); and her peers were hospitable to interpreting her codemeshing. It is important for students to realize that translanguaging is a rhetorical choice. It is not a mechanical activity independent of the specific communicative situation. One has to carefully assess the extent to which one can codemesh in a given context. This ability to assess the situation and frame one's language accordingly is part of a multilingual's rhetorical awareness and communicative proficiency.

Despite sensing the congenial context, Buthainah is still cautious in practicing the full extent of codemeshing she desires. She next negotiates the type and extent of codemeshing her audience is ready for. She progressively increases the range of codes included in her successive drafts. In this way, she is able to assess the uptake of the readers. In the first draft, Buthainah does not codemesh at all. Her essay is a straightforward narrative in English. The only indications of codemeshing are two smiley faces. It is in the second draft that we see the first signs of linguistic experimentation. She begins her essay thus:

> "Oh God! Give me more knowledge"—My education dictum through the years is a verse in the Quran stating "رَبِّ زِدْنِي عِلْمًا" **(D2).**

Note that she begins with the English translation first and gives the Arabic original next. In her later drafts, not only will she begin with the Arabic, but she will also delay the translation. In the third draft, we see the dynamic translanguaging characteristics of her final draft. Yet, some codes are deployed gradually. Even in her fourth draft, she says "Thank Allah" and not "*ma sha allah.*" Such careful experimentation shows that Buthainah is sensitive to the capabilities of the audience in negotiating her text. She also gradually builds the capacity of the audience to interpret her codes.

Not only is Buthainah checking the extent of uptake in her successive drafts, but she also directly queries her peers to understand their comfort

level. After posting her first draft, she writes in her journal:

> Alright, I submitted my first draft and I have a loooot of questions . . . Should I talk about my English literacy only? Or should I talk about my English, Arabic, and French literacy?!? Should I address my readers? Or should I ignore the fact that this is a personal essay? (J 09/15)

At the end of her third draft, she adds a note to her peers: "p.s. . . . Should I translate the poems?" (D3). Although all students posted their drafts for peer criticism, Buthainah was the only student to additionally query her peers on her choices. Even though Buthainah received conflicting responses from her peers (i.e., some asked her to translate the poems and others told her not to), she used her own discretion in the end to boldly delay or refuse translation, demanding more from her readers.

Research on lingua franca communication indicates that multilinguals who do considerable preparatory work to negotiate the footing and terms of engagement with their interlocutors are more successful. Planken (2005) observed that whereas novice nonnative sales personnel in Scandinavian communities tend to move directly to business and end up being unsuccessful, experienced professionals do considerably more footwork to create a safe space where their linguistic peculiarities can be negotiated in English. They spend a few minutes conversing on personal topics before they move on to sales talk. Those who do such preparatory work to establish rapport are more successful in their business transactions.

Beyond assessing the context, Buthainah subtly reshapes the context to prepare her readers for her unusual linguistic choices. She uses the ecological resources of the context to aid in intelligibility and interpretation. Scholars like Khubchandani (1997) have argued that multilingual interactions are aided by gestures, tone, setting, objects, and interpersonal strategies for interpretive clues, not words alone. In writing, one has to tap into alternate resources. The cues that Buthainah uses may be considered the *microecology* of the text (to borrow a phrase that Creese & Blackledge, 2010, adopt for classroom resources).

I consider the content part of Buthainah's textual microecology. The theme of Buthainah's essay—that she was motivated to become multilingual and multiliterate because she realized early on that knowledge is freedom—functions as a subtle way of preparing the reader for her bold linguistic and textual moves. She presents her thesis in the pivotal second paragraph: "Throughout my literacy development, the desire to know overpowered my other desires and gave me strength as new challenges and new perspectives arose as I design, learn, produce, and critically think" (D6). This idea is also neatly encapsulated in her epigraph, an Arabic proverb, ومن يتهيّب صعود الجبال ~~~يعش ابد الدّهر بين الحفر, which she translates later as "Who fears climbing the mountains~~~Lives forever between the holes" (D6). She writes that her parents quoted this proverb to her when she was afraid to go to elementary school, and she returns to its theme throughout her essay. With this theme Buthainah seems to challenge the reader to also move beyond passive reading and negotiate her codemeshing.

Buthainah also uses multisensory resources to aid interpretation. She deploys emoticons, provides visual cues, stylizes print, and captures auditory effects in writing. These are some emoticons that reinforce her points:

> At that time, my dear reader, I have not learned English in school yet since English was required to seventh graders and beyond; and I was in sixth grade ☺
>
> A *ket-koot* is a small chick in Arabic. At that time I had about seven chicks [P.S. couple of them died = '(]. (D6)

She uses words as visual media sometimes: "'I doo n't want to!' was my response to my parents request of enrolling me in a nearby preschool" (D6). The elongation of *don't* is a visual representation of an auditory effect. She also uses italics more than usual for effect, as in "Our first exposure to *real English* was at that airport. The man said *beaucoup de choes* that I could not understand" (D6). Through all of these strategies, Buthainah is calling for a more than cerebral response to her narrative and text. These multimodal resources also constitute codemeshing for Buthainah. She justifies her choice of these nonlinguistic symbols as follows:

> Symbols work as another way of expressing myself. I used Arabic, poems, French, and now symbols. Limiting myself to one language is—ironically—limiting . . . But, experiencing more than one language, we are able to express ourselves in different ways or the best way. So, symbols serve as another "language" that words may not be the best tool to express. (SR)

These visual resources, like content, are part of the microecology of the text to aid interpretation.

Buthainah also changes her footing with the reader in preparation for negotiating her codemeshing. Throughout her essay, Buthainah represents herself as a "functional bilingual." She

uses this term to distance herself from the English-as-a-second-language (ESL) and remedial writing courses into which she was placed after she migrated to the United States. She defines *functional bilinguals* as "language users who may have [a] few problems with English, but were beyond the realm of ESL" (D6). Her use of the term corresponds to her orientation toward codemeshing. Buthainah acknowledges that she may not have the grammatical competence of the native speaker, but she has the communicative competence to function bilingually and achieve her interests in the repertoire of codes she brings with her. Additionally, although she may not have comprehensive or formal mastery of a language, she has functional competence to communicate in the registers and contexts she desires. Buthainah is not denying that there may be idiosyncrasies in her grammar or idioms. What she is claiming for herself is creative and critical communication in a rhetorically effective text. This self-ascription helps the reader to comprehend the essay appropriately and not adopt unfair criteria.

In other places, she deals directly with the prejudices of the reader. Referring to her trip to the United States for her education, she writes:

> Couple of years later, my father began a new journey by enrolling in a master program in United States of America. He applied and, later, the IECP at Penn State University accepted him. When the paper works were complete, my family and I traveled from Saudi Arabia to United States by air plane [P.S. I wanted to travel on a camel, but they were all rented!]. (D6)

I was struck by the postscript. In my stimulated recall, I asked Buthainah, "This might be considered a digression by some readers. How would you respond to that criticism?" Buthainah replied:

> Yes, it could be to some readers. However, when someone writes about themselves, they have to consider the stereotypes and what's going on around them that may influence the comprehension or the interpretation of the text. I wrote that sentence because there are, still to this day, people who think that I, as a Saudi, ride camels to school. It is a joke that tries to remove that stereotype. In addition, a joke was needed here because I may have readers who hold negative associations toward my ethnicity. And I tried to elevate that tension that the reader may have, and hopefully, it will never occur. (SR)

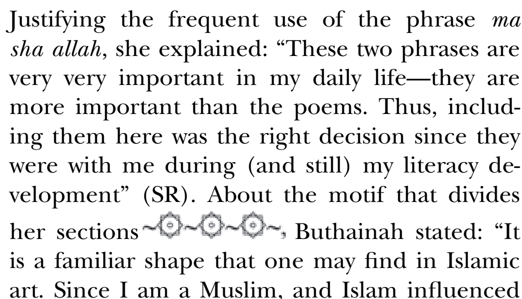
By bringing up the stereotype herself, Buthainahxt might be disarming readers of their prejudices and encouraging them to negotiate on equal and fair terms. Such a strategy has also been observed in Planken's (2005) study. She finds that speakers from Norway and Sweden make self-deprecating jokes about their accents and styles in order to make each party relaxed and free for negotiating their differences in English. Such strategies help in realigning relationships between interlocutors so that they are prepared to negotiate language on equal terms, setting aside their status differences, biases, and inhibitions.

Voice Strategies

Although Buthainah is cautious in assessing the appropriateness of the context and preparing it to suit her multilingual communication, she is also motivated by a strong sense of self, investment, and voice. This second set of strategies, which I call voice strategies, enables her to appropriate dominant codes and experiment boldly with language. Scholars have noted that multilingual speakers do not rush to a nebulous common code (which they may not easily find in many contact situations), but start from their own linguistic positionality and negotiate intelligibility through pragmatic strategies (see Gramkow Anderson, 1993; House, 2003; Khubchandani, 1997). This orientation additionally helps them to approach the interaction from a position of strength and affirmation. Their relationship to the codes of others is based on appropriation according to one's own values (Canagarajah, 2007). An attitude of deference to dominant codes or self-abnegation will lead to a shaky foundation for interlingual contact.

Significant choices in Buthainah's codemeshing are motivated by her desire for identity. This attitude also provides her with a strong investment in writing. She writes, not for a grade but for voice. When asked about her reasons for using Arabic and Koranic verses in her poem, Buthainah responded:

> My objectives for using thses poems are many. First, they are part of me. And this essay is about me. Thus, it seemed appropriate to include them in an essay on my literacey development. In addition, poetry is part of my Arabian culture because it is highly valued. . . Why shouldn't I includ it? (SR)

Justifying the frequent use of the phrase *ma sha allah*, she explained: "These two phrases are very very important in my daily life—they are more important than the poems. Thus, including them here was the right decision since they were with me during (and still) my literacy development" (SR). About the motif that divides her sections , Buthainah stated: "It is a familiar shape that one may find in Islamic art. Since I am a Muslim, and Islam influenced

me, it also influenced my literacy experience. Thus, using this particular motif was a hint to the reader to my heritage" (MC). Reviewing what she had learned in the course, she explained in an interview:

> I learned about the diversity of writing for one genre. All of my classmates and I were required to write about our lives. The way each person recalled these memories portrays not only the diversity of ethnicities, but the diversity of writing. Priority for voice and identity rather than encoding of meaning. (I; 12/09)

It is clear that articulating her voice is more important than merely conveying meaning. This priority enables her to negotiate her voice with confidence.

Buthainah's identity also has implications for her stance and positioning in her writing. Buthainah positions herself as a multilingual talking to multilinguals. She does not think of herself as a nonnative speaker addressing native speakers according to the latter's terms. In the second week of the class, in response to an assignment asking students to define their orientation to effective English writing, Buthainah wrote the following:

> Although some people assume that "excellence" is associated with writing like a "native," I strongly disagree with such belief. Who is a native speaker anyway? And why should a second language English writer have to mimic "native" in order to be given the award of excellence. (A, 09/10)

This attitude enabled her to experiment with words more confidently. When she overused the word "adore," I asked if she considered the possibility that native speakers will find this a cliché. She replied:

> I would respond by saying that I have a different insight into this word [than] a monolingual native speaker of English because I am a multilingual. What the word "adore" evolved to be is different from what it is to the native speaker. In addition, the context in which it is used may characterize the word as a cliché—but, in this context, I do not see it. Also, I honestly do not like to see the native speakers as the other. It feels odd to consider them that way in the question of "how THEY think." I do not understand why I feel that way especially since it is very clear that I am "different" from the native speaker. (SR; emphasis in original)

We must note that the status of a word as a cliché depends on the speech community concerned. "Adore" might be a cliché for native speakers, based on their history of usage, but the word may not have the same connotations for multilinguals. In addition, they always renegotiate meanings contextually.

A particularly important implication of this shift of stance is that Buthainah claims ownership over English, appropriates English for her purposes, and uses it with a critical and creative orientation. In many cases, she challenged my reading of her word choices from a native-speaker orientation and pointed out the creative possibilities in her usage. I had raised a question about the following cases of nonidiomacy in her draft, indicated with an underline:

> As I type each word in this literacy autobiography, <u>storms of thoughts stampede</u> to be considered and mentioned. Which experiences should I value, which shall I consider, and which should I ignore. My literacy situation is unique as only a few number of students in the department share the same status. As I click the keys on the keyboard, an illustration of my literacy development <u>shunt me</u> to continue my ongoing learning adventure from my academic communities, my home, and my life experiences. (D6; emphasis added)

To my criticism of nonidiomaticity, Buthainah replied:

> Actually, I am surprised to hear that because . . . it provides the readers of a visual for what I felt at that time. I do not see why only bulls stampede—this verb can be used figuratively as well. I do not think that this is an issue of native speakers of English, I think that it is a stylistic choice. (SR).

Again, when I referred to these phrases as peculiar in DFT, she responded, "Honestly, I do not see how they are peculiar. I find them creative" (MC). It is clear that Buthainah is experimenting with new uses for these words, enabled by her ownership of the language. The example reminds us that *idiomaticity*, like *cliché*, needs to be redefined. One might ask: From whose perspective is something unidiomatic? What if the tradition of use by native speakers is irrelevant? Should not we give value to the new meanings multilinguals may negotiate from these phrases in their contexts?

Through her revised stance, Buthainah also resists any imposition of deficiency on her background. She considers her background as a resource for writing and draws actively from her funds of knowledge. Her literacy biography makes clear that her home background has given her multimodal resources for expression. It created an appreciation of visual and oral resources for learning. The frequent quotation of Arabic verses and Koranic lines suggests that she considers her cultural background an inspiration for her learning English. Her first language and culture

are not matters to be suppressed. They are resources from which she draws for her literacy development in English and for education in the American schooling system.

Although Buthainah is strongly rooted in her identity and background, in the way she addresses the reader, her stance is not fixed and essentialized. As a multilingual, her positionality is hybrid and plural. This stance enables her to translanguage by bringing Arabic, English, and French into her writing. When she used too many asides, I asked her if such digressions were influenced by her Arabic background, stereotypically assuming that English had no place for such expression. However, Buthainah corrected me by attributing this feature to her hybrid background:

> Definitely not the Arabic writing! American English influence, yes. From reading my essay, it would be apparent that I am classify myself as a generation 1.5—someone who experienced both worlds—the American and the Saudi. Thus, you see that this specific essay is an example of this combination. To answer the question, the parenthetical comments are influenced [by] my American identity because in the American culture we use P.S., we use parentheses for insider information, and we [use] them to deliver humor as well. Here, my purpose was to humor the reader and give life to the essay. (SR)

Thus, Buthainah is able to move beyond essentialized notions of language and culture and adopt "third spaces" in her writing (see Gutiérrez, 2008).

Buthainah's background provides her with a rich intercultural and interlingual awareness from which she can draw to codemesh in her writing. Although I interpreted her inclusion of Arabic verses as a carryover from her home culture, she added that poetry is also appreciated in English writing and that she had learned poetry as an English major (SR). Her choice of Arabic verses is probably motivated by their appeal to an English literary audience, as well. She probably left out verses that would require more background information and pose challenges for interpretation by non-Arabic readers. In her literacy narrative, Buthainah gives an example of how her multicompetence (Cook, 1999) gives her insights into languages:

> The night before the exam, I went to "about.com" searching for information about the different forms of past tense. Since I use "was" when reciting stories from the past in English, I found out from the website that the French equivalent to "was" is "*était*." In the following day, I used *était* in many sentences to express that this particular event that I am recalling already took place (D6).

This is an example of the manner in which her knowledge in English was carried over to learn French. Such interlingual and intercultural awareness accounts for effective codemeshing in her essay. Furthermore, it helps her look at the interpretive activity from the eyes of readers from diverse backgrounds. She can anticipate the interpretive processes and linguistic capabilities of her readers and provide appropriate cues for interpretation.

Interactional Strategies

The confidence in one's identity and background and the ability to draw from them as resources for one's communication are certainly empowering strategies for multilingual students. However, these strategies can lead to miscommunication and stigmatization if the reader fails to negotiate one's creative codemeshing. We find from research on lingua franca communication that intelligibility is achieved despite individual differences because interlocutors negotiate on equal footing to co-construct meaning (House, 2003; Roberts & Canagarajah, 2009). Multilinguals are mutually supportive, collaborative, and consensus oriented (see Canagarajah, 2007; Khubchandani, 1997; Seidlhofer, 2004). It is this orientation that helps them to negotiate their peculiarities effectively to achieve intelligibility. As I mentioned earlier, clichés like "adore" and nonidiomatic phrases like "shunt" will be given fresh meaning by those who are prepared to negotiate for meaning in context. Even what might seem like errors from a native speaker's perspective will be renegotiated by multilinguals to co-construct new meaning. Meaningful communication is an interactional achievement. It is for this reason that, surprisingly, "misunderstandings are not frequent in ELF interactions," according to Seidlhofer (2004, p. 218). This interactional strategy is difficult to achieve in writing, as the orientations and backgrounds of the readers cannot always be anticipated or managed as in face-to-face communication. In addition, multilingual authors have to take into consideration the fact that native-speaker (and monolingual) readers could also be reading their essays, adopting their own norms one-sidedly for interpretation. Therefore, Buthainah adopts some extraordinary strategies to invite, cajole, and even pressure the reader into negotiating the text with her.

A striking feature in her writing is that Buthainah uses a lot of parenthetical comments to the reader. This is a way of engaging the reader to interact with her and actively negotiate her text.

When I commented in DFT that her asides to the readers sounded awkward and came close to violating the formality of academic prose, Buthainah responded:

> I knew that I was taking a risk by addressing the reader. But, I wanted the reader to be included into my discussion. I did not see my essay as a one-way informative essay. It is a negotiated essay that seeks a better understanding from educators and future teachers to the multilingual experience. By addressing my readers, I am welcoming them to the discussion, which, in my perspective, [is] ongoing. (MC)

The direct address to readers is a way of drawing them into a conversation.

There was more to this feature. On another occasion, she mentioned that the parenthetical asides were a way of showing that she respected the readers' perspectives and valued their activity in interpreting the text. She explained:

> I really do respect the readers of my paper. And I know that there will be different interpretations of my text. However, acknowledging this fact and informing the reader that I—as the author—know that they exist and that they are different thinkers and intellectuals than I am is a gesture of respect. (SR)

Through this strategy she is acknowledging the otherness of her readers and accepting them with all their peculiarities and uniqueness. Thus, she is not only inviting the reader to negotiate but also indicating that she is herself open to negotiating their differences.

If readers were resistant to negotiation, she had other ways of ensuring that they would negotiate. She tantalizingly held back important clues for interpreting non-English codes and delayed their introduction. For example, she transliterated the names of some poets in English and kept others in Arabic. When I inquired about this difference, she said:

> I kept it in Arabic because I translated his name to English when I explained the poem. I thought that if I kept it in Arabic, the reader would be eager to continue to reading to get to the meaning of this poem especially since this is the final poem. (SR)

I found that she had indeed mentioned the name of the poet in English later in a paraphrase of the poem. It appears that Buthainah wanted to pressure the reader to keep reading and look for more clues for interpretation. In this way, she encourages the reader to be more alert and proactive in creating meaning. She also sustains the curiosity of the reader.

A pointer to yet another strategy was that Buthainah refused to translate a particular set of lines by an Arabic poet on one specific instance. For other Arabic verses, she had at least provided paraphrases or allusions elsewhere in her essay to help interpret their meaning. When I queried her on this enigmatic omission, Buthainah explained:

> Translating this poem would take so much of its value and providing a two-sentence explanation will not do any justice for these few lines. The message of these lines is that who desires the best, need to work for it. He/she needs to stay up late working for it just like how divers have to search for the natural pearls. And those who try to get to the top and not work for it, they will waste their life getting nothing. I feel that these few lines that I wrote above about this poem do not give it any justice. Leaving it stand alone is more powerful. (SR)

In what sense is this more powerful? What is the reader supposed to get from the Arabic script?

Because writing is multimodal for Buthainah, an aesthetic appreciation of the lines is part of her expectation. The Arabic scripts provide an ethos to the text and represent Buthainah's identity. Even if one cannot understand the meaning, one can respond to the visual effect of the lines. For this, one has to do a holistic reading, not just extricate the meaning of the lines. Mark, an Anglo-Canadian student, recounted his response this way:

> To me, a non-Arabic speaker, this quote is a beautiful collection of alien writing, fascinating but incomprehensible. It is a statement to me that there is something Buthainah understands that I do not. It is a move that distances me from Buthainah but also leaves me intrigued and interest[ed] in reading more. (PC, 10/28)

There are also implications for footing in negotiating the text. By refusing to translate, Buthainah is realigning the relationship between herself and her readers. She is shifting the dominant Western practice of putting the onus of intelligibility on the speaker/writer. She is pressuring readers to work harder for meaning. Readers, especially native English speakers, may feel compelled to lay their biases aside, relax their judgmentalism, and adopt a more egalitarian multilingual orientation to the reader/writer relationship. Tim, an Anglo-American, confirms this realignment when he writes to Buthainah:

> By not translating you are excluding a wider audience, your non-Arabic speaking audience from being able to engage fully with the text. Perhaps you are challenging them to bridge that gap as readers. That if they want to gain access to your writing (to a piece of you, perhaps?) they have to meet you halfway somehow. Or, maybe these poems are a special

> treat you mean only for those able to read Arabic to experience. (PC, 10/22)

Meeting halfway is what multilinguals do in contact situations to co-construct meaning as they speak in different languages (Khubchandani, 1997).

For readers to adopt this footing, they have to change their attitudes and orientations to multilingual communication. Buthainah's strategies involve changing the perspectives of the readers, especially those of native English speakers (NESs). In further explaining her reason for not translating Arabic, she said her intention was "giving a sample or a taste of the experience that language learners go through to those who never experienced it, which may help them understand these stories and experiences better" (MC). She wanted the reader to go through the experience of being disadvantaged by an alien language, humbled into learning it, and encouraged to create meaning. Through this process, she will also force NESs to experience what multilinguals go through in contact situations. There is evidence that she succeeded in her objectives. In a peer response, Mark described his experience of reading the untranslated Arabic this way: "Something can only be scene [sic] perhaps in the Arabic text. Perhaps Buthainah is willing to help the reader but at some point some things can only be known to those who are willing to learn and become Arabic–English bilinguals" (PC, 10/28). Buthainah thus simulates the experience of multilinguals where NESs make them disadvantaged by excluding them from conversations when they make no accommodations. Through this strategy, Buthainah hopes to make readers change their footing and orientation and to collaborate in constructing meaning.

From yet another perspective, Buthainah expects readers to adopt the "let it pass" principle (Firth, 1996) when they confront languages or utterances that are not intelligible. Firth (1996) demonstrated that multilinguals adopt such a strategy in contact situations. As they wait patiently for further occurrences of the unintelligible item, look for diverse clues, or renegotiate it, they are able to achieve meaning. It is not that Buthainah completely ignored the need for readers to find meaning. It is simply that meaning would not be served on a platter. Furthermore, meaning has to be obtained through a different route—that is, through multimodal resources rather than focusing only on words in a narrow textual context. Through this strategy, she compels the reader to do a more holistic and multisensory reading. She explained her reason for not translating Arabic in the following way:

> If I translated everything, then the readers would simply go through it. But, if I did not translate it or provide an immediate translation, then, I am encouraging the reader to question the relationship between the poem and the stories being told and promote critical thinking. (MC)

In addition to clues from the microecology of the text (as demonstrated earlier), readers should also look for larger contextual and social cues for interpretation. Such is the strategy multilinguals use in contact situations. Because multilinguals cannot expect to be equipped with all of the codes or full proficiency required for a contact situation, they look for *alignment* to create meaning (Firth & Wagner, 2007; Kramsch, 2002). Atkinson, Churchill, Nishino, and Okada (2007) defined alignment as "the means by which human actors *dynamically adapt to*—that is, flexibly depend on, integrate with, and construct—the ever-changing mind-body-world environments posited by sociocognitive theory" (p. 171, emphasis in original). Multilinguals align words with other features of the ecology to produce meaning.

In addition to textual microecology, Buthainah accommodates face-to-face interactions as part of textual meaning-making. It was clear that Buthainah treated interpretive interactions as taking place outside the text, as well. She factored in these opportunities for oral negotiation as part of the interpretive process. Other students, too, began to count on such negotiations for more meaning. Tim, in his peer review, asked Buthainah to explain the quotes to him in the next class (PC; 10/27). He was counting on a face-to-face conversation to unpack the meaning of the Arabic verses. Although Buthainah was prepared to engage in these conversations, she refused to translate her Arabic verses in the text. It appears as if she was satisfied with oral communication for unpacking the meaning of these verses. Rita, another Anglo-American student, said she "decided not to worry about what I couldn't understand—I trusted my classmates to explain what was important" (I; 05/09). In her case, she is counting on others in the class, too, to help her. In this sense, meaning is socially constructed and collaborative. Such examples show that literacy for Buthainah is part of social practice. The negotiation of written meaning occurs in an expanded communicative context—one that includes conversations about the text in face-to-face interactions.

Textualization Strategies

From the preceding discussion, it should be evident that writing is performative for Buthainah. Not only does she want to achieve meaning interactively, but she also tries to achieve certain effects on her readers. Writing is also strongly tied to representation of her voice and identity. In a broader sense, then, her objective is not just to convey some ideas. She treats writing as social action whereby the text leads herself and her readers to reconstruct identities and relationships and to achieve certain sensory perceptions and emotional effects. Such a performative orientation has important implications for some of the traditional concerns of text construction.

To begin with, Buthainah orientates differently to form in writing. When asked about possible mechanical errors in some cases, Buthainah responded that she was not focusing on issues of form at that stage. She reserved attention to local errors for later stages in the writing process and focused more immediately on the interaction with the reader. On one occasion, she said, "I had multiple drafts of this essay, but did not notice this error. Of course, if I noticed it, I would have corrected it . . . I was so engaged in developing the content that I did not notice it" (SR). Whenever I drew attention to issues of form, Buthainah redirected my attention to the interactional goals of her writing. A focus on form would have limited Buthainah's writing. She would have focused on possible errors (from a native-speaker perspective) and not allowed herself to freely draw from diverse grammars or symbol systems and meshed them into her writing. Her relaxed attitude toward grammatical errors enabled her to draw from her multilingual grammatical resources. It is not that Buthainah did not care about form; rather, she made it subservient to her rhetorical purposes. As we saw earlier, she was open to appropriating form to suit her values and interests and not using them from the native-speaker point of view.

Moreover, for Buthainah, writing is rhetorical, not simply a matter of meaning construction. She is more focused on the effect on her readers, the aesthetic effectiveness of her essays, and the persuasive appeal of her writing. The rhetorical strategies she employs not only help her to adopt creative choices of translanguaging but also to communicate them effectively to her audience. This strategy also enables her to give free rein to translanguaging as she explores the most creative way to convey her ideas. This is consistent with Buthainah's literacy development, as represented in her narrative. When she finds learning to read and understand the Quran difficult at a young age, she focuses on the aural effect of the lines. When teachers focus on calligraphy lessons, she avidly reads the teacher comments at the end of her assignments, turning a mechanical activity into meaningful communication. Many of her language choices are motivated by performative reasons. When I observed that her few French words did not add much to the meaning of the essay, she responded:

> The reason I used "moi" is because it was part of my literacy history. I took three courses of French, and it seemed silly to ignore one part of my literacy development, and accept some. It seems hypocritical in a way. If, as you said, some readers would say that "don't serve any significant rhetorical functions in the essay" (unlike the Arabic quotations) I would say that the French langauge served a role in my literacey development. It may not be and will not be as influential as the Arabic language, but it's there. (SR)

It emerged that the choice was based on concerns of identity representation and contribution to the ethos of the text, not meaning alone.

Because writing is performative, Buthainah lets her writing shape her experience. She does not come with a preconstructed experience or thought that is to be conveyed to the audience. From this perspective, codemeshing is not separate from her experience; codemeshing shapes the experiences represented in the narrative. In one of her final journal entries, she confesses:

> As I am working on another draft for my literacy autobiography, I began to seriously engage the themes of 1.5 generation and "freedom for knowing." Interestingly, I found myself retelling the experience with its fact differently to suit my themes—this may not be shocking to anyone reading my final journal—but for me, it was. This is true because I felt I am manipulating my experiences to fit the norms of my themes—even though my experience does fit the norms of my themes anyway. (J; 12/10)

Although she fears she is "manipulating" her experiences to suit her themes, she later says that they are still true to her life. It is indeed a moot point whether experience can be divorced from rhetorical and linguistic construction. A striking example of the way her language shapes her experience is the fact that the influence of Arabic language and culture on her English literacy development is not only the theme of her narrative. It is enacted in her text by the way in which Arabic verses co-exist with English. They demonstrate how Arabic has actually inspired and spurred on Buthainah's development of English.

There is more evidence that codemeshing shapes Buthainah's thinking. She lets the process of writing help her discover her literacy trajectory. As codemeshing is practiced unhindered, her exploration of her literacy development takes its own trajectory. In a journal entry early in the writing process, she recounts how the writing helps her gain more insights into her literacy life:

> Writing this draft brings so many memories that seems to fade away. Learning languages is a big part of my life, and the idea that I began to forget some of the aspects of this important memory shocks me. Therefore, writing this Lit. Auobio. is a good idea for keeping my "legacy" of literacy!!! (J; 09/15)

She finds that she is discovering more about her life as she writes. Codemeshing thus helps Buthainah delve more into her thoughts and experiences.

Buthainah also lets her reading comment on her writing. Codes in one text shape other texts. She says,

> The articles that I am reading for this paper has some reactions that I felt as a learner. Although my situation for learning English had no similarities to the examples given by the authors (permanent immigrants/residents etc.), their findings had similarities to mine. I never knew why I hated ESL when I was in high school—and throughout my career at [X university], no one ever told me of the 1.5. Thus, it is such a relief to know that my reaction had an explanation. (J; 12/10)

Her reading of the construct "1.5 generation" helps her to frame her experiences in English learning as different from those of stereotypical ESL students. This is a testament to intertextuality. Texts thus empower her. They enable her to gain new insights into her own linguistic and literacy life.

What makes all of these strategies possible is that, for Buthainah, writing is a process. She is not focused only on getting a good, finished product. She is focused on discovering meaning and reshaping the essay in relation to her own evolving thinking, responses from peers and audience, and interactions with other texts and codes. An orientation to writing as process enables Buthainah to not only improve the rhetorical effectiveness of her essay but also reframe her negotiation strategies in relation to her observations about the uptake of the audience. Based on the uptake, she also calibrates the extent and types of codemeshing. In a course-end interview she stated:

> The collaborative aspect helped in shaping the final product. Questions that I was not sure about were somewhat answered after the discussion on my paper. My style was either supported (keep the poems) or criticized (not talking about the college experience) And all of that helped my writing as a reader may see in the final produce. (I; 12/07)

Although Buthainah finally makes her own choices about how to shape the final product, the interaction with the readers helps her make her decisions wisely and confidently. When asked whether peer review had any implications for her style, she said, "Yes, it was helpful because I was debating on whether I should include Arabian poems or not. And if so, shall I translate them? I got many responses, and settled with keeping the poems un-translated"(I; 12/07).

The textualization strategies of Buthainah are protracted and gradual. Buthainah changes her strategies and choices in relation to her evolving views and interactions during the writing process. As we discussed earlier (in relation to her first strategy), she adopts more creative codemeshing in later drafts, having figured out the comfort level of her readers. Similarly, although she was a bit diffident and apologetic about her tone in the early versions of her essay, she gained more agency in later versions to adopt a more assertive tone. In her third draft, she includes the following statement:

> Although all of the examples I mentioned were not happy ones, they were the ones that came to my mind. Please pardon the cheerlessness regarding language learning presented in this paper. Although the experiences that I mentioned were not positive, learning languages became a part of my life that I adore. (D3)

This statement was omitted in the later drafts. The process-oriented approach to writing helps her to calculate the responses and counterstrategies of her readers. In a course-end interview, she gives an example: "A person criticized my direct address of readers as a sign of weakness. Although I would argue the opposite, that particular response made me even more carful of the skeptical reader" (I; 12/07).

Buthainah's orientation to language and text confirms the strategies multilinguals adopt in contact situations. By focusing on the activity at hand, multilinguals make grammar and vocabulary subservient to the objectives of communication (see Canagarajah, 2007). Rather than letting form hinder communication, they focus on the pragmatic strategies that will enable them to reshape form, making even "deviations as the norm" (Khubchandani, 1997, p. 94). Thus, multilinguals are more open to the possibility of emergent grammar (Hopper, 1987), letting

form be shaped by the negotiation process and objectives of the interaction. Furthermore, the importance of form in intelligibility is reduced as communication is multimodal. Multilinguals use ecological resources as cues for interpretation and communication. More importantly, because meaning is co-constructed, form does not hold unqualified power in multilingual communication.

Such an orientation to form has interesting implications for codemeshing. The types of codes meshed emerge to be based on Buthainah's rhetorical needs. They are not mechanical or stereotypical for all contexts. Nor is codemeshing a monolith, undifferentiated in all contexts. Buthainah carefully chooses the extent to which diverse languages should be mixed in her discourse. I wrote in DFT that Buthainah's French mixings were trivial compared to her Arabic mixings. French was less syntactically complex and it accomplished less compared to her Arabic verses. The latter had powerful aesthetic and rhetorical implications for her text. However, Buthainah pointed out that the distinction between the languages was intended and had meaning. She wrote in her response:

> The reason that I did not include French poems or more French phrases is because French cannot be compared to my Arabic language. The value of the Arabic language is much greater than that of French simply because it is the language of the Quran and the language of my heritage. To treat French the same way, it would be simply strange. In addition, when a reader is paying a close attention to my selection of French words and my selection of Arabic words, it would be apparent that what it was stated in the Arabic language contain significant meaning while what was stated in French can be easily replaced by English or Arabic. Does this make sense? (MC)

It is clear from her statement that codemeshing is not a mechanical activity, where diverse languages are meshed indiscriminately. Multilinguals choose the extent to which the different languages in their repertoire are to be emphasized. In this case, Buthainah's choice is based on rhetorical, social, and identity considerations. We need more knowledge on the ways multilinguals mesh different codes in their communicative activities. We can make students translanguage more effectively by cultivating this knowledge.

ASSESSING TRANSLANGUAGING PROFICIENCY

Before we address the pedagogical implications, we have to consider the translanguaging proficiency of Buthainah. Do all translanguagers have perfect competence in codemeshing? Are all of their texts, spoken or written, perfectly constructed? Can there be room for improvement? How do we distinguish between codemeshing and mistakes or errors?

These are difficult questions to answer. To begin with, objectively assessing the practices of translanguagers has been problematic for many reasons. Although our field has espoused monolingualist perspectives on translanguaging for a long time, we now see a need to adopt insider perspectives on multilingualism. However, we still have a long way to go in understanding multilingual communicative strategies. As we strive to develop an emic perspective for these reasons, it has been difficult to adopt an objective stance to critique the language practices of multilinguals. Therefore, a critical view on translanguaging has been slow in coming. Furthermore, the "deviations" from a language that we see in the usage of multilinguals might be cases of positive *transfer* rather than negative *interference*. Therefore, scholars have accepted as natural the deviations from norms or even appreciated their creativity. Such an orientation, too, has slowed down advances on a critical and developmental perspective on multilingual communication. In the context of the prior monolingualist orientations, multilingual scholars have sometimes swung to the other extreme of glorifying multilingual student communication, ignoring the possibility of further development of translanguaging proficiency.

However, it is possible to develop a critical perspective on Buthainah's choices and performance while maintaining the insider perspective we have adopted on her writing so far. There are signs that Buthainah herself sees her choices as developmental and open to correction. Consider the following points:

1. Buthainah's choices become more effective, daring, and creative in successive drafts. There is no reason to believe that the choices that she adopted in the final draft in my possession (D6) comprise the most effective piece. What is the guarantee that Buthainah will not adopt other choices if she had further opportunities for revision? She herself claims that her writing process and negotiation are ongoing.
2. There is evidence that she is rethinking her own choices, displaying some uncertainty. She gives different opinions and justifications for her choices during my successive interviews, stimulated recall, and member check procedure. For example, when asked why she did not translate the Arabic poem in one specific place, Buthainah

writes in SR that she thinks translation always fell short and letting it stand alone would have a more powerful effect. When I later referred to this case in DFT, she offered other reasons for her choice. She commented that she wanted to foster a critical reading attitude in the audience. She offered yet another reason when she said in MC that she wanted to simulate the experience of being handicapped by a language one does not know and attempting to learn it firsthand. Similarly, she offers different reasons for her parenthetical comments to readers. In SR, she says she wanted to humor the reader. In MC, she says she wanted to give the readers insider information and also disarm them of their stereotypes. Her views, then, are not settled and final. As her positions are unresolved, she would benefit from expert guidance.

3. She is questioning herself about her choices as she writes her successive drafts. There is evidence of an internal debate and critical evaluation. At times, it appears as if she is not confident about the rhetorical effectiveness and/or appropriateness of some of her choices. There are even signs of confusion. When Buthainah sends her third draft for peer review, she tells her friends: "p.s. There is something in this essay that I do not like. I am not sure what it is—but I feel that this essay is different from everything I have done in the past (in an unpleasant way)" (D3). In other places, she doubts whether translanguaging will be appreciated. In a course-end review interview, she says, "Just like our identities and backgrounds are diverse, so should our writing. They should reflect who we are—but would that work all of the time?" (I; 12/07). Her self-questioning on the efficacy of voice is striking. However, such attitudes are not difficult to understand. Multilingual students may doubt the translanguaging skills they bring with them because the school imposes its monolingualist ideologies on them. Furthermore, dilemmas in rhetorical options are but natural. Such choices are not always clear-cut. There is always an element of risk-taking in rhetoric.

4. There are inconsistencies in her text that suggest that in some cases she is not fully in control of her choices. For example, she italicizes *ma sha allah* sometimes and not in others. She capitalizes each word on some occasions and not in others. Buthainah did not have good reasons for these inconsistencies when I questioned her in SR. Could some other textual realizations that I consider codemeshing be mistakes instead?

5. More importantly, Buthainah herself distinguishes between codemeshing and mistakes. In SR, I brought attention to the spelling of "verses" as "versus" in her final draft. I pointedly asked her:

> You misspell verses as versus. Since you have been very careful with your choice of Arabic and other stylistic devices in this essay, I was wondering how you would explain these spelling mistakes. Did you think these issues were less important? Did you think the readers will easily understand your meaning and therefore you don't have to worry too much about editing problems?

Buthainah answered:

> I am quite embarrassed about this error (and another mistake below). I had multiple drafts of this essay, but did not notice this error. Of course, if I noticed it, I would have corrected it. I could have misspelled it, and the Word document auto-corrected it. I was so engaged in developing the content that I did not notice it. (SR)

Here, Buthainah does distinguish between codemeshing and errors or mistakes.

How do we distinguish codemeshing from errors and mistakes? I could not proceed far in unraveling Buthainah's understandings of these terms. In fact, Buthainah seems to use *error* and *mistake* as synonyms. In general, it appears as if intentionality would help us distinguish between codemeshing and mistakes. Mistakes are unintentional, whereas those that are consciously chosen are codemeshing. However, intentionality is not always the best arbiter of communicative success. Multilinguals can use certain words appropriately and effectively through intuition and social practice (without explicit awareness). As for error, we have to develop a practice-based and socially oriented definition, departing from a form-based definition. We have to ask whether deviations from norms have rhetorical and communicative functionality. Thus, when Buthainah uses *choes* for *choses*, I do not see any rhetorical value in this deviation. This usage could be classified as an error. Additionally, failure of uptake can lead to error. If the language form was not mutually negotiated for meaning, both writer and reader have to ask how the failure could have been avoided. The writer could have prepared the text for the usage better, and the reader could have processed the usage with greater contextual awareness. In this sense, there is a social dimension to error.

Are there other cases in which Buthainah may adopt more complex choices for greater rhetorical effectiveness? Could she adopt more complex multimodal resources for communication rather than using smileys and emoticons that might be too informal for academic essays? Can she explore the potential of alignment, fonts, and the materiality and spatiality of the page as visual resources? Can she address the readers in more

subtle ways rather than always resorting to parenthetical asides? Buthainah has to also reconsider the rhetorical effectiveness of her metaphors and idioms. When she says "storms of thoughts stampede," she is mixing metaphors. If she intended any special effects through the mix, it is not evident in the context. Because speaking and writing are not acts of transferring ideas or information mechanically, but of achieving communicative objectives with art, affect, voice, and style, there are always limitless possibilities for development. We will do a disservice to our students if we do not help enhance the resources and strengths with which they come. However, these options cannot be imposed by teachers. Buthainah should herself come to a realization of their functionality and internalize it into her evolving repertoire according to her own readiness.

PEDAGOGICAL IMPLICATIONS

It is possible, however, to raise an awareness of these diverse options and resources available for multilingual students without imposing unfair expectations from outside. The dialogical pedagogical approach I adopted in this course can spur Buthainah on in her chosen trajectory of communicative and intellectual development. My queries on Buthainah's drafts and the feedback of her peers help question her choices. The strategy helps her to assess the effectiveness of her codemeshing and decide which instances are mistakes and which are choices she will retain. She can develop greater intentionality for items she had used intuitively or spontaneously. She may be able to assess different levels of rhetorical and communicative effectiveness. More importantly, she may develop a metacognitive awareness of her codemeshing practices.

There are good reasons why we should develop teaching practices from the strategies learners themselves use. Multilingual students bring from their homes and communities funds of knowledge that are valuable for themselves and others (Gonzalez, Moll, & Amanti, 2005). It is important for teachers to learn from them rather than impose their own views of how codemeshing works. Additionally, we cannot generalize for all students and impose a one-size-fits-all pedagogy. Even translanguagers come from different backgrounds, and teachers (even if they are multilingual) should not presume to know the rationale for the choices or trajectories of development for all multilingual students. Furthermore, we still have a long way to go in developing a taxonomy of translanguaging strategies and theorizing these practices. Therefore, it is important that we develop our pedagogies ground up, from the practices we see multilingual students adopting. As my dialogical pedagogy demonstrates, it is possible to work toward the development of students' translanguaging proficiency while studying from them.

Although the dialogical approach I adopted will help students question their choices, think critically about diverse options, assess the effectiveness of their choices, and develop more metacognitive awareness, there are more specific skills we can teach, deriving from the strategies we observe from students who practice translanguaging. I have identified four broad sets of strategies that can be useful to students: recontextualization strategies, voice strategies, interactional strategies, and textualization strategies. The specific strategies I list under each category are not complete. As we study multilingual writers and interview them about their practices, we will come to know other strategies that are characteristic of all multilinguals and/or unique to some groups.

In addition, teachers can also give communicative tasks in a range of contexts and genres. Students have to increase their repertoire in codemeshing. They have to learn that the extent and type of codemeshing differs according to context and genre. Different from the types of codemeshing in the earlier literacy narrative, which calls for a certain extent of personal tone, narrative flow, and dramatic flair, a more formal research article will call for more modulated codemeshing practices. As students shuttle between different genres and contexts, they will develop a keen sensitivity to the rhetorical constraints and possibilities available to them in different communicative situations.

It is also important for teachers to provide safe spaces in classrooms and schools for students to practice translanguaging. Buthainah acknowledged that the freedom provided in my class enabled her to "play" with writing and adopt creative and bold strategies of experimentation (I; 12/07). If students are thrust into high-stakes writing at every turn, they will not have the freedom to develop their translanguaging skills. Another resource that helped in my case was models of codemeshed writing by expert multilingual writers. My close analysis of Smitherman's (2003) academic essay (Canagarajah, 2006b) inspired Buthainah to try out this kind of writing (SR). There are other bilingual and postcolonial writers who can be adopted as readings. Authors like Chinua Achebe, Ken Sara-Wewo, and Derek Wolcott codemesh to varying extents. An anthology like *Rotten English*

(Ahmad, 2007) brings together many textual examples from these and other writers.

Additionally, teachers can model codemeshing for their students and scaffold students' attempts in classrooms. In this regard, my own literacy autobiography (which I gave students as an example at the beginning of the course) discusses the way I shuttle between languages (see Canagarajah, 2001). As for scaffolding, the dialogic questions I ask and suggestions I provide, in addition to the peer comments of the students, can scaffold students' practices. Teachers' engagement in codemeshing, in their speaking and writing, can both encourage students in this activity and also further develop their proficiency. Modeling and scaffolding are among the pedagogical practices effectively used by a bilingual teacher to facilitate codemeshing among his Spanish/English students in a Midwestern U.S. elementary school we observed (see Michael-Luna & Canagarajah, 2007).

As a concluding note, it is important to ask if the fact that I was friendly to codemeshing in my class limits the generalizability of this study to other pedagogical situations. However, I hold that there are no neutral pedagogical contexts. In all contexts, the values of the teachers mediate the policies of the institution. Students do identify favorable resources in the classroom ecology for codemeshing, even when the teachers do not make their position clear (as we saw in the literature reviewed in the opening section). Furthermore, despite my preferences for codemeshing, my classroom is not fully free from the dominant ideologies on writing. I myself struggle with competing ways of approaching texts, as one can see from my comments to Buthainah that are challenged by her for their limited assumptions. Like me, the students, too, had to negotiate the competing orientations to language and writing, and many chose not to codemesh, preferring to satisfy the dominant policies on writing. The lesson of this study is that students have to always identify favorable ecologies for translanguaging and negotiate competing ideologies to achieve their communicative interests (as Buthainah did in this course).

A related question is whether codemeshed writing would serve the students well in contexts outside the classroom. Are there possibilities for such writing in the academy? I consider the conventions of academic writing as not set in stone. These conventions are open to negotiation. I have written elsewhere about advanced professionals who have codemeshed in their academic journal articles as they negotiated the dominant conventions for voice (see Canagarajah, 2006b, 2006c). It is possible for students also to appropriate unfavorable conventions and policies effectively for voice, with suitable negotiation strategies. This is not a haphazard process. Students have to take the dominant conventions seriously and negotiate critically and creatively to find suitable means of translanguaging. Teachers can help in this venture by developing in students the strategies that will help them in this negotiation process.

NOTE

[1]Although there is a body of literature on learner strategies (see Cohen & Macaro, 2007, for a recent review), the constructs there are not useful for my purposes. They largely treat the individual student as the locus of these strategies and treat the mastery of a language in isolation from other languages as the focus of the learning. Because I view strategies as social, collaborative, and collective and treat translanguaging as the focus of communication, I start from the ground up in identifying these strategies.

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