APPRECIATING COLLEGE STUDENTS' HOME DISCOURSES THROUGH CODE-
MESHING: A QUALITATIVE STUDY WITH FIRST-YEAR WRITING STUDENTS AT
THE UNIVERSITY OF HOUSTON

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To Allah Almighty and then to my parents, without whose support this would never have seen the light.

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ABSTRACT

Understanding college student writers' literacies and discourses as other than a monolithic set of practices helps writing teachers become more accommodating of and invested in their learners' wide array of community discursive resources and home-grown linguistic skills. In this dissertation, I recruited 16 research participants from three of my 2019 First-Year Writing sections in order that I study their code-meshing moves in their writing for class. While a teacher research project informed by past and more recent code-meshing research, my qualitative IRB-approved study draws from the following data sets: my students' responses vis-à-vis their code-meshing experiences collected via their interview and survey responses and the code-meshing choices they made in their writing for class. The dissertation's introduction chapter provides an overview of the context of the problem of code-meshing and a literature review of language difference in Rhetoric and Composition, identifies the research gaps, and proposes the study's interventions. Chapter 2 goes through the data collection process for the surveys, interviews, and student writing gathered from student participants, addresses the dissertation's methodological framework of teacher research, and identifies the multi-data-supported thematic categories deduced from the study. Each of the dissertation's data-focused chapters, Chapters 3 through 5, begins with the collection process of the data for that chapter, offers takeaways based on analyzed data, provides student-data examples, and finally reaches a conclusion by the chapter's end. Each one of these middle chapters also identifies the thematic categories most significant to research questions based on its own data type and proposes triangulated thematic overlaps with data types in other chapters. Chapter 6, the dissertation's conclusion, provides a reminder of the lines of inquiry asked in the dissertation's introduction, answers them, and offers takeaways and implications for writing teachers, researchers, and scholars by the chapter's end. This dissertation

project reaches the conclusion that code-meshing, as a composing strategy, helps make student writing more rhetorically compelling, more intimately personal, more processually aware, more community-conscious, and more politically responsive to the struggles and concerns of college students and their communities, especially transitioning (first-year) college students. Also, it suggests that code-meshing can be one means to promote rhetorical and linguistic diversity in college writing and one buffer to guard against retarding student language and thought by exclusively adhering to entrenched apparatuses of academic prose.

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CHAPTER ONE:

Introduction: Rhetoric and Composition's Evolving Attitude toward Language Difference, Code-

Meshing Theory, and My Intervention

Increasingly, students with culturally and linguistically diverse traditions and different

modes of learning, communicating, and thinking are flooding the US college classroom. While

those students come to the college classroom for different reasons and with certain expectations,

they should not have to start afresh with a blank slate and eradicate their home (nonacademic)

linguistic and literate practices, repudiate their home-grown communicative modes, and

relinquish their own ways of making sense of their worlds and the worlds they cross paths with.

The monolingual or monoliterate tradition of the standardizing dominant culture is no longer

fitting for the large swaths of students gushing into the American college classroom with their

varied linguistic, communicative, and conceptual baggage.

In order for Rhetoric and Composition scholars and educators to more efficiently work

with students from diverse linguistic or literate backgrounds and with different modes of

learning, we should first be keen on understanding where these students come from: their modes

of learning, their modes of communication, and their language traditions and practices. Building

on their diverse literacies and multiple modes of learning and communicating, Rhetoric and

Composition scholars should accommodate the communicatively versatile backgrounds (the

modes of learning and communication) that many students come from, and they also should

welcome those new linguistically diverse traditions that students bring into the college

classroom. At the same time, Rhetoric and Composition scholars and writing teachers can still

concurrently develop those academic literacies and modes of learning the students will find

useful in their academic lives, their professional lives, and their social lives. To attain these

objectives, these teachers and scholars of writing and education should also be diligent with conducting qualitative research on their students' local ways of knowing and communicating to come up with the possibilities to allow these to be used in the writing classroom.

This dissertation project examines the code-meshing practices of FYC (first-year composition) students at the University of Houston from a teacher research standpoint informed by different methods and analytical frameworks. Since informed by qualitative methods, the study is grounded in IRB-approved surveys, interviews, and student writing and conducted as a classroom inquiry in an effort to elicit students' responses to their code-meshing experiences and practices (through interviews and surveys) and to trace their code-meshing choices in their writing (through coding and analyzing the written assignments of my study participants). The study draws flexibly from ethnographic research and social-science disciplines in its data collection and data analysis. The study aims to contribute to current Rhetoric and Composition scholarship on code-meshing in general and to the study of code-meshed student writing through a teacher-research lens more particularly by pursuing three major lines of inquiry:

1. How has code-meshing operated rhetorically in FYC student writing?

2. How favorable or unfavorable have FYC student writers' responses been vis-à-vis utilizing code-meshing in their writing assignments?

3. How has the code-meshing of FYC students' home discourses vindicated college writers' discursive identities and projected their realities?

Through my study, I explored what I have come to believe to be the best methodological practice for studying diverse discursive practices issuing from the fast-changing first-year composition student demographics. The two lines of methodological inquiry I pursued in my study were the following: Are teacher research and qualitative research methods appropriate and

effective methodologies for studying how well students can incorporate their local language practices into college writing? How well will a teacher researcher's qualitatively informed study of writing students' code-meshing practices complicate current understandings of code-meshed writing in Rhetoric and Composition and other educational research venues as a legitimating tool for enfranchising minority-discourse speakers in college classrooms?

Therefore, to answer those questions about FYC students' community language incorporation in their academic writing, I conducted my teacher research project as a classroom-based inquiry that is part classroom ethnography and that utilizes qualitative research methods. I used teacher research because of its long-standing value in bringing educational theory and practice together in the classroom (Zebroski), because of its "collaborative" spirit (Ray) between teachers, students, and researchers, and because of its deep-seated intimate connections to classroom happenings. Therefore, it is important to note that the scholarly expectation of rigor here is more relevant to teachers than it is to researchers (Ray 64).

For my data collection, I used qualitative methods, such as surveys, interviews, and student texts, in order to more proficiently understand and study patterns and instances of code-meshing in class writing. My classroom inquiry was also informed by my reflections and class notes based on my observations and experiences with the classroom activities and student behavior. Conducting interviews permitted me to establish deeper connections with my study participants and has helped me obtain fuller answers to my inquiries concerning my research participants' code-meshing experiences. Using these qualitative research methods helped me better account for my students' responses, attitudes, and reactions toward code-meshing their home or community linguistic features with those in academic English. In fact, the qualitative accounts about students' experiences with code-meshing—accounts coming from class notes, the

students themselves, and the instructor of those students—provided me with possibilities and direction on how to proceed further with crafting class assignments that more successfully accommodate all students, including those from non-US or nonmainstream cultural and linguistic backgrounds. More broadly, the experiential aspect of my teacher research project on code-meshing here aimed to acclimate writing "classroom economies" (Inoue) so the FYC classroom can become more readily equipped to receive the home "linguistic riches" (Inoue) of all writing students, including those from nondominant discursive traditions.

In fact, some of the variables I analyzed in my code-meshing participants' reactions had specific foci of rhetorical awareness, processual awareness, personal awareness, and political and community awareness. In addition to these major themes, my analysis chapters also included other points of discussion, such as the following: the duration of students' crafting of their individual code-meshing choices, the rhetorical potential of their code-meshing acts, the nature of their code-meshing experiences, their audience considerations and expectations, their rhetorical purpose or message in code-meshing, and their consciousness and roles. Based on different factors, including length and completeness of my participants' responses, these areas of participant accounts were covered with varying degrees of detail.

At the end of this teacher-research-oriented project, I offer more practical pedagogical implications on course materials, classroom activities, and assignments that are friendlier to more types of college writers, especially those student writers who hail from underrepresented, oft-under-researched student populations, offering teaching techniques that help students plumb the depths of their discursive capabilities with rhetorically meaningful consequences for the mission of the 21st century first-year composition classroom. In the sections that follow in this chapter, I first give a short overview of the fast-changing tradition of rhetoric and then contextualize my

study in the long tradition of building on students' home language varieties, a tradition that has led to code-meshing. Next, I explain the problem of the dearth of empirical research for code-meshing first-year composition students and situate my study in relation to more relevant code-meshing scholarship. I then present my proposed interventions to the qualitative code-meshing conversation. Finally, I close with a dissertation chapter breakdown.

The Developing Understanding of the Tradition of Rhetoric:

Since its official initial conception, rhetoricians and philosophers have debated the nature of rhetoric and experimented with its province. In the *Gorgias*, Socrates divides rhetoric in two types: flattery and that which is admirable or saying what is best. However, in order to use rhetoric for good, philosophy would have to guide it; in other words, rhetoric alone isn't inherently good, but a skill—not an art like philosophy—based on the experience of swaying an audience. Rhetoric had to do more with style than content. In *Rhetoric*, Aristotle extends rhetoric by making it the counterpart of dialectic. While dialectic is concerned with more general inquiries—e.g., the pursuit of truth—rhetoric aims at "the popular" in terms of what is accepted by the audience, aiming for persuasion. Since Aristotle's conception of truth was different from Plato's, Aristotle believed there were many forms of knowledge and truth beyond Plato's "absolute truth," and thus, rhetoric was one way to pursue knowledge of general principles, much like dialectic. Broadening the province of rhetoric wider than Plato's, Aristotle came up with three modes of persuasion—ethos, pathos, and logos—with three functions—political (deliberative), forensic, and ceremonial (epideictic).

More recently, and closer to home, James Berlin, Albert Kitzhaber, and Robert Connors spoke of rhetoric in American colleges as rhetorical instruction that took different forms and modes in the 19th and first two thirds of the 20th centuries. Kitzhaber, being the first of the three

to address the forms rhetoric took in the latter half of the 19th century (1850-1900), was hailed as one of the early founders of the "new rhetoric" and called for its addition to the triad of "New Grammar" and "New Criticism" (Berlin 126). Kitzhaber studied how rhetoric in American colleges evolved and broke away from its British ancestry and explained the significance of this new independent rhetoric and its implications for American students and teachers of writing. James Berlin picked up where Kitzhaber left off and addressed the different figurations that rhetoric took in American colleges from 1900-1985.

Berlin divided rhetoric based on its epistemological differences: objective rhetoric, subjective rhetoric, and transactional rhetoric. Also, Robert Connors argued that the changes that rhetoric went through—including exiting the 19th century as composition—from the late 19th century until past the first half of the 20th century were driven by social and pedagogical needs (7). Connors, in "Gender Influences," documents the various shifts and turns that rhetoric underwent in the late 19th century: 1.) "agonistic" to "irenic" 2.) oral to writing as classroom focus 3.) from argument to exposition 4.) decline of abstract in favor of personal (44). According to Connors, starting as early as 1870, rhetoric became written composition (60), and oral rhetoric got pushed to the side of the new province of rhetoric (52). Connors' analysis also covered the pedagogical aspect of written rhetoric more so than his two previous predecessors, contending that writing pedagogy had become an increasingly inseparable part of rhetoric all the way coming into the latter half of the 20th century.

A Brief Historical Overview of the Conceptions of Language Difference in Rhetoric and Composition in the Twentieth Century:

Scholars in Rhetoric and Composition and education have been mindful of the potential of students' home language practices or dialects since the dawn of modern rhetoric in the early

20th century. In "The Standard of American Speech" in 1917, Fred Newton Scott contended that allowing difference in one's language did not necessarily get in the way of delivering communicable speech (qtd. in Berlin 48). In 1922, Scott in "English Composition as a Mode of Behavior" argued for allowing the use of students' dialects as a democratic move on the writing teachers' part to help students get more comfortable with general language use. Scott noted that teachers' insistence on the use of standard English and the mechanical "correctness" of students' writing jeopardizes students' chances of making themselves better understood by only using the standard school dialect. According to James Berlin, Scott argued that "tak[ing] away a student's language is to deny her experience, forcing her to talk and write about what she does not know" (Berlin 48). Commenting on Scott's two articles, Berlin maintains that to "deny the validity of a person's dialect is to deny the reality of that person's experience" (48). In other words, for college writers to have meaningful composing experiences, some degree of projecting their personalities and realities in their writing had to be allowed in the college classroom.

Starting in the 1960-70s, education and literacy scholar Paulo Freire called for the respect of students' realities, experiences, and local discourses as a way to understand their world and then transform it. Freire encouraged teachers to get a feel for their students' learning needs by visiting their communities and studying their community ways before they start teaching them. One of the ways Freire recommended for teachers to have "communion" with their students was to use the latter's community traditions and community discourses to engage the students more efficiently into the literacy experience that an educator is assigned to. Using themes and conversations coming from students based on their local language habits and codes was one way to engage with the students discursively and one way to show respect for students' communities. Freirean generative themes were deeply ingrained in subjects familiar to the learners, which Ira

Shor attests to in his *When Students Have Power*.[1] This familiarity of subject should be first and foremost rooted discursively, namely based on students' language codes and community discursive experiences, as in using one word the community of learners can easily relate to in order to start a conversation in the literacy classroom.

Rhetoric and Composition's official advocacy for a paradigm shift in accepting college students' local language practice in the writing classroom was first proclaimed in the Conference on College Composition and Communication's (CCCC) 1974 resolution "Students' Right to Their Own Language," usually referred to as SRTOL. The resolution was mostly concerned with defending students' rights to make use of the different linguistic varieties their form of English was comprised of. The statement mainly tackled the issue of respecting and defending students' language habits and communicative ways. The statement also affirmed the respect of both the multiplicity of students' linguistic differences and the variety of students' communication modes:

> By building on what students are already doing well as part of their successes in daily living, we can offer them dialect options which will increase rather than diminish their self-esteem, and by focusing on the multiple aspects of [their] communication process, we can be sure we are dealing with the totality of language, not merely with the superficial features of "polite usage." (12)

This was one of the earliest attempts—if not the earliest official stab at the subject—that writing educators and communication scholars have made toward tolerating and defending different modes of learning and various linguistic habits and practices that students from diverse

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[1] Generative themes or generative words, according to Freire, are those that a community feels strongly about and connected to. These words or themes start with personal writing or conversations that lead students to changing their conditions or effecting new ones.

backgrounds brought into the writing classroom. Although issued about 45 years ago, the recommendations for respecting language difference in the college classroom have since been taken mostly in part, rarely in full, in varying degrees of implementation and success (Shor; Elbow; Canagarajah; Horner; Lu; Young; Young and Martinez; Young, Barrett, Young-Rivera, and Lovejoy).

Describing and reflecting upon his teaching experiences with his community college students, American critical pedagogy pioneer Ira Shor in *Critical Teaching and Everyday Life* (1980) provides details of the different exercises he engaged his writing students in in order to enhance their language and thinking skills. In some of these exercises, Shor makes use of his students' "native idiom" by asking them to transcribe each other's natural discourse. To Shor, putting students' native discourse on paper helps "validate their native speech," shows it more "respectful care," and confirms it to be "a far richer source" for those students than ever anticipated (131). In his other course on "Utopia," Shor designed other language and logic exercises to help his students enhance their critical thinking. With their focus on students' reality and experiences, these exercises helped put students' discourse and thinking into relief in the writing class while relegating the teacher profile into the background (156-57), a process Shor calls "the withering away of the teacher" (102). In an effort to present authentic language with authentic voices, Shor developed "the style grid," a grid that aimed to exercise language skills for the creation of authentic characters (253). The grid asks of students to list the different formal, informal, and slang words for one item, allowing learners to work with different registers of English and helping them decide with a one-word option to use with the character proposed for the exercise to render it as authentic as possible. In his later book, *When Students Have*

Power, addressing democratic education, Shor again reminds us that students should not be expected to "respond in the academic idiom of teachers" (78).

Also, one of those early literacy pioneers that paid distinct attention to both learners' special modes of communication and their local patterns of language use was Shirley Brice Heath in *Ways with Words: Language, Life and Work in Communities and Classrooms* (1983). Heath talks about the "communicative patterns" (3) of the Piedmont Carolinas' children that had gone unnoticed and/or un(der)appreciated. Heath challenges the idea that all language development is universal for all children and concludes that the younger community members in Roadville and Trackton "came to have different ways of communicating" (11) than those expected in school. Throughout the book, Heath argues for the value of bringing children's modes of learning and language practices into the classroom; however, she does not explicitly argue for the incorporation of their distinctive linguistic features into their school settings or compositions.

At the beginning of the book, Heath is more concerned with the disconnect between the modes of learning and teaching at home and those at school. In other words, Roadville and Trackton teachers did not entertain the schoolchildren's ways of learning or thinking about the world but projected their own and the school's; for example, Heath recounts that teachers "do not follow the story-telling norms of Roadville community, but instead they begin rehearsing the preschools for the book-reading and story-telling experiences of the school" (161). Heath further argues that "neither community's ways with the written word prepares it for the schools' ways" (235); that is, neither community in Roadville or Trackton prepared children for the written word, the literate tradition of the dominant culture. Heath's implied argument may be that because of their disadvantaged linguistic practices, those students from Roadville and

Trackton—linguistically different from the mainstream children in school—had more hurdles to jump over in order to be marked as successful members of the school system. However, toward the end of the book, Heath talks about some teachers' successful attempts to promote and embed their Trackton and Roadville students' patterns and modes of communication in their own classes; more specifically, those teachers that came to study their students' communities ethnographically came to appreciate, "understand," and "bring these ways [of their students'] into the classroom" (11).

The many advances and alterations of rhetoric and the continual evolution of new rhetorical modes and purposes have recently made more Rhetoric and Composition scholars ever more hopeful of further (re-)conceptualizing more elastic forms and modes of rhetorical research and rhetorical instruction, awakening its dormant capabilities. For example, the province of rhetorical studies and rhetorical instruction has been reimagined to incorporate forms and modes of knowledge and teaching not traditionally thought of as part of rhetoric: critical pedagogy, literacy research, and community writing in writing studies and in Rhetoric and Composition research are but a few examples to showcase the multimodality that the field of rhetoric has assumed in the recent decades. These abovementioned modes of rhetorical research and Composition Studies have recently been orbiting what has now been dubbed the "Global Turn" (Canagarajah; Young; Horner et al.; Bou Ayash; Guerra; Jordan; Lee; Lu; Matsuda; and so on). One of the most current configurations of rhetorical instruction has had to do with the practice of promoting academic composition to be injected with college student writers' local ways and modes of composing, namely through code-meshing, as opposed to more implicit translingual moves.

In fact, it is important to note here that the two terms, *code-meshing* and *translingualism*, have been hotly contested in contemporary scholarship on the subject and have been seen in different ways. Most recently, Brooke R. Schreiber and Missy Watson in their 2018 "Translingualism ≠ Code-Meshing: A Response to Gevers' 'Translingualism Revisited'" warn against the conflating of the two, citing Jeroen Gevers' caveat against engaging translingualism uncritically. Schreiber and Watson differentiate between translingualism and the practice of code-meshing, where they contend that while code-meshing is the rhetorical choice of embedding visible language differences in one's writing, translingualism is much broader and a more critical adoption of students' translingual literacies. With that in mind, my project here only deals with visible or explicit examples of my participants' code-meshing as opposed to more implicit translingual moves student writers can make in their academic writing.

Most Prominent Code-Meshing Conceptions in the 21st Century:

More recently in his 2006 "The Place of World Englishes in Composition: Pluralization Continued," Suresh Canagarajah made the argument that code-meshing has been around in academic writing longer than originally imagined. Canagarajah cites Geneva Smitherman's infusion of African-American Vernacular English (AAVE) in academic writing as one of the first attempts to code-mesh in academic writing in her "Soul n' Style" in 1974. Although Smitherman had used AAVE in almost all of her own academic writing, she never provided a clear pedagogy on how to incorporate AAVE or another dialect or language into the writing classroom.[2] By contrast, Canagarajah explicitly calls for the hybrid use of conventionally

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[2] According to Canagarajah ("The Place"), Smitherman used AAVE in the following works: "Soul n' Style" in 1974, *Talkin and Testifyin: The Language of Black America* in 1990, "'Dat Teacher Be Hollin at Us'—What Is Ebonics?" in 1998, "Role in the Struggle for Language Rights" in 1999, and "The Historical Struggle for Language Rights in *CCCC*" in 2003.

nonnative varieties of English into the writing class (See "The Place"). In fact, Canagarajah proposes a model of code-meshing where multilingual codes are not less prioritized than standard codes in academic writing and where students can apply their minority and native codes in their academic writing in "rhetorically strategic ways" (598). Canagarajah defines code-meshing in academic writing as the "shuttl[ing] between [one's speech] communit[y]" and "the dominant varieties of English." Canagarajah challenges writing instructors to think beyond local Englishes to include non-traditional and/or international varieties of English or "World Englishes" ("The Place" 598).

In 2011, Bruce Horner, Min-Zhan Lu, Jacqueline Jones Royster, and John Trimbur in their "Language Difference in Writing: Toward a Translingual Approach" explain that SRTOL's response to language differences should not only be seen in terms of rights but also in terms of students' local and community language practices being "resources" (304). Horner et al.'s approach to recognizing local language practices in the classroom is warmer and more comprehensive than originally intended by the resolution, whose statement only implied tolerating local language practices coming from varieties of American English. Horner et al. emphasize the use of one's local linguistic variances as a "resource" to help with communicating more "expressively, rhetorically, and communicatively" (303); for them, it's a medium for producing meaning in the four main language skills, "writing, speaking, reading, and listening," and not just writing or reading (303).

Similarly to STROL's initial statement, the translingual approach forwarded by Horner et al. acknowledges the logicality of all local varieties of English and the rights of all speakers of English to produce text in their own community variety of English. However, Horner et al.'s translingual approach extends the SRTOL argument by contending that those differences in

"language varieties are fluid" (304). Therefore, Horner et al. argue that this understanding of their translingual approach should engender "patience," garner "respect" for writers' local differences of language use, inspire "an attitude of deliberative inquiry," and call for questioning linguistic "practices that appear to conform to dominant standards" (304). The translingual approach proposed by Horner et al. argues against the use of standard language practices simply for the sake of linguistic conformity; it aims at including as many local voices and community perspectives as possible currently at odds with those of the people in power (305). Likewise, reviewing the STROL resolution, Canagarajah, too, uncovers two dilemmas with the SRTOL statement, similar to those identified earlier: 1.) the statement seems to be one of "tolerance" rather than "promotion" 2.) the implied "variants" referred to are mainly AAVE and Chicano English ("The Place of World Englishes" 596).

Taking a more transdialectal approach to code-meshing—in comparison with Canagarajah's more translingual approach to the practice—Young's code-meshing practices and research are mostly concerned with the use of code-meshing with AAVE (African-American vernacular English) in academic texts. In 2014, Young et al. in *Other People's English: Code-Meshing, Code-Switching, and African American Literacy* provide an operational pedagogy for code-meshing and infusing another dialect of English, African-American Vernacular English (AAVE), with Standard Written English (SWE).[3] Young contends that "writing in a form other than code-meshing creates artificiality which might explain why some teachers can't get some of their [nonstandard-English-speaking] students to write lucid, vivid academic prose in the same way those teachers observe those same students communicating with each other" (Young 6). In

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[3] Young et al. have provided in their book so many examples of people engaged in code-meshing: politicians, scholars, schoolchildren, and others. They have offered teaching tips and exercises for students and teachers.

Other People's English, Young, again, argues for code-meshing to replace code-switching, which he believes, while coming from "well-intentioned educators," is a form of "legalized racial segregation" (9).[4] This may suggest that while those "well-intentioned educators" continue to hold up their "Academic English Only" signs—which they will readily argue are only paraded for the sake for pragmatic reasons—they are heedless of their complicity in sidelining their first-year composition students' home discourses and have increasingly grown unsuspecting of their collusion in suppressing their student writers' freedoms of rhetorical expression.

The SRTOL and its advocates were not without their naysayers. Some Rhetoric and Composition scholars thought allowing students' home discourses in academic writing was nothing but a move to strip nonmainstream students of the means of success and privilege in life through discouraging them from fully embracing standard English. Jeff Zorn thought that SRTOL's "liberatory" claims were no more than a means to enhance "underachievement and provincialism to the students it purported to serve" (311-312). Likewise, Erec Smith thought there was no need for students to learn to code-mesh, as they already know how to code-mesh (34). Smith argues that promoting language difference in academic writing ends up being more about the teacher than about the student code-meshing; using this pedagogical strategy gives the teacher a sense of "empowerment" when the student "complies" with the teacher's code-meshing requirement or recommendation (45). In other words, to some Rhetoric and Composition

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[4] In 1996, Rebecca Moore Howard notes her "discomfort" (266) with the linguistic pedagogy of code-switching in her "The Great Wall of African American Vernacular English in the American College Classroom" as a method for dealing with language varieties in the classroom. She explains that code-switching is nothing more than "covert eradicationism" (267), which practice confirms the use of standard language in school to the exclusion of the students' "non-standard home code" (265). Instead, she advocates for the use of "pluralism" (267) in the context of teaching African-American Vernacular English in the classroom. However, she reported that she did not have much success using this method in her classes. She explained that almost all of her students, African Americans, European Americans, and others who had initially been excited about the idea of using African American Vernacular English in class, ended up retreating into using standard English and claimed that they were not ready or willing to engage in the dialect at this point.

scholars, code-meshing may be just another disenfranchising move, though possibly unintentional, to keep underprivileged student writers from acquiring the codes to "the culture of power" (Delpit) and at best a redundant teacherly stunt with no real material pedagogical value.

Despite the negativity and critiques most of the theories of translanguaging and code-meshing have encountered (e.g., in Berthoff 1975; Pennell 2005; Zorn 2010; Smith 2019), there are still a few cases—although they don't deal with FYC contexts—where theories of translanguaging and code-meshing were intertwined with actual classroom practice and empirical research, which theories helped revolutionized the practice of promoting language difference in college writing—or subsequently led to classroom and institutional change as regards celebrating language difference in academic writing. What follows are some practical examples of functional pedagogies that have been well-established in translanguaging and code-meshing theory.

Peter Elbow's Concept of "Code-Meshing":

Peter Elbow was one of few Rhetoric and Composition scholars who translated their concern for minority students' uneven enfranchisement in the writing class into classroom action. In "Vernacular Englishes in the Writing Classroom," Elbow devised an approach for accommodating language differences in his writing classroom whereby he allowed his minority students to use their own linguistic varieties during the drafting stages of the writing process; however, he also taught them to edit these differences out for the final drafts for his class writing assignments (126). While Canagarajah acknowledges that Elbow's approach is "pragmatic" for its sensitivity to the differing perspectives surrounding the issue of tolerating language difference in college classrooms, he thinks that Elbow's well-intentioned process may eventually lose out in

the end when students are made to purge the emotional and personal "engagement" they had already invested their writing with in their earlier drafts (597).

A. Suresh Canagarajah's Concept of Code-Meshing:

Suresh Canagarajah extends Peter Elbow's approach further than allowing nonstandard codes only in the drafts of students' writing. For Canagarajah, unless language users feel a personal connection to their writing, their writing may not have as much meaning to them; they would just be "mimic[king]" someone else's language and not using their own (597). This personal engagement (597) that student writers develop in code-meshing their writing assignments with their own linguistic codes should not be compromised during any stage of the writing process, as in editing out the students' distinctive linguistic choices that came with them from their homes or their local communities. In fact, editing out those codes that are specific to the students' local variety of the language may result in the students' losing the connection they have been developing through the writing assignment and in the students' forfeiting any interest or value they have already assigned to the writing.

In fact, Canagarajah is one of the few Rhetoric and Composition scholars who has advocated for translingual writing and the use of different languages in the English-language text in composition classes and provided tangible strategies for writing instructors to avail themselves of. Canagarajah has called for the mixing of both kinds of linguistic codes in academic writing: unofficial local language codes and official Standard English codes ("The Place of World Englishes" 598). This recommended strategy Canagarajah calls "code-meshing" or "translanguaging", namely "merging the [different linguistic] codes" (598), all in the same text.

Tracing the genealogy of the practice, Canagarajah notes that code-meshing is an old practice that was used for different strategic purposes. As far back as classical rhetoric, code-meshing was used by upper classes by inserting words from Greek or Latin into their speech without translation. Code-meshing is not new to academic or creative writing, either. Canagarajah contends that bell hooks and Geneva Smitherman used code-meshing in their academic writing while not referring to it as such (598). It is also noteworthy that code-meshing was not just using nonstandard English forms of literacy (dialectal or from other languages) for the mere sake of asserting one's "elite" or intellectual superiority, as in throwing in words of other languages into one's conversation or text (598); rather, code-meshing was used as a stylistic choice and a rhetorical move with a purpose: to educate on a misrepresented issue, to affirm affiliation or membership, to commiserate on a common cause, to solicit proactive responses, to advocate for equity, or to call out iniquities, just to name a few.

In his 2011 "Codemeshing in Academic Writing: Identifying Teachable Strategies of Translanguaging," Canagarajah identifies four types of translanguaging strategies in the literacy narrative of his graduate Saudi student's writing strategies: "recontextualization strategies, voice strategies, interactional strategies, and textualization" (401).[5] He argues that these translanguaging strategies are employed rhetorically by the writer based on four major factors: "contextual, personal, social, and textual" (404). Canagarajah maintains that Buthainah, the subject of his study, was especially mindful of her audience's needs and "capabilities," and the more drafts she went through, the more successfully she applied translanguaging and the more accommodating she was of audience considerations (404). Buthainah's writing samples

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[5] Canagarajah uses the same student and others in a later 2013 article, "Negotiating Translingual Literacy: An Enactment."

showcase code-meshing in a student writer's multiple drafts. For example, as a rhetorical choice, Buthainah starts with the English translation of a verse in the Qur'an, and toward the end of that part of her text, she provides the original Arabic (404). Buthainah's use of Arabic text here isn't random; rather, she rhetorically incorporates this verse into her English text because of the associations the Qur'an and the Arabic language have had on her character and cultural makeup growing up.

V. A. Young's Concept of Code-Meshing:

While some African-American scholars have made great strides in incorporating AAVE in their own writing and called for the use of code-switching as a way to validate Black English (bell hooks *Talking Back: Thinking Feminist, Thinking Black*, 1988; and Geneva Smitherman "The Historical Struggle for Language Rights in *CCC*," 2003), others, like Vershawn Ashanti Young (2004; 2007; 2010; Young and Martinez 2011; and Young et al. 2014), have argued against code-switching in favor of code-meshing. In fact, Young was *the* first Rhetoric and Composition scholar to coin and theorize the term "code-meshing" in his 2004 article "Your Average Nigga." For Young, in addition to ascribing to the dominant language ideology, switching to standard English would make students feel as if "their language and identities are not welcome in school" (704). In the article, Young grew quite critical of Lisa Delpit's code-switching pedagogy that capitalized on the importance of giving students access to the "codes of power" (704). In commenting on Delpit's class exercise where students assumed the character of a popular newscaster in order to learn "the codes of power," Young argued that Delpit, like "other powerless teachers," was simply playing right into the dominant ideology of privileging Standard English (705).

For Young, code-switching has been an enabling strategy by the mainstream apparatus of dominant culture to further disenfranchise nonconforming groups. Young contends that code-switching "gives teachers permission to fail students who display linguistic difference in their speech and writing. It gives employers permission to place limitations on workers' promotional opportunities or permits them not to hire diverse speakers … certainly not for important positions. And it sanctions accent discrimination and pronunciation prejudice" ("Nah, We Straight" 64). As a contrastive alternative to code-switching, Young defines code-meshing as "the blending and concurrent use of American English dialects [Standard English with other English varieties] in formal, discursive products, such as political speeches, student papers, and media interviews" ("Nah, We Straight" 51). In other words, to be effective, code-meshing calls for the merger of different codes in the same piece of writing, namely meshing codes from Standard English with those from another variety of English all in the same thought or half-thought (at the sentential level, at the clausal level, and even at the phrasal level).

Because of the continuous misunderstanding surrounding the practice of code-switching, in 2010, Young comes back to re-propose using code-meshing in place of code-switching in his article "Should Writers Use They Own English?" Young's article was mainly a response to Stanley Fish's *NYT* piece, "What Should Colleges Teach?" where Fish had asked writing instructors to disregard the CCCC resolution statement about SRTOL and only teach the language that helps people "get ahead in the world" ("Part 3"). Young here defines code-meshing as "the new code switching; it's multidialectalism and pluralinguilism in one speech act" (114). About the possibilities for which code-meshing is used, Young adds: "Code-meshing what we all do whenever we communicate—writin, speakin, whateva. Code-meshing blend dialects, international languages, local idioms, chat-room lingo, and the rhetorical styles of

various ethnic and cultural groups in both formal and informal speech acts … Code-meshing also be used to add flavor and style" (114). This final part of the quotation also suggests that Young is arguing that while code-meshing is a means to boost one's facility in communicative acts, it is also meant to promote college students' home discourse community styles, blend their styles with the styles of academic discourse, and potentially expand their repertoire of "stylistic options," which may eventually help lead to "a real renaissance of stylistic discovery" (Butler 84) for transdialectal students in the FYC classroom.

In their 2011 *Code-Meshing as World English*, Young and A. Y. Martinez put together a collection of essays on code-meshing different styles and diverse languages codes of English as practiced and argued by the different literacy instructors and professionals in the collection. To Young, Martinez, and other contributors to the collection, code-meshing should be an accepted method of communicative practice by business professionals and a legitimate pedagogical practice by English teachers and teachers of writing when either group encounters a nonmainstream form of English. To the two editors, the goal of this collection is to "promote the linguistic democracy of English and to increase the acquisition and egalitarian, effective use of English in school, government, in public, and at home" (xx). In other words, college classes should offer one of the early discursive venues for modeling any democratic negotiation of language and rhetorical choices. More specifically, writing classes should offer the initiatory equalizing grounds for any type of "egalitarian" rhetorical circulation, which Young and Martinez may very well be referring to.

In 2014, Young in *Other People's English: Code-Meshing, Code-Switching, and African American Literacy* lays out useful teaching advice for code-meshing African-American Vernacular English (AAVE) with Standard Written English (SWE). The following is an example

of code-meshing employed by Geneva Smitherman, whom Young cites in the book as a scholar

utilizing code-meshing in academic prose: "Tellin kids they lingo is cool but it ain cool enough

for where it really counts (i.e. the economic world) is just like tellin them it ain cool enough at all

… [ellipsis in original] See, we all time talkin bout preparing people for the main stream but

never talkin bout changin the course of that stream" (qtd. in Young et al. 61). Furthermore,

Young argues that code-meshing has long been used by politicians as a rhetorically strategic

practice. For instance, Young cites the example of Iowa Senator Chuck Grassley's tweets to

former President Barak Obama as a text code-meshed with "common txtng abbrvs., standard

English Grammar, and a African-American rhetorical technique" ("Should Writers" 114):

> First Tweet: "Pres Obama you got nerve while u sightseeing in Paris to tell us 'time to
>
> deliver' on healthcare. We still on skedul/even working WKEND."
>
> Second Tweet: "Pres Obama while u sightseeing in Paris u said 'time to deliver on
>
> healthcare' When you are a hammer u think evrything is NAIL I'm no NAIL." (qtd. in
>
> *Other People's English* 76 and in "Should Writers" 114)

While Young's and Canagarajah's accounts of code-meshing were the conceptions of

code-meshing most influential to many teacher researchers interested in code-meshing, there

were other more contemporary scholars who studied code-meshing with their students in

different contexts. Melissa Lee documented her pedagogical shift to a more translingual

pedagogy and recorded her students' self-perceptions in her 2014 "Shifting to the World

Englishes Paradigm by Way of the Translingual Approach: Code-Meshing as a Necessary Means

of Transforming Composition Pedagogy." Vanessa K. Sohan's 2014 article addressed her

translingual "relocalized listening" approach toward her students' "code-meshed" response texts

to Gloria Anzaldúa's "How to Tame a Wild Tongue." Both argue for the importance of

appreciating students' recently discovered or exercised translingual capabilities regardless of how untraditional or implicit.

In the last couple of years, more studies were conducted on code-meshing in the writing classroom, including with undergraduate college students. Jamey Gallagher's 2019 "There's Levels to This: Code-Meshing in a Community College Classroom" described his study of three of his FYC students' code-meshed writing in a community college. Gallagher argued that code-meshing offered his students a means to address language prejudice in a more "politically meaningful way." Madhav Kafle's 2020 interview study of 14 undergraduate international students in an ESL class concluded that his multilingual students weren't in favor of "code-mixing" because they were afraid to be perceived as "deviant," their code-meshed writing as problematic to academic prose, and wary of identity crises. Nancy Bou Ayash's 2020 study of two students (one international and one domestic) concluded that critical translation was one means to highlight writing students' translingual literacies. In "'Now I Don't Use It at All . . . It's Gone'" of 2020, Lisa Arnold measured Canagarajah's four translanguaging strategies with 21 undergraduate Lebanese students through their interview responses and found that her interviewees' use and favorability of these translingual strategies were affected by their perceptions of how language worked. While the studies above and others more offered insight on students' views concerning the practice of code-meshing, they either were too context-bound to accommodate FYC students' attitudes toward the practice or were too limited in their data types to cross-reference their students' reactions vis-à-vis code-meshing with other sources.

The Problem of Empirical Data's Scarcity in Code-Meshing Research:

Many scholars in Rhetoric and Composition have addressed the SRTOL document and advocated for relevant changes in pedagogy and the writing classroom. However, most of these calls were criticized for not being proactive enough or for only being mere theorizing, since most such calls were not accompanied with sufficient tangible, qualitative measures in educational institutions as well as in the writing classroom. According to Scott Wible, although the call for translingual writing has been around among Rhetoric and Composition scholars for a while, "the most consistently reached conclusion among compositionists is that the students' right to their own language is a theory that rarely, if ever, has materialized in the writing classroom" (443). In other words, earlier theories of code-meshing and translanguaging were not grounded in material consequences for student writers and rarely had any substantial pedagogical implications. Further, Brian Ray in his "Toward a Translingual Composition: Ancient Rhetorics and Language Difference" refers to:

> Students' Right document's largely acknowledged failure as indicative of how approaches to language difference have always struggled to gain momentum in rhetoric and composition—precisely because they never venture beyond the "high-minded" principles that Berthoff has described as ineffectual and because they often use theory to justify language difference in student writing rather than to elaborate and explain ways to enact that difference in institutional settings. (22)

In other words, despite the recent efforts to study code-meshing with college students as aforementioned in the previous section, the discipline is still too far from having turned enough of these theories about translingual and transdialectal writing into real composing situations for FYC student writers or collected diverse enough data to better validate the conclusions coming from these studies. For my part, I hope that this dissertation project, which I grounded in code-

meshing theory and practice and informed by my capacity as a teacher researcher, will help close the gap between the conceptual domain of pedagogies and theories of code-meshing and the concrete needs of the 21st century first-year writing classroom. Given my methodological predilection to utilizing teacher research as a real-world pedagogical and research practice for more authentically documenting the classroom experiences of writing situations and student writing, I was able to bring to the fore from several code-meshing classroom sites a multi-data pool (i.e., a pool with a greater number of students, assignments, and classes under study). Also, I was more explicit in my research analysis about identifying more specifically particular skills that code-meshing taught its student practitioners through coding and analyzing the most common themes in students' accounts of their code-meshing experiences. The triangulation of my themes through the different types of data I used was an additional safeguard employed for crosschecking the validity of my findings throughout my data analyses.

Another aspect in code-meshing scholarship which has not been covered adequately (if at all) is the value that FYC students themselves assign to their own code-meshing attempts. This point of code-meshing's student-given value seems to be missing in code-meshing research. Foregrounding FYC students' voices in this dissertation with regard to their code-meshing experiences is of particular interest to me for two reasons: 1.) my methodological commitment to teacher research behooves me to share class governance with my students and thus take their feedback (in the form of surveys and interviews) into serious pedagogical consideration 2.) my vested interest in FYC students' rhetorical proficiency compels me to figure out how discerning said students are of the value of the code-meshing activities they're asked to partake in. That said, there are two aspects of qualitative data I feel have not been sufficiently addressed in recent code-meshing scholarship: a wide enough pool of FYC student writing from several assignments

and several classroom sites *and* the privileging of FYC-student-given values assigned to code-meshing captured through interviews and surveys

My Code-Meshing Intervention:

Although the above scholars proposed different theories and pedagogical practices on code-meshing for writing classes, many of their studies were approached from a second language writing standpoint with international students or non-native speakers of English being at the forefront. For this reason, I believe that there is still room for more empirical code-meshing investigation involving domestic students in their first years in college who *are* primarily native speakers of English, specifically first-year composition students. The filling of this gap with empirical code-meshing research, especially for FYC students, is projected to make sure to tap the multi-rhetorical potentials of more student writer groups in college, previously underrepresented in this emerging field of code-meshing. Also, the addition of this multi-data-driven research to previous strands of research on code-meshing can confidently help even out the learning grounds for our FYC constituency.

In the tradition of contemporary teacher-research projects, my dissertation is firmly grounded in the lived discursive experiences and animated language decisions of my FYC students' code-meshing choices, experiences, and accounts over the course of several major assignments for the entirety of one academic semester. As a teacher researcher, I chose to privilege and foreground my FYC study participants' qualitative responses and accounts of their code-meshing experiences over my and other scholars' theoretical debates or musings of code-meshing. Also, by contrast to most previous empirical studies on code-meshing, rather than focusing on one or a few student participants in one class or semester with one or two data sets, the scope of my study traverses the experiences of a larger sample of first-year writing students

who come from different majors, different semesters, and different levels of writing knowledge

with a wider range of students' professional, occupational, and cultural backgrounds.[6] Having a

wider pool of research participants from FYC classes whose voices are as appreciated as the

scholarly voices in the code-meshing conversation was something that I, as a teacher researcher,

felt other rhet/comp scholars might have undervalued or not yet consciously identified as a point

worthy of semi-longitudinal investigation.

Eliciting responses from students from different class, gender, and cultural backgrounds

ensures that we as code-meshing researchers get a more representative impression for how larger

swaths of collegegoers feel toward this novel composing practice in FYC. In fact, the UH college

classroom has been a convivial home to learners that belong to various cultural, religious,

occupational, and socioeconomic affiliations with various ideological, political, and moral

persuasions. Consequently, this vibrant kaleidoscopic diversity has helped make my UH FYC

classroom sites a most apt environment for testing out and vindicating this rhetorical technique.

Additionally, utilizing teacher research and qualitative methods in my study helped me to allow

the readers of my research to hear directly from my research participants from within their

classroom communities. Also, through this more direct interaction with the research sites'

participants, I tried to reduce the possibility of imposed interpretations or misrepresented

narratives.

Since FYC is a core college course sequence meant to introduce beginning college

students to rhetorical and communication skills needed for their academic and professional

advancement, it should also be the space to smoothly transition them, especially those from

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[6] I'll explain these aspects of my students' diversity in upcoming chapters.

nonmainstream backgrounds, from their former, locally cherished, modes of understanding their former realities—including their local language use—into the academic environment and academic discourse. However, many of those who had been heretofore un(der)privileged and un(der)served in their former educational settings may, at least initially, suffer a cultural shock upon entering college and encountering academic discourse.[7] This new-to-college cultural shock may trigger the onset of a slew of some larger issues, such as experiencing identity crises, undergoing other-inflicted self-loathing, or falling victim to peer-pressure and hazing, just to name a few critical issues that may have lasting impact on some student populations. The writing classroom may unwittingly contribute to nondominant students' sense of underachievement and devolving self-worth by its zealous focus on fixed writing conventions and a unified academic discourse, to the exclusion and sometimes to the stultification of students' home discourses, home-grown discursive habits, and traditional conventions of learning and thinking. Code-meshing as a student-discourse-centric technique should help ease rising student writers into the college class, and more particularly the writing classroom and academic discourse.

Framing the study primarily around data sets can help keep the focus of my research on the sources of my study: my participants' code-meshing experiences and reactions. The emphasis on their contributions (their survey responses, their interview answers, and their self-composed code-meshed texts) for outlining my study can also give them agency as co-researchers, an important concept to me as a teacher researcher. In fact, drawing on more than data set for investigating my participants' experiences with code-meshing helped me cross-reference my interpretations and prioritize one over another. Having different iterations of the same data set for the same participant also helped me fact-check their code-meshing moves, reactions, and

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[7] Please refer to Mina Shaughnessy's and Mike Rose's analyses for more.

experiences in more than one way, adding a triangulation potential to my study.[8] Toward the end of each of my data-focused chapters, I provided a section on that showcased how my data sets spoke to each other on the same theme.

Building off of the above-mentioned theoretical traditions and pedagogies of code-meshing offered, especially by both V. A. Young and S. Canagarajah, in 2019, I studied the code-meshing practices and experiences of writing students in three of my FYC classes at UH. More specifically, I closely examined my students' reactions and responses to their code-meshing experiences *and* carefully analyzed the code-meshing choices they made in their essay writing for their classes. While my dissertation here does not cover or cite all recent studies and research conducted on code-meshing, it critically suggests possible additions to Canagarajah's and Young's code-meshing's implications for FYC and primarily extends their theories of code-meshing into areas of empirical research that have not yet been charted at length before.

As explained above, my focus on Canagarajah and Young is because both scholars have been the most vocal proponents for and major contributors to the development of the concept of code-meshing. However, writing teachers interested in both code-meshed writing *and* FYC may find problematic that most of code-meshing scholars' research—including Canagarajah's and Young's—have yet to cover bigger samples of student writing, have yet to identify additional relevant thematic categories for code-meshing students in FYC, or have yet to include more extensive, lengthier discussions of students' reactions and responses to their own code-meshing attempts. The limited nature of my predecessors' research and data makes their scholarly findings more idiosyncratic than characteristic or representative of most of college writers'

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[8] Most of the attempts made after my classes to get in touch with the participants about the study were unsuccessful.

experiences with code-meshing, especially for first-year writing students and instructors. While my sample isn't large enough to be representative of all college students, it offers a greater and more varied range of writing students' experiences and perceptions of code-meshing in first-year composition classes.

In fact, omissions on the part of Canagarajah, Young, and many of their contemporaries mentioned above make it really tricky to properly appreciate their claims and implications about code-meshing when their studies have not yet investigated big enough examples of student writing or students' reactions, have not focused on FYC, and have not covered student writing and attitudes over a long-enough stretch of time, as in an academic semester or an academic year. All in all, many of the studies conducted on code-meshing thus far, as explained above, have not covered the FYC classroom, many have not traced their participants' rhetorical decisions concerning code-meshing across many assignments or classes/more than one class throughout the semester or the academic year, and many have not used different data sets to triangulate their data (interviews, surveys, student writing)—if they have, these have not been that elaborate in expanding their participant pool or eliciting and diversifying their students' attitudes toward their code-meshing experiences through studying different responses submitted from their surveys and interviews.

For example, in "Codemeshing in Academic Writing: Identifying Teachable Strategies of Translanguaging," Canagarajah focuses only on one assignment (the literacy narrative) of one of his graduate students, who was an ESL learner, but now a current teacher of English herself (Canagarajah uses the name Buthainah for his only research participant). Although he *does* address the progression and rhetorical awareness that his one participant exhibits while she code-meshes, a more expansive student pool from a more introductory writing class would have been

more helpful to FYC teachers. In his 2013 "Negotiating Translingual Literacy: An Enactment,"
Canagarajah, again, focuses on one major assignment (the literacy autobiography) with non-FYC
students; rather, his student pool comprised "both advanced undergraduates and master's degree
students" (47). Like his "Codemeshing in Academic Writing: Identifying Teachable Strategies of
Translanguaging" of 2011, in this study, although Canagarajah has a greater number of data sets
(interviews, multiple essay drafts, journals, peer reviews, and course activities) to work with,
more definitive thematic categories and broader implications for FYC student populations could
have been a much needed addition to code-meshing scholarship. In both articles, while
Canagarajah mentions that surveys were part of his study, he does not present any data from
those surveys, report any findings, or provide any analysis based on survey data.

As for Young, he was more interested in presenting a theory and a framework for code-
meshing than he was with capturing writing students' experiences in general, and FYC students
in particular. In his 2011 essay collection on code-meshing (*Code-meshing as World English:
Pedagogy, Policy, Performance*), he collected scholars' experiences and research on translingual
writing, where students' experiences and accounts of code-meshing were not a real focus and
were kept in the background. In his 2014 edited collection (*Other People's English: Code-
meshing, Code-switching, and African American Literacy*), again, Young et al. were more
interested in providing examples and exercises than documenting writing students' experiences,
let alone FYC students' experiences.[9]

Secondarily, while the practice of code-meshing is traditionally based on students'
conscious choices of embedding codes or features from their home *language* or *dialect*, in this

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[9] In my middle chapters (Chapters 3 through 5), I identified more extensions of and additions to research and
conceptions on code-meshing.

study I have also traced and analyzed my students' code-meshing of features issuing from their different nonacademic "registers" (Canagarajah, "Codemeshing"; Schreiber, "'I Am What I Am'") and discourse communities. This added qualitative inclusion takes into account any of my FYC students' language codes that are native to any of their assorted discourse communities: the discursive codes students use within their various socio-cultural circles (e.g., family, friends, place of worship, and so on), linguistic features from their different literate practices (e.g., linguistic codes from legalese, culinary verbiage, medical jargon, military slang, and so on—if those students happen to engage in these, familiarly enough), and/or codes typically reserved for or strictly used in their own college majors or areas of specialty. While this less popular understanding of code-meshing has been theorized by code-meshing scholars, including Young and Canagarajah, it has not been taken with sufficient serious qualitative investigation or analysis.

Therefore, in addition to encouraging my FYC student participants to employ linguistic elements specific to their different languages and dialects, I had also made available to them the option of embedding language practices based on the different literacies they had acquired from their different communities and groups; they could now use terms and linguistic features distinctive of their professions, distinctive of their school majors, and distinctive of their various social circles.[10] For example, owing to their different discursive spheres, code-meshing students could incorporate language elements deep-seated in their socioeconomic backgrounds, could

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[10] I argue in this dissertation that *all* of the FYC class members come from multiple discourse communities with distinct language practices, so even if not all students speak another language—or another dialect—in the traditional sense of the word, they are constantly engaging in distinctive language practices in their discrete communities that they believe are rich resources and should not be kept out of academe or, more specifically, the writing classroom.

display language features rooted in their personal interests, could engage in language practices inspired by their occupational commitments, and so forth.[11]

My Rationales for Research Site Selection:

Having been a member of the greater UH community and a resident of the linguistically rich City of Houston, I've often thought about the potential that translingual literacies would have for our writing classrooms. Following that thinking, I became particularly intrigued to investigate code-meshing among culturally-rich student demographics.[12] Working with students at UH with varying levels of familiarity with academic English and academic discourse expectations[13]—including those coming from ESL backgrounds or those US-born native-speakers of English coming from nonmainstream linguistic backgrounds—I have come to see my UH writing classroom as plentiful in pedagogical opportunities for expanding rhetoric's and academic discourse's confines beyond dominant FYC expectations and requirements, including the desire to develop my overall teaching practice and to share ensuant pedagogical implications with other fellow writing instructors at UH and elsewhere. To recap, thanks to the verdant linguistic, socio-economic, and cultural diversity that both Houston and UH abound in, I have found that my UH classroom has offered me fertile exploratory grounds to probe into code-meshing's potentials, many of which may not have been tapped or properly explored before.

Dissertation's Operational Definitions:

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[11] A good number of my study participants ended up code-meshing from more than one discourse in the same assignment.

[12] College students at UH are part of and constantly engage in a myriad of cultural practices on campus and in their various life circles. Less diverse campuses and towns cannot afford or do not enjoy this multicultural luxury.

[13] In *Going North Thinking West* (2010), Irvin Peckham explains in depth the deficit assigned to "non-academic" (read: non-middle-class) discursive habits and modes of communication as means to social reproduction and further marginalization of non-middle-class learners and as a conduit to privilege middle-class values to the exclusion of nonconformist elements.

- Code-Meshing: the practice of embedding academic writing with visible linguistic, rhetorical, and discursive elements from other discourse communities usually kept out of academic writing—loosely defined and applied in the tradition of V. A. Young

- Local Language (Practice)s: the type of language, dialect, or discourse students use outside of academia that isn't considered part of mainstream discourse

- Academic English/Writing/Discourse: the type of English, writing, or discourse used in and/or for academia

- FYC: first-year writing or composition, which is the mandatory set of writing classes taken in US colleges

- Community: a group of people that share commonalities of thought, discipline, and communication methods

- Discourse: written communication that carries meaning specific to a certain group or community

- Discourse Community: a group of people that share the same or similar ways of communicating, learning, and/or viewing the world

- Community Affiliation/Membership: one's belonging or participation in a given community

- College Students from Dominant Backgrounds: those students who are mostly Caucasian, come from middle-class America, *and* speak the dominant form of English[14]

- Rhetoricity: the rhetorical effectiveness or rhetorical nature of a piece of text

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[14] I often use *mainstream* and *dominant* interchangeably. Please see Irvin Peckham's discussion of the dominant class, dominant discourse, and dominant codes in *Going North Thinking West: The Intersections of Social Class, Critical Thinking, and Politicized Writing Instruction*.

Dissertation Chapter Breakdown:

Chapter One has provided the context of the research problem of code-meshing, explains academia's needs for code-meshing, and introduces the dissertation. This chapter has also offered a quick overview of the developing understanding of rhetoric over the years, proposed a non-exhaustive narrative list of scholars' conceptions of language difference since the early 1900s, and reviewed the more recent prominent, relevant literature and scholarship on code-meshing. Additionally, Chapter One posed the study's research questions and major lines of research inquiry for the project and identified the scholarly contributions the dissertation is offering to the ongoing conversation on code-meshing.

Chapter Two addresses the project's methodology, the data collection process, and the study's major themes. The chapter recognizes the teacher researcher's positionality and details the theoretical traditions and techniques of teacher research as a methodological framework for the project. Additionally, this chapter introduces the ENGL 1303 and ENGL 1304 participants, walks through each type of data collected from all three sites, explains how themes were determined, provides secondary theoretical texts for the two most salient themes, and gives a couple of examples from the study's data.

Chapter Three explains how the survey data was collected, proposes analyses of the survey responses collected from my student participants, and then offers a more detailed discussion of the most salient themes identified from the survey responses. Strewn about, I have also used my own class observations to further explain and analyze students' responses and occasionally signposted scholars' contributions where I thought relevant. The responses I collected from the two surveys I conducted at the beginning and at the end of the study for each site address what my student participants reflected on in their code-meshing experiences and

offer their own accounts and evaluations of the effectiveness of the code-meshing practices they employed in their Spring 2019 and Fall 2019 English papers. This section of the dissertation project starts off the detailed qualitative analysis of the data collected from my research participants.

Chapter Four features the data collection and analysis of a wide range of college-student accounts offered by my research participants' reactions, attitudes, and overall experiences with code-meshing through their interview answers. My showing of relevant interview selections and consecutive analyses was conducted through collecting, categorizing, coding, and analyzing my research participants' interview responses and semi-detailed accounts of their code-meshing experiences in the form of audio-recorded real-time conversations. The interview answers draw special attention to some very specific aspects of the rhetorical and processual experiences of my students' code-meshing.

Chapter Five presents my student-writing data based on my students' uses of code-meshing in their FYC papers for ENGL 1303 and ENGL 1304 in Fall 2019 and Spring 2019 respectively. My findings in this chapter are based on my analysis of my students' code-meshing choices in their papers for their class. In this chapter, as a teacher researcher, I have used my own classroom-based observations and knowledge of my students to more effectively explain and analyze my students' language choices and writing habits and behavior regarding the composing practice and rhetorical technique of code-meshing in light of code-meshing research.

Chapter Six revisits the research problem and the research questions and offers tentative answers to them. This chapter also provides a list of the takeaways, summarizing the study's findings, and recognizes the study's limitations. A reminder of the dissertation's contributions is

provided here as well. It finally closes out with conclusions and implications for writing teachers,

researchers, and scholars.

CHAPTER TWO:

Methodology, Data, and Themes

In this chapter, I address my study's methodology, the data collection process, and the two major themes that overlap over all my chapters. First, I identify my positionality as a teacher researcher, detail the theoretical traditions of teacher research as a methodological framework for my project and mention its techniques, and acknowledge the different borrowings I exercised to collect and analyze my student-centric data. Next, I explain how I prepared my students to partake in code-meshing, introduce my ENGL 1303 and ENGL 1304 participants, and describe the data collection process, walking through each type of data collected from all three sites. Finally, I explain how themes were determined, provide secondary theoretical texts for the two most salient themes, and give a couple of examples from the study's data based on these themes.

The Methodology:

The Teacher Researcher's Positionality:

As the teacher of the courses I recruited my research participants from, I had the advantage to create all class activities, including the code-meshing activities, and then observe how my student participants engaged in these activities and the code-meshed texts they produced. In other words, my accounts and analyses of my students' responses and writing were informed by my insider status as the instructor of the courses. My participants were also aware of my authority as the teacher, grader, and the primary audience of their interview and survey responses and their code-meshed texts. The fact that my student participants needed to code-mesh for the purposes of this study may have caused a certain level of unavoidable artificiality regarding their code-meshing choices. Also, students may have offered some of their responses

in interviews and surveys based on what I explained code-meshing would achieve for writers and in academic writing.

Additionally, I come in into this line of classroom inquiry as an "ally" of underrepresented—which I have also referred to as "minority literacies"—discursive or linguistic communities' marginal literacies.[15] My feeling a sense of allyship à la Nathan Shepley ("Place-Conscious") to the class communities I studied comes out especially because of my own membership in a quadruple minority: an ethnic minority by virtue of being an Arab, a religious minority by virtue of being a Muslim, a linguistic minority by virtue of being a speaker of a minority language (Arabic), and a non-citizen minority by virtue of being a resident alien of the United States.

Furthermore, given my interests in students' local and community language practices and due to my "preemptive methodological orientation" (Broad 202) to conduct classroom-based inquiries as a responsible research methodology for studying situated language use in writing classrooms, I investigated the code-meshing practices of my FYC students in this dissertation guided by qualitative methods and teacher research methodologies. To initially conduct my research, I used teacher research to study three of my writing classrooms because of its methodological capacity to make the connections between my pedagogical theories and my pedagogical practice more relevant and more intimate. Since this study was heavily invested in drawing upon students' experiences and responses, teacher research offered me the best methodological fit for accommodating my students' reflections and reactions and for

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[15] In the same way, Shepley engages with and rereads Appalachian literacies as an ally to the region—as opposed to someone *from* the region—I relate to and analyze my students' meshing of their discourses in academic writing as an ally to them without necessarily belonging to any of their discourses or traditions.

collaborating with my students as co-producers of practical knowledge and co-researchers in this study (Ray).

Most teacher research scholars generally define teacher research as the "systematic and intentional inquiry about teaching, learning, and schooling carried out by teachers in their own school and classroom setting" (Marilyn Cochran-Smith and Susan L. Lytle 27). However, my classroom-based inquiry project was conducted in light of various strands of teacher research forwarded by more empirically-driven, experientialist teacher research scholars, including Ann Berthoff, Dixie Goswami and Peter Stillman, Ruth Ray, James Zebroski, and others. Coming after the father of teacher research, Lawrence Stenhouse, those scholars of teacher research came to offer a re-assessment of the strictly objectivist view of teacher research scholarship upheld by Stenhouse and his followers and extend the practice of teacher research to include classroom teachers' inside experiences, reflections, and anecdotal repertoires of teacherly materials. My research was also informed by more recent reconceptualizations of teacher research scope, methodology, and inquiry from Stephen Fishman, Colin Lankshear and Michele Knobel, and Lee Nickoson.

Teacher Research as a Methodological Framework for the Study:

One of the major tenets of teacher research is the relationship between theory and practice. Unlike other researchers who may not have such an intimate relationship between their theories and their practices, teacher researchers insist on marrying the two strands of knowledge-making into one act and into one process: teacher research. In 1975, Laurence Stenhouse was the first one to coin the term "teacher research," where he conceived of it as the inquiry that teachers conduct on their students and in collaboration with other teachers who have similar ends of research. Operating from an objectivist perspective, Stenhouse's idea was that of a "clearing

house" (Nickoson 103) for pedagogical and research practices that teachers collected and tested over the years. By contrast to this traditional and more positivistic approach to teacher research, Ann Berthoff in "The Teacher as Researcher" (1979) was one of those first scholars of teacher research to privilege the teachers' insider standpoints in the research they conducted in their classroom. Berthoff insists that teachers do not need any more information from the outside; the information they need is already under their noses: in the classroom and with their students. In other words, the best people to improve classroom practice and student performance are the teachers charged with teaching and mentoring their students. For her, teacher research is simply a matter of "REsearching… looking—and looking again" (30). Berthoff further contends that "educational research is pointless" unless questions and answers enter into a "dialectic" and "dialogic" relationship, and until "theory and practice need one another" (30).[16]

In the insider-view tradition of Berthoff and Dixie Goswami and Peter Stillman (*Reclaiming the Classroom* 1987), Ruth Ray places teacher research in direct opposition to other more quantifiable types of research, mainly the more strictly quantitative outsider-view research advocated by Stenhouse and his followers. In fact, Ray's preference for using qualitative over quantitative data in examining educational research in general and specific classroom practices in particular has helped me better articulate my decision regarding choosing qualitative over quantitative measures in my interviews, surveys, and student writing. To me, Ray seems to be making the point that educational research should not be that intimidating to classroom teachers. According to Ray, educational theory and research can originate from anywhere, "including the

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[16] Berthoff's last point here about this dialogic relationship quite aptly fits my rationale for using interviews with my students: I needed answers to questions I had about the new teaching practice of code-meshing in a UH classroom setting. Also, studying the classroom setting with the experiential view of a teacher researcher, as Berthoff suggests, has been valuable in observing how the local language practices of the class communities of my FYC students as a whole slowly advanced to hold gradual sway over the learning and composing environment of the FYC class.

classroom," and theory can be made by "many people, including teachers in collaboration with students and other teachers" (*The Practice of Theory* xi). Also, one of the other reasons for conducting teacher research, Ray argues, is because it seeks to "end the subordination of teachers to researchers; and [because] it attempts to end the domination of theory over practice" (27). In other words, teacher research aims at equalizing the grounds for both education theory and classroom practice, where theory alone can no longer be the sole cure-all to every educational issue that teachers face in their daily classroom activities.

In "Composition from the Teacher Researcher Point of View" (1992), Ray adds another set of collaborators to the teacher-researcher dyad of previous teacher research scholarship; she describes teacher research as a social construction achieved through equal "collaboration among students, teachers, and researchers" (175). In addition to giving teachers agency in their classroom research, she also passes on that agency to the students whom educational research is primarily all about. Ray even takes it a step further by calling students "co-researchers, sources of knowledge whose insights help focus and provide new directions for the study" (175-76). In fact, one of the major tenets of teacher research is the value it places on the local knowledges and ways of meaning-making that students bring into the classroom. To that, Ray argues that classroom teachers are the best ones to represent student voices the most authentically owing to their privileged positions in the classroom and their intimate knowledge of students' literacy performances and composing capabilities (*The Practice of Theory* 40). Better yet, like feminist theory, teacher research, Ray continues, gives teachers and students the rhetorical space to "voice," establish, and introduce "epistemologies" and theories of knowledge they could not otherwise express (*The Practice of Theory* 29).

To piggyback off Ray's last point, teacher research has offered me the most fitting and responsible methodological apparatus for studying code-meshing in my FYC classes because of its focus on and promotion for the local ways of knowledge-making and language practice students ordinarily bring along with them into their college classrooms. Through engaging students in educational research via interviews and surveys, my teacher research project has given my students the space to contribute their views and produce knowledge relevant to their composing experiences. In so doing, teacher research helps in leveling the knowledge-making grounds in the classroom between teachers and students since either one's knowledge holds value for the other.[17]

In a similar vein of feminist thinking imbued with classroom practice, James Zebroski in *Thinking through Theory* (1994) describes his teacher-research—though he doesn't explicitly call it so—classroom practice. In his book, Zebroski explains how he made his classroom a space where students get to shape their epistemological and meaning-making thinking through writing, which I argue is a pioneering teacher research move. Although more traditional teacher research scholars may not consider this classroom practice as teacher research as such, the fact that Zebroski provides thick teacherly descriptions—á la Geertz—of his classroom practice along with students' responses to it and offers reflections and critiques of both has helped me expand my teacher-research parameters and classroom inquiry and has solidified for me the connection between teacher research and ethnographic and qualitative research. Zebroski seconds Ray's position that theory alone doesn't get teachers too far in their pedagogical pursuits; rather, both teachers' theoretical knowledge and practical experiences, much "like art and life," need to enter

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[17] By extension, through learning about the importance of collaboration and the value of equalizing working and learning grounds for all members of any one community, such as in my teacher-research-based classroom, students may now learn to seek out equity in other venues of life and more easily detect and challenge the inaccuracies and inequities that they feel at school and in society at large.

into a community of "dialogue with each other" (2) for teacherly knowledge to fully materialize in the writing classroom.

Zebroski addresses yet another aspect of educational or classroom research that more traditional researchers may not conceive of as teacher research: getting both the teacher and students to engage in reflecting upon their writing practices. For Zebroski, this kind of "metawriting" (21) that students generate when reflecting on their own writing or the writing of their peers (21) counts as teacher research because it is a form of classroom inquiry that is conducted by the teacher and is meant to test and enhance student performance. Reporting on his classroom practice, Zebroski notes that having students conduct "miniethnographies" for his class also proved to "allow students to produce good writing" (26). Zebroski also engages his students in reflecting upon the language that comes out of their communities by having them write about the different communities they inhabit, especially the workplace (21-26). This more innovative view and novel interest of teacher research in students' local knowledges, and more specifically the wide range of their language and rhetorical practices, has now been one of the major tenets of the more experiential, collaborative classroom-based strand of qualitative teacher research theory.

In fact, this Zebroskian emphasis on foregrounding metawriting for both the teacher and students and his literacy narrative assignment model have helped me cement my feelings about utilizing student writing, past and present, as a starting place for any FYC course and for creating class content. For this reason, I assigned the literacy narrative essay as the first essay for the three classes that I studied in this project. The Literacy Narrative essay—in the tradition of Zebroski—tells students, "describe your relationship with writing or describe an instance/event in your life (e.g. a teacher, friend, or parent's interaction) that helped you feel or start acting

more positively about writing OR an experience that made you more conscious of the impact of writing in your life."[18] The assignment was meant to get students to reflect on their previous writing in order to think of themselves as evolving writers that had gone through many developmental composing steps in their writing careers. Throughout their literacy narratives, students were asked to code-mesh in their writing anywhere they thought these code-meshing instances best fit their rhetorical purposes in the essay.

For their assignments, and most specifically the third and final major assignments for their classes, my class participants were asked to think of themselves as members of different communities *and* to choose community problems affecting them. Although the assignment, and others like it, was an artificial, pedagogical exercise, students were still required to explain their investment in the selected communities, explain their community problem, and then propose a solution enlisting help from community members. For example, with ENGL 1304's final essay (The Community-Based Solution Essay), students were required to revisit the community and the problem they had investigated for the second assignment (The Annotated Bibliography), conduct ethnographic research (observation notes, interviews, or surveys) about *their* communities (Zebroski), and then write up their research essays by incorporating elements from their communities. For this assignment, student participants were supposed to code-mesh linguistic elements coming from them and/or from their communities.

Finally, the more recent reconceptualizations I've utilized also view teacher research as a more "flexible [approach] in both pedagogical and scholarly focus" (Fishman), as a methodology accommodating of "multiple methods and researcher perspectives" (Lankshear and Knobel), and as a qualitative method that provides a "deeper understanding of student writers" (Nickoson). In

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[18] The language here is excerpted from an earlier Literacy Narrative assignment prompt I'd shared with my students.

fact, the reconceptualizations of teacher research, such as those advanced by Nickoson and Lankshear and Knobel, have helped me render my teacher research practices more flexible and have helped "explode [their] possibilities for how, with whom, and for what reason we engage the work of research" (Nickoson 109). These newer strands of teacher research have also been concerned with ethical issues related to power disparities, role formulation, and authentic interpretations in scholarly representations (Nickoson). All in all, the contemporary strands of educational research have actively been striving to pitch the methodological framework of teacher research as a more just scholarly practice whose chief objective is a "deeper understanding of student writers" (111).

Furthermore, teacher research's flexibility has allowed me to study my three different classrooms more nuancedly and compare research findings from all three sites. Since teacher research has gone more "multimethodological" and has grown into a more "robustly collaborative [form of classroom] inquiry" (Nickoson 108), I have felt as a teacher researcher more justified in using as many analytical and study methods as my research situation calls for— collecting, coding, and analyzing interviews, surveys, and student writing in person and online; conducting case-study analyses, in hard copy texts or digital texts; and so on. For example, for my final interviews of ENGL 1303, I gave my students the option to have their interviews over Zoom. Also, for surveys that could not be handed in to me in person, I gave students the option to email their surveys. For student essays, I was able to access those and obtain them digitally— having secured my research participants' consent—through the school's Blackboard site.

Investigating the usefulness of code-meshing for FYC students through teacher research has also helped me better understand college students' code-meshing experiences and further complicate current understandings of local language use as a less legitimate mode of writing and

communication. Teacher research has proven to me to be an efficient tool for collecting my observations and reflections on the classroom practice of code-meshing. Conducting my teacher research project informed by ethnographic methods has helped me account for and reflect on the instances when students engaged in code-meshing in class activities and in writing assignments. Such instances of code-meshing helped me generate observation materials and self-reflexive notes based on my observations which then helped me turn these into thicker accounts of code-meshing experiences in the tradition of Clifford Geertz.[19] Through the surveys and interviews conducted with my class participants, I was able to more elaborately and specifically inquire about my students' code-meshing decisions and experiences. Finally, being familiar with my students as a classroom teacher and through the qualitative data I collected about them has made it easier for me to locate recurring patterns of students' local language use (i.e., their multiple uses of code-meshing) in their class writing, which I ended up coding and analyzing.

Qualitative and Analytical Borrowings:

Taking the advantage of teacher research's flexibility in drawing from other traditions, I exercised incidental borrowings from different data collection methods and analytical frameworks. For example, I used qualitative methods in the form of surveys and interviews in order to record my students' responses toward their code-meshing experiences in their writing for my courses. I also practiced ethnographic write-ups in much of my data analysis, which allowed me to offer richer, more contextualized accounts and analyses of my students' experiences of their code-meshing choices. To study the data I collected, I initially applied open coding and subsequently exercised selective coding for theme finding. I also utilized some

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[19] In Rhetoric and Composition, Goswami and Stillman, Mary Sheridan, and Shor (in *When Student Have Power*), among others have used thick descriptions and/or theorized their use in their pedagogical and methodological research.

variations of reflective thematic analysis (primarily inductive and deductive) to help me develop my thematic categories.

My analysis, too, was influenced by multiple theoretical orientations in my examinations and subsequent analyses of students' responses and texts. From feminist thought came the tendency to give marginalized voices and bodies the much-needed space and agency to pronounce their experiences and input. I pursued my lines of inquiry based on foregrounding and privileging my students' voices and experiences over more theoretical, philosophical discussions of code-meshing coming from scholars who offered their conceptions of code-meshing without student input. Similarly, through critical ethnography, my analysis was informed by my students who were somehow offered the platform to speak their minds regarding their code-meshing experiences through their responses, making my analysis more multivocal than mono-vocal. This multivocality helped pave out the asymmetrical relations of power often pervading much scientific writing. Freirean praxis helped me explain how my students reflected on their code-meshing choices, especially through their interview responses, and what transformation they planned to achieve through certain code-meshing choices.

The Study's Code-Meshing Scaffolding in the Classroom:

To introduce the idea of code-meshing to my students in ENGL 1303 and ENGL 1304, to make them more aware of their latent home and community linguistic and rhetorical capabilities, and to urge them to apply those into their class writing, I engaged my students in a series of code-meshing activities and reading materials about the practice of code-meshing. Readings, such as Gloria Anzaldúa's "How to Tame a Wild Tongue," Amy Tan's "Mother Tongue," and V. A. Young's "Should Writers Use They Own English?" were meant to alert students to the different discourse communities they were members of. Being mindful of their discursive riches,

they could use the rhetorical and linguistic features from their disparate communities into their academic writing where their rhetorical situations allowed: I explained that they needed to be acutely heedful of their audience needs, careful about the clarity of their messages, and attentive to the opportune time for their code-meshing choices. While I was the most immediate audience for their code-meshing selections, they were also supposed to imagine that their code-meshed writing would be read by other audiences, audiences more relevant to their code-meshing choices.

Videos of people code-meshing were also presented to best visualize the practice for more visual learners.[20] I also shared with them a presentation where I explained further what code-meshing was and provided scholars' positions and my own examples of code-meshing. I also had my students identify the different discourse communities they were part of, and then I asked them to find items characteristic of their selected discourse communities.[21] While they were still new to the topic, the code-meshing choices that students reluctantly tried to embed into their course writing had varying levels of rhetorical bearing on the writing situation for the assignment.

Data Collection for My Three UH Classroom Sites:

In order to evaluate the effectiveness of code-meshing in enhancing FYC student texts, I decided to use one of my ENGL 1304 classes from Spring 2019 and two of my ENGL 1303 classes in Fall 2019. After getting my doctoral project approval by UH's IRB to conduct

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[20] One of the videos I used was that of poet Jamila Lyiscott, who code-meshes in three dialects and argues for the "linguistic celebration" that code-meshing achieves.

[21] In one later assignment, I asked them to code-mesh any items from their discourse communities into a literacy journal they had already composed in preparation for their literacy narrative assignments. When some could not think of anything to include in their already composed literacy journals, I gave them the choice to compose any sentence and employ code-meshing into it.

interviews and surveys and to study my students' writing, I proceeded to decide on a class

session to explain to my students what my dissertation was about and to recruit study participants

to partake in my research. In the weeks leading up to my study announcement and data

collection, I had introduced code-meshing to all of my students and engaged them in different

activities that included the use of code-meshing, as explained earlier. Research solicitation

officially began on February 18th of 2019, where I first introduced class materials—as I regularly

had done—but then I moved on to explain my code-meshing research and described what student

participation meant. My dissertation director was in attendance for the purpose of monitoring my

research presentation and for ensuring that any student participation in this research would be

supplemental, and thus this research participation opportunity was offered on a strictly optional

basis with no possibility of real or perceived grade ramification, coercion, or release of

identifiable information.[22]

This meeting was followed with an email almost a week later, providing a copy of an

IRB-approved consent forms for my students to study and/or use for signing off their consent for

research participation. The email also provided willing participants further instructions on how to

complete the form, setting a deadline of Monday on February 25th for participation notification.

The email further reminded class members that their participation in this study was entirely

optional and that their decision not to participate would not affect their final grades or their

standing in class. The email recipients were also given the option to contact my dissertation

director for any further information on the topic and/or the process. I repeated the same data

collection process the following fall semester with my two ENGL 1303 classes.

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[22] All participants were given the option to select their own pseudonyms in this study with the caveat that their chosen pseudonyms could not have the same initials as their real names' initials for added unidentifiability. Those participants who didn't respond with their self-selected pseudonyms were given pseudonyms by me.

Surveys:

I had my IRB-consenting participants complete two surveys on their code-meshing experiences: one at the beginning (The Recruitment Survey/Survey I) and one toward the end of the semester (Survey II). The surveys have given me the means to get to know my students demographically, linguistically, culturally, and rhetorically and have provided me with the means to compare their thoughts and attitudes toward code-meshing at the beginning and again at the end. These surveys have also functioned as a way to evaluate the effectiveness of code-meshing for FYC students in college classes as diverse as those at UH. [23]

For my ENGL 1304 section, I had eight participants out of 27 students in the course. While 8/8 completed the first survey, 7/8 completed the second survey. The respondents identified with different cultural, ethnic, and linguistic backgrounds. One of them, at least, was a former ESL learner and recently transitioned into regular English classes. One of them, at least, came to the US while he was under ten years old. Some identified a language other than English to be their mother tongue or first language. Five were designated as freshmen, two as sophomores, and one as a senior. For my ENGL 1303 sections, I started with 13 survey respondents out of 51 students in both courses and ended with six respondents.[24] Like their peers in ENGL 1304 from the previous semester, my ENGL 1303 participants identified with different community and linguistic affiliations. Since it wasn't a focus of the study, the surveys did not probe respondents about who spoke English as a foreign language as opposed to those who

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[23] In total, I studied all 292 survey responses from 16 participants in this study: 8 (no. survey questions) x 8 (no. survey respondents)= 64 (ENGL 1304-Survey I), 12x7= 84 (ENGL 1304-Survey II), 9x8= 72 (ENGL 1303-Survey I), and 12x6= 72 (ENGL 1303-Survey II).

[24] While 13 study participants completed the first survey, I only included data from eight of those who stuck with the research and were more responsive. By the end of Fall 2019, only six of those eight participants completed the second survey.

spoke it as a second or first language, but there were at least 1-2 students who spoke English as a foreign language. All but one were first-year students; the participant who wasn't was a sophomore.

Since this first survey also functioned as a recruitment survey, it contained identifying information about my research affiliation and approval, student participants' eligibility to participate in the doctoral study, and the time commitment needed to effectively participate in the research (5-10 minutes for each survey in addition to the number and location of surveys and interviews expected). The survey queried the respondents on their linguistic background, their use of another language or dialect besides academic English, and their opinion of the utility of code-meshing for academic writing in general and its utility for my class. It also asked them to share some examples of linguistic items usually reserved for their dialect or language code-meshed in an academic English sentence. Additionally, the survey tried to gauge the student participants' willingness to make their code-meshing relatable to and of value to their audience members. All survey respondents assigned value to their code-meshing or code-meshing in general, providing examples where they deemed it necessary. [25]

Survey II is the second and final survey in the study. Survey printouts were distributed toward the end of the semester for the class. Seven out of eight student participants completed the survey forms from ENGL 1304, and 6/14 completed the surveys from ENGL 1303. Students completed the survey forms right before submitting their final essays for the class (The

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[25] While the focus of my survey questions was centered around issues of code-meshing and rhetoricity, the structure and verbiage of my survey questions were also informed by qualitative studies I've looked at, studies that have empirically tried to explain college students' or community members' literate perceptions and practices regarding some aspects of language, rhetoric, literacy, or identity. For example, in drafting some of my original survey and interview questions, a study done by Sara Webb-Sunderhaus on Appalachian literacies proved helpful. Her questions about students' backgrounds, writing process, literacy acquisition, educational/college experiences, and identity performance, among others were useful to me.

Community-Oriented Solution Essay for ENGL 1304; Analysis/Synthesis Essay for ENGL 1303). The participants who did not complete the second survey were "lost to follow-up"[26]— they either stopped coming to interviews or they did not respond to the survey email sent after the last day of class.

Survey II covers what the code-meshing experience in academic writing had been like for the student respondents: their sentiments and attitudes toward their code-meshing, their knowledge of the technique, their implementation of code-meshing in this class, their application of it to other life scenarios and classes, what pedagogical materials were the most helpful to understanding the process and practice of code-meshing, what their thoughts were on how to best teach code-meshing, other people's—employers and instructors (imagined or real)—reactions vis-à-vis their possible use of code-meshing, the respondents' audience-based awareness when applying code-meshing, and the potential for code-meshing in other avenues beyond this class. The survey ended with asking the respondents, again, if they were willing to share their writing for the research purposes of this project, to which question they all answered in the affirmative.

Interviews:

The interviews started in late February-early March of 2019 with 8 participants from ENGL 1304. The 8 participants completed 3-4 interviews from the time they signed their consent forms to the end of the 2019 Spring semester. While I originally was approved for biweekly interviews (6-8 interviews) to be completed during the spring semester, I only completed 3-4 interviews with each of my 8 participants. Two out of 8 participants did not complete the final

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[26] A term used by UH's IRB Office for those study participants who initially consent but are currently no longer responsive to research requests.

round of interviews for ENGL 1304. The data from their former interviews was still utilized for

this study.[27]

      All of the interviews for ENGL 1304 took place in UH's Roy G. Cullen Building: most

were in my office (C 135), while a small number were conducted in the hallway of the second

floor of the building. I used the Voice Recorder feature on my laptop (which has been password-

protected) to audio-record the interviews, and I only had to write down interview responses—

instead of only recording them on the computer software—on two occasions for one of my

research participants, who later agreed to be audio-recorded.[28] Most of my ENGL 1304 study

participants spoke English as a first language. At least 1-3 spoke English not as a first

language.[29] My research participants were in different years in their college experience and came

from different majors. Research participants provided different reasons for participating in my

study, including obtaining extra credit, seeing the value of code-meshing, wanting to help me out

in my research, and wanting to be part of the research process.[30]

      For ENGL 1303 in Fall 2019, I went through the same process as with the data collection

process from the semester before: I got IRB-approval, had my dissertation director monitor my

research presentation and study recruitment, and was able to secure 3-4 interviews based on my

IRB-approved forms. Since I was initially approved for up to 8 participants from each ENGL

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[27] The total number of interviews studied in this dissertation is 39: I was initially supposed to have 3 interviews from each one of my 16 participants, which would have come to a total of 48 interviews. However, 2/8 didn't make it to the second interview of my ENGL 1303, and 5/8 didn't make it to the final round of interviews of the same class. As with ENGL 1304, two participants didn't make it to the last round of interviews.

[28] During these two interviews with the student, I only recorded her responses as she was uttering them; I did not make any summaries or notes about or of her answers or the interviews themselves.

[29] At the time, I did not ask my interviewees what their self-designation was for their mastery in English, for I didn't think it was relevant or I didn't wish to cause discomfort for them—I may also have been worried about potential assumptions getting triggered on account of such an inquiry that would have led to tainted, less authentic responses.

[30] All the students in ENGL 1303 and ENGL 1304 who participated in the study had the opportunity to earn up to 10% toward the final grade of their class, provided that the 10% could only supplement the grades of their non-major assignments for the class, not the major assignments (i.e., their course papers).

1303 section from Fall 2019, at first, I was only able to recruit a total of 14 participants: 8 from the 8:30-10:00 section and 6 from the 11:30-1:00 section. However, for my study here, I'm only utilizing interview data from 8 participants: 5 from the 8:30-10:00 section and 3 from the 11:30-1:00 section.[31] For my interview data collection this semester, I added in my IRB-approved consent forms the possibility of doing virtual synchronous interviews with my interview participants, potentially conducting the interviews "over the phone or via Zoom- or Skype-like (online) platform."[32] However, none of the interviews were conducted by any other means but the traditional face-to-face mode. The interviews began in mid to late September of 2019 and continued until mid to late February of 2020.

All of the interviews for ENGL 1303 took place in UH's Science Building, more specifically in Room S 214 (one of the Huddle Rooms assigned for office hours), which I primarily used as office space on Tuesday and Thursday. Again, I used the Voice Recorder feature on my laptop (which has been password-protected) to audio-record the interviews. My ENGL 1303 student participants mostly spoke English as a first language but were fluent in varying degrees in other languages (e.g., Spanish). At least 1-2 participants spoke English not as a first language. All of my research participants but one were in freshman year in college and majored in different specialties. My research participants provided different reasons for participating in my study, including obtaining extra credit, seeing the value of code-meshing,

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[31] Some students did not regularly participate, some vanished, and some withdrew from the study.

[32] This was long before COVID-19; I wanted to make this remote interview mode option available in case my participants or I needed to use it instead of the traditional face-to-face mode, especially for the final round of interviews after classes ended. Two of my eight interview participants didn't show to the final round of interviews for ENGL 1304 the semester before, so I thought providing this more flexible option would give my students more incentive to complete the final interviews with me, even after school was out.

wanting to help me out in my research, wanting to be part of the research process, and so on and so forth.

Student Writing:

The code-meshing writing analyzed in this study was completed for the three major writing assignments of ENGL 1303 and ENGL 1304 in 2019. In Spring 2019, my ENGL 1304 students had the following paper assignments: the Literacy Narrative, the Annotated Bibliography (personal research narrative, the annotated bibliography, and students' conclusions), and the Community-Oriented Solution Essay. For my ENGL 1303 classes in Fall 2019, students also had three assignments, one of which was the same as the assignment for ENGL 1304: the Literacy Narrative. The other two ENGL 1303 assignments were the Summary/Strong Response Essay and the Analysis/Synthesis Essay.

Throughout their respective semesters, ENGL 1303 and ENGL 1304 students went through multiple stages of the writing process for each of the three major papers they were assigned during their corresponding semester. [33] They were asked to freely select topics for their essays, to freewrite and journal for these assignments, construct relevant theses, find relevant *and* adequate evidence, offer relevant analyses in light of the evidence used, share their developing writing[34] with peers and with me for feedback, submit rough drafts, receive feedback from their peers and from me on their drafts, meet individually with me once after receiving feedback from peers and from me following the submission of their drafts, and then submit their final drafts on Turnitin on the class's Blackboard site.

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[33] Incorporating and conducting research with ENGL 1303 was more informal and less pervasive than it was with ENGL 1304.

[34] Sharing at least one draft was mandatory. Also, the instructor and students needed to provide feedback on drafts submitted on time.

At the start of the relevant semester, I explained to both classes what code-meshing was and what range of discourses they could code-mesh from. When code-meshing, I asked students to blend their code-meshing instances into the structure of their academic prose for those major class assignments above wherever the rhetorical situation allowed.[35] I further asked them not to underline or use italics, bold font, or quotation marks when incorporating their code-meshing into their course writing.[36] I asked that of them because I wanted their code-meshing to feel natural and flow smoothly into the rest of their prose. However, I *did* ask them to transliterate their code-meshing choices by sounding out what these choices would read like in English-language consonants and vowels, unless their language or dialect already used English characters (and sound patterns). I also asked them to translate what the instances meant in academic English. I also encouraged later participants to identify the particular discourse community their code-meshing examples came from (e.g., Mexican Spanish, Vietnamese, Southern English, etc.).[37] My student participants varied in how well they abided by these instructions for incorporating code-meshing. I always cautioned them to make sure their code-meshings made sense to the audience reading them, to their purpose, to the writing occasion in question, and to the surrounding text.[38] While code-meshing, students used languages, dialects, and other non-academic group discourses from their different discourse communities: Arabic, Hindi, Spanish, Vietnamese, AAVE (African-American Vernacular English), Southern American English,

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[35] Please see Loyd Bitzer's and Richard Vatz's definition of *the rhetorical situation* in the themes' section.

[36] Although advised against, some students still placed their code-meshing choices in bold, in italics, in underlining, or in quotation marks.

[37] By *community*, I explained that it would be any group that they belonged to. By *discourse community*, I explained that it would be any community they belonged to that had unique rhetorical ways and language practices.

[38] Students understood that they had different audience members they needed to be mindful of: academic audience members, class audience members, and audience members from their communities. Based on their knowledge of those audiences, students should determine the type of pathos, ethos, logos, and code-meshing that would work with their audiences.

British English, (American) English slang, Internet slang, generational slang, workplace jargon,

professional club speech, and so on.[39]

My ENGL 1303 and ENGL 1304 Research Participants:

In order to give my research participants more human physiognomies in the sections and

chapters to come, I'm including information about them (see table 1) gathered from different

sources, including official school records and my own study data:

Table 1

Information about ENGL 1303 and ENGL 1304 Student Participants:

Student	**Class**	**Year**	**Major**	**Additional languages/dialects/discourses**[40]
Fannie	ENGL 1303	1	Biology	Spanish
Amanda	ENGL 1303	1	Pre-Comm Disorder	Generational American slang; Vietnamese
Tia	ENGL 1303	1	Exercise Science	Bahamianese; American slang
Alexa	ENGL 1303	1	Chemical Engineering	Spanish (informal & formal); American slang
Patrick	ENGL 1303	1	Hotel & Rest Mgt	Korean

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[39] Some participants even identified and used varieties of the other languages they spoke, e.g., Palestinian Arabic, North Mexican Spanish, and so forth.

[40] This table includes languages, dialects, and discourses that student participants stated they used in addition to academic English or that they incorporated for the sake of code-meshing in composing their ENGL 1303 or ENGL 1304 papers.

Lauren	ENGL 1303	1	Hotel & Rest Mgt	Informal English; Spanish slang
Teresa	ENGL 1303	1	Political Science	Chilean Spanish; Spaniard Spanish
Eva	ENGL 1303	1	Architecture	Macy's work jargon; Spanish
Belinda	ENGL 1304	1	Media Prod	Spanish; American slang
Regina	ENGL 1304	1	Pre-Bus Adm	African-American Vernacular English (AAVE); workplace jargon
Zach	ENGL 1304	1	Comp Engr Tech	Hindi; Nepali; Maithili
L.P.H	ENGL 1304	1	Exploratory Studies	Vietnamese; British English
Bruce	ENGL 1304	1	Exploratory Studies	Vietnamese
Betty	ENGL 1304	2	Exploratory Studies	Spanish
David	ENGL 1304	2	Political Science	Southern American English; Spanish
Nour	ENGL 1304	4	Health	Palestinian Arabic; Houstonian English

Major Code-Meshing Themes Running through My Data Analysis:

To work out my analytical categories, I used a more qualitative approach to coding. First, I started with a more open approach to coding for the themes I had discerned, and then I adopted

a more selective approach to coding, where I homed in more carefully on the more salient

thematic patterns in my different data sets coming from my 16 research participants. I also

utilized reflexive thematic analysis (Braun and Clarke) to identify the main patterns and

recurrent themes I found to be the most relevant to my research questions in my students'

writing, interview answers, and survey responses. The major themes that were showcased the

most forcefully in my students' answers and writing orbited the following areas: rhetorical,

community, personal, and political. While the rhetorical and community thematic categories are

the most recurrent themes throughout my data chapters, other themes specific to one or two

chapters only, major and minor, also feature based on different factors, including original data

setups and initial research assumptions. In other words, both the rhetorical theme and the

community theme were the most clearly distinct and permeable for almost all my students in all

data sets.

However, other themes, such as the personal, political, and processual natures of code-

meshing, were added to one or two data sets. In other words, these additional themes were not as

elaborately deliberate or visible in all data sets. For instance, since my survey data was primarily

built to probe for student participants' perceptions of code-meshing, it helped me identify a

theme that I couldn't see as clearly in all data sets: the personalizing potential of code-meshing.

That said, I was still able to detect some personal thematic codes in the code-meshed student

texts. As for my political theme, it was shown the most intelligibly in the data set of student

writing: where particular examples of code-meshed student texts were more readily interpreted

as politically motivated, among other factors of less significance. In addition to other themes, my

interview data, an ideal and more immediate source for direct interaction with my student

participants, was principally invested in participants' process and consciousness of crafting their

code-meshing choices while composing their paper assignments, and thus it helped me identify a

theme I couldn't find operating as explicitly in other data sets: the processual sensitivity of

student code-meshers. In the remainder of this chapter, I'll share my two multi-data-supported

thematic categories. Then, in subsequent chapters, I'll discuss these two and additional themes

along with illustrative data bits in fuller detail.

      To validate the legitimacy of my original three thematic categories, I conducted a

reliability test (see Appendix D) where I surveyed graduate students in English from UH and

outside[41] using an online survey system.[42] All of my ten survey respondents, who were also

writing teachers, were PhD students in different concentrations of English Studies, with mostly

coming from Rhetoric and Composition. The survey queried my gracious respondents on

excerpted materials from my data and asked them to identify the most dominant out of three of

my analytical thematic foci; each one of my three excerpts was supposed to be assigned only one

of the three most likely answers provided: rhetorical, personal, and political or community. The

point of this survey was to learn how closely aligned my ten respondents' interpretations (their

own thematic/analytical categories) were with one another's *and* my own and my own categories

and themes with regard to the data I excerpted for the survey questions. The survey included one

example of student-composed code-meshing, one interview answer to a question I posed to all

my study participants, and one survey response for the final survey in the study. More than 4/6 of

the time I found agreement in how my reliability test respondents and I thematically labeled

these excerpts from my data, which the respondents were not privy to while completing the

survey. Consequently, the responses from my online survey generally supported my original

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[41] One survey respondent is a PhD student in the English Dept at the University of Wisconsin-Milwaukee.
[42] I used surveymonkey.com, which provided my respondents ease of access and anonymity.

themes in all three categories and offered me assurance that my interpretations were more likely

justified than not. Their selections of the same thematic categories I'd already identified for the

same data excerpts I shared gave me the boost I needed to learn that I was on the right track and

that my theme-based interpretations were in agreement with a number of educated writing

instructors and graduate students in English.

While the dissertation's later chapters explain additional themes in greater detail through

relevant, adequate discussions, analyses, and examples, the following themes sum up the most

multi-data-supported thematic topics, themes that coursed through *all* my data sets in this study.

Code-Meshing as a Tool for Enhancing Rhetorical Sensitivity:

Wayne C. Booth in "The Rhetorical Stance" explains that the balance of the main

elements of rhetoric is important to any communicative act. The three elements he sees as

essential to the balance and success of a rhetor's project are arguments made for the subject

itself, the engagement of audiences' interests, and the ethical projection of the rhetor (141).

Others, however, have posited that the rhetorical project is determined by outside parameters laid

out by the rhetorical situation (Bitzer). To Lloyd Bitzer and others from the strand of realist and

objective rhetoric, *kairos* or *exigence* must precede any rhetorical work. On the opposite end of

this spectrum, social constructionist rhetoricians like Richard Vatz have believed that a rhetor

has more agency in preselecting a situation for rhetorical investigation through a series of

calculated rhetorical steps. Scott Consigny meets critics from both camps (i.e., Bitzer's and

Vatz') halfway: the rhetor should engage with particular outside problems but should do so

creatively. In other words, while the rhetor will not ignore certain outside exigencies when they

arise, likewise s/he will not be limited by how to handle those given circumstances. That stated, I

see my research participants' rhetorical mindfulness of their uses of code-meshing occurring at

different points on the spectrum of the rhetorical situation—a balanced act of rhetorical appeals, an externally mandated response, a socially constructed comeback, a resourceful art of topic selection, or a blend of two or more of the aforementioned—from Booth, to Bitzer, to Vatz, and, finally, to Consigny.

My research participants' code-meshing examples project a range of rhetorical responses to the composing situations (e.g., the assignment prompts) they find themselves in. Among many other features of rhetorical responsiveness, my student participants attempted the following through their various code-meshing choices: they tried to captivate the interests of their audiences, appeal to certain audiences, and educate others (through Booth's engagement of the audience); they responded to situations imposed upon them (through Bitzer's externally dictated rhetoric); they attempted to create meaning through their rhetorical struggles with situations they selected (through Vatz' subjective rhetoric); they made attempts at couching their claims in novel ways in order to offer and elicit new perspectives on their topics (through Consigny's creative rhetoric); and so on.

My research participants' code-meshing choices were grounded in a great number of rhetorical potentialities, be those wielded wittingly or inadvertently. In fact, as a researcher who also knew his participants as students in my class community, my rhetorical interpretations of students' code-meshing suggest more nuanced, fluid, and complex implications than more mono-discursive analytical attempts would usually allow or make conceivable. Such interpretations pendulate on a spectrum of endless rhetorical possibilities and prospects with audience and purpose being the leading factors. Almost all participants exhibited a commendable command of rhetorical sensitivity when asked about when and how to use code-meshing. Thanks to their reflecting on appropriate code-meshing choices for their writing, most research respondents

seemed to have developed a mindfulness of audience needs and expectations, in the sense that they were too careful not to let their audiences down, give them the wrong impression of the message, or come across as patronizing or didactic to them when injecting a code-meshing instance. Also, the use of code-meshing, other student participants thought, was judged at the discretion of the author and based on authorial purpose. Many, however, thought that the efficacy of a code-meshing choice should be determined commensurately with the deliverability of the message above all else; in other words, a code-meshing injection would not be as useful if it detracted from the readability of the surrounding text. Therefore, any code-meshing decision should always be made based on how intelligible the intended message gets to be.

Working with different code-meshing choices made my research participants spend more time thinking, researching, and negotiating different choices of code-meshing as regards the reading ease of their messages and their audiences' relatability. In fact, there were many occasions where I found my research participants to have exhibited or developed good rhetorical judgment in terms of crafting their code-meshing examples appropriately. Questions about audience focus and rhetorical purpose seemed to always be on the study participants' minds: how will a code-meshing choice be perceived and understood by the audience, and will a given code-meshing example help enhance or impede the flow of the writer's message? Based on the responses I collected from my student participants, my data suggests that the practice of code-meshing has helped my participants become more rhetorically aware: aware of how deliverable and coherent their messages needed to be and how discerning they needed to be of their audiences' needs and expectations, when engaged in code-meshing.

While few scholars of code-meshing may have acknowledged similar points of code-meshing's rhetoricity in their students' writing, including Canagarajah and Young, many

researchers of code-meshing, as was briefly explained in Chapter 1, have not traced their participants' rhetorical decisions of code-meshing across several assignments or tracked the code-meshing of FYC students over more than one class throughout the semester or the academic year, have not used different data sets to triangulate their data (interviews, surveys, student writing), have not included as many participants to justify theories/studies,[43] and/or have not provided detailed accounts of their participants' attitudes or experiences vis-à-vis their code-meshing choices. The aforementioned forfeited lines of classroom inquiry and qualitative research in code-meshing have made scholarly inadvertences in the research of code-meshing in academic writing all the more glaring.

While more than half of my respondents' answers covered different rationales and benefits for employing code-meshing in their FYC writing, the most recurring rhetorical theme was the code-meshing decision-making process that controlled the frequency, location, utility, and selection of students' code-meshing choices. In fact, a closer look at participants' answers and moves should make explicitly clear that the one point underlying most (if not all) of the responses and analyses of code-meshing choices was students' almost habitual inclination to gauge the potential rhetorical success of the code-meshing example embedded in a given situation. For example, at least a fourth of my study participants reported that they were often quick to ask themselves whether a given code-meshing item would flow with the spirit of the surrounding text and intended message, whether a certain code-meshing instance would make sense to the reader, and/or whether the location of a code-meshing example would make sense to the reader. Overall, most research participants were also able to recognize what audience they

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[43] The number of my research participants is eight from one section of ENGL 1304 and eight from two sections of ENGL 1303 = 16 total. These participants used code-meshing in all their three major writing projects for their respective classes

were speaking to. More specifically, some of the audience types that participants were able to identify fell somewhere along the spectra of the following categories: some domestic and some abroad, some mainstream and some minority, some young and some old, some academic and some nonacademic, some monolingual and some multilingual, some peers and some superiors, some performed for one's own inner audience (i.e., one's own satisfaction) and some solely performed for external audiences, and others.

To give an example of my student participants' developing rhetorical sensitivity, when asked in a survey regarding the amount of code-meshing recommended in academic writing, Betty began by referencing one of the most important rhetorical factors: the author. She thought that the decision to infuse one's text with codes from one's own language should be reserved for the author's judgment or "discretion." Betty's dependent clause, "If it truly enriches/adds to the writing," can be interpreted in two ways: code-meshing helps "writing" in that it helps deliver the message more effectively, or code-meshing helps one's writing by making it richer aesthetically and stylistically. In other words, Betty is saying that the practice of code-meshing might help with another part of the rhetorical triangle, the message, and one of the five canons of rhetoric, namely style. However, Betty later added that "there shouldn't be a limit or restriction" on the author in how much code-meshing to deploy in one's text. This final statement of Betty's may mean that as long as one's rhetorical antenna is well calibrated, there should be no constraint on however much a writer decides, albeit rhetorically, to engage in code-meshing.

Moreover, code-meshing allowed my study participants to develop and advance additional goals and rhetorical purposes beyond those initially intended by them or by the assignment. Through their code-meshing choices, research participants started aiming to achieve further objectives: recalling relevant linguistic expressions, affirming some identity markers,

emphasizing the importance of some elements, recollecting prior experiences, showing a diversity of ways for doing the one thing, making a political statement, advocating for a social cause, connecting with certain community members more closely, highlighting some personal traits, reminiscing on fond or not so fond memories, and so on. In other words, code-meshing has given code-meshers more time, greater commitment, and better cause to re-think and reflect on the rhetoricity of their composing acts.[44]

Code-Meshing as an Advocacy Tool for Identity Vindication and Community Affirmation:

Throughout my data-analysis process, code-meshing has been utilized as a political tool of rhetoric and language that helps to garner community support through projecting one's writerly voice and discursively enunciating one's community presence. Code-meshing has helped my student research contributors participate in their own politics of meaning making by introducing unique language choices from their communities (their college community, local community, ethnic community, faith community, professional community, and so on) previously excluded from mainstream academic writing. Although it may initially appear merely an artistic move, code-meshing gives student writers the chance to compose a text that screams of their own community concerns and more local interests. The composing technique of code-meshing attempts to extend college student writers the opportunity to command their own community-conscious rhetorical platforms instead of merely abiding by the academically mandated, monotone political agendas seeping through most of mainstream college writing.

As a writing teacher, I was interested in learning if code-meshing individually calculated, community-oriented linguistic choices can help college student writer become more adept at

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[44] For more on this theme and others, please see Chapters 3 through 5 for a more detailed discussion of these themes with student examples.

delivering more subtle or even more overt civic messages of student reality. In other words, code-meshing becomes an effective means to detect and keep in check what Irvin Peckham calls "linguistic codes of social control" (33) that usually trump any attempts at incorporating one's community rhetoric in college writing. This is quite similar to what Gloria Anzaldúa dubs "linguistic terrorism," which is defined as the recurring assaults one sustains on one's "native" or community tongue by the dominant culture one resides in. The freedom from this subjugation to the mainstream linguistic code eventually leads to what Ira Shor calls the "withering away" (101) of the academic language enforcer and subsequently drives student writers' liberation from entrenched composing paradigms and time-honored thinking apparatuses to more open-ended community-imbued writing practices.

For V. A. Young, code-meshing is a powerful means for community validation and identity assertion much needed for the eventual liberation of student writers from the dictates of institutionalized language practices. In fact, in *Other People's English: Code-Meshing, Code-Switching, and African American Literacy*, Young argues for code-meshing to the replacement of code-switching, which he believes, while coming from "well-intentioned educators," is a form of "legalized racial segregation" (9). Code-meshing, for Young, is meant to disturb and subvert the status quo of language discourse so as to reconstruct new discursive realities that make academic discourse more adaptive of an increasingly diversifying student writer demographic. This attempt to reduce the polarization of academic prose proposed by code-meshing allows student writers to break away from some of the linguistic choices imposed by mainstream discursive practices and driven by automated ideological paradigms, helping students to interrogate their marginalized affiliations or statuses. Eventually, code-meshing becomes every college instructor's pedagogical

tool of choice to bring out the individuated successes of disadvantaged nonmainstream college students.

In addition to being rhetorically calculated, close to half of my student participants' code-meshing choices have adopted, though indirectly or inadvertently, some version of Freirean generative themes meant to evoke a sense of community performance into the structure of the academic text and intended to advance a sense of community affiliation and promotion. Code-meshing brings students' discrete community elements all into one literate act, the academic text, offering alternative text-weaving methods and challenging entrenched dominant stereotypes about what student writing and academic discourse should each look like, separately and not in the same composing act. This makes code-meshing a literacy event that "brings members of a group together for the purpose of [communal] textual production and/or consumption" (Webb-Sunderhaus 67). Henceforth, code-meshing becomes a mode of fulfilling students' sense of community and reinstating the complexity of their community literacy acts.

Unlike traditional rhetoric which has had a way, at least to a number of writing instructors, of playing down college students' incoming habits of cultural communicating and expressing, my data has shown that code-meshing can be wielded into a conduit for drawing out the local and cultural ways of being and meaning-making. Zebroski contends that rhetorical instruction should always be wary of turning into a means of "denigrat[ion] of the student's culture values, and most importantly, his or her ability as a member of a community to produce knowledge" ("The Syracuse Writing Program and Cultural Studies" 92), especially that writing should be a social and community act made tangible by the individual writers themselves. In other words, student writers should build their writing content with elements emanating from their communities (*Thinking through Theory* 17). Progressively, students end up learning how to

smoothly "shuttle between [multiple discourse] communities" (Canagarajah 596) simultaneously in the same piece of writing. As will be demonstrated in the forthcoming paragraphs, code-meshing, for many of my research participants, has ultimately become a means to restore legitimacy to their heretofore marginalized community rhetorical traditions and a technique to re-affirm their previously disenfranchised community literate practices.

For example, in her response to a survey question about the relatability of her code-meshing choices to her audience, Fannie explains that since her primary audience is Spanish-speaking, her code-meshing will be relatable to that audience and will provide her with the "sense of home" that has been missing from much of the college writing she has composed. Fannie's statement speaks more broadly to the sense of identity and community affirmation that academic writing tends to inadvertently strip from many writers under the cloak of keeping all discourse formal and professional. Reclaiming the lost "sense of home" into the classroom is what Fannie is referring to and working toward through her code-meshing choices. In fact, according to Young, the classroom should be the place where student writers' "language[s] and identities" should feel "welcome" ("Your Average Nigga" 705). In other words, repossessing the sense of home back into one's college writing coupled with "feeling connected to your first language" (Fannie) should be a major pedagogical focus for first-year writing courses, especially in linguistically diverse collegiate environments, such as UH.

Some respondents were quite anxious about how they had been perceived when they used to engage in their home dialects or languages while in more formal settings or composing situations. Eva cited her apprehension of being perceived in a poor light for code-meshing. Her anxiety about staying true to academic English in most composing scenarios had dissuaded her against incorporating her own language before this class. Eventually, code-meshing gave her the

boost to assert her newly evolving discursive identity where she had "become more comfortable in how readers *take* my dialect" (my emphasis). Eva felt a more advanced level of confidence and comfortability, which code-meshing provided her. In her answer to a question about successful instances of code-meshing in the second survey, Eva states that one such example of her successful application of code-meshing was her "being able to incorporate my own dialect into writings when I [had] never done before."

In the upcoming chapters, I'll review in greater detail my student participants' code-meshing experiences, reactions, and samples, providing thematic categories and analyses: In Chapter 3, I'll examine my students' feedback toward code-meshing in college writing and their overall experiences with code-meshing through their survey responses. In Chapter 4, I'll share my students' interview answers and offering my interpretations of those in the context of thematic categories based on their interview answers. In Chapter 5, I'll share various written samples of my students' code-meshing choices in their major papers and proposing analytical themes to my participants' code-meshing examples. Chapter 6 will close the dissertation, revisiting research questions, summarizing takeaways, and offering implications.

CHAPTER THREE:

My Participants' Survey Responses: Data and Analysis

Since college students come with many home-grown literate experiences from multi-layered backgrounds, teachers need now, more than ever before, to exercise greater investment in awakening and subsequently incorporating college students' undervalued linguistic and discursive riches into their classes' composing situations. Understanding of student writers' literacies and discourses as other than a "monolithic" set of practices (Webb-Sunderhaus 1) helps writing teachers become more tolerant and invested in their learners' wide array of discursive and linguistic experiences. Code-meshing is one such means to promote linguistic diversity in college writing and one such buffer to guard against retarding student language and thought by exclusively adhering to the entrenched apparatus of academic prose.

The focus in this dissertation in general and in this chapter in particular will be on code-meshing as a writing strategy that makes student writing more rhetorically compelling, more intimately personal, and more politically responsive to the struggles and concerns of college students and their communities, especially transitioning (first-year) college students. This chapter offers the first set of data I'm studying in this dissertation project: survey responses from my 16 student participants who reflected on their code-meshing experiences in my classes and provided their own evaluations of the effectiveness of the code-meshing practices they employed in Spring 2019 and Fall 2019 at the University of Houston. Also, this chapter explains how the survey data was collected, analyzes the survey responses gathered from my student participants, and then offers a more detailed discussion of the most salient themes based on my survey participants' responses. As a teacher researcher, I have also used my own class observations to further explain

and analyze students' language choices and behavior and signposted scholars' thoughts where I deemed those useful.

In fact, based on my survey respondents' responses, I've been able to deduce the three following salient themes from my data:

1.) code-meshing's capability to enhance one's rhetorical sensitivity: as will be explained in the upcoming survey responses, most ENGL 1303 and ENGL 1304 students exhibited rhetorical acumen in determining whether a code-meshing choice was appropriate or not in a given circumstance.

2.) code-meshing's capability to personalize one's writing: many student participants explained that code-meshing was used for personalizing their writing.

3.) code-meshing's political capability to validate one's identity and community affirmation: student participants also spoke about code-meshing's value in vindicating their discursive identities and freely performing their rhetorical group attachments.

Despite the fact that these three major themes are in some way specific to this chapter, they quite often intersect with my themes in my other data chapters, Chapter 4 and Chapter 5. In Chapter 4, while the focus of my themes is on the rhetorical awareness, composing process, and writerly consciousness of my study participants' code-meshing choices, smaller categories investigate topics close enough to those in Chapter 3: the message (rhetorical, personal, political) intended from the participants' code-meshing examples, their audience (or community) considerations, the participants' (personal) anxiety while making certain code-meshing choices, and so on. Similarly to Chapter 3, the rhetorical theme is one of the three major themes in Chapter 5; yet, the other two themes in Chapter 5 (community and political) still exhibit much

overlap with the other two themes in Chapter 3: the personal theme and the community-validation theme.

While the interpretations and themes in this chapter were decided and ordered by me, I tried to privilege my students' voices and explanations over other scholars' in this context of qualitative code-meshing data. Also, my inclusion of my students' survey responses as actionable data for recurrent-pattern deduction and thematic categorization will be a much-needed addition to the ongoing conversation on code-meshing, especially in the context of code-meshing data gathered from and investigated with FYC student writers. My survey analysis has been largely informed by my First-Year Composition (FYC) students' survey responses to and attitudes toward code-meshing in their writing classes at UH and by Rhetoric and Composition scholarship on code-meshing referenced in the earlier chapters. The data collection part of my qualitative study was predicated on drawing out and then drawing on college students' incorporation of their un(der)acknowledged community literacy and linguistic practices into their college writing. As explained in Chapter 2, teacher research has been adopted as one methodology with great potential for collecting qualitative data from writing students engaging in code-meshing and for subsequently studying those students' responses to their code-meshing experiences. Additionally, combing through the data and attempting to offer some kind of analysis to it has made me better able to "excavate my own assumptions about writing" (Zebroski 16) and the teaching of writing.

I managed to divide my survey data based on major themes and analytical categories, as identified and discussed below. In the tradition of thematic coding (Braun and Clarke)[45] and

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[45] Although many researchers in Rhetoric and Composition (e.g., Heath, Shor, Seitz) have worked, in varying degrees, with different methods for theme finding in their work, I've found reflexive thematic analysis to be the most

analytical coding (Miles and Huberman),[46] after all survey data was collected, I began to study

my students' responses, and then I moved on to assign labels to data units I found meaningful.

Primarily, my themes developed either inductively or deductively: inductively, when my

thematic categories began to form from the data I was studying; and deductively, when my pre-

established themes directed my analysis of the data. Often, I studied my data semantically based

on the explicit occurrence of certain words, phrases, or sentences. Occasionally, theme

development was more latent, so themes required a deeper level of deducing.[47]

As for determining what was a major theme and what was a minor theme, I initially cast a

wider analytic net to create bigger categories and then decided on the smaller categories or sub-

themes that became curated under their bigger thematic umbrellas with no real sub-section

identifications. My bigger categories which I discuss in the remainder of this chapter (rhetorical,

personal, and political) either emerged from the content of my data or were inspired by existing

thematic concepts, concepts I had already set out to look for in my data. Under these larger

themes, I discussed smaller units emerging from the theme in question; for example, under my

rhetorical theme I discussed audience, purpose, message, and other rhetorical elements, which I

deemed to form sub-themes or minor themes.

Additionally, the combination of being both a teacher of writing and a teacher researcher

helped make the thematic determinations. As such, theme identification determinations were also

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suitable approach for my thematic analyses. Victoria Clarke and Virginia Braun's reflexive thematic analysis provides qualitative researchers a more elastic approach to theme development. Within this reflexive approach to thematic analysis, there are six possible variations, as in the following: inductive, deductive, semantic, latent, realist, and constructionist. As best suited to the project, a qualitative researcher may use a cluster of those methods. For my study here, I primarily used the deductive, inductive, and semantic variations.

[46] According to Miles and Huberman, analysis of qualitative data goes through data reduction (discarding irrelevant data), data display (sharing data), and conclusion drawing.

[47] Since I didn't use any handwritten coding, I coded my survey responses using my personal laptop. I often used the MS Word features of certain colors, highlights, and shades to help me identify certain thematic units in my research participants' responses.

based on my own discretionary interpretation informed by my knowledge of the survey situation, the student respondent in my class, and the class material introduced, among other factors. For example, as a teacher who is researching my own students, I was able to identify themes deductively based on what I had explained to my students code-meshing was and would serve and be useful for. Since I had the vantage point of knowing my respondents better than an outside researcher would, I also analyzed some of my themes inductively based on my knowledge of, experience with, and interactions with the student who answered a specific survey question. In the following section, I'll share the main takeaways of my students' survey responses. Then, I'll summarily go over their responses from both surveys. Finally, I'll assign students' responses to thematic categories.

Major Survey Data Takeaways:

- While some students commented on more than one aspect of code-meshing's rhetoricity, each one of my participants addressed at least one of those rhetorical aspects: message, author, audience, or time and place.

- For under half of my participants, code-meshing could be used when writing about issues close to home: personal, family, community, and ethnic group, among others.

- For some, code-meshing could be a subtler response to academe's linguistic exclusionism, but it also extends to conventional audiences the chance to appreciate local and community ways of languaging.

- At least two students intimated that code-meshing may at times be necessary to make certain points about equity and power, and thus allowing the practice of code-meshing makes the writing classroom a more welcoming space for a greater number of college students.

- While some respondents may have been reserved concerning or suspecting of the rhetorical potential of code-meshing in Survey I, they could now see code-meshing as a legitimate rhetorical tool in college writing by Survey II, after engaging in it and seeing others engage in it. Some responses in Survey II (the end-of-study survey) recorded a greater use of code-meshing among participants and a more sophisticated appreciation for code-meshing.

My Code-Meshing Surveys:

Survey I (The Recruitment Survey):

For ENGL 1304 participants, Survey I (the Recruitment Survey; see Appendix B) was the first part of my study that students completed in Spring 2019 after signing the consent forms. This survey was mostly completed in February in 2019, although 1-2 students did not return it until the end of the semester. They may have completed it at home, at school, or at my office. This first survey helped me get more assurance from the consenting student participants about their willingness to partake in the upcoming interviews (3-4 interviews for each study participant) and their willingness to allow me to use their course writing (primarily the three major essays for the class: the Literacy Narrative Essay, the Annotated Bibliography, and the Research-Backed Community-Oriented Solution Essay) for my research analysis.

Many students identified more than one dialect or language practice they used: Southern American English accent, Spanish, Palestinian Arabic, British English (i.e. British spellings), Vietnamese, African-American Vernacular English (AAVE), Houstonian accent, Nepali, Hindi, and Maithili. Some student respondents identified whom they used their community languages or dialects with, such as parents (mother *or* father), grandparents, audience communities, or the

discourse community members they only used that language with. Some identified the locale where they use these language practices. Some identified their ethnic heritage (Tex-Mex, Mexican, Salvadoran, and so on). This information above was mostly recovered from their responses to Questions # 1 and 2 in the survey.

For ENGL 1303 participants, similarly, Survey I (the Recruitment Survey) was the first part of my study that students completed in Fall 2019 after signing the consent forms. This survey was mostly completed in August-September in 2019. The surveys could have been completed at home, at school, or anywhere of the survey respondent's preference. This first survey also helped me confirm student participants' willingness to take part in the upcoming interviews (3-4 interviews for each participant) and ascertain, once again, their willingness to allow me to use their course writing (primarily the three major essays for the class: the Literacy Narrative Essay,[48] the Summary/Strong Response Essay, and the Analysis/Synthesis Essay) for my research analysis.

Many students identified more than one dialect or language practice they engaged in: Bahamianese, Korean, Spanish, Spanish (informal and formal), Chilean Spanish, Spaniard Spanish, Latin American Spanish (El Salvadoran and Honduran), Spanish slang, Spanglish, an informal form of English, Standard English, and Vietnamese. Some student respondents identified whom they used these languages or dialects with, such as parents (mother *or* father), grandparents, audience communities, or the discourse community members they exclusively use that language or dialect with. Some identified the locale where they use these language practices.

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[48] One of the reasons I assigned the literacy narrative to both ENGL 1303 and ENGL 1304 was because I wanted my students to be alert to and accommodating of their dormant rhetorical strengths. The literacy narrative is the place to get in touch with the budding rhetor inside and the place to make a recall to one's most significant rhetorical encounters. It is the place to delve back into one's earlier sensitivities to writing and rhetorical situations.

Some identified their ethnic heritage (Korean, Mexican, Salvadoran, Honduran, and so forth). This information above was mostly recovered from their responses to Questions #2 and 3 in the survey (Survey I was revised the following semester by adding to the beginning of the survey a question identifying the respondent's name).

In their answers to the question about incorporating one linguistic item from their home language or dialect into an academic English sentence, some survey respondents provided full translations of examples of what they would say in that other community language rather than code-meshing their language with academic English. The trope of translation, which is an important skill to have when code-meshing, was recurrent with most to all respondents. Sometimes, sentences were composed completely in another language or dialect besides academic English with minimal to no translation into academic English. A few provided code-meshed sentences. Most of the sentences that included code-meshing instances blended academic English with another dialect of the English language rather than code-meshing their mostly English sentence/s with words or phrases from other languages. Some provided explanations of expressions or idioms usually distinctive of their language or dialect.

In the answer to the following question, "Do you think this or other items from your home language/dialect may be successfully used in academic writing?",[49] although it was a closed-ended question, most respondents surpassed the yes-no responses. Belinda[50] said that she "can easily incorporate [her] language in any paper." Betty thought code-meshing might be very

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[49] While this was Question #4 for ENGL 1304, it became Question #5 for ENGL 1303 after the revision mentioned earlier.

[50] All of my study participants were given the option to select their own pseudonyms. If no response was received about a pseudonym selection, one was made for the non-responding participant, rendering the pseudonym as unidentifiable as possible. This practice was done in consultation with the dissertation director and the IRB's Office of Research Division at UH.

meaningful because "so many people have the culture." David believed that examples from his community language and his home dialect could be used meaningfully; the examples he used in the question before were "y'all need to bring the buggie" and "my tio, mi hijo, and my tia." He also added that writing words based on the way they're pronounced is another way to use code-meshing. Nour answered in the affirmative, but she added that "not all phrases translate equivalently." However, "in these instances," she added, code-meshing could be "a useful tool." For L.P.H,[51] another ENGL 1304 respondent, code-meshing would be successfully used as "just a different way of spelling or replacing a word." For an ESL student, Bruce, code-meshing was considered "helpful" for those who did not speak "fluently with English." Regina thought that it was inappropriate to use her dialect in academic writing (she identified AAVE as her dialect)— she did not see her dialect past the use of profanities. Only one respondent used the short answer of "yes" to the question. While there were a few caveats suggested about the practice, most of the respondents were expectant.

Most ENGL 1303 respondents provided positive responses to Question #5 about the possibility of meaningfully utilizing language items from their home dialect or language in academic writing. Some referenced the use of code-meshing to "show my culture" (Tia) and enhance one's writing when writing about family (Alexa) and personal memories (Fannie) or when the type of writing has a personal aspect to it (Amanda). While others were concerned that code-meshing might be "difficult" (Lauren) or inappropriate for formal compositions such as "research papers," they still thought that code-meshing would work better in "literacy

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[51] This participant chose this pseudonym with this particular dotting and spacing, so I honored both.

narrative[s]/personal essay[s]" (Amanda). All in all for this question, ENGL 1303 respondents believed that code-meshing in academic writing was a rhetorical call on the part of the writer.

In answer to the question (Question #5 for ENGL 1304; Question #6 for ENGL 1303) about how much code-meshing their own academic writing should utilize, answers were quite idiosyncratic. One said "close to one and a half," while another said, "5-10%" but then added that it should be used "sporadically" so as not to "frustrate the reader [and] lose the way it impacts the reader." Yet, another said, "it depends on what the writing is about." Similarly, ENGL 1303 participants varied in their responses. Many gave more quantitative responses about how much code-meshing they should use in their academic writing: "one third or less than that," "10-19%," and "about 10%." A few believed that code-meshing should be employed sparingly depending on the circumstance with "certain words and phrases" as long as one can establish a connection with the audience. In "research papers," however, code-meshing should not be used in order to keep one's writing more "formal" and more "factual." More than half of the responses suggest rhetorical sensitivity and audience awareness on the part of respondents, characteristics much needed when employing code-meshing to any piece of writing.

As for the question "How will you make this code-meshing experience relatable and of value to your own audience?" responses from ENGL 1304 participants ranged from selecting relevant, natural, and common phrases from one's language/dialect—with translations for understandability—to using code-meshing expressions in a way to counteract feelings of "shame" about using one's language and to refute perceived "inferiority" associated with nonmainstream dialects and languages. As for ENGL 1303 participants, responses covered a greater array of reactions: using current words and real-life examples from one's culture, selecting terms relevant to the story line, using everyday familiar language, encouraging the

reader to incorporate their own local language practices in their own writing, explaining the personal significance of the used words to the writer, and showing the audience why code-meshing matters in college writing.

As for the last two questions in Survey I, the survey questions simply elicited additional consents from the study participants about their willingness to partake in upcoming interviews about their code-meshing experiences and their willingness to allow their course writing to be used for research analysis. All respondents answered in the affirmative to the penultimate question in the survey about their willingness to partake in interviews about their code-meshing experiences. As for the final question of the survey about their willingness to allow their course writing to be analyzed in this research study, all but two (both are from ENGL 1304) answered in the affirmative: one added that she would like for her writing to be "anonymous if it's posted or shared somewhere" and another said "Depends."

Survey II:

Survey II see (Appendix C) is the second and final survey in the study. Survey printouts were distributed toward the end of the semester for the class. Seven out of eight student participants completed the survey forms from ENGL 1304, and 6/14 completed the surveys from ENGL 1303. Students completed the survey forms right before submitting their final essays for the class (The Community-Oriented Solution Essay for ENGL 1304; Analysis/Synthesis Essay for ENGL 1303). The participants who did not complete the second survey were "lost to follow-up." [52] This survey covers what the code-meshing experience had been like for the student respondents: their sentiments and attitudes toward their code-meshing, their knowledge of the

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[52] This expression is used by IRB when participants either stop coming to interviews, do not complete surveys, or just do not respond to email requests.

technique, their implementation of code-meshing in this class, their application of it to other life scenarios and classes, what pedagogical materials were the most helpful to understanding the process and practice of code-meshing, what their thoughts were on how to best teach code-meshing, other people's—employers and instructors (imagined or real)—reactions vis-à-vis their possible use of code-meshing, the respondents' audience-based awareness when applying code-meshing, and the potential for code-meshing in other avenues beyond this class. The survey ended with asking the respondents, again, if they were willing to share their writing for the research purposes of this project, to which question they all answered in the affirmative.

As for the response to the second question (the first question asked participants to state their names), which asked the code-meshing participants to describe their overall experiences and attitudes toward code-meshing during the semester, ENGL 1304 participants' responses included the following:

- "Really positive!"
- "fun and easy,"
- "interesting,"
- "Good, I've been more inclined to use outside my English classes,"
- "It has been really good since I don't have a lot of trouble when I tried to code-mesh,"
- "It has been a very interesting journey since it was my first time attempting to codemesh," and
- "It has been an interesting experience. I've liked books that code-mesh in the past. I like that I now have experience to do it."

For ENGL 1303, six participants completed Survey II. The respondents had comparable experiences and reactions toward code-meshing during their first semester in college—for most participants who were freshmen:

- "Pretty easy going and stress free; some thought required,"

- "Pleasant … in order to express myself better,"

- "Enlightening … [code-meshing is also used] into my writing to enhance it,"

- "Influences … how you can personalize writings,"

- "Been going well. At first challenging, but now easier to implement naturally," and

- "Interesting."

While almost all responses were favorable and many provided short answers, most respondents in ENGL 1303 and ENGL 1304 went further to explain how the practice of code-meshing was impactful: it could "enhance," "personalize," or "express," among the other advantages it could offer to one's writing. Some remarked that they liked code-meshing because it was a new experience, and it equipped them with a new composing skill. While a couple of participants admitted that code-meshing needed some work and necessitated some "thought," others more described it as an easy rhetorical measure to apply. In a nutshell, the responses for this survey question mostly revolved around taking ownership of one's writing and one's message in more assertive ways when applying code-meshing to academic prose.

The survey's third question was a multiple-choice question that asked respondents to rate their "knowledge and command" of code-meshing at the end of the semester. The ratings they were supposed to select from were as follows: A- Advanced B- Very good C- Good D- Medium E- Poor F- Unsure. There were a total of 7 responses to this question for ENGL 1304

respondents. Three respondents picked "Very good," three others selected "Good," and one picked *both* "Very good" and "Good." For ENGL 1303 respondents, there were a total of 6 responses collected: Two said "Very good"; Two said "Good"; and Two said "Medium." The slightly more favorable responses from ENGL 1304 respondents could suggest that these more experienced writers from their ENGL 1304 may understand and can relate better to code-meshing's rhetorical worth and/or do not see code-meshing as an additional burden to their writing demands.

Question #4 asked respondents to share two examples of what they thought were "successful instances of code-meshing this semester." The question also asked respondents to indicate where or "in what class or context … these code-meshing instances occur[red]." Most respondents answered the second part of the question: the context of these code-meshing examples. Most student participants noted in what essay for their ENGL 1303 or ENGL 1304 class they used code-meshing: first, second, or third essay for the class. Some explained how it felt and why they code-meshed in these essays. Only a few, however, provided examples of actual code-meshing instances from their papers. It is noteworthy to mention that the question was meant to pick students' brains about their understanding of where they thought they succeeded in their attempts to use code-meshing. It was also geared to investigate the setting or the context the code-meshing instances were utilized in.

For example, with Belinda's response to this question, she indicated that she thought that she used code-meshing examples in her first and second essays, although there was a third assignment in the class. For her first essay, she used "a common phrase in Spanish" and for her second essay "a specific quote from a Hispanic interviewee." David gave two examples ("bland" and "raging herbivores") he'd used to code-mesh in two of his essays and that he thought he had

used successfully. As for the context of where these were used, he indicated that both examples "occured [sic] naturally when I was off campus."

Question #5 queried survey respondents about the readings and pedagogical materials they deemed instrumental to their understanding of code-meshing. Responses and reactions to this question included the following: class discussions, illustrative examples, Blackboard readings, a PPT presentation, scholarly articles, class exercises, homework readings, book chapters, and videos shown in class. In fact, the materials referenced above by the survey respondents were presented in class earlier on in the semester when the concept of code-meshing was introduced. These materials were explained in 2-4 class sessions in the first 2-3 weeks of class.

The following question, Question #6, was about whether they thought that the code-meshing choices they made could be used in other forms of academic writing. Some did not think it was a good idea because code-meshing was viewed as "informal" or because some audience members would be unfamiliar with the language of the code-meshing used. Others thought it was a good idea based on their cultural background, based on the nature of their code-meshing choices, and based on their need to validate their multilingual status. One student suggested that code-meshing might be more successful "if students are taught about it at a younger age." Another answered that code-meshing might be effective in some journals, but not in such journals as "medical journals." One other participant thought that it would only work for "bilinguals," such as Spanish speakers. Only one student reported that she had already tried code-meshing in another class (i.e., in her World Cinema Class). More than half the respondents were primarily concerned with the perception of code-meshing choices used and audience's familiarity with those choices.

Question #7 asked participants to identify how much of their academic writing had used code-meshing in different venues this semester: their English class, other classes, or any other academic-writing occasion. Most respondents have only used code-meshing in this class (ENGL 1303 and ENGL 1304). One respondent stated that "all of [his] essay[s] thus far have code meshing." Another said that he "code meshed around 4 times this semester." One said that in addition to using code-meshing in this class, she also used it in "personal writing." Another respondent identified two places in the English class where she used code-meshing: the Literacy Narrative essay and the final essay. Finally, only one student stated that she code-meshed in all of the classes that included essay writing. It is quite understandable that student participants had varying levels of code-meshing at this point, especially that for most of them this was their first encounter with code-meshing.

For Question #8 "Do you think you could/should code-mesh more often from your community language/dialect in academic writing?" more than half of the respondents suggested that it was a good idea to code-mesh more because code-meshing had the potential to "strengthen writing" and to project one's "voice," so many of them decided that they would code-mesh to a greater extent in the future. Respondents gave different reasons for why they believed it was advisable to code-mesh in their academic compositions. Some thought it would make their writing "more relatable & creatively unique." Some said it solely depended on the writing task. One respondent stated that she would code-mesh more if her writing was leaning more toward the rhetorical appeal of pathos, "the audience's feelings." Another respondent thought, "Yes and no," for code-meshing should not be "overused." Almost all of the respondents seemed to commit more to the practice in future writing tasks with a couple of reservations or limitations from a few respondents.

Questions #9 gauged student participants' expectations of the impact code-meshing would have on other instructors and employers who would be reading the texts the participants had composed for them with code-meshing elements. Some respondents thought that other teachers and professionals would not have an "issue" with code-meshing because they would "appreciate" it, be "impressed" by it, consider it a culturally-rich learning experience, or find it "interesting." Other respondents were concerned about the "confusion" that code-meshing might cause if some audience members were not familiar with the code-meshing choices used. A respondent thought that readers would be "confused at first, but they would find it interesting." Some expressed their "fear" because of the "casual" or "unprofessional" nature of code-meshing. Another respondent stated that the audience members would not necessarily feel a certain way about it because they might not be her "intended audience" for the code-meshing choices she included in her text. One multilingual respondent thought that monolinguals might find code-meshing "stressful or unnecessary." It is fair to say that respondents were split over this issue, almost in half, so to speak.

Just like with Survey I, Question #10 in Survey II inquired about how much audience-consciousness was exercised when respondents' code-meshing choices were embedded in their course writing during the semester. While Survey I had attempted to gauge respondents' rhetorical sensitivity toward their future code-meshing, Survey II was meant to elicit respondents' thoughts on how considerate their code-meshing examples had been of their audiences' needs in terms of "relatability" and literate "value." Some respondents explained how successful their code-meshing had been in terms of relatability and value; they referenced in what kinds of writing assignments or with what types of audiences (Hispanic, for instance) they made their code-meshing choices "relatable" by using certain sayings the audience members

were familiar with. For some, the value of these code-meshing choices was in the fact that they made the audience "feel more comfortable using their own voice in their own writing" and the fact that they offered illustrative examples to the audience members so they "can add their [own] personal touch to academic writing [through code-meshing]." A few thought that some of their code-meshing choices were "slightly forced" but could be "improved" upon. One respondent reported that making one's code-meshing relatable would be "more difficult for someone who doesn't speak the same language." Similarly, another explained that her own "main audience (Spanish speakers or foreigners) can relate more" than other audiences, more specifically monolingual audiences. While almost all respondents spoke of their efforts in making their code-meshing choices relatable, they still acknowledged that their audience's familiarity was a major factor in the process.

Question #11 requested of respondents to volunteer their own advice and recommendations on the best practices for teaching and for incorporating code-meshing in academic writing. The advice and recommends were two pronged: those addressed to writing teachers and those addressed to fellow writers. For the pedagogical part of respondents' advice, a few respondents recommended showing more examples of code-meshing, including "more professional" examples. One respondent recommended receiving more feedback on their code-meshing. Another suggested that more class assignments should require code-meshing so that students could have a more practice with code-meshing. "Engaging students in code-meshing activities … (like my professor did this semester)" and "the way my professor taught code meshing" were other pedagogical recommendations. For the personal practice part of the question, suggestions about code-meshing were made to fellow college writers: "Be original & go with your gut," not looking at code-meshing as a "requirement," "trial and error. Find out

what works and what does not," code-meshing that feels "seamless: [neither] forced [nor] formulaic," checking to make sure code-meshing makes sense, maintaining "flow," "embrac[ing] [code-meshing] when it feels right," and "input[ting] your own everyday language." Overall, more than half the advice was heartening tips directed to those writers who were unfamiliar with code-meshing, just learning about it, or too hesitant to try it out.

Major Code-Meshing Themes from Both Classes (ENGL 1304 and ENGL 1303):

After collecting both surveys, I examined the survey data collected noting the most recurrent patterns and most frequent themes—as explained earlier in the chapter—inductively, deductively, semantically, and less frequently latently. To search for analytical categories, I color-coded some of those words, expressions, and sentences that pointed to certain prevalent thematic foci and repeatedly went back over them in different places of my survey data to determine how often and how saliently they featured. I also looked at the survey questions themselves to help me identify certain other themes that I suspected existed in my participants' responses. In my theme analysis below, as a teacher invested in hearing directly from my students about pedagogical practices in the writing classroom, I'll be privileging my student participants' voices, opinions, and reactions about their code-meshing experiences over other scholars' voices and interpretations by heavily citing from my student-produced data.

At the end of the analysis process, I am able to identify three major thematic categories. These categories are to a degree ordered by which is the most plausible thematic interpretation, as explained earlier, based on the appearance of certain lexical items and thematic codes in the responses. These three major categories below also touch upon other less major, minor themes and topics, whose discussion was woven into the textual analysis of the larger themes:

Code-Meshing as a Rhetorically Informed Strategy:

One of the most striking foci discerned from both surveys is respondents' special attention to the composing or rhetorical situation when engaging in code-meshing.[53] While not directly identifying a "rhetorical situation" in the scholarly sense of the term, respondents' survey answers addressed multiple rhetorical elements in response to the practice of code-meshing. Some of these rhetorical aspects analyzed in this thematic category were as follows: audience, message, clarity, purpose, and the right time and place. Suresh Canagarajah believes that code-meshing should only be used in "rhetorically compelling ways in academic texts" ("The Place" 598). In fact, Canagarajah's conception of code-meshing reaches all the way down to the smallest rhetorical unit. For him, a writer's composing or rhetorical situation should determine when, where, and how much code-meshing should occur in a text. V. A. Young et al. also believe that for code-meshing to flourish in the writing classroom, language instruction and writing pedagogy should be understood "through a broader lens and focus on the rhetoric of choice rather than on surface errors" (*Other People's English* 145). In other words, a writer's code-meshing choices should be built on rhetorical grounds before anything else.

My survey-based information below should offer new reasons to reconsider additional rhetorical aspects of code-meshing not covered by Canagarajah or Young or re-see in a new light rhetorical aspects of code-meshing they'd addressed.[54] Before moving on to individual examples of students' views on the rhetorical effectiveness of code-meshing, I'd like to highlight some main takeaways I've come to see prominent in my respondents' answers. While some students

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[53] See the discussion of *the rhetorical situation* in Chapter 2.

[54] Additionally, although both Canagarajah and Young highlight some rhetorical components of code-meshing for college writers, neither of them discusses any qualitative data about code-meshing through the use of surveys or with FYC college writers.

commented on more than one aspect of code-meshing's rhetoricity, each of my participants addressed at least one of those rhetorical aspects: message, author, audience, time and place. Their audiences' positive perception of code-meshing was a key reason for participants' perceptions of success in code-meshing. Some student participants attributed the effectiveness of code-meshing to the kind or genre of writing a rhetor is engaging in. While some respondents may have been reserved concerning or suspecting of the rhetorical potential of code-meshing in Survey I, they could now see code-meshing as a legitimate rhetorical tool in college writing by Survey II, after engaging in it and seeing others engage in it. A few respondents referenced translation as a means to help audience members navigate code-meshing more swimmingly.

Almost all survey respondents exhibited a certain command of rhetorical sensitivity when asked about when and how to use code-meshing. Thanks to their reflecting on appropriate code-meshing choices for their writing, most respondents seemed to have developed a mindfulness of audience needs and expectations, in the sense that they were quite careful not to let their audiences down, give them the wrong impression of the message, or come across as patronizing or didactic to them when injecting a code-meshing instance. Also, the use of code-meshing, other respondents thought, was judged at the discretion of the author and based on authorial purpose. Many participants, however, thought that the application of code-meshing should be determined, before all else, based on how clear the message remains after a code-meshing example has been added; in other words, if the intelligibility of the message intended is compromised because of a code-meshing choice, then that code-meshing choice should either be revised or deleted altogether.

While not intentional, the rhetorical value that many participants in my ENGL 1303 and ENGL 1304 classes assigned to code-meshing might have been prompted by those classes'

readings and activities on rhetorical concepts (most importantly the message and audience), writer autonomy, and code-meshing. Also, at the start of that Spring 2019 semester—as I do with my other FYC classes—I had frontloaded various explanations and materials on rhetorical concepts, covering the different elements, parts, and appeals of the rhetorical situation. In addition to the rhetorical instruction I'd provided, I had explained to my students how code-meshing should be understood rhetorically and used as a means to solidify one's argument where an academic English sentence might fail or might not work as well. My position as the teacher of the course and as the primary audience of their writing could have prompted them to entertain certain expectations they thought I might hold. In other words, my presence and my construction of code-meshing activities and surveys may have contributed to their responses.

Belinda's response to the amount of code-meshing in academic writing was also about one of the three elements of the rhetorical triad: the message, or more specifically the clarity and fluency of the message. To Belinda, code-meshing should be used "more often since it facilitates writers to express themselves." Belinda's comment "since it facilitates writers to express themselves" indicates that she was completely sold on the idea of code-meshing as an essentially effective rhetorical appeal to ensure clarity or as a discursive move that writers necessarily feel more comfortable with for its appeal to their rhetorical heritages. Belinda may have been indirectly inclined to give such credence to code-meshing's inherent ability to be rhetorically effective on account of several reasons: first, her own personal experience with code-meshing per se or a similar practice; second, her interpretation and experience with the reading materials and class practices that I used with the class at the beginning of Spring 2019; third, the constructed nature of the assignment and survey requesting feedback on the rhetoricity of code-meshing.

A couple of the responses to the same question determined that the use of code-meshing should be made on generic considerations; in other words, the type or the genre of the piece of writing should decide how much code-meshing college writing should incorporate. To David, "narrative prose" should embed more code-meshing as opposed to "research based/academic based writting [sic]" where he would "use standard [English]." Alexa, another respondent, agreed with David about keeping code-meshing out of certain genres, such as "medical journals." For her, other genres or journals, however, may make better use of code-meshing "to help get points across more effectively."[55] In other words, even within genres, it was more specific for Alexa: code-meshing should only be used with those journals that could use it to enhance its prose's effective delivery.

By contrast, Zach's response was simply "none." In Survey I, he thought that none of academic English's texts should employ any code-meshing. In other words, he did not think any amount of code-meshing was appropriate for academic writing. Although Zach had stated earlier in the survey that he had used and spoken three other languages or dialects (Hindi, Nepali, and Maithili), he may not have been yet quite sold on the idea of merging more than one discourse all in the same text; perhaps he thought code-meshing would be too radical, too confusing, or too premature, at least for first-year composition beginning writers. However, in Survey II, Zach was more willing and open about using code-meshing in academic writing; it may be that his experience with code-meshing in his class writing showed him the potential that code-meshing might hold for academic writing.

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[55] It might be worth mentioning that although both bilingual (English and Spanish) respondents had provided examples in Southern American English and Spanish when prompted to share samples of their own code-meshing in their surveys, they only used American colloquial speech/American slang in their major papers for their ENGL 1303 (for Alexa) and ENGL 1304 (for David) classes.

Responses to the question about making one's code-meshings relatable to one's audience varied based on participants' understanding, appreciation, and experience with code-meshing. In response to "How will you make this code-meshing experience relatable and of value to your own audience/readers?" Nour attributed code-meshing to the idea of "supplementality" to one's rhetorical purpose; in other words, unless an instance or an injection of code-meshing enriches or enhances "the topic and is beneficial to the work," it would only "detrack [sic] from the writing." Although she might have been only minimally familiar with the practice of code-meshing in college writing, her first priority as a writer was the rhetorical effectiveness that any of her code-meshing choices could endow her academic writing with.

While Nour's response was more along the lines of the rhetorical purpose, David's was in line with the perception the audience may hold about this stylistic move: It should be "casual," "warm," and "natural" as opposed to "isolating + clunky." David's comment bespeaks a deep care toward one's audience. In fact, audience consciousness is highly stressed in any aspect of writing for college. The idea is always to make the audience feel comfortable with the reading or at least reduce their anxiety if the reading isn't something they are reading for pleasure. Also, using "casual" register with the right audience will make the reading a lot easier and faster to complete. By contrast, a reader's bumpy reading experience reflects poorly on the message the writer is trying to impart, which may depreciate the ethical appeal of the text.

Similarly, Belinda's concern was for the audience members' comfort during the reading experience. Their level of familiarity with the code-meshing expressions used was paramount to her rhetorical enterprise. Although she chose to use linguistic items from her own language, these, to her, had better be "common" enough so that her audience would be able to relate to such usage and to the argument forwarded through such usage. In fact, one of the ways audience

members may come to "value" a writer's unique linguistic choices, Belinda continued, was by the common ground the writer would try to establish with them: code-meshing choices that both the writer and readers were familiar with, albeit in slightly varying degrees and different dimensions.

For Zach, whether the audience is familiar with the code-meshing injections was not necessarily a deal-breaker. Zach would make his code-meshings relatable and valuable to his audience through his translations of the code-meshing instances he embedded into his text. This might be because of the less well-known languages Zach had stated he might use: Hindi, Nepali, and Maithili. Since these languages were less likely to be familiar to his general audiences in a Western university, Zach saw his translations to be the answer to make his code-meshing more relatable and valuable to his audience members. Zach's response could also have been prompted by my recommendation in class to use translation as a steppingstone toward educating the audience about the meaning and significance of the writer's code-meshing choices. Or it could be because Zach did not want to take any chances with the deliverability of his message and risk getting his message misapprehended.

L.P.H stated that code-meshing should "allow the audience/readers to have a broader view of how other people around the world write." For him, code-meshing should be a teaching tool to help readers have a more inclusive understanding of the different types of writing and meaning-making available everywhere. L.P.H could be looking at the greater implications of code-meshing and the multiple uses it would have for college writers that come from different backgrounds with different areas of specialization and different rhetorical needs to fulfill. Writing should be a universal literate practice, and code-meshing is one way to help enhance the universality of one's argument and message.

Code-Meshing as a Personalizing Tool of Writing:

My survey data has shown me that code-meshing has extended or has the potential to extend to my student participants the opportunity to imbue their academic texts with an additional personal feel previously inaccessible to them: their local (community) linguistic voices. In addition to personal discovery and exploration, I've learned from my research that code-meshing can become this discursive space that is explicitly and distinctly the writer's, namely with the linguistic additions that are exclusive to their local discourse. As explained in Chapter 2, Young in *Other People's English: Code-Meshing, Code-Switching, and African American Literacy* believes that circumventing the incorporation of one's personal linguistic voice into more official forms of writing leads to "artificiality" and affectation in one's writing. In other words, for student writers to take ownership of their prose, they need to inject some personally wielded choices into their writing so as to more piercingly project their composing personalities.

However, unlike Young, I contend that a code-meshing writer does not need to compose all, most, or a large portion of their academic writing in their home discourse to successfully personalize their writing and project their local discursive voice. A smaller portion of code-meshing than what Young expects or what his academic writing examples seem to demand may just deliver the same effect, as is attested below by my study participants.[56] In fact, Appalachian writers have for powerful long enunciated their regional affiliation, sprinkling their academic writing with occasional smidgens of local language choices. In "In My Own Country," Silas House talks about language prejudice that Appalachians have suffered at the hands of others.

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[56] Please see Young's article "Should Writers Use They Own English?" to get an idea of how much code-meshing he may expect from student writers. Also, see his examples of others code-meshing in Chapter 1.

While writing for an academic audience, he does code-mesh at times where he deems appropriate. In one instance where he is describing Appalachians' suspicion of other Appalachians who seem to have shed some of their linguistic tradition, he code-meshes into his explanation of what Appalachians would call such individuals: those who "talk proud" and those who try to "get above their raising."[57] Amanda Hayes is another Appalachian writer who code-meshed in her doctoral dissertation—her dissertation title, acknowledgements section, and throughout her dissertation—peppering her diss. with local Appalachian elements, such as "ain't," "wudn't," "cuz," "gon," "you'uns," and others.[58] However minimal their code-meshing was, it still helped deliver the message more vividly and in their local linguistic voices.

Here are some of the major takeaways I have been able to identify for this thematic category: first, students believe that code-meshing can be used when writing about issues close to home: personal, family, community, and ethnic group, among others; second, code-meshing can be used to deepen one's connections with community and family members; third, through using one's discursive voice, code-meshing becomes a means to establish rapport with one's readers; fourth, writing strictly in academic jargon may alienate some readers; fifth, one should not get too personal with their code-meshing choices to the point that it impedes effective communication of certain parts of the message; sixth, the use of code-meshing by more college writers eventually normalizes and legitimizes the practice in academic writing.

For example, for one of my ENGL 1303 participants from Survey I, the practice of code-meshing afforded her the opportunity to connect with the audience in the writing of her college

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[57] "Talking proud" is sounding like someone from the Northern United States, and "getting above [one's] raising" means to put on airs or act differently than one's own tradition would allow.

[58] Hayes' 2015 dissertation, "You'uns: Toward Appalachian Rhetorical Sovereignty," is a defense of Appalachian dialects as "different" rather than "wrong" and advocates for people in Appalachia as rhetorically sovereign. In 2018, Hayes turned her dissertation into a book, *The Politics of Appalachian Identity*, wherein she also occasionally code-meshed from Appalachian English.

essays. By embedding individualistic linguistic turns of phrases and terminology from her different linguistic groups into the academic text she was composing, code-meshing granted Amanda the necessary platform to "input [her] voice as a writer" and forge "a connection w/ [her] reader."[59] Amanda continued: "In doing so [in code-meshing], I can, as a writer, describe me as a *person* and my background through my language" (my emphasis). In other words, for Amanda to come fully alive on the page, she would need to use her local idiosyncratic voice, or perhaps her idiolect.[60] Put differently, the use of personal language was her gateway to more descriptive prose and thus more effective reaching out to and rapport with her audience. Adding just a few discursive elements—not necessarily half the page—from one's language is just enough to more distinctively flavor one's academic writing with one's individualistic linguistic style.

Similarly, in the second survey, students made recommendations for using code-meshing because of its personalizing capabilities. David, for instance, thought that code-meshing was quite key to any writer seeking to establish "a more personal interaction w/ the reader. You stop being an author that is unrelatable + become approachable." In other words, to some audience members—perhaps those less fond of academic discourse—writing strictly in academic jargon could be alienating. In fact, what David could be suggesting is that considering that a lot of writers are constantly invested in being "approachable" and "relatable," they should consider adding code-meshing elements to their rhetorical projects. While Amanda, as explained above, seemed to be in agreement with David and others, she still offered the cautionary tale that fellow writers make sure that their code-meshing choices still maintained a "flow within the rest of

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[59] Not Amanda Hayes, but one of my ENGL 1303 research participants who happened to have that pseudonym.
[60] An idiolect is a person's characteristic use of a language, including speech patterns, phraseology, and syntax.

[their] writing." That is to say, code-meshing injections need to be thoroughly revised after being applied in one's text to ensure coherence and intelligibility.

For a few other respondents, code-meshing may also be commissioned for more familiar types of (academic) writing: types of writing that touch upon personal issues. When some issues ring too personal for some writers, a warm language tool such as code-meshing might be more apt than a more detached form of writing. While this has not been as explicitly accentuated with Young, I argue that code-meshing's usage of local languages, dialects, and voices can prove the most opportune for such occasions as writing about one's personal issues, family situations, and community concerns. Put differently, while some writers are able to utilize code-meshing in all or most of their writing occasions, others may only be able to implement the practice when the occasion is personal or more visceral.

To illustrate, Eva, one of my ENGL 1303 research participants, suggested that if a student writer wished to "bring across personal issues [or] include more personality" into his/her writing, the use of personal dialect or language could "personalize writings" a lot better. Perhaps the conveyance of some innermost elements is best performed when a part of the writer's local, as opposed to social, self—namely his individualistic discourse/idiolect—is engrafted into the writing. However, like Amanda above, Eva also reminded us that one's personal language choices should always be applied "fluidly" for the practice of code-meshing to render successful communication and desired impressions. Rightfully so, a writer should not get too specialized in their language choices that it chips away at the delivery of the intended message or the smoothness of the narrative they are attempting to recount.

Parts of my survey data show that students believe that code-meshing is one way to deepen one's connections to family and community members one feels passionately about and

attempts to appeal to. The personal, intimate nature of code-meshing makes it more appropriate for more familiar and inner-circle audience members. For instance, Alexa deemed code-meshing a good composing practice to use while writing about family. Writing about family is a highly personal composing act, and thus requires a personalizing composing technique, and code-meshing provides that. Betty agreed that code-meshing was a good way to make one's writing more successfully "appeal to [one's] culture" and to render one's prose more "relatable to the Hispanic reader … since they can recognize particular sayings they're familiar with." To put it simply, code-meshing offers college writers a technique to appeal to their community members through the use of relatable community language choices. This idea of utilizing code-meshing in order to solidify one's affinity to family and community was not clearly voiced by either Canagarajah or Young.[61]

My data also indicates that students believe that one's code-meshing choices themselves can be a gateway for others to adopt the practice. By the mere exercise of this rhetorical strategy, the writer signals to the reader that code-meshing is an appropriate composing practice to personalize one's prose and is quite an acceptable communicative performance to use in academic and college writing. The successful use of code-meshing by a given college writer enables and emboldens alike writers to follow suit and take advantage of their local language practices in the prose they produce for their writing classes. In the second survey, Alexa stated that her own code-meshing choices "helped [her] audience feel more comfortable using their own voice in their writing as well." Likewise, Lauren noted this instructive aspect of code-meshing in helping show fellow college students another way of enhancing their personal writing

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[61] Neither Young nor Canagarajah used survey data in their discussions of code-meshing. Although Canagarajah *did* reference that he used surveys, he never shared any data from his survey responses (2013).

because one's code-meshing examples "show the audience that they can add their personal touch to academic writing." In other words, when using code-meshing in one's prose as a way to open up about personal issues, students believe that the writer is indirectly encouraging readers to employ code-meshing when needing to open up about their personal issues.

Code-Meshing as a Liberatory, Political Tool for Self-Identity and Community Affirmation:

While code-meshing has shown that it can be readily wielded as a personalizing implement in academic writing, my survey data proposes that students believe that it can also help to advance social justice through projecting a rhetor's politically invested voice. The responses I gathered from my study suggest that code-meshing can help student writers partake politically in speaking out and pushing for change when they introduce nascent language forms and items previously left out from college writing. Code-meshing has afforded my student writers the opportunity to color their texts politically so that the latter can now smack of their larger ideological persuasions and epistemological concerns. Put differently, code-meshing can give student writers the space to command their own political agendas rather than blindly observing the pre-approved political expectations that some academic discourse pushes for.

V. A. Young sees code-meshing as a powerful means for community validation and identity assertion much needed for the eventual liberation of student writers from the dictates of institutionalized language practices. In fact, in *Other People's English: Code-Meshing, Code-Switching, and African American Literacy*, Young argues for code-meshing to the replacement of code-switching, which he believes, while coming from "well-intentioned educators," is a form of "legalized racial segregation" (9). Code-meshing, for Young, is meant to disturb and subvert the status quo of language discourse so as to reconstruct new discursive realities that make academic discourse adapt to. This attempt to reduce the mainstream politicization of academic prose

proposed by code-meshing allows student writers to break away from some of the linguistic choices imposed by dominant discursive practices and driven by automated ideological paradigms, helping students interrogate their marginalized affiliations or statuses.

Based on my analysis of my students' responses within the context of this theme, I've been able to identify some major takeaways. For many of my participants, code-meshing has become a tool for vindicating their individual and community identities and their local ways of learning, writing, and communicating. For a few, code-meshing can pose a subtler response to academe's linguistic exclusionism, but it also extends to conventional audiences the chance to appreciate local and community ways of languaging. At least two students intimated that code-meshing may at times be necessary to make certain points about equity and power, and thus allowing the practice of code-meshing makes the writing classroom a more welcoming space for a greater number of college students. At least three respondents were quite apprehensive about how they would be perceived when and if they engaged in their home dialects or languages in more formal settings.[62] Finally, some responses in Survey II (the end-of-study survey) recorded a greater use of code-meshing among participants, a higher sense of comfort with using code-meshing, and a more advanced appreciation for code-meshing.

For my survey respondents, code-meshing was one way to make greater space for many, especially nonmainstream, writers to participate in the college linguistic enterprise. Students and scholars in academia come from diverse backgrounds with multifaceted experiences in language, culture, and thought. Therefore, it would be a great waste to exclude unique and creative language practices that nonmainstream scholars and college writers possess if both groups were

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[62] Please refer to Eva's example in Chapter 2 for more on this point of respondents' apprehension of public perception.

only expected to adhere to academic language and rhetorical practices. For David, academia

should already be heading in the direction of advocating for unique language practices to be

utilized in academic writing and on the path of "accept[ing] code-meshing more to create more

diverse space for scholars." David's comment is indicative of the need that some college student

writers may feel for code-meshing their discourses in their writing for school but do not seem to

have the space to share them in. Said college student writers will usually fear repercussions or

judgments for daring to break the norm of academic discourse and code-mesh their local

language practices in it.

Betty's response, too, was more politically motivated. For her, there was much "shame"

about using one's "home language in a non-home setting." Therefore, through the use of code-

meshing, she was hoping to "diminish these feelings [of shame] or at least acknowledge them

[namely home languages]." Betty's answer suggests that giving the rhetorical space to one's and

another's home language in college writing is one step toward vindicating one's and others'

home discourse/s and thus one's and others' identities as college student/s. In tandem with V. A.

Young, Betty believed that code-meshing was one answer to end linguistic shaming and make

student writers feel more welcome in the writing classroom through acknowledging their local

linguistic practices (Young "Your Average Nigga," 704).

Likewise, Regina's use of code-meshing was intended to "disprove what some people

think that [is,] AAVE is inferior or that using it means you're not intelligent." Critically

responding to people's assumptions and preconceptions about one's background or home

language through the use of code-meshing seemed to be Regina's proposed solution to the

problem of linguistic prejudice. In fact, code-meshing now becomes one of the better rhetorically

calculated moves that a writer advocating for linguistic equity could use with conventionally

thinking audience members. Rather than calling out some audiences on their linguistic

exclusionism, for Regina, code-meshing offers a subtler strategy to make otherwise conservative

audiences get initially more comfortable with the use of non-canonical linguistic choices in

academic writing. Code-meshing eventually gives the audience the chance to find value in the

nonmainstream linguistic choices used.

Bruce's response that a code-meshing experience could be relatable when the student

writer "make[s] [the audience] see why code-meshing is necessary in writing academic[ally]"

indicates that the writer should take the extra effort toward showing one's audience members the

necessity for using code-meshing in college writing. Describing code-meshing as "necessary"

speaks to the writer's need to allow different rhetorics, academic and local, to merge and get

infused in the same text. Bruce may be proposing code-meshing as an essential political tool to

help equalize the meaning-making grounds for all classes of rhetoric, the "high" and seemingly

"low," the privileged and the underprivileged, the mainstream and the nonmainstream, the fully

enfranchised and the un(der)franchised;[63] in other words, a code-meshed text becomes the

"hybrid text" (Canagarajah) which comprises multiple layers of language, privilege, and power

for the different forces operating in the one text.

With my research participants, code-meshing has proven to be one way to showcase

one's community and to enunciate one's cultural affiliation. For Tia, code-meshing "certain

words [from her community language] can be used to show [her] culture and enhance [her]

writing." Lauren made a similar statement about using code-meshing in one's writing as a way to

intimate to one's fellow student writers and other audience members the usefulness of

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[63] Paul Butler offers a more elaborate explanation of the meaning-making capabilities of both high and low styles in *The Writer's Style* (61-64).

"express[ing] their background" and the significance of "includ[ing] their culture/language into their writing." Code-meshing here gives student writers the agency to add their own spin on the academic text, leaving their unique discursive imprint on academic prose. In other words, code-meshing does not only help with affirming one's community and background affiliation, but it also contributes to the effectiveness of enhancing one's prose, making it "pop" for the writer and the audience, as Lauren put it.

My research participants also explained that code-meshing has engendered greater feelings of courage for them to become bolder in using their home languages. Like other respondents in the study, Alexa explained that one of her problems had always been shying away from using her own language, Spanish, in professional settings. Alexa used to fear "judgment" and perhaps "miscommunication" for using her own language, which had prompted her to stick to standard English in all formal or semiformal occasions. However, after engaging in multiple code-meshing exercises in class, Alexa admitted in the second survey that she had now developed enough nerve to utilize her own language and her home-grown "words in [her] essays w/o fear." In fact, Alexa explained that this newly born sense of linguistic confidence and self-assurance reflected more favorably on her life as a whole: "In my general life I have become more comfortable speaking in Spanish and English meshed." In the same way that code-meshing Alexa's own language into her own college writing meant and felt like "a breath of fresh air" of linguistic liberation, for Fannie code-meshing granted her the "sense of home" that has been absented from much of her writing for school.[64] Both participants found code-meshing to be a redeeming force and a liberatory writing tactic that academic prose should avail itself of.

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[64] For more on Fannie's response and follow-up analysis, please refer to Chapter 2.

Themes Crossing More than One Data Set:

As a researcher who is studying his own class, it was important to me to see if my themes above crossed over into my other data sets in this study, as opposed to only belonging to one data set. The rhetorical and community (which by extension includes the political theme) themes in particular seem to permeate surveys, interviews, and student writing. For example, in one of her surveys, Belinda, an ENGL 1304 student participant, demonstrated her rhetorical awareness in that her code-meshing choices should be made "relatable" to her audience and be made to "facilitate" one's writing. Her audience mindfulness suggests that her rhetorical consciousness was enhanced due to her need or desire to code-mesh into her writing. This rhetorical awareness was also exhibited in student writing, another data set. In her literacy narrative essay, Belinda herself selected her code-meshing choices based on her topic, family role in her career choice, and in order to appeal to her primarily Spanish-speaking family members. Signaling her family's concern with her career choices, Belinda code-meshed two sentences from Spanish: "'Y que vas a estudiar mija?'" and "'y que estas estudiando?'" Further, in order to widen her audience appeal—to both Spanish-speaking and English-speaking readers—Belinda code-meshed an American colloquialism, "my 'thing,'" to give a nod to her passion about her newly adopted major, Media Production.

An ENGL 1303 participant, Fannie explained in her final survey that code-meshing offered her the "sense of home" or community that had been missing from her academic writing. In other words, her code-meshing choices provided her the nostalgic means to reminisce about her home community back in Mexico and re-affirm her ties with her community members. In another data set, interviews, when I asked Fannie about the process of her code-meshing, she explained that code-meshing "wasn't so hard" because the problem she wrote about, the low

minimum wage in Mexico, was "very close" to and much affected her family and community in

Mexico. Put differently, Fannie's code-meshing choices were very much invested in her pointing

out her community affiliation *and* her community problem, attempting to make an actionable

statement about the worsening state of the economy in her home country.

Conclusion:

Based on my study participants' responses to the two surveys I administered in Spring

and Fall 2019, my data suggests that code-meshing seems to be helping student writers create

and articulate meaning in more intimate and immediate voices: the student writers' very own

language voices. Although the process of code-meshing may appear messy at first blush, the

literate act of entangling the personal with the academic enriches the student writer's product

text, intriguing and motivating the intended audience members to adopt similar rhetorical

practices in their own discourse. Consequently, college writers involved in code-meshing

become better able to validate their linguistic identities through the rhetorical act of blending the

language of their personal culture with that of the school culture. Eventually, the code-meshed

text becomes the concourse of diverse voices, identities, and rhetorical traditions through

concomitantly merging different language practices (these individually shaped and those

academically dictated), all of which contribute to co-constructing the one text.

As shown thus far in the chapter, my survey data seems to suggest and accentuate some

content areas of code-meshing previously not clearly heeded by many of my predecessors,

including Young and Canagarajah: code-meshing can be utilized to deepen one's connections

with community and family members; code-meshing can be deployed to address political issues

outside of the code-meshing writers' communities; a couple of students believed that the use of

code-meshing by more college writers would eventually normalize and legitimize the practice in

academic writing; and with incrementally greater incorporation of code-meshing elements in college writing, student writers experience a higher sense of comfort with embedding code-meshing and savor a more advanced appreciation for code-meshing.

Giving this much authority to students' language voices and experiences in college writing classes through the practice of code-meshing may initially be a challenging but eventually a necessary step in the rhetorical experience of the 21st century composition classroom. Students in the 21st century belong to more complex discourse communities and rhetorical groups than any other previous generation: online communities, gaming communities, multiple peer communities, newly developing occupational and professional communities, among many more. All these communities abound in riches unbeknownst to writing teachers of previous generations. Therefore, writing teachers and researchers might expand the possibilities of code-meshing by figuring out other composing needs that code-meshing might capitalize on college students' emerging composing modalities. Calculated research and pedagogical measures will ultimately help make the writing classroom space a common place more inclusive of and hospitable to all student writers hailing from different ways of discoursing and being.

CHAPTER FOUR:

My Participants' Interview Responses: Data and Analysis

In this chapter, I provide more definitive thematic categories (major and minor) from the interview responses of my writing students about their code-meshing experiences framed in the context of a teacher research project. While building on other scholars' conceptions of code-meshing mentioned in the previous chapters, through my more elaborate showing and subsequent analyzing of the interview responses I collected from my ENGL 1303 and ENGL 1304 classes, I'm investigating as a classroom inquiry how code-meshing has *actually* been faring for beginning and semi-beginning college student code-meshers in my UH's FYC classes. These focused exchanges with my students, which totaled close to 40 interviews for this project, have been primarily centered on the rhetorical and processual thematics of their code-meshing experiences.[65] While the rhetorical thematic category is a constant throughout my data chapters, my code-meshing students' processual awareness is an additional major analytical category specific to this chapter.[66]

While Rhetoric and Composition's relative dearth of interview data in FYC classes makes tracing the development of their participants' code-meshing experiences partial and incomplete, I hope to rectify this gap through providing interview responses covering the sequence of three major essay assignments for my FYC participants. Also, my interview data

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[65] In *Translanguaging outside the Academy: Negotiating Rhetoric and Healthcare in the Spanish Caribbean* (2018), Rachel Bloom-Pojar argues that Young and Canagarajah were not as focused on *process* as they were on *product*.

[66] As will be explained later in the chapter, the sub-themes of my rhetorical foci (my second major theme) of my interview questions are as follows: code-meshing students' audience expectations, their intended rhetorical messages, and their rhetorical omissions. The sub-themes of the processual foci (my first major theme) included the following: the process and duration of code-meshing choices and the provenance of these choices (real vs. romanticized). I eventually added a third thematic category, which included my student participants' writerly consciousness: writer's roles and anxieties.

pool will be gathered from FYC study participants from multiple classes, most of whom are in their first semester or year in college. While still a smaller interview data sample than in bigger research studies in Rhetoric and Composition or education, my gleaning of interview responses from my students and my teacher-informed perspective offers me insight into how favorable/unfavorable and how effective/ineffective code-meshing has been for this student demographic, namely FYC, across several sites.

My showing of relevant interview excerpts and consecutive analyses has been done through collecting, categorizing, coding, and analyzing my own student participants' interview responses and semi-detailed accounts of their code-meshing experiences. These code-meshing experiences were captured in the form of audio-recorded real-life conversations I conducted with my students in the same semester they utilized code-meshing for this study. These qualitative accounts from my willing FYC study participants about their code-meshing experiences through interviews have allowed me to establish deeper connections with my interviewees and have helped me obtain fuller answers to my inquiries concerning college writers' code-meshing choices. Being flexible with my participants' schedules may also have contributed to making my research participants more comfortable and more willing to provide longer and/or well-thought-out interview responses. Through flexible, laid-back interviews,[67] I hope that I was able to elicit fairly authentic, relaxed responses concerning interviewees' attitudes and reactions toward code-meshing in their FYC classes with me. However, my teacherly presence may have unwittingly and unintentionally spawned some artful responses on the part of some of my student interviewees. Toward the end of the chapter, I couple parts of my interview data with survey data

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[67] Before hitting the "record" button on my computer, I would start by asking my interviewees how they were doing, I would elicit their feedback about class content, or I would remind them by providing information about the momentary interview, among other warm-up questions.

in Chapter 3 and student-writing data in Chapter 5 to provide more layers of qualitative triangulation to my proposed findings. Below are the major implications I deduced from analyzing my participants' interview responses:

Major Interview-Data Takeaways:

- The writing assignment itself played a big role in how long it took students to come up with code-meshing choices and how many sessions they needed to complete the selection and incorporation of their code-meshing choices.

- The extent of my interview participants' code-meshing was based on whether code-meshing choices still "made sense" or were "easy" enough for their audiences to understand and relate to. My participants' rhetorical omissions of their initial code-meshing choices were based on how well these flowed within and how suitable they were to the structure and the overall meaning of the adjacent text.

- Reaching and teaching about their communities ranked the highest in interviewees' responses regarding the messages they wished to relay through their code-meshing selections.

- An overwhelming majority of my study's interviewees noted that they didn't or "didn't really" experience any moments of anxiety or tension while code-meshing.

- Most respondents thought their code-meshing choices came from real experiences.

- The majority of my interviewees identified "college student" as a primary role or their only role they assumed while code-meshing.

The Data Collection:

My interview questions (see Appendix A) were more semi-structured than not. If I sensed that an interviewee didn't fully comprehend a question, couldn't hear me well, could have used more paraphrasing or explanation, or was having trouble finding the words to answer, I conducted "quality checks" during the interviews by repeating the question again, rephrasing the question, or giving relevant examples to help clarify the troublesome part of my interview question. In an effort to represent my interview data as sincerely as possible, my transcriptions were meant to capture my respondents' language as naturally as possible.[68] I often used the dictation feature on Microsoft Word to help me get most of the transcript down before going over it, re-checking the accuracy of the transcript, correcting what the diction feature got wrong, and adding missing parts of the original audio responses. I used software by the name of Winamp that allowed me to play the recorded interviews and have five-second rewinds for replays of more accurate linguistic representation of interviewees' responses. I frequently left out filler words (*um*, *like*, and so on.) in my transcripts to maintain the flow of the interviewees' responses. I tried to use my judgment with punctuation, heeding conventions of academic American English while staying true to the original spirit of the responses as much as possible.

While it was not planned, the interview data collected from both semesters (Spring 2019 and Fall 2019) for this study now features data from eight participants from ENGL 1303 (Fall 2019) and eight more participants from ENGL 1304 (Spring 2019). For the purposes of this dissertation, I'm only including the interviews I recorded *after* my student participants had

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[68] I ended up transcribing *all* of the interview responses (or perhaps 97-100%, in all fairness) for the three rounds of interviews for each participant I wound up including in my study—there was one round of interviews I decided against including for consistency reasons. For around half of these interviews, I used the "Dictate" feature in MS Word to help me transcribe more easily, but I ended up going over these transcripts to correct the MS Word feature-generated errors and to provide punctuation. (This system/feature does not punctuate, I'm sad to report.)

already completed their major writing assignments/essays.[69] Also, while using my discretion, I only used interview data from participants who were generally more responsive than those who had consented but were hard to reach and didn't respond in a timely fashion to my research requests. For almost all of my research participants, all of their major class papers included code-meshing examples, with the major writing assignments totaling three essay assignments for each student participant in ENGL 1303 and ENGL 1304.

The Interview Data and Analysis:

My interview questions were based on my research participants' most recent experiences and reactions toward their code-meshing attempts in their relevant assignment for class. Since they were not scripted, the responses I collected from my interviewees had varying degrees of detail, reservation, directness, rhetorical awareness, processual sensitivity, enthusiasm, and advocacy for code-meshing. Most of my interview questions were based on topics that had already been figured out before the start of my study or topics that were developed throughout the analysis stage.[70] Preselected research foci helped me form and focus my initial interview questions, which in turn helped me identify the direction I wanted to take in eliciting my participants' takes on their code-meshing experiences. The foci of the interview questions and answers primarily helped me determine my major and minor thematic categories for this chapter:

Major themes: "processual awareness," "rhetoricity of code-meshing," and "writerly consciousness"

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[69] There was a batch of interviews I'd recorded before 2/3 sections completed one of the papers, but then I decided against using this batch of interview data for the sake of keeping consistent with using the same kind of interview data (interview responses captured after students had submitted their papers that included their code-meshing) for all of my three sections.

[70] Interview questions and topics were informed and inspired by qualitative studies in rhetoric/composition and literacy studies, as explained in the previous chapter.

Minor themes (sub-themes): "duration of code-meshing," "nature of code-meshing choices," "audience expectations," "rhetorical message," "rhetorical omissions," "writerly roles," and "anxiety or tension"

While "rhetoricity of code-meshing" and "writerly consciousness" were thematic categories offhandedly built into the interview questions, "processual awareness" evolved after the data collection and during thematic analysis. While the rhetorical theme was a major theme in Chapter 3 and will be a major theme in Chapter 5, the processual and consciousness themes are primarily specific to this chapter. The specificity of these latter themes may be attributed to the type of interview questions that focused on the composing process of and time commitment for student participants' code-meshing choices and their writerly consciousness while selecting and incorporating their code-meshing examples. The three major themes in this chapter were fundamentally based off of my pedagogical proclivities as a teacher researcher to investigate and contribute to my students' composing processes, perception and awareness of writerly growth, and overall rhetorical well-being. Upon revisiting the interview data repeatedly, I was able to cluster the sub-themes under their proper themes.[71]

For the sake of an example, if an interview question was asking about the approximate length for an interviewee's code-meshing choices, I would look at the response received (e.g., "around 10 minutes; it wasn't that hard…"—Zach), while also bearing in mind what the question was asking ("How long did it take you to come up with appropriate code-meshing examples/items for your assignment?"—Subhi). In other words, while the focus of my interview questions (e.g., "duration of code-meshing" or "length of code-meshing") helped me determine

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[71] *Sub-themes* are synonymous with *minor themes*; however, I often favored to use *sub-themes* because this appellation implies a stronger connection to their major themes, where sub-themes are to (major) themes what sub-sections are to (major) sections. Please see Chapter 3 for more on sub-theme identification.

the thematic category (e.g., "process of code-meshing"), the answer helped either further validate the proposed theme (e.g., "process") or move the interview response to another category (e.g., "rhetoricity" or "writerly consciousness").

For the remainder of this chapter, I'll have section headings identifying main sections for my major themes and sub-sections for the sub-themes housed under each main section. Each section or sub-section will usually have some explanation or identification of main takeaways up front, which will then be followed by more specific, case-by-case examples secondarily ordered by class, first and assignment, second. The current order of data examples by class and assignment was the most sensible way for me to have a consistent organizational system within my main themes and sub-themes. I start with ENGL 1304 before ENGL 1303 because my ENGL 1304 class (Spring 2019) came chronologically before my ENGL 1303 classes (Fall 2019). Another reason for this internal organization is the often wildly diverse range of responses that I ended up with. Reexamining the interview responses more than once helped me identify key moments, find relevant quotations, and highlight and discuss different strategies that the writers deployed while code-meshing. Toward the end of this chapter, I will briefly revisit a couple of themes that I have seen my study participants most engaged in and successful at and that I believe to be the most relevant and conducive to their code-meshing decision-making processes.

The Processual Nature of Code-Meshing:

In response to the more formalist current-traditional method of writing, where students were rewarded for adhering to a set of prescribed composing modes, Composition Studies in the modern era saw one of its earliest more effective dissections of the writing process with Janet Emig's *The Composing Processes of Twelfth Graders* (1968). Emig pioneered the anatomization of the composing act into three distinct parts: prewriting, writing, and rewriting. In subsequent

years, the idea of "process" was picked up and further developed by other Composition scholars, including Peter Elbow, Donald Murray, and many others, into a more expressive, less rule-bound act of knowledge production. By 1994, James Zebroski argued that composing was to be understood as "more than process; writing is a relation, a social relation that is first shared between two or more people in a community" (17). In the late 1990s, other Composition scholars, such as Thomas Kent and Gary Olson, strove to add more defining features to the process pedagogy of composition and referred to it as "post-process." These other defining features included that writing should be interpretive and situated. In fact, a healthy blend of traditional "process" and "post-process" theories of composing has been the most conducive method for the study of my participants' composing processes, and by extension where my students' code-meshing processes featured differently in different cases: some processes featured as private, some as public; some were more easily interpreted, others not so much; some were context-free, many community-based.

My participants' responses were quite explicit about their code-meshing incorporations being process-oriented. When queried on the duration it took them to arrive at their code-meshing examples, my study respondents provided quantitative and qualitative details about their processes of figuring out what their code-meshing choices should be and where to place them. While some students explained their code-meshing processes holistically, others answered in more detailed ways. Their answers to the questions I posed regarding their process helped me chart the course that the students had gone through in order to reach their code-meshing products that eventually appeared on the page. My respondents explained to me on many occasions that their writing had taken some time and had undergone several steps before reaching its final shape. I also learned from the responses I collected that students' code-meshing choices could be

explained as both processes *and* as relations between the author, the text, and the target audience (Zebroski). Through their code-meshing choices, my study participants tried to establish close connections with their audience members, in addition to seeing their code-meshings as developmental *processes*.

As a teacher of writing constantly invested in my students' composing processes, my interviews' second and third questions were focused on process, namely on querying my study participants about the process of their code-meshing for their three class assignments. Writing or composing of any type, including composing code-meshing examples, takes time and goes through developmental steps before reaching its final shape. This means that in order to fully understand students' experiences with code-meshing, in addition to studying the final products that constituted my students' code-meshing choices in the final drafts for their assignments, I also had to learn of and study the processes they underwent in order to bring their code-meshing choices to a close. James Zebroski goes a step beyond "process" in the traditional sense of the word: "Writing is more than a product; it is more than process; writing is a relation, a social relation that is first shared between two or more people in community and is subsequently internalized, individuated, and made concrete by the individual" (16-17). Through my upcoming data analysis of interview responses, students' code-meshing choices are explained as processes *and* as relations between the author, the text, and the target audience. Similarly to Zebroski, I learned about and viewed my study participants' code-meshing composing acts as close connections my participants attempted to establish with their audience members, in addition to seeing their code-meshings as developmental *processes*.

Duration of Code-Meshing

The first of the two interview questions queried students on the duration it took them to arrive at their code-meshing examples for their individual major assignments: "How long did it take you to come up with appropriate code-meshing examples/items for your assignment?" The second question asked students to estimate the number of writing sessions they needed to bring their code-meshing choices to completion: "Did you write [your code-meshing] all in one sitting, or did it take several writing sessions to finalize?" While both questions inquired about students' code-meshing processes holistically, more than half of the students answered in more detailed ways. These answers to the questions helped me trace the process that students went through in order to reach their code-meshing products that eventually appeared on the page.

One of the major takeaways I was able to discern from the interview responses to the two questions concerning the duration of my student participants' code-meshing choices pertained to the kind of writing prompt. For my interviewees, the writing assignment itself played a big role in how long it took them to come up with code-meshing choices and how many sessions they needed in order to complete the selection and incorporation of their code-meshing choices. Most of the respondents found code-meshing in the first essay (the Literacy Narrative for both ENGL 1303 and ENGL 1304) the easiest major assignment to code-mesh in; in fact, I don't find that particularly shocking, especially that for almost all student participants—and non-participants— the Literacy Narrative made one's writing more "personal," "casual," and "emotional," and hence, a perfect environment for their personal linguistic choices to thrive. One finding that I came to learn was missing from my respondents' answers was whether or not the process of their code-meshing selection and incorporation had improved with every new assignment or with every new code-meshing choice. While at least one ENGL 1303 respondent agreed in my final interview with her that it did, it was not an explicitly expressed consensus from all participants.

However, surprisingly, a few respondents from ENGL 1303 found their second essay (the Summary/Strong Response essay) easier to code-mesh in than in the Literacy Narrative essay. While those respondents didn't explain why, one respondent explained that since she didn't have to use her feelings in her Summary/Strong Response, it was ultimately easier to code-mesh in than in Essay One, the Literacy Narrative.[72] With my ENGL 1304 participants, while the second assignment (the Annotated Bibliography) was challenging to code-mesh in, based on my textual analysis of their written assignments, I've found that almost all of the participants who code-meshed in the Annotated Bibliography incorporated their code-meshing choices in the first part of the assignment—the research narrative—because as many reported, this was the most personal part of the Annotated Bibliography assignment, the less *researchy*, and the closest thing to a personal narrative assignment, much like the Literacy Narrative essay. David, for example, felt the Literacy Narrative was more of a narrative than the second assignment, which was basically an "interrogation of evidence," insinuating that the Annotated Bibliography was less personal to code-mesh in.

Moving on to case-by-case data specifics, my study participants had various responses regarding the process that they were engaged in for their code-meshing: most of them thought that the process "didn't take long," was pretty "easy," or "wasn't too hard." For them, code-meshing could have been done in one sitting or several writing sessions, depending on their different thinking and writing processes, I suspected. Around half of my participants provided

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[72] Another reason could be that since the Literacy Narrative required the recalling of a past literacy event, to code-mesh, respondents reported that their code-meshing processes involved yet additional memory recollection so that code-meshing writers could remember the local expressions they used in these past events and include them in their Literacy Narrative essays for the class. This extra effort may have caused an additional strain on the students' study load. Also, while some came up with code-meshing instances easily for the first assignment, they still had to revise their code-meshing selections to make sure they fit well, which took longer than figuring out the code-meshing choices to begin with.

details about which code-meshing choices were easier than other code-meshing choices or which assignments were easier than others to code-mesh in, and thus they took either less or more time in making their code-meshing decisions. Most respondents were conscious of where to embed their code-meshing examples so as to "make sense" to their audience members and to their own rational processes.

For ENGL 1304, at least three of my participants stated that the code-meshing in the second assignment (the Annotated Bibliography) took longer or was harder than the first assignment (the Literacy Narrative essay). Those ENGL 1304 participants attributed that to the fact the second assignment felt less "personal," less "casual," and less "emotional" than the first essay, which was "the hard part." Also, at least two used other people's quoted words to code-mesh into their prose for the second assignment. This borrowing from others to code-mesh rather than using one's own code-meshing expressions could be due to the fact that the two student participants thought these borrowed items would attain a greater rhetorical impact or cache than their own code-meshing items in a given instance. A couple (David and L.P.H) had to go back and code-mesh after having already completed the assignment. While almost all agreed that it was easier to code-mesh in the first essay than the second, more than one student thought it was easier to code-mesh in the first part of the Annotated Bibliography, namely the research narrative, than in its other parts.

For the duration of code-meshing processes in the Annotated Bibliography, code-meshing choices took four ENGL 1304 participants only one sitting; for others, it took several writing sessions, and some students spoke in terms of one or two days. For one respondent, the thinking about which code-meshing choices to use took longer than writing them up; thinking about it took two days, but incorporating it took only one writing session. Some were not sure

how well they code-meshed and expressed concern about their choices. One participant, David, stated that it took him two sittings to finalize. For the first example, it felt more personal that he was able to render it "humorous"; for the second, it felt more "different" and he felt "very cynical," as in his code-meshed example of "*raging herbivores*" when he referred to radical vegans. It's interesting that even though 3/8 of my student participants didn't code-mesh in this assignment, none of those three participants admitted to not having code-meshing, which bespeaks an artificiality this rhetorical strategy might carry.

For their final assignment (the Community-Oriented Solution Essay), all but one stated that the code-meshing choices took them only one sitting. One respondent specified that each code-meshing choice took "3-4 minutes" with an approximate total of 15 minutes, all in one sitting. For this participant, he would only translate his code-meshings from English into Vietnamese. One respondent thought Essay Three was easy enough, almost as easy as Essay One, the Literacy Narrative, because it felt more personal than Assignment Two, the Annotated Bibliography. Almost all participants, 5/6, stated that all code-meshing choices only took one sitting. One respondent reported that for one of her code-meshing choices, she simply borrowed someone else's code-meshing from a speech they gave, for she thought that was an "interesting" choice of code-meshing. Another participant used examples from the previous assignment, the Annotated Bibliography. Belinda reported that her code-meshing examples in this assignment came naturally to her because they were "pretty much at the top of [her] head since it's [her] second language," referring to Spanish. More than half of my ENGL 1304 students' code-meshing choices took one composing session to incorporate into their prose with varying amounts of time for reflecting on which code-meshing choices to include, depending on their

type of assignment, their code-meshed discourses, their code-meshing selections, and the topics they wrote about.

As for ENGL 1303 participants, when asked how long the code-meshing examples took them for their first essay, the Literacy Narrative,[73] people varied in their interview responses. About half said that it had taken them about a week: one participant explained that her code-meshing selections had to be "the best for the narrative" and another one clarified that her examples could not be "forcefully or randomly put in code-meshing to where it wouldn't flow." For the other half, it was less quantitative; they told a short narrative of how hard or easy it was at first, attributing the need for such length to an emotional trigger or the need to revise to "make it sound complete." One respondent reported that it took her a "while" because code-meshing choices had to be made "fluent," a minor theme that would prove to be more vocal among ENGL 1303 responses than among ENGL 1304 responses. As for how many writing "sittings" or sessions code-meshing took from conception to completion in their Literacy Narratives, all but one of my ENGL 1303 participants reported that their code-meshing took several writing sessions to determine "which words are best." Some even relied on memories from "back home" to code-mesh: Tia reported that it took her a week because she was "thinking about the different methods used back home, and [she] would best fit into the essay that [she's] writing"; Teresa attributed her ease with code-meshing in her Literacy Narrative to her first important literacy event taking place in her home country, Chile, as opposed to it happening in the US. She said, "if it had happened here [the US as opposed to her home, Chile], I would have had a harder time

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[73] As with ENGL 1304, ENGL 1303 had the Literacy Narrative Essay as the first essay for the class.

thinking of words to code-mesh into the story." Overall, more than half stated that "fluency," "flow," or their equivalents were the reason behind their reported code-meshing lengths.

For ENGL 1303's second essay (the Summary/Strong Response), participants split over whether the process of code-meshing was easy or hard. Almost half thought it was easier than the Literacy Narrative, and the remaining half thought it was harder to code-mesh in this second essay. All but one of the 7 participants in ENGL 1303 reported that code-meshing for this essay took more than one writing sitting—three participants reported that code-meshing in their second essays took them two writing sessions/sittings. One respondent, however, reported that because she didn't have to use her feelings in the second essay, code-meshing in this second essay proved a lot easier than the Literacy Narrative essay, where she was "talking about [her] feelings." By contrast, Alexa thought it was harder to incorporate code-meshing in the second essay because it was more "rhetorical" and less "personal." For others, the "flow" and "finding the appropriate words" were what determined how long the code-meshing took. It's noteworthy that 1/8 of my student participants (Eva) who didn't come to this round of interviews also had *not* code-meshed in this assignment. While I can't speculate as to why she never showed for the interview, her lack of code-meshing might be due to the fact that she forgot to do so or was too reluctant to embed code-meshing in an assignment she didn't think she could accommodate this composing technique in.

As for ENGL 1303's final essay (the Analysis/Synthesis Essay), the interviews took place after the semester was over, and perhaps for this reason, only three respondents showed up for the interviews. All three respondents agreed that code-meshing for their final essay for the class was no difficult task because the code-meshing words were "commonly used," because of prior code-meshing experience with the "past two assignments," and because, as one respondent

put it, "I'm very close to [where] all of my family lives. So, I think it was right away that I came up with code-meshing." As for how many sessions their code-meshing took to materialize, all three reported that it took them "a couple to several writing" sittings to complete. While one ascribed the reason for such length to the essay being longer than the former assignments, another said that it was her personality as a writer that required that length, explaining, "because I'm a writer who likes to revise a lot not just want it done."

For ENGL 1303 participants in all three assignments, more than 90% of them reported taking more than one composing session to incorporate their code-meshing choices for "flow," "fluency," and "[sounding-]natural" reasons, whereas more than half of my ENGL 1304 interviewees reported taking only one composing session to incorporate their code-meshing in their writing. It could be that since ENGL 1303 students were beginning college writers, it would follow that the process could conceivably take most of them more composing sessions to embed their code-meshing choices than it would take more experienced ENGL 1304 writers.

Real vs. Staged (Romanticized) Code-Meshing Choices/Experiences

The next question related to process that I asked my interviewees was about whether their code-meshing examples came from real or fantasized experiences. I explained to them that I was hoping to learn whether their code-meshing choices came from expressions or linguistic items used in incidents that actually took place "at home, at work, or things like that" or whether their code-meshing choices came from scenarios that they imagined. The processual nature of real vs. staged or romanticized code-meshing experiences was manifest in the students' efforts to remember or think up code-meshing selections, find a place for each for incorporation, and then revise them as needed. Most participants provided shorter answers for this question than they did for other questions; some, however, had more detail and provided greater context. There wasn't

any real pattern explaining whether students provided shorter answers regarding code-meshing in one assignment as opposed to another or in one class—ENGL 1303 or ENGL 1304—compared with another. In hindsight, perhaps if I had posed follow-up questions to those short-answer responses, interviewees might have changed their answers and provided more context.

Most respondents thought their code-meshing choices came from real experiences. This may be due to the fact that I had explained code-meshing in terms of linguistic items derived from the students' local discourses or communities. Surprisingly, one ENGL 1304 respondent thought the *process* of injecting code-meshing into his writing was staged while his code-meshing choices themselves came from real experiences. However, he stated in the final interview that the more he'd used code-meshing, the more normalized it was getting for him. By contrast, another student, now from ENGL 1303, noted that she had originally staged her code-meshing in her second assignment, but then while she was "revising," she realized that and tried to make her code-meshing examples more "from real experiences." In other words, being processually sensitive in the selection and incorporation of her code-meshing helped her enhance the faithfulness of her code-meshing. At least two more respondents referenced revising their code-meshing along the way. For example, Regina reported that her code-meshing examples were real although she had to edit them to make them more appropriate for academic audiences.

More specifically, for the Literacy Narrative with ENGL 1304, overall, all eight respondents thought their code-meshing experiences were "real." However, their different experiences nuanced and differentiated their responses. For examples, David thought that the "language" utilized and the "experiences" recounted in his code-meshings were real, yet the "process of putting them [the code-meshing instances] in was staged" for the purpose of wielding code-meshing for the assignment. Regina thought that none of her code-meshings were

"romanticized," but she still needed to revise her everyday "dialect" to render it less "inappropriate for academic writing." Bruce explained that he simply translated English words into his "own language and code-meshed it," though he "*did* use them [the code-meshing examples] in real life" (my emphasis). L.P.H described the authenticity of his orthographic code-meshings in terms of having used the code-meshing examples in a previous British literature class.[74] Belinda thought that since her code-meshings were "personal," then they must have been considered "real."

As for ENGL 1304's second assignment,[75] more than half of the eight respondents' code-meshing choices were "real" for different reasons. Bruce thought his code-meshing choices were "half-half: half from real experiences and half from stage." David thought that while the expressions he used for the second assignment were all real, "things [he] would say in day to day conversation," they were "staged" in the sense that he "went back and reinjected them" into his assignment. L.P.H answered indirectly by explaining that his code-meshing instances were connected to his "research question" which he revised halfway through, which might in turn suggest that his code-meshings were likewise revised to meet his developing line of inquiry. Betty related the genuineness of her code-meshing choices to her "direct[ly] translat[ing] … [from] personal experiences." For Nour, her code-meshing examples were a bit "harder" this time around because she incorporated "*mathals* (proverbs)" from her Arabic language.

With ENGL 1304's final assignment, only 6/8 reported to the interview time and place. Four of the six reported that all or most of their code-meshing came from "real experiences."

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[74] For his Literacy Narrative assignment, L.P.H code-meshed a British spelling, "colour," and a spelling from old English, "blake" for black.

[75] The second assignment for ENGL 1304 was the Annotated Bibliography with the research narrative section, the annotated sources section, and the conclusions section.

Betty, however, explained that her code-meshing choices were mostly staged because her primary objective was to "connect with the audience more." L.P.H attributed the staged nature of his code-meshing choices to the fact that he didn't "actually use those words in real life." David explained that while code-meshing expressions were words that carried "meaning to [him] and [felt] representative of [his] personality," they still felt somehow staged because, to use his words, "we're not taught, y'know, to use code-meshing whenever we're younger, so, I guess, the more I've used it, the more and more I've realized that I'm having to break down this barrier of feeling like it's not academic writing." In other words, according to David, the greater the use of code-meshing for our different rhetorical needs, the more real these code-meshing experiences feel and less intrusive they get. While more than half of my ENGL 1304 participants explained their code-meshing examples came from real experiences, some started to realize that some aspects of the process were staged. While not explicitly acknowledged by all, a few noted or insinuated that their code-meshing choices were somehow revised from their original forms or contexts for different reasons.

With ENGL 1303's Literacy Narrative essay, all 7/8 agreed that their code-meshing had real elements to its employment and incorporation, using expressions such as "everything was from a real experience," "everything came for real experiences," "all of it was real," and "all of it happened." One respondent noted that most of her code-meshing choices were from real experiences, such as expressions "heard at home, or at work, or things like that," but then she qualified her superlative "most" by concluding her response saying, "I don't think I used one that was just staged." In contrast, two interviewees thought that there were also "staged" elements in addition to their real code-meshing choices. Lauren explained that one was real because it was "coming from [her]" while she felt that the remaining code-meshings were staged. Amanda

clarified that two of her code-meshing choices were examples that she had "actually said in real life," but the final one was staged in the sense that she "wouldn't say it normally."

With ENGL 1303's second essay, 5/7 respondents confirmed that their code-meshing choices were completely from real experiences. Patrick noted that his code-meshing came from what he "heard" and "learned" from his teachers. One interviewee, interestingly enough, recalled that she didn't stage any of her code-meshing, though her code-meshing choices were not "related" to her. Two respondents, by contrast, reported that their code-meshing examples were a mix of the two: staged and real. Alexa explained that "50% [of her two code-meshing examples] was staged," but at least one code-meshing instance was "pretty real." Amanda recounted that she initially staged her code-meshing, but after she started "revising, [she] noticed that [she had] staged it; therefore, [she] tried to make it more coming from real experiences."

For their final essay for the class, all interviewees, 3/3, for this round of ENGL 1303 interviews agreed that their code-meshing experiences were "real" and not "staged." Fannie explained that she not only code-meshed into the textual structure of her essay, but she also code-meshed visually, namely by generating a Microsoft Word table and populating it with important facts and statistics from the original Spanish text. Essentially, Fannie converted the information originally written in Spanish into a table with information in English translation. To Fannie, her code-meshing contribution constituted her act of converting a visual medium, an infographic photo with Spanish text, into another visual medium, an MS Word table with English text. For my ENGL 1303 interviewees in all their assignments, almost all stated that their code-meshing choices came from real experiences that "happened," "were sometimes used in daily life," or were "heard and learned" from others. All in all, a little over a fourth of ENGL 1303 responses recorded more specific details about which choices were real and which ones were

staged, whereas under half of the ENGL 1304 responses provided more definitive answers about the code-meshing choices being "real."

The Rhetoricity of Code-Meshing:

In addition to learning about the process of code-meshing per se, I, more specifically in my capacity as a classroom teacher committed to increasing my students' rhetorical sensitivity, wished to query my study participants about any rhetorical considerations that they accommodated when code-meshing in their assignments. In my interviews with my study respondents, I asked them questions about matters related to how much rhetorical mindfulness they exercised during particular aspects of their code-meshing experiences: whether they tried to entertain any audience considerations or had any particular audiences in mind, whether they had particular messages or statements they wanted to make through their code-meshing choices, and whether there were any code-meshing choices they ended up not including. Based on 3-4 interview questions—which were not posed in successive order during interviews[76]—I developed the three thematic sub-categories below:

Audience Considerations and Expectations

The rhetorical factor of audience in any rhetorical act has been a central theme with rhetoricians since the advent of rhetoric. In almost all of the philosophical interchanges that Plato recorded about the art of rhetoric—probably more so than his predecessors or contemporaries—audience was invariably given a special status. In the *Gorgias*, Plato clearly states that audience considerations should be given precedence over other rhetorical factors in the speaking act. To Plato, rhetoric is about capitalizing on the audience's desires and the rhetor's ability to help his

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[76] Questions #5, 6, 7, and 10 interrogated interviewees about those rhetorical features named in the sub-categories.

audience feel self-worth and identify with the rhetor's argument. In *Rhetoric*, Aristotle similarly defines rhetoric as that medium whose objective is to get at the "popular" with the audience; in other words, rhetors are to be heedful of what the audience finds palatable, trendy, and comprehensible.

More modern theories of audience awareness have gone through many models responsible for improving communication between writers and audiences, from Walker Gibson's "real reader" versus "mock reader" to Walter J. Ong's "fictionalized audience" to Lisa Ede and Andrea Lunsford's "Audience Addressed/Audience Invoked." In fact, these audience paradigms have offered valuable audience analysis frameworks, while relegating the designing of most of these audience roles chiefly to and/or in favor of the writer. Writers' alert consciousness of their rhetorical surrounds usually accounts for all relevant considerations of the audience so as to engender a more rhetorically collaborative relationship between the writer and the audience. More specifically, rhetorically sensitive writers frequently keep revisiting their audiences' wishes with a clear direction and thoughtful accommodation of their intended audiences' individual characteristics and dynamic needs for any discursive situation.

To return to my study of twenty-first century college student writers' audience awareness while code-meshing, my interview participants were asked if they had any "audience[s] in mind" through posing the following question: "Trying to entertain your audience considerations, did you have a certain audience in mind? Or did you feel like you were performing for yourself— such as you would in a journal or diary—or for others—such as your readers or instructors—or for both?" While just under half of my participants *did* identify what audiences they had in mind, most of them did not, but they explained what audience-conscious moves they made while they were selecting their code-meshing injections. Some identified their communities as their primary

audiences, others the instructor, and others other types of audiences, including the writers themselves.

Before sharing some case-by-case details from my interview data, I would like to firstly foreground 1-2 main takeaways in this sub-section on the rhetoricity of my participants' code-meshing experiences. Most of the interview respondents from ENGL 1303 and ENGL 1304 identified the following three audiences: one's community, one's course instructor, and oneself. The first type of audience meant different things to different respondents: one's peers, one's generation cohorts, one's classmates, one's ethnic community, one's mother-tongue community, one's professional community, and one's US state community. While choosing oneself as an audience may come as a surprise, it might help to learn that that part of this interview question about audience considerations was inquiring whether participants' code-meshing choices were (also) self-performances as they would do in a "journal or diary." In other words, this question segment about whether the code-meshing student was performing for him or herself may have prompted this audience type, namely oneself as audience, to become a possibility.

For most interviewees, it was important that their code-meshing choices "made sense" or were "easy" or "familiar" enough for their audiences to understand and relate to. The extent of code-meshing was one factor in appealing to their audiences. One respondent noted that she tried to stay away from code-meshing phrases of greater length so as not to alienate her audience, so she opted to use "one-word phrases." It's noteworthy that this respondent's language wasn't something that her "general audience" would likely be familiar with, hence her shorter code-meshing examples.[77] Although another respondent was using a dialect of English, she reported

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[77] Nour, an ENGL 1304 respondent, code-meshed from Arabic.

that she had to "change a lot of things [she] normally would say" because she was trying to be thoughtful of her audience. This response was further explained by her answer to the same question in the third interview, where she noted that she had to edit her choices because she wanted to keep it "less inappropriate" for her audience.

More specifically, with audience considerations for my ENGL 1304's Literacy Narrative interviewees, making their code-meshing choices appeal to their audiences on some level was key. One interviewee, Nour, explained how she was trying to "appeal to the general audience" while she was code-meshing. For this reason, she didn't use "bigger phrases [but] kept it simple with one-word phrases." Betty explained that one of her audiences was a person with a similar background, "like me, a Hispanic student." She added, however, that she was also trying to meet the expectations of her course instructor. Belinda, similarly, explained that she also wanted to appeal to someone that she shared a common background with: the "Spanish-speaking audience because it is easier [for them] to understand and relate to." L.P.H and Bruce explained that in addition to wanting to meet the "expectations of [their] readers and instructor," they were also code-meshing to provide some "satisfaction for [themselves]." Regina had her audience's comprehension in mind when picking her code-meshing examples: "I had to change a lot of things I normally would say differently. I kept in mind that others will be reading it." In addition to making a performance for her audience, she was also performing for herself. Surprisingly, Zach announced that he was only trying to appeal to his teacher through his code-meshing choices, but he didn't elaborate. While not consciously resistant, it *did* feel to me that Zach was somehow reluctant in his answer to having accommodated any other audience but his instructor, which is quite understandable considering the constructed nature of this assignment as well as most college writing.

As for ENGL 1304's Annotated Bibliography assignment, almost all interviewees, 6/8, identified more than one audience type. Bruce and L.P.H explained that their audiences were multisided. For Bruce, his code-meshing performance was for both "[him]self and the reader to understand," which is why he provided the translation for the latter. For L.P.H, again, his code-meshing choices were trilateral, based on his "satisfaction," the readers', and the instructor's. Zach, as in his other previous interview answers to the same question, admitted that his audience was "others, like teachers." While not directly addressing her code-meshing choices, Betty conveyed that she was trying to make her research for the assignment "as educational as possible and unbiased. The audience could have been anyone who was reading it." As for David, his code-meshing choices had to make sense for him "personally" and had to be a "personal reflection of who" he was. He explained that he had used code-meshing items he would usually use with his friends or family where he would speak "more dramatically." Nour acknowledged that her code-meshing audience for this assignment was the "UH students and faculty." Belinda, similarly, was specific about her audiences, where she recognized that her audiences were both "myself and the Hispanic community." While these latter ENGL 1304 participants were the only two to have identified whole communities (the UH community and the Hispanic community) outside the usual ones in this assignment, Belinda was the only one to have stayed consistent in accommodating the same audience for all three assignments: the Spanish-speaking or Hispanic community.

As for ENGL 1304's final essay, all 6 interviewees—where two never showed for the final round of interviews—unanimously concurred that they were trying to meet the expectations of both their readers and their instructor, myself. Most interview respondents also added more audience categories to this former united answer: Nour for "an academic audience," Belinda "the

Hispanic community," Betty "my community members, so in a way that was also for myself,"
David "the general class-professor-audience," and L.P.H "the residents of New Jersey." About
half of ENGL 1304 participants added that the code-meshing choices were also for themselves in
the final essay. By the third assignment, most ENGL 1304 participants seemed to have
broadened their audience awareness beyond the usual suspects (readers, oneself, instructors, and
classmates) to reach out to larger communities outside the FYC classroom. All in all, ENGL
1304 participants in all three assignments understood code-meshing to serve more than one
audience group or classification and crafted their choices accordingly.

For their ENGL 1303's Literacy Narrative, interview participants also performed
different audience-awareness checks while identifying their audience types. Lauren explained
that her code-meshing choices were primarily addressed to those audience members who
"struggled with being bilingual or trilingual and having to manage different languages." Amanda
recognized that she had two sets of audiences in mind, her instructor and her "peers," so she
wanted to make sure her slang code-meshing choices did not cause any "loss or confusion" to her
audience members, especially her instructor. Similarly, Tia directed her code-meshing examples
toward her instructor and her "classmates." Fannie explained how she had a change of heart
about her audience: first, she was only writing for herself, but after obtaining "feedback from
[her] peers," she decided to revise her code-meshing choices to make them more understandable
to others who were "actually identifying themselves with what [she] was writing." Alexa
identified a mix of audience considerations she aimed to accommodate: the "younger generation"
and those in the "medical" profession. Teresa and Eva admitted that their code-meshing choices
were for both: readers and the instructor. However, Teresa acknowledged that her audience
consciousness was more in sync with "readers because I think we all kind of struggle with

English," and Eva noted that she initially code-meshed for other readers and then for "[her]self." In short, all ENGL 1303 students in this essay were at least bilateral in their audience focus.

With ENGL 1303's second essay, more than half of the participants identified at least three different audiences. 3/7 of them (Patrick, Tia, and Fannie) admitted that their code-meshing audience considerations were based on three particular audience groups: oneself, the instructor, and other readers. Patrick explained his choice by stating that he "want[ed] other people to know [his] opinion [on the subject of] the relationship between Japan and Korea." Tia started out with two primary audiences in mind, but then she moved on to a third, herself, as she "continued to write" more. Teresa was also trilateral in her audience focus, directing her code-meshing to three categories of audience: "American citizens as well as middle eastern people living in the US and Hispanic minorities." Two participants had one specific audience category each: Lauren was quite specific about her primary audience accommodations, "the 21st century, this generation," and Amanda chose to direct her code-meshing examples toward those "peers" of hers that are more likely to "underage-drink, so [she] tried to really call them out in [her] writing." For Alexa, it was important to her that her code-meshing choices be appealing and make sense to her audience members, be they from any category, so that "they could use that to understand what [she] was trying to say."

As for ENGL 1303's final essay, given the smaller number of interviewees for this batch, there was no real pattern governing participants' responses. Fannie based her code-meshing choices on the basis of teaching people "in the US what people in Mexico actually go" through by code-meshing thematic elements, Spanish expressions, and visual data that better bring out the community problem she was investigating. As explained in Chapter 5, Fannie used more than just text to code-mesh: she created a table and populated it with data from a Spanish infographic.

Tia decided that her code-meshing choices were primarily focused on her "instructor and [her] other classmates, but then also for [her]self." Amanda determined that her code-meshing audiences were bilateral: the instructor and "teenagers like young adults." Amanda added that she, "as a writer," tried to establish a "medium" between the two audiences. All in all, ENGL 1303 participants in all their essays for the class accommodated multidimensional audience considerations in their code-meshing choices and provided more diverse, more nuanced audience categories than their ENGL 1304 counterparts.

The Message to Convey to One's Audience

Having a rhetorical purpose in one's writing is key to any rhetorical task. Aristotle realized that over two millennia ago when he divided his rhetorical triangle into three main elements. The message is the rhetorical element that a writer hopes to deliver through a rhetorical project. While having the audience in mind, the writer will still try to make sure their mission of communicating certain information can get successfully accomplished. With my code-meshing project, I wanted to learn if my student participants had particular kinds of specified messages to relay or particular statements to make based on the particular kind of code-meshing choices they selected. Although my project here is more qualitative than otherwise, creating a chart in this sub-section populated with my students' stated code-meshing messages might help better articulate students' attitudes vis-à-vis code-meshing's potential to make certain statements. Table 2 shows the range of my ENGL 1303 and ENGL 1304 participants' responses concerning the purported statements they were making through their code-meshing choices:

Table 2

ENGL 1303 and ENGL 1304 participants' responses about their message-laden examples:

1303	Amanda	Fannie	Tia	Eva	Lauren	Teresa	Alexa	Patrick
Literacy Narrative (LN)	Showing slang change	Bilingualism & freedom to express	"Yes" but didn't say what	Showing club membership	Exhibiting background	Proving existence of other realities	Showing code-meshing as educated	No show
Response Essay	Audience can relate and understand better	Drawing audience's attention	"Yes" but didn't say what	No show	Personalizing writing	Showing lack of English equivalents & serious issues	Feeling comfortable	Correcting a cultural narrative
Analysis Synthesis Essay	Injecting voice to show discourse and community	Highlighting the problem or solution	Making social statements	No show	No show	No show	No show	No show

1304	David	Belinda	Betty	L.P.H	Nour	Bruce	Zach	Regina
LN	Recalling former self	Family role in careers	Elevating essay	Showing many ways to do things	Didn't say	Memories	Affirming identity	Didn't say
Ann. Bib	Injecting personality	Community relevance	Familiarity with community	Emphasis	Relevancy to topic	Bilingual status	Bilingual status	Things community could relate to
Research-Backed Essay	Didn't say	Community size	Connection to community	Emphasis	"a certain feeling" period	Clarity of message	No show	No show

While my students shared different messages based on their selected code-meshing choices, they were a few lexical or thematic features that helped me identify some main takeaways. Based on what the chart is telling me, the high note of "community" continued to crescendo throughout my ENGL 1303 and ENGL 1304 students' responses; more than half of

my respondents seemed so keen on exhibiting different aspects of their communities through their code-meshing: their cultural richness, their connection/relevance/familiarity with their community, their bilingual status, their community affiliation, and their community discourse. Around a fourth of my ENGL 1303 and ENGL 1304 participants were more centered on the texts themselves they were composing, so they used code-meshing to enhance their impact: enriching their writing, delivering clear, emphatic messages, and drawing readers' attention.

As for how personal or political participants' messages were, just under half wished to make these code-meshing choices more "personal": personalizing writing, rehashing memories, identifying family roles, expressing certain feelings, indicating comfort in a given discourse, and projecting voice or personality. For about a third of them, code-meshing selections were political: highlighting community problems and solutions, righting a cultural wrong, putting other realities into relief, showing code-meshing as educated discourse, advocating for social justice, and heightening the seriousness of relevant issues. There was no discernable pattern for any one student being consistent in what message they tried to deliver through their code-meshing choices across all three assignments. However, about half of my ENGL 1303 students had at least one response that leaned toward personalizing their messages, and of my ENGL 1304 participants, 6/8 had at least one response that recognized directly or indirectly community, identity, or their equivalents. While almost none of my ENGL 1304 participants' responses were political, around half of all ENGL 1303 participants had at least one response that was more explicitly political than not.

With ENGL 1304 Literacy Narrative interviewees' responses to the question, "were you trying to convey a certain message through your code-meshing choices?" half of the participants identified a personal purpose their code-meshing examples served. For David, the purpose of his

code-meshing was to travel back to his "former self" and revert to "a younger version of [him]self and get more in touch with the words that [he] was using and the little slang expressions that [he] and [his] friends used to describe certain situations." For Belinda, the message she was trying to deliver was how "family plays a role in [one's] career choice/influence." Bruce explained that he was trying to deliver a personal message about his past memories through his translation of one clause from English into Vietnamese; he translated into Vietnamese the clause about his being little while learning to write. As for Zach, it is worth mentioning that he was so eager to choose the first example ("to affirm one's identity") I listed among possible messages or statements student writers would make when code-meshing. In fact, this may be a downside of the artificial nature of the assignment where the participant was more interested in providing any answer than offering a well-thought-out response.

However, a fourth of my ENGL 1304 participants identified less unified objectives for code-meshing in their literacy narratives: For L.P.H who code-meshed by employing nonstandard spellings in his prose, his message was to show that there was more than one "way of doing things: … old-fashioned traditionalist and more modern liberal ways." Betty explained that while she was "not trying necessarily to convey a point," she code-meshed because she wanted to "emphasize [certain parts and] elevate the essay." A couple of the participants were not too sure how to answer the question: Regina didn't think she could convey a message through code-meshing choices for this essay; she continued to contend that perhaps "if it was a more open prompt, [she] could have done more with making a message out of the code-meshing." Nour rejected the idea of conveying a message through code-meshing and insisted that she was merely looking for "something that fit that context." This less uniform set of answers might have been triggered by the fact that those participants were caught off guard, especially

that this was their first round of interviews in this study, and hence their first encounter with this type of question.

As for their ENGL 1304's Annotated Bibliography, in this non-traditional research assignment, I felt like almost all of my ENGL 1304 students were much more purposeful in affirming that they had a message than they were in the assignment before and explained their messages through their code-meshing choices. All of the ENGL 1304 participants somehow tried to identify their personal identities and cement community rapport through their code-meshing choices. David was hoping to convey the message that code-meshing allowed him to "inject some personality" into his writing, for without code-meshing, one's prose "can feel a little impersonal." Zach and Bruce wanted to demonstrate their "bilingual" status and their ability to speak another language. Regina code-meshed with the intent to "use words that people would use in that community, so it didn't seem out of place." Belinda, too, hoped through her code-meshing insertions to "better express, to prove [her] point because the essay was about the Hispanic community." While Betty denied trying to convey a message through her code-meshing choices, she, similarly to Regina, wanted to display her "familiarity within the community [she] was talking about." For L.P.H, the message was to "emphasize" the importance of a couple of phrases significant to his community problem, which he translated into Vietnamese: "red tape & rules and regulations." Nour's intention behind her code-meshing was, again as with her Literacy Narrative, to "find things that are relevant to what [she] was writing about." My ENGL 1304 participants' responses seemed to have gotten more polished from the assignment before: they now have a clearer purpose for what their code-meshing choices were supposed to serve.

For their final paper, almost all of my ENGL 1304 respondents, 5/6, had the same clarity of rhetorical purpose as regards their code-meshing choices: community-laden sentiments.

Belinda wanted to show "how large the Hispanic community is, and how it impacts all of us." As with his Annotated Bibliography assignment, by code-meshing the same community-related phrase, *red tape*, more than once in Vietnamese, L.P.H explained that he was meaning to "emphasize certain areas in [his] essay." Along similar community lines, Bruce thought that his message would be "clear[er]" about his community and would "make more sense in Vietnamese than in English." Betty wished to stimulate "a feeling of connection with those of [her] community members" through her code-meshing. Nour, likewise, wanted to pass on a "certain feeling" through code-meshing because the words she utilized from Arabic had "a greater significance in their original language." David was the only participant who didn't provide a straight answer to the question. He *did* explain, however, that his message wouldn't have been affected by his code-meshing, so he tried to make sure his code-meshing "felt integrated into the rest of the paper." This reluctance to provide a straight answer was clarified by David who didn't want to tie down the statements he made in his essay only to his code-meshing choices but rather to his overall message based on his topic. David's resistance might be explained as a downside of the interview question which only inquired about possible messages based on his code-meshing choices to the exclusion of his other rhetorical moves in the assignment.

With the Literacy Narrative essay, my ENGL 1303 respondents were more intentional in their answers to this question than my ENGL 1304 participants were. Almost half were quite affirmative in stating that they had a message in mind and explained what that message was. Alexa wanted to show that using "non-academic writing" should not "sound inappropriate" or "uneducated." Teresa's response was more general where she code-meshed because she wanted to "portray another reality that is just as valid as the ones that we all experience." For Fannie, the message she was hoping to pass on to others was that having a command of different

"languages" or "dialects" should give writers "free[dom] to express" their thoughts better. Lauren was trying to show that a writer can "put [their] own background into a paper" and can also "let others know of [their] culture, where [they] came from, through [their] professional writing." Likewise, Eva's intent was to affirm her membership in a math club and to relay a "message that [she] was in that certain club." While Amanda wasn't sure about what message she was trying to convey through code-meshing, she surmised that the point she was conceivably making by code-meshing was to demonstrate to her "readers how much slang is changed these days." Tia answered with only "yes" with no further explanation. To sum up, most ENGL 1303 code-meshers were split between teaching their audiences certain points about what good discourse is or highlighting their community affiliations through their code-meshing choices.

As for ENGL 1303's Summary/Strong Response essay, although more than half the student participants exhibited tentativeness in their answers about their code-meshing choices' explicit or latent messages, they ended up confirming their code-meshing choices' intentional nature. Patrick wanted to correct a cultural narrative between Korea and Japan through his code-meshing. Tia and Fannie agreed that they had wanted to relay a message through their code-meshing choices. More specifically, Fannie wanted to draw the "audience attention" to her issue through code-meshing examples. Given her familiarity and "awareness" with her audience, Amanda used words that her audience members "know of, so they could relate and possibly get something out of [her] writing more." Alexa's message was to make the point that one should be "feel comfortable speaking however [they] want, professionally of course, but however [they] want in an essay." For Lauren, code-meshing was a way to make one's writing more "personalized." While Teresa categorically rejected there being a message through her code-meshing choices, she recognized that she used code-meshing to incorporate those Spanish words

she "couldn't find in English" and also in order to bring some "seriousness to the issue." More than half of the student participants attributed their code-meshing choices to the need to raise awareness and draw audience's attention to certain matters. A couple, as shown above, chose to keep their code-meshing more personal.

When I asked the final interviewees from my ENGL 1303 class whether they were trying to convey a message or make a statement through their code-meshing choices in their final essay, they all agreed, offering different amounts of nuance and detail.[78] Tia explained that while she wasn't making a political statement, she was trying to make a social statement about gender inequality in the workplace. Fannie code-meshed in one of two cases: whenever she was "referring to the problem" or whenever she was discussing the "solution" of the problem. Amanda made a summative statement about all her essays for the class: she wanted to demonstrate to her audience that college writing didn't have to be "all written in standard English" while keeping your essay "sound[ing] professional." She added that code-meshing also had the capability to inject "your voice because you're showing your audience who you are, your discourse community, [and] where you're from." Overall, almost all of my ENGL 1303 and ENGL 1304 participants attempted to send pointed messages and make different statements through their code-meshing choices, even though they might not have known that or these rhetorical intentions were not as well-verbalized at first blush.

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Rhetorical Omissions of Code-Meshing Choices

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My interview participants for ENGL 1303 and ENGL 1304 had to think about their code-meshing selections before deciding to embed those in the final drafts of their essays. They had to

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[78] Only 3/8 of my ENGL 1303 participants made it to their final round of interviews.

reflect lengthily on how their audiences would be affected by their code-meshing insertions and how well those interpositions would be perceived. Ultimately, for most participants, some code-meshing choices didn't make the cut and thus were not included in their course writing. To learn of the rhetorical omissions of some of their initial code-meshing choices, I asked every participant the following question: "Do you care to share some [code-meshing examples or] details you chose to leave out, and why?" While just under half of my respondents from both ENGL 1303 and ENGL 1304 explained that they omitted none of their original code-meshing choices, more than half the participants offered explanations for what code-meshing choices they excluded from their writing and why. While close to half of the responses also explained why, at least a fourth of all participants' responses identified the category of code-meshing choices they left out.

Based on my students' responses, I was able to make some generalizable statements about most of their responses. First, close to 1/4 of my participants' responses showed that their code-meshing decisions needed to be based on their flow and the suitability of the code-meshing additions to the structure and the overall meaning of the adjacent text: avoiding complications, distractions, and misinterpretations, keeping it simple, ensuring (structural) flow, prioritizing sense-making, and so forth. Second, close to 1/3 of the responses showed that research participants from ENGL 1303 and ENGL 1304 tried to avoid using code-meshing choices that would reflect badly on their ethnical appeal: avoiding the use of "bad words," "angry words," "touchy" expressions, "too emotional" or "personal" examples, uncomfortable choices, cultural or religious examples,[79] and unprofessional selections.

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[79] This comment came from Nour, an ENGL 1304 participant, who code-meshed from Arabic. Nour explained that she was worried that including religion-specific or culture-specific code-meshing choices may be erroneously

ENGL 1304's Literacy Narrative interview participants were either concerned about perception or structural flow when explaining why they left out certain code-meshing choices from their essays. Nour considered leaving out "religious" and cultural" for fear of affecting their readers "in a different way" or unfavorably. She explained that her concern about potentially projecting a "bias" precluded her from using any code-meshing with "religious" or "cultural" connotations. When Betty was addressing an immigration problem, a "touchy subject," in her Literacy Narrative essay, she was thinking of leaving out certain code-meshing choices because she was not too sure how they "would be taken," but then surprisingly, she ended up using them. Regina avoided code-meshing elements that had "profanity" and choices that were "really hard to explain; [she] tried to make it pretty simple." David admitted that he left out the details that were "too personal" and less "fond memories" about his writing experiences in high school. To David, code-meshing was more than just a few words to weave into one's text; rather, it was also memories writers don't normally use in academic writing. Belinda didn't want to "complicate [things] more because it's a different language, and you wanted to keep it simple." L.P.H omitted some code-meshing choices to ensure "the flow of writing" and to eschew any likely "misinterpretation." Bruce explained the omission of some of his code-meshing choices based on linguistic considerations: "you gotta make sure [the foreign-language code-meshing] connects to a sentence well." Zach was the only Literacy Narrative interviewee who had "nothing" to leave out from his original code-meshing.

With their ENGL 1304's Annotated Bibliography, around 2/3 of the participants explained how they didn't see fit to include in their final drafts some of their code-meshing

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perceived as prejudicial—Perhaps Nour was concerned that using expressions that include Allah (Arabic for God), Prophet Muhammad, and specific Islamic references might distance some audiences.

examples they had initially considered. Nour decided to leave out a lot of proverbs that she deemed "inappropriate," proverbs that her family and friends had shared with her. As with her Literacy Narrative, Belinda, again, decided to leave out code-meshing items "not to complicate," referring to Spanish-language code-meshing examples. Regina opted out of utilizing "the bad words" that usually "come to [her] mind … when code-meshing." She explained that she left them out for the sake of maintaining an appropriate level of "academic writing." Bruce left out what he thought would be "misleading" examples of code-meshing because they would be coming from a different language. David decided to leave out an example he thought would sound too "exaggerated" based on the "generational" gap between his generation and an older generation. David ended his interview response about his code-meshing omissions by further clarifying that his omissions were also based on a "stylistic decision" not to have too many code-meshing choices too close together.[80] Betty and Zach were the only two respondents who noted that they didn't leave out any code-meshing examples for this assignment.

As for ENGL 1304's final essay, while one half of the participants didn't have any or couldn't think of any examples they purposely left out when deciding on code-meshing choices, the other half or so based their code-meshing omissions on structural flow. Betty, Belinda, and David all concurred that no code-meshing omissions happened during the drafting and/or writing of their third assignment for the class. David reported his success about getting "the correct

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[80] To further illustrate the richness of FYC discourses and FYC students' rhetorical sensitivity, I'm sharing David's comment about a rhetorical omission that he made. David explained that when he was listing famous vegans, he was going to include the phrase "Hilary Clinton's husband" to refer to former president Bill Clinton. He believed that this code-meshing choice would have made for a tighter connection with his generation-specific audience than the phrase "Bill Clinton" because Hilary Clinton to this generation was a more well-known figure than her husband, who left the office before many of David's generation cohorts were even born. Even within the same language or dialect, generational sub-discursive practices abound. In fact, while this code-meshing choice would have made sense to David and his cohorts, most outside readers—readers not native to this generation-specific discourse—may not believe this would actually be a discursive feature to communicate in or make arguments through.

number" of code-meshing needed for this assignment (the number was recommended based on their participation in this study), embedding his code-meshing instances where he "saw appropriate." As explained earlier, close to 1/2 of the respondents were concerned about the flow of their code-meshing nominees within surrounding text: Nour mentioned that there were some code-meshing examples she ended up leaving out because she "couldn't think of a way to incorporate them," and L.P.H made his omissions based on them "flow[ing] correctly" with the rest of the surrounding text and based on whether they "ma[d]e sense" or not. Overall, ENGL 1304 participants across all assignments made their code-meshing omissions based on appropriateness, flow, and perception.

With ENGL 1303's Literacy Narrative interviewees, more than half of my interview informants made code-meshing omissions based on factors such as "emotional," "personal," "appropriate," "flow[-conscious]," and "work-related." Lauren was concerned about her code-meshing being "poppy," which is why she omitted some of her initial code-meshing ideas. Amanda was worried whether some code-meshing choices would make some audience members "uncomfortable or something," so she decided to leave them out. Describing her "emotional" situation away from her family, Fannie explained that she ended up leaving out some of the code-meshing choices because she did not want them "taking away the real purpose of the story" and because she thought they were "too personal." Alexa reported that she decided on using a different language, English as opposed to Spanish, because she was afraid that her Spanish injections would not "really blend together with [her] essay because [they] had nothing to do with it." Eva was concerned about some of her code-meshing examples getting too "work-related," and hence they would only work for "a smaller audience." Teresa and Tia did not omit any of their code-meshing choices for their Literacy Narratives.

With ENGL 1303's Summary/Strong Response essay, it was surprising to learn that only two respondents admitted that they left out one or some of their initial code-meshing examples. Fannie explained that since she was writing about something she felt strongly about, "the environment,"—a topic that made her "mad,"—she "tried to limit [her]self to not use words that wouldn't sound professional." Alexa, again, decided against using Spanish because she was worried her code-meshing in Spanish would not "make sense" and because she could not move "from Spanish to English fluently to make it sound okay." While denying leaving anything out, Lauren still made sure that she didn't include anything "inappropriate." Patrick and Teresa both noted that they didn't leave anything out because they didn't think of their code-meshing while they were writing their essays; in other words, they plugged in their code-meshing examples *after* having composed their essays. Amanda noted that unlike her Literacy Narrative which "had to be more professional," for her second essay here, she didn't leave anything out and felt more comfortable using "slang." Tia was the only respondent who admitted to not leaving anything out while not offering an explanation.

Similarly, for their ENGL 1303's final essay, 2/3 students were careful with their code-meshing choices' rhetorical fit with the audience and within the writing situation at hand.[81] Fannie, again, felt "emotional" and "mad" because she was talking about a topic close to her heart, namely the low minimum wage in Mexico. Fannie added that she was nervous about what her "family and friends in Mexico have to go through all of that, so I limited myself in not using angry words in Spanish." Tia explained that for her final ENGL 1303 final essay, she left out "some terms that I chose wouldn't fit in my sentences/essay, so I chose not to put them in there."

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[81] No record remains of Amanda's omissions when she code-meshed; I might have accidentally skipped this question when I interviewed her.

When I asked her why she left out certain terms, she replied that these code-meshing choices were omitted "not because [they were] inappropriate or anything, but because [they] didn't fit [her] style of writing." All things considered, ENGL 1303 and ENGL 1304 participants, more or less, based their code-meshing omissions on one or more of the three rhetorical appeals: ethos (how their choices would be perceived or judged), pathos (how their audience would relate or react to their choices), and logos (if their choices would make sense and how smoothly they would structurally fit within the adjacent text).

Inward Writerly Consciousness in Code-Meshing:

While my student writers exhibited different levels of rhetorical awareness and went through various processual motions during their code-meshing ventures, they admitted that they also recognized identity hats or roles they assumed while composing or composing their code-meshing choices more specifically. Additionally, upon querying them, my study participants noted that they had harbored deeper, less visible emotions as rhetors while engaged in the code-meshing act, namely tension or anxiety. As a teacher researcher, I was interested in learning what different parts my students played when they code-meshed: college, community, family, and professional. I was also curious to see if code-meshing experiences caused my students any level of positive or productive agitation. While this thematic category, "inner writerly consciousness," may also be relevant to the rhetoricity category above, I thought it could sit alone since it is more specific about what student writers were actually thinking and what functions they thought they served while manipulating their code-meshing choices into their course papers.

Writerly Roles in Code-Meshing

To inquire whether my research participants thought they occupied specific personas while code-meshing, I asked them the following question: "Were you conscious of your role as a college student, a professional, a family member, etc.?" It is interesting that 12/39 responses answered with "yes" or "yeah" to the question, which technically means that a little under a third were conscious of all the roles I listed: college, family, professional, and community.[82] Even though the question was framed as prompting students to pick one or more of these suggested roles, the question triggered longer responses from respondents. Some participants were caught off guard and provided hesitant answers at first, which they ended up revising toward the end of the interview response.[83]

One of the key takeaways I was able to deduce for this sub-category was that more than a third of my interviewees who specified certain roles they thought they'd inhabited during their code-meshing activities identified "college student" as a primary role or their only role.[84] This may come as a surprise especially because my code-meshing assignments were meant to more freely incorporate student writers' community affiliations through the utilization of their local language practices. A preponderance of this role identification in interview responses may suggest that code-meshing student writers were still conscious of their academic surroundings even when they were supposed to more liberally celebrate their local uniqueness. Another takeaway was that even though this interview question allowed research participants to select other roles to identify besides the ones listed as examples by the use of "etc." in the question's structure, only one student interviewee, Teresa from ENGL 1303, identified her role as an

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[82] More often than not, I added "community" as a possible role in the question itself or whenever I rephrased the question or repeated it.

[83] David, for example, started his response to the question with "I would say as a college student somewhat," but after talking at length about his pre-college school memories, he concluded: "I don't know I was so much as conscious as to the college student, professional, or family member."

[84] There were close to 15 "college student" role identifications.

"immigrant" or an "immigrant from the Hispanic community" in all of my interviews with her.[85]

This may be explained as a greater commitment to and more heightened mindfulness of her non-US citizen status.

More specifically, when asked about what roles they inhabited, "Were you conscious of your role as a college student, a professional, a family member, a community member, etc.?" respondents had varying responses. Half of ENGL 1304's Literacy Narrative participants reported that they were conscious of their roles as college students while they were code-meshing. A couple of those respondents also expressed that they were also conscious of other roles, such as their family and community members' roles. L.P.H explained that his primary role was college student, but a secondary role was a "family member not so much," though. Regina was conscious of her community role inasmuch as she was making her writing representative of her African-American vernacular community. She also added that she combined that community role with her role as a "college student to have a good paper, of course." Betty and Belinda thought of their roles primarily as family members "for the sake of knowing what it is like to have a family." While David was aware of his role as a college student, he admitted that he was "not super conscious" of that role while code-meshing, yet he was conscious enough to recall enough of his middle and high school "memories." Nour did not pick any one role, indicating that she was conscious of all roles mentioned in the question. The nature of the Literacy Narrative assignment may have contributed to these role designations; with this type of essay being about one's use and development of literacy and writing, perhaps participants were more likely to pick "college student" as a role than any other role.

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[85] Teresa (a pseudonym) never showed for the final round of interviews. I've only included data from her two interviews here—Though she was from Chile, she had near-native fluency in English.

As for the second assignment for ENGL 1304, again, half of my eight participant students reported that it was their college-student roles they felt the most conscious of when code-meshing. Some answered with simply yes (Nour) or no (Zach), which means they either were conscious of all the listed roles or none. L.P.H, Belinda, David, and Bruce announced their roles to be that of a college student. For David more specifically, it was the "college student youthfulness" because he utilized the type of language choices that he called "young code-meshing," which he said he used in a "youthful way." Belinda was conscious of two roles: college student and family member. Betty and Regina both thought that their community roles were enunciated the loudest in their code-meshing examples. Since the Annotated Bibliography assignment was about researching and evaluating sources, it makes sense that the students were still reliving their college personas while code-meshing for the assignment.

As for ENGL 1304's final essay, only L.P.H and Nour answered in the affirmative with no further explanation or comments. Belinda, Bruce, and David acknowledged that they were conscious of their college student identities. David was conscious of the role in the sense that he used "a lot of sources that are academic." He further explained that using these sources as a college student gave him more "credential" and "authority" in order to convey his argument more articulately about his topic, veganism. In addition to being conscious of her role as college student, Belinda also added the role of a "family member." Betty was the only respondent who was quite vocal about her role as a community member. It is quite interesting that ENGL 1304 participants were still stuck in their college-student roles while code-meshing, even though this assignment was more about their communities than the first assignment, for example.

As for ENGL 1303's Literacy Narrative responses about their consciousness regarding their roles while code-meshing, about half (Tia, Fannie, Alexa, and Lauren) answered in the

affirmative to the question. Which means that they were conscious of all roles listed in the question. Alexa added that she was conscious of those different roles (college student, community member, family member, and professional) because she was trying to maintain and boost her "credibility." Eva and Amanda were both conscious of their roles as college students. Amanda was also conscious of her role as a community member while she was code-meshing. However, Amanda noted that her being hyper aware of her role as a college student made her code-mesh less than she would have wanted because she remembered that she was writing this paper for a grade. While Teresa was conscious of all these roles, she was primarily conscious of a role not listed in the question: her role as an "immigrant." Unlike the ENGL 1304 responses to the same assignment, the responses from ENGL 1303 seemed to be inclusive of more roles; in fact, only one participant in ENGL 1303, Eva, identified only one specific role: college student.

As for ENGL 1303's second essay, again more than half of the respondents (Patrick, Tia, Alexa, and Fannie) answered in the affirmative about being conscious of all the roles listed in the question (college, student, community member, family member, and professional). However, Fannie added that while she was aware of these roles, this awareness made it harder for her to perform her code-meshings. Lauren only stated one role category when asked the question: "professional." Teresa's role consciousness was once again focused on her role as an immigrant within her Hispanic community. She added that when talking about immigration, which she did for this paper, people get "mad" and "upset" since it was a pretty touchy subject. What I gathered from her response was that she had a hard time coming up with code-meshing choices to use in her paper because she had to be accurate and careful with her wording not to misrepresent or demonize immigrants from the Hispanic community. When asked this question, Amanda answered by identifying her audience, namely her instructor, and the linguistic accommodations

she made for this audience: eluding her practice of "profanity or inappropriate words" when code-meshing. When I asked her if she was conscious of the role as a college student more specifically, she stated that considering this essay was a college assignment done for a "grade," she wanted to keep her code-meshing "professional." With their second set of encounters with code-meshing in this class, ENGL 1303 participants were still more varied in their role consciousness than ENGL 1304 counterparts.

As for their final essay, all three ENGL 1303 interviewees (Fannie, Tia, and Amanda) agreed that they were conscious of their roles, or of their writing, as "professional." Tia noted that she was also mindful of her role as a college student. Amanda, again, was conscious of the fact that she would be graded for this essay, and therefore she was "careful" with her code-meshing choices. This alertness to the fact that this essay was "an academic paper" made her wary of the two roles, namely college and professional: college student because she would be graded for the essay and professional because she was cognizant of the fact that this would be done for an academic audience, as well. This new role designation is, in fact, a new trend for this question, where all ENGL 1303 participants identified the same role: professional. Perhaps at this point in the semester, their personas were starting to develop, and they began to become more conscious of themselves as professionals in their own newly embraced fields.

There appears to be a major variance between ENGL 1303 and ENGL 1304 respondents to the roles they assumed while code-meshing. While ENGL 1304 students were more along the college-student roles, ENGL 1303 students were more likely to pick all of the roles listed in the question or identify other roles than "college-student." For many of my ENGL 1303 participants, Fall 2019 was their first semester in college, so this may explain the multilateral nature of this

aspect of their consciousness, where they were still mentally situated in other or numerous

spaces with different roles before starting to attend college.

Anxiety or Tension when Code-Meshing

Since the writing process is purported to place its practitioners every so often under

different levels of pressure, anxiety, or tension, I wanted to see, too, if my research respondents

experienced any such emotions *while* code-meshing for their three assignments. However, I was

astonished to find out that many of my code-meshing interviewees didn't endure such emotions

or states of mind. An overwhelming majority of my study interviewees noted that they didn't or

"didn't really" experience any moments of anxiety or tension while code-meshing.[86] Between

both ENGL 1303 and ENGL 1304, ENGL 1304 respondents were more consistent in providing

the same impression of their code-meshing accounts over the course of the three interviews:

whether such moments of anxiety or tension actually existed for them or not. One reason could

be that many of these respondents did not experience any tension or anxiety during the writing

process as a whole or they just could not separate the tension-sensed, anxiety-laced code-

meshing processes from their overall writing processes.

Another puzzling finding was that the Literacy Narrative essay had higher rates of

reported anxiety or tension than the other four assignments. I had originally thought that this

assignment would actually be more stress-free with my study participants than their other

assignments,[87] especially because I had emphasized the freeing, laid-back nature of this personal

essay as the space where they could spontaneously express their thoughts about their literacy and

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[86] 30/39 interview responses were along the lines of "no," "not really," and/or "not in this essay."

[87] The other assignments were the Summary/Response Essay and the Synthesis Essay for ENGL 1303 and the Annotated Bibliography and Community-Oriented Research-Supported Essay for ENGL 1304.

writing experiences with no judgment. The reason for the reported anxiety could stem from the fact that the Literacy Narrative essay was the first assignment for my study participants in all classes or even the first code-meshing experience for any of them. However, while an ENGL 1303 participant, Amanda, did not report feeling any anxiety or tension while code-meshing in any of her essays, she admitted in my final interview with her that her lack of these feelings came from her having gotten used to utilizing code-meshing in her writing.

As for ENGL 1304's Literacy Narrative, respondents had different takes on what counted as tension or anxiety and what made them tense or anxious while they were code-meshing. Six out of eight interviewees explained that they didn't experience any anxiety or tension or didn't think they experienced that much anxiety or tension. While Zach, Regina, and Belinda were confident no anxiety or tension occurred while code-meshing, L.P.H and Betty described how some code-meshing choices made them wonder to themselves what to include and if a certain code-meshing choice made more sense. David acknowledged that he may have felt "slightly nervous sometimes with the dialect that [he] use[d]. Maybe that it would be perceived as stupid or something like that." He later mentioned that he was also concerned whether his code-meshing choices were "still artistic" or they sounded more "forced and not good." Nour initially stated that the language she was code-meshing from, Arabic, had stigma, so she had to limit her code-meshings in the essay. However, when I asked her again if she experienced any anxiety or tension code-meshing for this Literacy Narrative essay, she admitted that she was not that concerned about that "bias" with her current writing instructor, me, but that she would have been more concerned if it had been a different instructor.

For their ENGL 1304's second assignment, the Annotated Bibliography, again 6/8 didn't have any anxiety or tension or didn't think they did. Nour's anxiety came from her lack of

confidence in her Arabic language skills, acknowledging that Arabic was harder for her than English because she grew up speaking English, and she was more comfortable with it than Arabic. She explained that she was worried about "misinterpret[ing]" some of the proverbs she was trying to code-mesh. L.P.H admitted that "the closest thing to anxiety and tension" he experienced while he was code-meshing for the second assignment was his concern with whether something "made sense the way [he] was putting it." While the Annotated Bibliography assignment would not be considered as laid back by the students as the Literacy Narrative would, three fourths of my ENGL 1304 participants still didn't undergo anxiety while code-meshing for it, which may be attributed to their getting more familiar with the practice.

As for ENGL 1304's final assignment, 3/6 (Nour, Bruce, and Belinda) all confirmed that they experienced no anxiety or tension while they code-meshed. Betty, however, described that occasionally she had "difficulty" figuring out whether her code-meshing was "relevant." In answer to the question, L.P.H qualified his response with an exception: he only experienced anxiety or tension when he was providing translations to his code-meshing. He explained that he needed to "make sure that every translation went in each place it was supposed to go." While his answer to the question was "no, not really," David further explained that his "most tension" set in when he was trying to figure out if his code-meshing examples "would read well to [his readers] … [and] how other people are going to perceive [them]." Yet, David recognized that although this "perception" anxiety could be one of the "biggest problems with code-meshing," it may very well be one of its "powers" or strengths. Although insignificant, there seemed to be a slight drop in the number of "no-anxiety" cases by ENGL 1304's final essay. This could be explained in one of three ways: the level of anxiety was understandable toward the end of an academic semester, the fact that this assignment had the biggest grade weights of any other may

cause anxiety, or anxiety was no longer stigmatized by the respondents and hence more shareable.

As for ENGL 1303's Literacy Narrative essay, 4/7 of the respondents confirmed that they sustained no anxiety or tension while code-meshing for their Literacy Narratives. Lauren, however, described how she felt stressed and anxious that she was code-meshing because that took her "multiple sessions of trying to figure out which words would fit best." Eva was anxious and worried about what feedback she might get regarding her code-meshing attempts and how code-meshing was going to make her look before her audience; she explained that she was "pretty nervous for writing the code-meshing just because I didn't want to have comments about [how] it doesn't flow well." Fannie explained that she didn't use personal writing but wrote in the "third person" in order to avert any potential anxiety. In fact, while other participants either acknowledged or denied it, Fannie may be the only participant to admit that she actually did something to avoid the emotion of anxiety in writing.

As for ENGL 1303's second essay, 5/7 respondents reported that they didn't experience any moments of anxiety or tension while they were code-meshing. Patrick noted that he experienced this anxiety or tension only once, but he didn't elaborate. By contrast, the subsequent comment Patrick made about his code-meshing attempts portrayed code-meshing as an effective rhetorical strategy useful in "tell[ing] [his] readers how [he] thinks and how [he] list[s] [his] thoughts." As for Teresa, her code-meshing incorporations caused her stress and anxiety when she had to code-mesh after she was done writing the assignment; for her, these code-meshing examples didn't "feel natural" because they were not done as she was drafting the assignment. While only slightly elevated, the number of ENGL 1303 participants not feeling

anxiety when code-meshing had gone up, which is understandable because by now this essay would be at least their second time code-meshing in the class.

As for ENGL 1303's final essay, two thirds of ENGL 1303 respondents (Tia and Amanda) reported that they did not experience any anxiety while code-meshing. Amanda explained that the reason she no longer felt that anxiety or the tension was because this was the final paper for the class, and she was "more used to finding the right place to code-mesh, so it wasn't as forceful." Conversely, Fannie was certain about having suffered anxiety and tension while code-meshing in her third paper for the class. Her anxiety and tension kicked in mostly while she was converting the visual data and after she had learned about how wide the chasm was between the wages her fellow Mexican compatriots and family members made and how expensive basic needs and food supplies were. Although Fannie was the only participant who reported anxiety, her anxiety doesn't seem to pertain to code-meshing or composing; rather, her anxiety was triggered by the knowledge she acquired while researching for her assignment. In other words, while the sample in this assignment is smaller than in other assignments, all interviewed ENGL 1303 participants reported no anxiety while code-meshing for their final essay. All in all, whereas anxiety while code-meshing has decreased for ENGL 1303, it has increased or stayed the same for ENGL 1304 for the reasons explained in this sub-section.

Thematic Categories' Spread over Other Data Sets:

In order to triangulate and further corroborate the pedagogical effectiveness of code-meshing for my FYC classes, I was interested in learning how many of my themes from one data set trickled into another data set. In fact, some of my major and minor categories identified in my students' interview answers above could also be detected in other data sets: surveys and student writing. For instance, in her interview responses, when asked specifically if she entertained any

audiences, Nour, an ENGL 1304 student, noted that she tried to keep her code-meshing examples "simple" because she "was trying to appeal to the general audience." She further explained that when selecting her Arabic code-meshing examples, she was trying to be careful not to alienate her audience by picking expressions with too specific cultural or religious undertones. Nour's audience considerations were also echoed in her survey responses where she recommended using code-meshing judiciously not to "frustrate [her] reader[s]" or make the wrong "impact" on them. As for rhetorical purpose, Nour added in the same survey that the idea behind code-meshing was to "supplement the topic" and not "detrac[t] from the writing."

Another promising capability that my study participants addressed directly or indirectly across more than one data set was the political potential or transformative wherewithal of code-meshing. In her interview responses regarding her Summary/Response essay, Teresa, an ENGL 1303 participant, made clear that through her code-meshing, she was hoping to "bring seriousness" to issues of substantial political weight: the issue of political demagoguery in Iran and the US and the issue of bigotry against immigrants in the US. In fact, this was better attested for in her code-meshed examples from Spanish, Chilean Spanish, and American slang. To mobilize the political potential of code-meshing, Teresa used the Spanish expression *arribistas* to refer to the class of people both the Ayatollah and President Trump mainly tried to bond with. Teresa also code-meshed through her incorporation of Trump's *beaners* to better pronounce the prejudicial languaging meted out on minorities, potentially calling her readers to reflect on the offensive situation in hopes of some remediation.

Speaking to the personalizing nature of code-meshing, David, an ENGL 1304 participant, explained in his second interview how he based his code-meshing injections based on what "felt personal enough for me to code-mesh." In fact, David explained how an expression he used in

his second assignment, *raging herbivores*, was "personal" because this choice better portrayed his "super dramatic" personality. He further commented in the same interview on another code-meshing choice he made, namely embedding *Ari* rather than *Ariana Grande*, for this "specific code-meshing was a personal reflection of who I am," referring to code-meshing items from his personal speaking style into his assignment. In the final survey of the study, David further emphasized the rhetorico-personal element of code-meshing by noting that code-meshing helped create a "more personal interaction w/ the reader." To David, code-meshing's personalizing potential was the most important feature of this composing technique, as substantiated through his interview answers, survey response, and his code-meshed texts.

Conclusion:

As illustrated from the categories and themes discussed above, my data proposes to me much eye-opening substance about my research participants' knowledge and practice of code-meshing. In fact, these more deliberate thematic designations about code-meshing's potential suggest more emphatical categories and accounts about FYC students' code-meshing experiences than what Young, Canagarajah, or their contemporaries have argued recently about the pedagogical practice and theoretical conceptions of code-meshing. While many other categories have surely accounted for the development of my participants' composing savvy with code-meshing, I would like to explain how two themes in particular have been especially useful in my and my study participants' understanding and employment of code-meshing:

- *Code-Meshers' Rhetorical Sensitivity*:

Working with different code-meshing choices made my FYC participants spend more time thinking, researching, and negotiating different choices of code-meshing as regards the

reading ease of their messages and their audiences' relatability. In fact, there were so many occasions where I found my research participants to have exhibited or developed rhetorical judgment in terms of crafting their code-meshing examples effectively. Questions about audience focus and rhetorical purpose seemed to always be on the study participants' minds: how will a code-meshing choice be perceived and understood by the audience, and will a given code-meshing example help enhance or impede the flow of the writer's message? Based on the responses I collected from my student participants, my data suggests that the practice of code-meshing helped my participants become more rhetorically aware: aware of how deliverable and coherent their messages needed to be and how discerning they needed to be of their audiences' needs and expectations.

For example, many of my study participants were always quick to ask themselves whether a given code-meshing item would flow with the spirit of the surrounding text and intended message, whether the employment of a certain code-meshing instance would make sense to the reader, and/or whether the *location* of a code-meshing example would make sense to the reader. Overall, most research participants were also able to recognize what kind of audience they were speaking to. In fact, some of the audience types that participants were able to identify fell somewhere along the spectra of the following categories: some domestic and some abroad, some mainstream and some minority, some young and some old, some academic and some nonacademic, some monolingual and some multilingual, some peers and some superiors, some performed for one's own inner audience (i.e. one's own satisfaction) and some solely performed for others, and some more.

Moreover, code-meshing allowed my study participants to develop and advance additional goals than those initially intended by them or by the assignment. Through their code-

meshing choices, research participants started aiming to achieve further objectives: recalling relevant linguistic expressions, affirming some identity markers, emphasizing the importance of some elements, recollecting prior experiences, showing a diversity of ways for doing the one thing, making a political statement, advocating for a social cause, connecting with certain community members more closely, highlighting some personal traits, reminiscing on fond or not-so-fond memories, so on and so forth. In other words, code-meshing gave my student code-meshers more time, greater commitment, and more reasons to re-think and reflect on the rhetoricity of their composing acts.

- *Code-Meshers' Processual Sensitivity*:

While many of my study participants reported that they engaged in the process of code-meshing while they were drafting and composing their different assignments, several thought of their code-meshing processes as distinct in some way from their general composing processes for their assignments. These code-meshing processes ranged from a few minutes to a week with a varying number of composing "sittings" purely for the selection and incorporation of their code-meshing choices. Some were quick to estimate how long their code-meshing processes took and then to readily specify how many sessions their code-meshing processes claimed. In fact, some did not code-mesh while they were drafting; they had to engage in a separate code-meshing process where they had to go back to their drafting material and inject their code-meshing items after they had completed their writing. This suggests that at least some of my study participants were conscious of an additional process that required an extra effort on their part to figure out the different elements needed to make their code-meshing more useful and comprehensible.

The process was also different from one study participant to another in terms of its difficulty level. The nature of the assignment (whether it was personal, academic, research-

based) also helped determine how easy or hard the code-meshing was. More than half of my student participants ended up comparing their code-meshing experiences for their current essay with the code-meshing they composed for their previous essays. Some explained how long each one of their code-meshing items took; some took too little time and some took too much time. At least a couple acknowledged that the length each code-meshing example took was entirely based on their personality as writers. All this suggests that code-meshing processes were highly individualistic; while I was able to make some generalizable determinations about my three student groups, as was explained toward the beginning of the chapter, my students' experiences were still individuated.

Moreover, my study of the current interview data has shown me that code-meshing research is better supported by empirical evidence and qualitative research issuing from the rhetorical field and performed by rhetorical researchers. Unlike previous studies of code-meshing with student writers which provided broad takeaways about code-meshing in non-FYC classes, my study has allowed me to tighten the connection between the practice of code-meshing and rhetorical instruction in FYC through the proposing of more specific themes to monitor. My aforementioned thematic designations have permitted me to more loudly project my budding rhetors' lived experiences of code-meshing by describing their vivid exchanges with code-meshing and by explaining their newly developing inter-discursive relationships with academic writing. More specifically, my data suggests that in order to fully appreciate college students' code-meshing choices, it is fairly important to take into account participants' own responses about code-meshing's writing process and the writerly consciousness involved, such as writers' self-professed roles when code-meshing. My focus on the two recurrent themes identified above is also meant to alert composition teachers and researchers to zero in on a specific set of writing

elements in their research or teaching at a time instead of focusing on too small a set or too many at one time. I hope that my study of current interview data will also allow future FYC researchers to realize the importance of including more student-heavy accounts of code-meshing experiences and reactions coming directly from their own student-writer groups rather than primarily relying on code-meshing theory or pedagogy of less relevant, less representative student groups than their FYC student demographics.

CHAPTER FIVE:

My Participants' Code-Meshing Choices: Data and Analysis

Giving agency and authority to students' discursive experiences in Rhetoric and

Composition scholarship and educational research has ever been a challenging but necessary step

to many beginning researchers. Students are now data and knowledge producers with bearings on

research and with major contributions to many of its findings. As in the tradition of Paulo Freire

and John Dewey,[88] an educator should be willing to start with the literate riches that students

bring with them into the classroom, as opposed to working from the premise that students have

nothing to offer rhetorically to a writing class's content. In other words, educators should take

further steps to figure out their students' home-grown rhetorical strengths and work out ways to

take advantage of them in their writing. Therefore, teachers should be careful not to embrace

pedagogies or classroom practices that indiscriminately dismiss students' individually-grown and

community-nurtured literate resources and experiences, especially those who do not come from

mainstream backgrounds and/or those who cannot transition immediately or wholly into

academic discourse.

In order to study my own students' code-meshed prose, I needed to work with a

methodology that would help me foreground my students' writing, voices, and experiences

without preconceived theoretical assumptions about students' experiences or practices. Teacher

research is one methodology with great potential for investigating code-meshing, namely

studying writing students' incorporation of their local rhetorical habits and ways of meaning-

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[88] In *Pedagogy of the Oppressed*, Freire is critical of a prevalent schooling tradition, "the banking system," where "the teacher teaches and the students are taught; the teacher knows everything and the students know nothing; the teacher talks and the students listen meekly" (53-54). In *Democracy and Education*, Dewey believed that "educational institutions should be equipped so as to give students an opportunity for acquiring and testing ideas and information in active pursuits typifying important social situations" (169).

making into their writing for school. Teacher research decides how much control theory gets in informing what is right, sufficient, and appropriate practice for studying the writing of college students. Loosening the stringency of previous teacher research protocols, Zebroski calls on writing teachers to view their classroom experiences as a means to "interrogate" and "test out [their] theory" (10) and the theories that they build on. In other words, teachers should not make assumptions about their students' writing practices and needs only based on prior research, which may at times be short-sighted, irrelevant, or simply inapplicable, but teachers should conduct their own inquiries to challenge and extend existing theory and pedagogy. Often, the application of already established theories may not "allow for the complex variations of locally defined perspectives" (Seitz 198) of student writers. Classroom teachers' theories should be built on students' practical experiences as manifested in classroom happenings and writing coming directly from student writers, which is what makes good theory possible. Additionally, conducting a teacher research project gives college students the chance to contribute to composition pedagogy and theory "rather than consume it" (Seitz 198) or be passive recipients to it through their writing, through writing completed for actual classroom assignments. This flexibility in teacher research and the easy movement between theory and practice have allowed me to navigate my three different classrooms more nuancedly and compare research findings from all three sites.

As a teacher researcher, I used my own classroom-based observations and/or knowledge of my students through my interactions with them and through their interview and survey responses to more effectively explain and analyze their language choices and writing habits and behavior regarding their code-meshing choices in light of contemporary code-meshing research. Based on my analysis of student writing in this chapter, I argue that Rhetoric and Composition

scholars have discussed code-meshing too monolithically. As I will show, the processes by which students code-mesh for first-year writing assignments change dramatically depending on the students' motivations for code-meshing in academic writing and on the students' familiarity with different nonacademic languages, dialects, and discourses at the time of code-meshing.

More specifically in this chapter, I focus on my students' code-meshing illustrations and instantiations in their FYC major papers and offer extrapolations meant to propose meaningful interpretations and analytical categories for student writers' code-meshing selections and placements. My findings in this chapter will be primarily informed by students' uses of code-meshing in their FYC (First-Year Composition) papers for ENGL 1303 and ENGL 1304 in Fall 2019 and Spring 2019 respectively. All in all, I'll be investigating a total of 48 papers (namely, the three major papers of each one of my 16 participants), where each paper may have on average 3-4 code-meshing cases, totaling close to 145 code-meshing choices from all student papers examined. While studying each one of these code-meshing choices, in the remainder of the chapter I'll only share those I believe to be good examples of code-meshing featuring the most salient themes I propose below.

In fact, the major themes in this chapter have much more in common with the major themes in Chapter 3 than with those in Chapter 4, as was explained in Chapter 3. After combing through all of my research participants' code-meshing choices in their papers, I've been able to arrive at the three following salient themes:

1.) My research participants' rhetorical awareness: as explained in the upcoming analyses, ENGL 1303 and ENGL 1304 students exhibited rhetorical judgment in determining which code-meshing choices to make, when, and where.

2.) My research participants' communal identity affirmation: in their capacity as locally conscious community constituents, student participants showed through their code-meshing choices that code-meshing could be utilized for asserting their community affiliations.

3.) My research participants' politicized code-meshing choices: as global citizens and civic members, student participants implemented code-meshing so as to advocate for just causes, expose social ills, and correct damaging cultural narratives.

While assigning adequate pedagogical value to student content (i.e., students' writing) and reinstating writing teachers' authority in determining how code-meshing has worked out for student participants from a teacher-research perspective, I approach V. A. Young's and A. Suresh Canagarajah's theories about code-meshing in student writing by offering the following interventions into the ongoing conversation about code-meshing:

1. My study takes code-meshing theory and pedagogy further by examining the code-meshing instances implemented by FYC student writers coming from diverse language backgrounds, especially when code-meshing in FYC has not yet been the subject of much attention.

2. The study[89] expands the pool of code-meshed student writing by engaging three classroom sites and allows to see the subtleties of code-meshed student writing from a larger range of student discourses working in practice in five different FYC assignments.

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[89] This project's planning started in 2018.

3. The study categorizes student writing with more emphatic thematic designations based on code-meshed student content, especially the use of code-meshing as a tool for community affirmation and social justice.

4. Since it is a teacher research project, along with the previous chapters, this chapter privileges student content (i.e., student writing in this chapter) as the springboard for analytical discussions.

Major Student-Data Takeaways:

- Due to the versatile nature of the code-meshing selections, code-meshing could be thought of as a multipurpose tool adaptable to a number of writerly needs, including appealing to different audiences all at once, raising community morale and garnering community support, and correcting social and political ills.

- Over a third of my student examples employed code-meshing choices that didn't necessarily come from another language or a well-researched dialect per se; rather, they came from discourses that were qualitatively downplayed and under-investigated in most popular and scholarly conceptions and conversations of code-meshing.

- My student writers utilized code-meshing in order to better visualize to their audience the severity of some political situations, rendering code-meshing rhetorically conscious *and* politically driven. My participants' code-meshing choices were wielded to bring awareness to social ills and to prejudice and discrimination issues.

- Some linguistic items that had been maliciously used by different offenders were co-opted, repurposed, and incorporated as code-meshing examples to more graphically picture a cultural or political wrong and to more explicitly articulate the urgency of the offensive situation at hand.

- More than half of my student writers signaled their multiple community affiliations—or their multilingual statuses—by embedding items from more than one discourse community in their course writing.

ENGL 1303 and ENGL 1304 Assignments with Code-Meshing:

The code-meshing writing analyzed here was submitted for three major writing assignments of ENGL 1303 and ENGL 1304 in 2019. In Spring 2019, my ENGL 1304 students had the following paper assignments: a Literacy Narrative, an Annotated Bibliography (personal research narrative, the annotated sources section, and students' conclusions), and a Community-Oriented Research-Backed Solution essay. For my ENGL 1303 class in Fall 2019, students also had three assignments, one of which was the same as the assignment for ENGL 1304, a Literacy Narrative. The other two ENGL 1303 assignments were a Summary/Strong Response essay and an Analysis/Synthesis essay.

Since I had explained that code-meshing could occur at the sentence level, the clause level, and/or the phrase level, students' code-meshing varied in length and structure. More than half of my student participants code-meshed with elements from more than one discourse community. Under half of these participants did not, however, identify which discourse they deployed at any given code-meshing situation, although they might have already identified more than one discourse community they subscribed to in their earlier surveys; this identification was later deduced through students' writing, survey responses, or interview answers, or through my knowledge of the students' mastery of specific discourse communities. Also, my knowledge of what discourses my students code-meshed came from details the student shared in class, through individual interactions with the student, or through my observations and analyses.

The Literacy Narrative Essay for ENGL 1303 and ENGL 1304:

The Literacy Narrative essay (see Appendix E) was explained as a first-hand narrative about students' previous writing and composing experiences in any form or context. It was supposed to be a form of autobiographical writing, which was meant to help student writers learn and evaluate the role of literacy in their lives. Also, it was intended to unravel student writers' attitudes and abilities, along with how they had developed as readers, writers, thinkers, and communicators. The Literacy Narrative essay functioned for students as their rhetorical space to theorize about their composing literacies and reflect on their own writing theories. It was a form of "metawriting, writing about writing" (Zebroski 20).

In order to code-mesh for the Literacy Narrative, all students were encouraged to include items from their home or community language into their literacy narratives where rhetorically appropriate; students were supposed to decide where to inject their code-meshing choices while being rhetorically mindful of their audience, purpose, and the surrounding text (i.e., the location of their code-meshing choices in the essay). Their home language, dialect, or discourse was explained as any language system that they did not use at school but only used in their home or community. While non-participating students in class were encouraged to code-mesh, my research participants were requested to have at least *three* items from their home or community language injected into their literacy narratives where they thought this injection served a rhetorical purpose to advance their narrative and support their main idea.[90]

Student participants code-meshed in different parts of their Literacy Narrative essays and during different moments of their literacy accounts: when addressing the difficulty of and

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[90] The number of the study's participants eventually went down to a total of 16 participants whose Literacy Narrative writing I'm studying here: 8 from ENGL 1303 and 8 from ENGL 1304.

frustration over a given literacy task, when engaging with literacy sponsors, when expressing

their views and feelings on writing and composing, when enunciating a particular discourse

background or affiliation (e.g., family, cultural group, workplace, and religious membership,

among others), when describing their everyday discoursing in languages other than academic

English, when trying to more vividly portray their literacy development, and many other

situations. The code-meshing examples includes phrases (monolexical or polylexical: e.g., verb

phrases, noun phrases, adjective phrases, prepositional phrases, adverbial phrases, and a past

participle), clauses, interjections, a shortened name, and one symbol.

ENGL 1303's Summary/Strong Response Essay (Essay II):

For Essay II, ENGL 1303 students were asked to provide a summary of an article of their

own selection (see Appendix F). Next, they were to formulate a critical response in which they

spoke back to that reading from their own critical thinking, personal experience, and/or values.

To best generate useful responses, students were required to couch their responses in the form of

a rhetorical critique, an ideological critique, a reflective critique, or even a "blended" approach

where all of these strategies could be utilized.[91] Students were also encouraged to envision their

audience as fellow students or instructors who had not read the article but who might want to use

this critical response as a resource in their writing. As for code-meshing in this essay, one of the

eight student participants (Eva) did not code-mesh at all, one participant (Alexa) code-meshed

only once, one participant (Patrick) code-meshed only twice, and all else (the remaining 5:

Amanda, Teresa, Fannie, Lauren, and Tia) code-meshed three times each. Again, student writers

applied code-meshing in different parts of their essays. The code-meshing examples included

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[91] This was referenced in *The Allyn & Bacon Guide to Writing* textbook for our ENGL 1303 classes.

single words (verbs or nouns), multi-word constructions (e.g., noun phrases, adverbial phrases, prepositional phrases) and full sentences.

ENGL 1303's The Community-Oriented Analysis/Synthesis Essay (Essay III):

The Analysis/Synthesis essay (see Appendix G) was ENGL 1303's final major paper, which was supposed to build on strategies students should have developed while crafting the Summary/Strong Response essay from the previous class unit. For this essay, however, ENGL 1303 students were required to engage with 2-3 texts involving a relevant contemporary problem or question in their communities—this time one with ethical implications—and then propose a solution to their community problem. Students needed to summarize and analyze the authors' purposes and main ideas, create connections between the texts—e.g., ideas or rhetorical strategies—and then synthesize them into an original solution of their own. Out of the eight participants in this essay, two did not code-mesh at all (Patrick and Lauren), one student only code-meshed once (Teresa), and three students code-meshed twice (Fannie, Alexa, and Tia), and two code-meshed more than twice (Amanda and Eva). Student participants code-meshed in the form of full sentences, multi-word phrases, and single words.[92]

ENGL 1304's Second Assignment: The Research Narrative, Annotated Bibliography, and Working Thesis:[93]

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[92] For this essay, participants code-meshed from more than one discourse community. Participants code-meshed from the following discourse communities (according to the students' descriptions and my own interpretations): general slang, English slang, modern slang, millennial slang, old slang, medical jargon, colloquial language, retail associate slang, and North Mexican Spanish.

[93] This assignment is also known as the Annotated Bibliography assignment and was only given to my ENGL 1304 students, not to my ENGL 1303 students.

For this assignment (the Annotated Bibliography; see Appendix H), students needed to locate themselves in a community of their choice[94] (school, work, hometown, ethnic group, religious group, etc.) and identify within their selected community a problem for analysis to ultimately propose a solution for in their final course assignment (Essay III: ENGL 1304's the Community-Oriented Solution essay). This assignment was considered the place where students studied their community problem, analyzed its causes/effects, and used research materials, finding and evaluating relevant supporting research regarding their community problem. Students were asked to begin this assignment by forming at least one research question related to a problem in their community, conduct research to gather a multitude of perspectives (sources) on that research question in the forming of annotated sources, and then present their findings, analysis, and reflections in the conclusion section of the assignment. The research journey and annotated bibliography in the assignment should give student researchers the opportunity to find and engage with quality sources that they could then use to write their third assignment for the class. While the Annotated Bibliography assignment should prepare students to make an argument for the third paper, it was not meant as an argument in itself but was intended to help them explore multiple perspectives on their community problem.

For my ENGL 1304 research participants, I asked those research informants to code-mesh 2-3 instances from their discourse communities in whichever part, or section, of the Annotated Bibliography assignment they thought it would best fit; this means that they could code-mesh in the research narrative, in the annotated sources section, in the conclusions, or in a blend/all of those. I *did* advise, however, that it might be easier to code-mesh in their first-hand

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[94] For this part of the assignment—and at the start of this course unit—I had students identify 3-5 of the communities they belonged to. Later, I asked them to identify 1-3 problems each one of their communities was dealing with.

accounts of the assignment—where they had to use the first person and talk about their own reactions and attitudes during these steps of the research journey.[95] Three (L.P.H, Betty, and Bruce) out of the eight ENGL 1304 student participants did not include any code-meshing examples in this assignment. The lack of code-meshing in these three student assignments may be because they thought that code-meshing would not work in this research-based assignment, because they forgot, or because they thought it to be recommended rather than required. The code-meshing examples included adjectives, adjective phrases, nouns, prepositional phrases, local spellings, proverbial expressions, an expletive, and a nickname,

ENGL 1304's Third Assignment: The Community-Oriented Solution Essay (Essay III):

For this assignment (see Appendix I), after students had already chosen a community problem in their self-selected communities and had conducted some preliminary research toward its analysis and its solution in the assignment before (i.e., the Annotated Bibliography assignment), students were now supposed to put together a solution argument on the community issue under scrutiny into one rhetorically cogent whole. In this essay, students were required to propose a coherent research-supported solution to the problem at hand, giving clear reasons why they thought their solution was valid. Students were asked to center their main claim on the research question they had developed in their Annotated Bibliography assignment. For this assignment, 7/8 participant writers (all but Zach) code-meshed at least three times in different parts of their essays. Their examples included interrogative sentences, whole (affirmative) sentences, verb phrases, adjectives, passive-voice constructions, local spellings, an adverbial, a phrasal verb, an idiomatic expression, an imperative, and one shortened noun.

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[95] I'm referring here to Part I, the exploratory research journey, and Part III, the conclusions, of the assignment.

Salient Themes in Student Code-Meshing for ENGL 1303 and ENGL 1304 Papers:

Similarly to Chapter 3—more so than Chapter 4—I managed to divide my student-writing data based on the upcoming major themes and analytical categories below. While the rhetorical and community themes were also major themes in Chapter 3 with the community theme being less so in Chapter 4, the two are also major themes here in this chapter. One additional major theme was added here, however: the political theme of participants' code-meshing choices. In the tradition of thematic analysis (Braun and Clarke), after all data was collected, I moved on to assign thematic labels to data units I found to include code-meshing materials in my student writing. First, I began by listing all student participants' names of my study in a MS Word document. Next, I listed all their code-meshing instances under their names in the chronological order of their three assignments by copying and pasting the whole sentence/s that included the code-meshing and oftentimes the surrounding sentences. Then, I tried to identify the thematic nature of in my research participants' code-meshing choices based on the appearance of certain lexical items in each code-meshing part and around it: words, phrases, and sentences. The combination of being both a teacher of writing and a teacher researcher helped me make the thematic determinations: theme identification designations were based on my own discretionary interpretation informed by my familiarity with the writing prompt, my knowledge of my student writers' interview answers following each essay, and my acquaintance of each student writer in my class, among other factors. Secondarily, I identified some of these thematic titles based on the topic of the paper in question.

In the tradition of reflexive thematic analysis, identifying themes and patterns is more flexible than old-style thematic analysis, rendering an approach less "rigid" and more reflective and its narrative more "analytic" than synthetic. Thematic categories are reached by identifying

"pattern[s] of shared meaning underpinned by a central concept or idea" (Braun and Clarke).

Detecting "patterns of shared meaning" based on major ideas has allowed me to locate meaning

shared across different student texts and across different assignments. Since the process of

figuring out meaningful patterns in my code-meshing data excerpts was to be more qualitative

and less measurable than quantifiable or quantitative, I wasn't too concerned with *exactly* how

many times instantiations of one thematic category recurred in my student data. However, I was

primarily attentive to the 2-3 themes that exhibited the most salience among less salient themes.

Looking back at my student data frequently, I was able to see that three themes kept popping up

more than others.

Analyzing the code-meshing of the five assignments composed by my ENGL 1303 and

ENGL 1304 research participants, other researchers may infer other themes than the ones I share

here based on the students' code-meshing practices. In the following sections, I have chosen to

focus on only three code-meshing themes that I have found to be more tenacious and plausible

than others and that I have been able to identify as more recurrent than others. While I had

already gone into the research with thematic foci that I suspected my code-meshing students had

accommodated, I was able to identify my themes below based on which themes emerged the

most in the pool of my students' code-meshing choices:

Code-Meshing as a Sentient Rhetorical Choice:

My student data analyzed in this chapter suggests that my research participants' rhetorical

awareness operates on nuanced gradations along the axis of the rhetorical situation: a balanced

act of rhetorical appeals, an externally mandated response, a socially constructed comeback, a

resourceful art of topics, or a blend of two or more of those.[96] In this section, I begin by illustrating how one student dealt with different strands of the rhetorical situation in three assignments over one semester. Fannie, an ENGL 1303 participant, exhibited her mindfulness of the rhetorical situation by adopting all three views depending on her particular assignment. With her Literacy Narrative essay, Fannie was responding to an exigency in her new life (Bitzer), so she code-meshed about a situation that she didn't necessarily select: her journey to the US, her going to school here, and her starting a life in the States. To more vividly describe her emotional state to her audience, Fannie code-meshed elements from her mother tongue, which she identified as North Mexican Spanish, when reminiscing about her former family and home, using elements such as the following: "my family has always been mi roca (my source of support)," "making my new environment a place that feels like mi dulce hogar (my sweet home)," and "Now that I am starting una nueva etapa en mi vida (a new stage in my life)."

With her Summary/Response essay, Fannie preselected a situation to rhetorically respond to (Vatz): the rainforest fires in Brazil's Amazons. In other words, the situation was not exactly imposed on her, but she chose to advocate for a change in a dire situation that affected other people. Using the same language as for her first essay, Fannie code-meshed the urgency of the forest fires situation by calling on those in charge or those in positions of authority to respond to the issue "lo más pronto posible (as soon as possible)." In her final essay (Synthesis/Solution essay), Fannie was somehow halfway between an externally imposed situation and her rhetorically creative agency to work out a response to it (Consigny). While she wasn't directly impacted by the minimum-wage situation in Mexico after relocating to the States, she still was able to forge a rhetorically constructive response where "necesitan saber que el problema existe

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[96] Please refer to Chapter 2 for more details on my discussion of the rhetorical situation.

(it needs to be shown that the problem exists)." Trying to be more rhetorically creative in her argument, Fannie noted that she code-meshed by converting a Spanish-language infographic into an English-language table to translate and explain the food cost discrepancy in Mexico in pesos and US dollars.

In addition to their mindfulness of the rhetorical situation, my research participants' code-meshing examples suggest that they were trying to captivate the interest of their audiences, that they wished to appeal to certain audiences and educate others, and that they made attempts at couching their claims in novel ways in order to offer and elicit new perspectives on their topics. In fact, V. A. Young, too, believes that code-meshing serves the instructive purpose of educating one's audience, especially that code-meshing "has the potential to enlarge our national vocabulary, multiply the range of available rhetorical styles, expand our ability to understand linguistic difference and make us in the end multidialectical, as opposed to monodialectical" ("'Nah, We Straight'" 65). Canagarajah addresses code-meshing as a practice that may at times take precedence over the conventional form of academic discourse and thus make it "subservient to [one's] rhetorical purposes" ("Codemeshing in Academic Writing" 411). Achieving greater distinction and pliability, my research participants' code-meshing choices were grounded in a far bigger number of rhetorical potentialities than previously explored, be those potentialities wielded wittingly or rather instinctively.

In my interpretations of my students' code-meshing examples in the remainder of this chapter, I suggest more nuanced, fluid, and complex implications about the rhetorical nature of their code-meshing choices. These inferences, especially those that pertain to audience-consciousness and authorial goals, should offer more than what other rhetorical studies on code-meshing would usually allow or make conceivable about student writers' code-meshing

experiences, as in Canagarajah's and Young's analyses of student writers' code-meshing. Plus, my interpretations hope to fill up the gap of formerly not accounting for student writers' rhetorical experiences with code-meshing in FYC classes. While my student examples selected below may pendulate on a spectrum of endless analytical possibilities and prospects for FYC students, I here focus on my students' rhetorical attempts to establish connections with their audiences, educate their audiences on their topics more forcefully, and more vividly describe past and sometimes personal experiences they underwent.

Before proceeding to individual examples of my students' code-meshing choices, I would like to summarize a couple of the most plausible takeaways I have been able to work out for this thematic category. While I *did* explain to my students that code-meshing could come from more than one community all in the same essay, about a fourth of my participants code-meshed from more than one discourse community. Those who *did* may either have wanted to appeal to more than one audience base to make their argument or have wanted to signal their *multilingual* status—compared with a *bilingual* status.[97] Those who *didn't* could have chosen the discourse community they were the most fluent in and used it for all of their code-meshing examples; this could be caused by a desire for convenience, a desire for coherence, and/or a desire for the affirmation of one community affiliation as opposed to more than one. Another discovery was that while the chief purposes of my students' code-meshing choices below were thought of as mainly rhetorical, they could also be explained as other moves, such as for community advocacy or for social justice, my other two thematic categories. This finding speaks to the versatile nature

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[97] I'm extending the definition of *bilingual* or *multilingual* to refer to people fluent in more than one discourse community, and not only "language" fluency.

of the code-meshing selections that my student participants chose to incorporate, which makes code-meshing a multipurpose tool adaptable to a number of writerly needs.

In her literacy narrative, Belinda incorporated five instances of code-meshing in different parts of the essay. She code-meshed individual words, a two-word noun phrase, and full sentences. Her monolexical code-meshing examples included a word from her English-based discourse community and a word from Spanish: "the arts were always my 'thing'" (her first code-meshing example in the essay) and "'producción'" (her final code-meshing example in the essay). Belinda also used two sentential code-meshing examples from Spanish: "'Y que vas a estudiar mija?'" and "'y que estas estudiando?'" As per the instructions I had provided the class in general and other research participants in particular, Belinda provided translations of these code-meshing examples (including all others) right afterwards with the use of parenthetical translations: "(What do you plan to study hun?/ Spanish)" and "(so what are you studying?)" respectively. Her only phrasal code-meshing example was "'ingeniería biomédica'" along with her translation "(biomedical engineering)" coming right afterwards.

In her first example of code-meshing in her literacy narrative, Belinda used a colloquialism, "my 'thing,'" when referring to her love of Fine Arts. This is the only place where she used an American colloquialism potentially to indicate her membership in the discourse community of American-English speakers. After this code-meshing, all her other code-meshing instances were in Spanish, signaling another community membership.[98] Belinda may have wanted to use more than one discourse community because she wanted to make her text appealing to more than one type of audience. She may have used this more well-known

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[98] In fact, Belinda stuck with code-meshing Spanish only for her two other assignments for the class.

American-English colloquialism because more of her readers were likely to understand it and relate to it, at least perhaps more readily than the other examples she listed further down. After easing her readers into code-meshing through items they were more likely to know, she then used items that would more likely appeal to a Spanish-speaking audience than other readers who might not know the Spanish used.

While at least two thirds of my participants tried to code-mesh smaller elements into their literacy narratives, several incorporated whole sentences or longer phrases. Some of these long sentences and phrases came as quoted materials from previous conversations had by the research participants. Zach code-meshed in that way for the most part except for two instances where he used noun phrases instead of whole sentences. The quoted sentences that Zach used came from Hindi and were about his preparation and his mental state before taking the STAAR test. These Hindi sentences that Zach embedded into his literacy narrative were conversations he had had with his mother who asked him about his school, his general well-being, and his STAAR test. It is quite unclear why Zach transliterated his Hindi code-meshings into English without providing the original Hindi script, even though I asked participants to provide both the original script and then, in parenthesis, the transliteration (if the language of their choice didn't use English-like script) with the translation.

Since Zach was supposed to find an impactful literacy event to write about for his literacy narrative, Zach may have wanted to incorporate the most significant moments from this literacy experience into the essay. Zach could have chosen to embed parts of his conversations with his mother about his STAAR test because of how instrumental these interactions were in improving his performance for the test. Then again, Zach could have wished to enunciate his mother's role as a literacy sponsor who had helped bring that literacy experience to fruition. In fact, Zach

talked about his mother's literacy care for him earlier by code-meshing a noun phrase his mother said to him in Hindi in the first paragraphs of his literacy narrative: "don't be sad[.][99] tumharra samay (your time)[100] will come." Later in the essay, in his interactions with his mother about the test, Zach expressed his anxiety about the test and the test's high stakes, but his mother reassured him saying: "yah theek hai, mujhe pata hai ki aap aisa karane mein saksham honge, bas aapako khud par vishvaas hai (it's alright, I know you will be able to do it[;] just believe in yourself)." In this first example, Zach only code-meshed a noun phrase; however, toward the end of his essay, Zach code-meshed three consecutive Hindi clauses all in the same breath—with the English translation coming parenthetically right afterwards. The increasing amount and intensity of code-meshing may have come from Zach's rising level of comfort with the practice and/or from the literacy-laden importance of the Hindi clauses his mother used with him to boost his literate self-regard.

In addition, Zach was the only participant to have code-meshed in the conclusions section (Part III) of the Annotated Bibliography assignment. Writing on the issue of having "teacher-coaches" for both high school students' academic and athletic subjects, Zach theorized the main reason for the failure of this model: the low level of pedagogical productivity of teacher-coaches brought on by taking on the dual role. In the conclusions section, Zach made the closing argument that many teacher-coaches who took on double the workload eventually came across as or exhibited telling signs of being "sust (dull)" when it was time to teach an academic subject *after* having coached a sport. To Zach, those overworked teachers, whom he described as "very thaka hua (tired) and sluggish during classes" in the research narrative section of the assignment

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[99] In square brackets, I incorporated my punctuation additions so as to make the code-meshing more readable.
[100] The parenthesized translations of the code-meshing enclosed with quotation marks are always the students'.

(Part I), adversely impacted students' "pradarshan (performance)" in academic subjects. Since Zach's topic centered around the motifs of teacher-coaches' exhaustion and spiritlessness, he chose to code-mesh once for each motif: he code-meshed for fatigue in Part I, "very thaka hua (tired)," and for listlessness in Part III, "sust (dull)." The two code-meshed instantiations of the lack of energy on the part of the "double-duty" teachers, with the two code-meshing examples being on opposite ends of the assignment, may be suggestive of the relatively sharp focus of Zach's rhetorical purpose and of his diligent effort at some writing coherency.

David used code-meshing in the research narrative of the Annotated Bibliography assignment (Essay II for ENGL 1304). In this part of the assignment, the student investigator was supposed to recount to the reader the different research steps and stages he or she had gone through while examining the community problem under investigation. David's first example of code-meshing was the use of a celebrity's nickname "Ari," rather than the full name of the celebrity, "Ariana Grande," when talking about the support the plant-based movement was getting from famous people. Considering that Ariana Grande was a renowned individual in popular culture and a well-known amiable supporter of the vegan movement, David may have thought that the use of her nickname would be an appropriate code-meshing choice for his research narrative for this assignment, since most readers and/or advocates of the movement were familiar with the nickname. Perhaps David code-meshed her nickname in order to further highlight her familiarity and devoted support for the movement and thus more pungently pique the attention of the readers toward his research topic. When referencing radical vegan activists, however, David code-meshed by utilizing an unflattering metaphor, "*raging herbivores*" (original italics), for the likes of those "extremist" vegans who had caused mayhem in Paris and Toronto. David's two examples of code-meshing in the same section of his assignment, even in

the same paragraph, helps show his audience the contrast of two different kinds of vegans: the peaceful and the "turbulent."

Writing on the topic of her Annotated Bibliography assignment, Regina chose to code-mesh lexical elements that were most germane to the topic investigated: "The Exploitation of Hip Hop by Record Labels." Like David, Regina only code-meshed in the research narrative of the Annotated Bibliography assignment. However, as opposed to only using two examples of code-meshing, Regina employed code-meshing three times in the research narrative. When addressing the main dilemma that hip hop was going through, namely the exploitation of the hip hop genre by record label corporations, Regina code-meshed when stating one of the reasons hip hop was being exploited: "'clout' (social popularity)." While *clout* may not be considered exclusive to Regina's (African-American *or* hip-hop) community, she still deemed it a linguistic item characteristic enough of her community and one that could be used as an adequate example of code-meshing. Also, when referring to the exploitation that hip-hop musicians had fallen victim to, Regina, again, stated another reason for that exploitation, saying, "It's jus' bout the moolah (just about the money)," referring to those who abused hip-hop musicians.

It is noteworthy that Regina was the only participant for this assignment to have code-meshed orthographically, namely by virtue of using specialized spellings meaningfully. Regina chose to spell *just* as *jus'* and *about* as *bout* rather than adhering to the standard spelling known in mainstream English. While it is quite common to utilize such spellings in fiction and nonfiction, especially when trying to vividly capture how a character would say something in his/her voice, it is rather unconventional to use that in research writing, writing done for credit, or for academia. By deploying orthographic code-meshing examples, Regina may have been trying to depict the immediacy of the problem at hand. Or she could have been trying to make a

heavy-hearted situation less dispiriting in hopes of finding a solution for it. In other words,

Regina meaningfully code-meshed some orthographic features from her discourse community in

order to more vibrantly convey her messages across to her intended audiences. Additionally,

when recounting her research experience, Regina also code-meshed an expression,

"investigation," which in her group's discourse community referred to "Googling." While

Regina did not indicate what discourse community "Googling" came from, that community

could have been generational, collegiate, occupational, and/or disciplinary.

Betty's topic for the Annotated Bibliography assignment was finding solutions to the

problem of Hispanics' low college completion rates in the US. To examine her community

problem further, Betty looked at the social, economic, and political factors inhibiting high

completion rates for Hispanics: the primary social obstacle was segregation, the main political

obstacle was immigration laws, and the primary economic obstacle was the shortage of resources

given to Hispanics. When talking about the impact immigration laws had on students and their

enrollment, Betty code-meshed in Spanish to reflect the "fear of being *hechados a la migra*

([t]aken by ICE and deported)," which some Hispanic college students and their parents

harbored. In fact, in some of her interview responses, Betty explained that she was conscious of

her role in the Hispanic community she was a member of. In other words, it is likely that Betty

code-meshed in Spanish because she may have been trying to establish a connection with her

relevant audience: audience members who had been vulnerable to immigration laws themselves

and audience members who may be related to family members, loved ones, friends, or

acquaintances of affected Hispanic college students.

To more effectively investigate her community problem further, Betty conducted

ethnographic research in the form of three interviews about the hardships that Hispanics endured

in obtaining education. After collecting interview responses for her study, she turned these responses into a pie chart featuring the percentages of encountering economic, social, and political barriers Hispanic college students had bumped into. When reporting back on one of these interviewees' responses in the body of her essay, Betty code-meshed the kind of violence, "*pura pandilla* (a lot of street gangs)," one of her interviewees suffered when he was in high school. Her code-meshing of *pura pandilla* into the surrounding standard text may suggest that she wanted to make her readers pay more attention to the atrocity of the problem her community members were embroiled in, giving it a more immediate, more explicit portrayal than its academic-English equivalent would have.

Code-Meshing as an Act of Community Validation:

In addition to being rhetorically calculated, my student writers' code-meshing choices were also attempts to evoke a sense of community performance into the structure of the academic text and intended to advance a sense of community affiliation and advocacy within the academic community. In fact, code-meshing has helped bring my students' discrete community elements all into one literate act, the academic text, offering them alternative text-weaving methods and challenging entrenched, dominant stereotypes about what student writing and academic discourse should look like. For them, code-meshing has become this influential means to more vivaciously reenact communal identity performances and to fulfilling a community whole. In other words, this "layering of multiple literacies that coexist … brings members of a group together for the purpose of [communal] textual production and consumption" (qtd. in Webb-Sunderhaus 65-67).[101] Henceforth, code-meshing has developed into this mode of

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[101] This quote comes from an article in *Rereading Appalachia*, where one contributor, Emma Howes, addresses certain literacy events in Appalachia as performances for maintaining community affirmation.

satisfying student writers' sense of community and of reinstating the complexity of their community literacy acts.

Unlike traditional rhetoric which doesn't usually acknowledge student discourses as substantive knowledge, my data suggests that code-meshing gives student writers the authority to invent community-inspired texts hitherto unwelcome in academic discourse. Students strived hard to enhance the authenticity of their community experiences and to give a discernable boost to their deeply felt connections to their communities in their writing, and one way to come across as a true-blooded member of a certain community could be achieved through code-meshing. Zebroski believes that writing is a social and community act made tangible by the individual writers themselves. In other words, student writers should infuse their writing content with elements issuing from their community (Zebroski 17) and by extension, I argue, from the discourse of their relevant communities. Eventually, students end up learning how to smoothly "shuttle between [multiple discourse] communities" (Canagarajah, "The Place" 596) simultaneously in the same piece of writing. As will be demonstrated below, code-meshing, for many of my research participants, has ultimately become a means to restore legitimacy to their heretofore marginalized community rhetorical traditions and a self-fulfilling, meaningful performative act to re-affirm their previously disenfranchised community literate practices. While Canagarajah, Young, and others may at times acknowledge *community* in terms of its relation to code-meshing, they do not explicitly or elaborately state how much community validation code-meshing can offer their student writer groups, let alone FYC students.

One of the more plausible takeaways from the student samples to follow was that although contrary to my finding in the previous thematic theme, more code-meshers in this batch of student examples signaled their multiple community affiliations by embedding items from

more than one discourse community all in the same assignment. The multi-community discursive mixture suggests that my student participants' code-meshing items were more likely done for community-validation reasons than for strictly stylistic motives. In other words, the need to highlight one's community or one's community discourses through specific code-meshing choices was greater and a bigger priority for many student writers here than the need to appeal to audiences less invested in the communities or discourses in question. Additionally, some of the discourse communities employed were those most people don't recognize as separate from the larger mainstream American discourse community: many of these code-meshing choices didn't necessarily come from another language or a well-established dialect; rather, they came from discourses that are qualitatively downplayed and under-investigated in most popular and scholarly conceptions and conversations of code-meshing. Another finding was the fact that although they were recommended to identify the discourse community the code-meshing example came from, about a fourth did not. This may be due to the fact that they wanted their readers to exert an extra effort to figure out what community they belonged to, a rhetorically-savvy but community-proud move on their part. Finally, code-meshing examples could have been used by participant student writers to raise community morale and garner community support for the issues under discussion from the communities themselves.

Code-meshing in her Literacy Narrative essay, Regina used colloquialisms, idiomatic expressions, and jargon coming from her workplace community and potentially other communities. Although she had identified AAVE as her community dialect in the survey, she did not use code-meshing examples typically associated with AAVE in her Literacy Narrative essay.[102] This may be due to the fact that I had explained to the class earlier in the semester that

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[102] As explained in previous chapters, AAVE stands for African-American Vernacular English.

we all belonged to more than one community, so we all utilized several discourses, each with specialized language practices. I'd also explained that they might use more than one linguistic community tradition in the same paper; for this reason, Regina's membership in the AAVE dialect community did not bar her affiliation with another community and just as surely did not restrict her from code-meshing from that other community. Based on that, in her literacy narrative, Regina code-meshed elements from different discourse communities (e.g., general American slang, her workplace jargon, and her college slang) and not constrained herself to one discourse community as most participants did.[103] For example, Regina code-meshed from her workplace the expression of "collecting receipts" to refer to searching for evidence and conducting research. Also, Regina believed that her use of "the most" (which she explained in parentheses as "the act of doing more than what is required") in her "I was doing the most" was an example of code-meshing, which had come from yet another discourse community. While to many, this last expression is not necessarily exclusive to one linguistic community, Regina still thought that it was not part of academic discourse but part of her own community discourse, therefore using it in academic discourse to enhance the authenticity of her literacy experience and validating the discourse of her community.

While Regina had only one instance of orthographic code-meshing in her Annotated Bibliography assignment (Essay II), she code-meshed her community spellings into two different places of her third assignment (Essay III). When reflecting on her music preference, Regina mentioned that rap music from the East Coast was her "typa thang (type of thing)." Also, when talking about educating artists before signing to corporate record labels, Regina argued that

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[103] These discourse community designations were gathered from the study participants' descriptions in their course papers.

"'Dey betta' (they better) realize their worth and sign to a company that will respect them." In more than one interview with her, Regina explained that she was quite conscious of her community and hence mindful of her code-meshing choices in her essay. In this assignment, it is very likely that Regina was using her community spellings because she wanted to present her message in a more cheerful tone in order to reach the hip-hop fans who may have been despondent about the recent state of the industry. Based on a few exchanges with Regina, I'm also suspecting that through these code-meshing choices she wished to add more flare and make her prose more animated so as to garner more support and interest for her cause from the audience and community members who felt conflicted or uninfluenced by the music.

Eva, on the other hand, used four code-meshing elements from her math club in her Literacy Narrative essay, all noun phrases, 1-2 words long each. While some of them may appear to be mainstream English, to her, they were characteristic of *her* discourse community, her math club, and still held value for academic writing. As instructed for the composition of the essay, she *did* identify the discourse community of her code-meshing choices in parentheses after explaining their meanings, separating the two with a comma. For her first code-meshing example, when talking about her literacy experience, she referred to English composition as "more of a trial and error or a process sequence (order, math club)." To her, "process sequence" was an instance of code-meshing used here to explain what she thought of writing at the time. When talking about one of her literacy sponsors, she described how he'd explained the connection between language and literature as one having "a different correlation (relationship, math club)" than other subjects. The use of four code-meshing instances from her math club suggests her deep personal connection to that community and her desire to more vocally pronounce her affiliation to that group.

In her attempt to find a solution to her community problem—Macy's low sales—Eva proposed some ideas to increase Macy's business: "specify[ing] employment options in the company and opening more positions to specifically help customers." In speaking of the different tasks the same employee had to do while working for Macy's, Eva code-meshed what to her was considered workplace jargon. Eva explained that when one would start working for the company, they would end up doing different jobs all at once, "like being a cashier (checking out customers, retail associate), fitting room assistant (maintaining fitting rooms, retail associate), etc." Describing the community she was a member of, Eva code-meshed again and explained that "retail associate"—which Eva identified as her discourse community—was too broad a work label that many people had to work under "as a cashier, fitting room assistant, on the floor (customer assistance, retail associate), go backs (returning misplaced clothes, unwanted clothes from the fitting rooms, or returned clothes, retail associate), cleaning/folding your area, and more." Although many of Eva's code-meshing choices may be common knowledge and not too technical to many people, she still thought they should be incorporated in her college-writing assignment possibly because of the associations they had for her and her community members and potentially to portray to the reader the occupational confusion that the Macy's worker community had to wade through on a daily basis.

For her Literacy Narrative essay, Tia used one general American colloquialism and two idioms from an international dialect of English: the Bahamian dialect. Talking about the essay that she was forced into writing by her teacher as part of a graded essay competition in the 7th grade, Tia recounted her initial attitude toward the assignment. In fact, her initial reaction and apathy toward the assignment caused her to get "rowed" by her mother, as Tia put it, using a code-meshing example from her discourse community of Bahamian English. Tia explained in

parentheses the meaning of the verb above, to *scold*, and identified the language tradition it came from. It is noteworthy that Tia put the parenthetical material (her language community and her translations) in bold, something that I had not asked student participants to do. She may have done so as to alert the reader to her code-meshing choices coming from her Bahamian community or to signal to the reader the nonrestrictive nature of the bracketed information.

To connote her frustration with her first draft—which her best friend had laughed at—and her subsequent feeling of defeat, Tia used a code-meshing expression widely known in North American English, or even in most varieties of English: "throw in the towel." Tia explained that this idiomatic expression was a "colloquial term for giving up on something." Since she did not identify which discourse community the expression belonged to, it may be safe to presume that she believed it to be an expression common to all/most nonacademic discourse communities. It is unknown, however, why Tia decided to utilize an example of colloquial speech known to American audiences. Perhaps she thought it would fit better or it would make more sense to her audience than a Bahamian idiom or turn of phrase. Nonetheless, Tia reverted back to code-meshing elements from the discourse community she had identified at the beginning of her code-meshing efforts: Bahamian English. This third and final code-meshing instance that Tia incorporated may have come after her interaction with her teacher who explained to her the writing process as "nonlinear." Tia couched the conclusion she learned from her teacher about the writing process in a Bahamian expression: "that writing wasn't a 'one and done job.'" Her decision to code-mesh here may be due to the important moment of illumination she obtained here about the writing process, a realization that she would constantly keep with her as a writer. Her code-meshing from two discourse communities gestures to her membership in these communities: Bahamian and American.

Describing his arduous efforts in learning English, Patrick code-meshed from his mother tongue, Korean. When speaking of his disappointment for scoring so little on his first English essay after coming to the States, Patrick recounted how he used the Korean expression "'쪽팔리다 (jjock-pal-li- da)'"—which he translated into "what a shame"—to capture his frustration and his "most shameful moment since [he] came here, [which] absolutely shattered [his] confidence." Patrick may have code-meshed here because he wanted to indicate to his readers that that unsuccessful literacy experience tugged at the very strings of his inner literate self and thus necessitated a most visceral linguistic response that had to come from his native discourse community.

Patrick also talked about his parents' encouraging words and feedback when he felt that he no longer was able to complete the journey he had started and when he felt "clueless about [his] surroundings." Whenever he called his parents back home, they would always reassure him telling him "'힘내' (Him-nae)," which he translated into "you can do this." The code-meshed expression "힘내" may have functioned as a literacy-sponsor move on his parents' part to steer him from being literately downtrodden to being brought back on track and "promis[ing] [him]self to become a better person." Rather than bypassing Korean and translating his literacy moment from Korean into English, code-meshing "힘내" here made sense to him because it more explicitly captured the literacy nurturing he had received from his literacy sponsors and his native literacy community, after he had thought that his ESL literacy efforts had been rendered futile by repeated blows to his literate self-regard.

L.P.H was the only participant to have code-meshed the same expression repeatedly in his course writing. L.P.H's essay "Possible Recovery for the Casino Closings in Atlantic City,"

researched the causes and effects surrounding the recent closing of casinos in Atlantic City, New Jersey. Being from Jersey, L.P.H did his best to research possible solutions to the community problem that had struck the city and had affected the economy of his home state. One obstacle that L.P.H learned of when researching the causes of the problem was "**băng đỏ** (Vietnamese for Red Tape)," which had blocked developers from building new casinos, existing casinos from getting their licenses renewed, and other casinos from continuing to operate in the state. L.P.H's repetitive incorporation of "**băng đỏ**" a total of 8 times in both the problem analysis section of the essay and the solution section of the essay suggests that reiterating "**băng đỏ**" may be the key to understanding his community problem better and working around it. His Vietnamese embedding of the concept may have been helpful in making it more immediate to him and those familiar with it (his community members) as well as its meaning in Vietnamese. Growing up in a household that spoke in Vietnamese may have contributed to the significance of embedding the concept in Vietnamese. While it is important to note that L.P.H code-meshed other words from Vietnamese in his solution section of the essay—"**ủy thác** (Vietnamese for trustee)" and "**quy định** (Vietnamese for regulations)"—L.P.H still reverted to using "**băng đỏ**" two more times (in addition to the six times in previous paragraphs), one of which right before closing his essay.

For her Strong Response essay, Lauren couched a response to an article about the psychology behind people falling prey to conspiracy theories. Lauren, along with the authors of the article she selected, agreed that people believed in conspiracy theories because they craved a sense of fulfillment and validation. In this essay, Lauren code-meshed from Internet slang, whose discourse community she identified as the "internet community," in making her points about the article she was responding to. To describe her initial unfamiliarity with the topic of conspiracy theories, Lauren code-meshed her feeling of having been given "the facepalm (ridicule; Internet

Community)" to portray people's reactions toward her lack of knowledge about the subject. To explain how people got hung up on certain conspiracy theories by indulging in one video after another, Lauren defined what had happened to her as an "addiction" that left her more wanting than sated. To announce her membership in and to appeal to her Internet community, she started off that sentence about her newly evolving addiction with "IMHO (In my humble opinion; Internet Community)" possibly to try to relate to those from her community and/or to those given to the same compulsion.

Code-Meshing as a (Political) Statement:

While it has been a rhetorical device, the data from my student writers' samples tells me that code-meshing has also served as a literacy skill utilized to make effective statements about matters important to college student writers. For students to code-mesh with a good conscience, they first needed to learn that their brief departures from academic writing could be effective for the sake of making more powerful material changes in their and others' realities. Conceptually, code-meshing became a functional mechanism for interested college writers to embark upon this "symbolic exodus" (Shor 98), though a fractional exodus at that, from the realm of academic discourse into a more even playing field of politico-rhetorical multiplicities. Such momentary breaks from "the conventions of middle-class English" (Peckham 28) as code-meshing offered provided my participants with the means to eventually help level the achievement grounds for those with "no middle-class origins" (68). Consequently, through locally claimed linguistic choices and community-bred discursive moves, college writers could have made the cognizant, well-informed decision—though it was part of an assignment—to break away from or circumvent *some* of academe's entrenched, albeit well-meaning, languaging restraints to more vociferously promulgate messages about their reality and the reality of their communities.

In other words, code-meshing as a liberatory technique may be better able to bring much needed limelight to issues that conventional academic prose may not. While Young does touch upon code-meshing as a possible political tool, he does not bring it into any context of FYC students code-meshing for that purpose. For Canagarajah, code-meshing is more of a rhetorical tool than a political tool. In other words, neither explores in depth the political potentials of code-meshing for FYC student writers, and neither offers any implications on code-meshing's political capabilities for other than oneself. My examination of the student texts here attempts to fill in said gap by showcasing code-meshing as a composing skill to enhance the possibility of making advocacy statements by FYC student writers better heard. In fact, some college students may feel the need to code-mesh so as to more compellingly highlight a social justice cause outside of themselves through the use of such discursive "deviations" as code-meshing provides. In other words, student writers may choose to code-mesh for politically motivated reasons with no personal stakes, as in helping out with community issues not directly affecting them, especially when they don't come from the communities in question.

As a teacher who was committed to providing my writing students with sufficient leeway in pursuing their different interests in their course writing, my student writers in ENGL 1303 and ENGL 1304 were not given a set of topics to choose from for their three course papers. Rather, they were encouraged to make their writing about "a felt need or problem" (Shor 163) they cared about, were invested in, or were affected by, especially those issues with profound political implications. This freedom to compose about anything of interest to them gave them the opportunity to critically reflect on their realities and granted them the hope to transform those realities they found oppressive, thus evolving a Freirean sense of socio-political awareness. The assignments that asked students to search for a community problem to resolve helped students

hone their critical consciousness skills (Freire) because they now had to think of a serious community problem worthy of receiving a well-thought-out, politically committed solution. The political activism that student papers picked up has made the employment of code-meshing a more feasible, sometimes reformative, writing move for engendering consequent political action.

For my final thematic category here, I've been able to deduce some generalizable statements based on my student writing data. One generalizable discovery was that student writers utilized code-meshing in order to better visualize to their audience the severity of the situation under investigation. While such moves of code-meshing may be thought of as essentially rhetorical, these were primarily made for political reasons, rendering code-meshing rhetorically conscious *and* politically motivated. The latitude in or the kind of assignments that ENGL 1303 and ENGL 1304 students engaged in may have helped create the political atmosphere for code-meshing's political potential to best materialize.[104] In addition to advocating for changes regarding political problems, code-meshing choices were wielded to bring awareness to social ills—societal problems affecting certain communities—and to tackle prejudice and discrimination issues. In a couple of student-cases, linguistic items that had been maliciously introduced by different offenders were co-opted and repurposed by student code-meshers and then incorporated as code-meshing examples to more graphically picture a cultural or political wrong. These examples, as opposed to safer choices, were selected to more explicitly articulate the urgency of the offensive situation at hand. Eventually, code-meshing becomes a compelling pedagogical tool for those instructors interested in bringing out and further sharpening their

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[104] In their Summary/Response essay and their Analysis/Synthesis essay, ENGL 1303 students had the latitude to compose about any topic including those with political implications and thus could code-mesh politically. For ENGL 1304, students were required to locate and analyze a community problem in the second assignment and then compose a solution for it in the third assignment for the class.

students' critical and analytical thinking skills. For the remainder of the chapter, examples will follow to further promote this added advantage to code-meshing's political potential.

In her efforts to bring the issue of Brazil's Amazon rainforest fires to the forefront, Fannie responded to an article about the topic for her Summary and Strong Response essay (Essay II) and code-meshed three times to help make her case. Fannie tried to validate the information from the article she was responding to by looking up reliable sources about the causes of the colossal fires. One reason for the fires she learned from her chosen article and her research was that President Jair Bolsonaro of Brazil had given many industries free rein to invest in the formerly protected indigenous lands. According to Fannie, Bolsonaro's actions were "the cause de que ciudadanos pierdan su hogar y que muchos animales esten en peligro de extinción (of numerous amounts of citizens losing their homes and lots of animals being in danger, North Mexican Spanish)." Looking for a motive for his actions and to highlight his indifference to the situation, Fannie lamented that "Desafortunadamente, el prefiere riqueza que la salud de la comunidad (Unfortunately, he prefers wealth over the community being safe, North Mexican Spanish)." While Fannie's first example of code-meshing was one part a prepositional phrase and another a cumulative sentence, her second code-meshing example is a full sentence with an adverbial phrase, which may indicate that she felt more comfortable to code-mesh a full sentence by the end of her essay. In her conclusion, Fannie crafted a general appeal to her audience by code-meshing the urgency of the situation of the fires as "important issues that need to be addressed lo más pronto posible (as soon as possible, North Mexican Spanish)." In fact, Fannie's political intervention was made better voiced by her three code-meshing transplants from her native North Mexican Spanish dialect.

In her Analysis/Synthesis essay (Essay III), Fannie wrote on the community problem of Mexico's low minimum wage. In her suggestion to resolve this problem community that had impacted her family, Fannie proposed that the Mexican government devise a plan in consultation with economists to gradually raise minimum wage and that the government find ways to penalize companies that did not comply. In the summary of one of her articles, Fannie code-meshed the Mexican government's slack in finding alternatives to fix the economy and the government's use of inflation as a pretext to keep the minimum wage at a low rate; Fannie stated that "Mexico's government has not increased the minimum wage due to a possibility of inflation in the economy, en vez de buscar alternativas para resolver este problema (instead of looking for alternatives to avoid this issue, North Mexican Spanish)." When starting the section of the essay that introduced the solution to her community problem, Fannie code-meshed in the first sentence of that paragraph: "I believe that for an audience to understand that a problem needs to be fixed, necesitan saber que el problema existe (it needs to be shown that the problem exists, North Mexican Spanish)." It might be important for Fannie to code-mesh in these instances because she wanted to make sure that her audience had no doubt about the adverse material conditions that the problem presented to affected community members. To best visualize her political statement about the gravity of the problem, Fannie also code-meshed an infographic with Spanish text— embedding visual data with Spanish text—which she did translate in the following paragraph by inputting the same information in a table in English.

Talking in his Summary/Response essay about the growing unsolved tension that had always lingered about between Korea and Japan and prompting a transnational political reform to said tension, Patrick explained that Imperial Japan had invaded and controlled Korea from 1910 until the former was defeated in World War II. In the essay, Patrick described how "the

Koreans suffered terribly by the Japanese" that this period of Korea's history was called "일제감정기 (IL-Jae-Gang-Geom-Gi)" which roughly translates from Korean into English as "Korea under Japanese rule." Addressing one form of oppression Imperial Japan had committed against Korea, Patrick code-meshed a second time using another Korean expression, 위안부, which roughly translates into "comfort women," to refer to wartime sex slavery that the Japanese military forced Korean women into. Patrick may have code-meshed these two expressions because he could have been trying to elicit an emotional reaction and seek political action from his audience or more specifically from the Japanese officials who had never provided closure for the Korean victims. Patrick believed that one way to help fix things between the Koreans and the Japanese was for the Japanese to offer a "sincere apology" that the 위안부, the sex victims, had been expecting for decades.

Trying to raise awareness about the issue of sexism in her community, Belinda code-meshed in her Annotated Bibliography assignment (Essay II) by incorporating quoted phrases from her interviewees. The annotated source in question was an interview that Belinda had conducted with a participant about finding a solution to the problem of sexism within the Hispanic community. More particularly, when asked about how to stop sexism within the Hispanic community from being passed down to "future generations," the lady interviewee answered in Spanish saying, "'empezar a educar a nuestros niños' (start by educating our kids)," a phrase which Belinda wanted to code-mesh into the annotation of her primary source along with the above translation. Another example of code-meshing in her annotated sources was a phrase used in a video where one Hispanic actor called an indigenous actress a "'p*nche india' (f*cking indian)." Belinda argued, more to her point, that such comments were spawned by

sexism within the community she was investigating. Although Belinda's two above phrases may not be considered by some as examples of code-meshing but rather as quoted phrases used to capture the original encounter in its source language, Belinda still considered the twain as examples of code-meshing perhaps because they were not something she would normally use in her academic prose, all while identifying a problem and proposing a solution.

In her later assignment (Essay III), Belinda investigated her community problem further. Belinda learned that sexism toward Hispanic women mostly came from their parents, Latino men, and the workplace Hispanic women operated in. When addressing the problem of sexism toward Hispanic women in the workplace, Belinda code-meshed the state that one of her female interviewees found herself in to better visualize the occupational difficulties that women had to slog through: "The woman continues by saying she was rodeada de hombres (surrounded by men), emphasizing how alone and out of place she felt in that situation." While Belinda could have used a longer quote from her interviewee to capture her loneliness around predominantly male co-workers, she chose to paraphrase the kind of situation that the lady found herself in by using her interlocutor's own turn of phrase, "rodeada de hombres." Perhaps Belinda thought that a paraphrase rather than a quotation might flow more easily for the reader and help the reader more vicariously appreciate the situation. Also, in the conclusion to her essay, Belinda code-meshed again to highlight how "esta encajado (is so deeply rooted)" sexism was toward Hispanic women. Belinda took a clear political stance against sexism toward Hispanic women using, among other devices, code-meshing as a way to more pictorially bring this political situation to the forefront of the reader's mind.

Nour, on the other hand, was able to make her code-meshing more political by virtue of the topic of her Annotated Bibliography assignment: the effect of US policy towards Palestine

and Israel on the image of Palestinians. In her annotation of a *Washington Post* article, Nour brought up the example where President Trump accused Congress of being Anti-Semites when he himself had praised the anti-Semitic "white nationalists of Charlottesville as 'very fine people,'" even though they had stated that "Jews will not replace us." To show this "irony," Nour used the Arabic proverb "الخط الأعوج من الثور الأبرق" (ilk hat ilawaj min ilthor ilabrak/the crooked line [comes] from the spotted bull.)" along with the afterward parenthetical transliteration and translation. This Arabic proverb refers to the old tradition of using several bulls in tandem to plow a field for planting seeds. Arabs used to say that if the plough lines seemed crooked, the crookedness should be attributed to the bull first in line which must have steered off the designated plough line. Right after Nour made mention of the proverb, she offered the following explanation: "It's ironic that [Trump] would point at anyone below him and accuse them [of anti-Semitism] when he doesn't hold accountability to himself." Nour could be saying that if anti-Semitic sentiments had risen and widely spread in recent times, they may be ascribed to Trump whose campaign had initially resurrected, enabled, and abetted a myriad of formerly buried sensibilities of prejudice and discrimination.

In a comparison she conducted between President Trump and Ayatollah Khomeini of Iran, Teresa code-meshed from Spanish, Chilean Spanish, and American English. Using both leaders as examples of political figures who appealed to the common people, "arribistas," Teresa code-meshed from Spanish to "refer to impoverished individuals who support the abuses of the elite because they strive to be like them." Explaining that both Trump and Khomeini used pathos more than logos, Teresa code-meshed from Chilean Spanish to describe the radical Ayatollah as "humos a la cabeza," which translates into "smoke to the head," thus referring to the Ayatollah whose hot air, namely dishonest pathos, went straight to his own head. At another place in the

essay, when Teresa discussed President Trump's "stylistic" choices, she code-meshed a word that he had used from taboo slang, "beaners," in reference to the Hispanic community. However, Teresa's use of the word was likely for different reasons; she may have used it here because she wanted her audience to feel the barbarism and gravity of the word on its hearers, let alone the people it was supposed to refer to, thus sounding a rude political awakening about the prejudicial language that minorities in the US have recently been subjected to.

In her Strong Response essay, Amanda used an article arguing that underage drinking should be controlled.[105] In one of her response paragraphs, she cited a supporting source to help her corroborate her critical response. In this paragraph, Amanda code-meshed three times, with one example from millennials' discourse (Generation Y) and two from Generation Z's. When addressing parents' role in regulating their college-going children's drinking, Amanda code-meshed from the millennial slang of Generation Y—whose cohorts may be some of those parents or their family members—which might have been done intentionally to more subtly offer a proposal to those parental figures who were unaware of their charges' underage drinking problem. Through her code-meshing, Amanda highlighted "parent[s' need to] want to know that his or her child can hold her liquor (community from: millennial slang; definition: drink alcohol without throwing up or not acting stupid or ridiculous)?" In the same paragraph, Amanda also code-meshed two more times but now from a generation slang more familiar to her, a generation whose cohorts she may identify with: Generation Z. Examining the rationale behind college kids' drinking, Amanda contended that "college students [did] it to be basic (community from: Gen Z new slang; definition: normal or dominant trend) or get turnt (community from: Gen Z new

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[105] For the sake of clarity, the Summary/Strong Response essay and the Strong Response (essay) are all the same assignment.

slang; abbreviation: turned up; definition: have fun).” Her two code-meshings from Gen. Z may have been her attempt to plead to her fellow Gen. Z cohorts and to lightheartedly alert them to the likely dangers behind uncontrolled drinking.

In her Analysis/Synthesis Solution essay, Amanda researched the problem of breaks in communication between college students and their instructors and proposed a solution to this community problem of hers. For her, the solution went both ways: professors would need to go through training to improve their communication output, and students would need to improve their listening intake. In her solution section, Amanda code-meshed to offer a corrective agenda to schools who did not take their teacher evaluations seriously and to petition the need for providing instructors with free language-barrier assessments of their communication skills, asking the question: “would [schools] want to receive a bad rep (community from: millennial slang; def: short word for reputation) that affects their admissions?” Amanda incorporated the slang here in order to delicately and lightheartedly highlight the risk schools would be taking when they would not pay attention to communication breakdowns in their classrooms and in order to alert schools to how they might be perceived by prospective students. Getting “a bad rep” is not something any establishment would want to have on their institutional records, so Amanda may have used this expression to caution her college community to possible ramifications that might ensue from not handling this situation prudently.

Amanda code-meshed again when she talked about those teachers with a language barrier who would be reluctant to go through school-mandated assessment. To her, this kind of reluctance might be indicative that “their career in teaching might not be for them. I say this without throwing shade (community from: modern slang; def: insult) because I cannot imagine how difficult being a teacher is already.” As another part of the solution, Amanda code-meshed

again when she called upon her fellow students to take on the responsibility of improving their listening skills by "surf[ing] the web (community from: old slang; def: browse the internet)." Amanda's use of three different slangs (according to her own classification) shows her wide discursive knowledge of her discrete communities and her deep familiarity with their different jargons. It is, however, uncertain why she chose to use one type of slang over another in the instances where she did: modern slang vs. old slang. She may have just wanted to diversify her political appeals, considering that her audience members may be students, parents, administrators, law makers, politicians, and others more from different age groups, distinct cultural heritages, and assorted socioeconomic backgrounds.

Thematic Spread over Data Sets:

After slicing through all data for the study, I've noticed more than one theme traversing more than one type of data I collected for analysis. This panoramic view over all data sets gave me the necessary advantage as the teacher researcher to figure out what themes were the most significant *and* most relevant to my research inquiries. The rhetorical theme was by far the most important to and among almost all study participants across all data types. For example, with Amanda, an ENGL 1303 participant, code-meshing as a rhetorical technique was first and foremost a means to establish a "better connection with one's audience." In fact, she repeated the "connection" refrain in more than one of her survey responses. Additionally, Amanda demonstrated her accommodation and appeal to different audience members in all her assignments for this class: teenage slang, modern slang, old slang, millennial slang, and Generation Z slang. For instance, when addressing underage drinkers and guardians' roles in containing the problem, she code-meshed expressions to make connections with both groups: "getting turned" for the former and "holding their liquor" for the latter. In one of her second

interview responses, Amanda elaborated on how she tried to make a connection with audience members from her peers: she explained that through code-meshing certain elements from her audience's slang, she "tried to really call them out" so as to alert them to the dangers of underage drinking.

Another theme that trended throughout all data sets was the community appeal and community assertion student participants wanted to invoke through their code-meshing choices. Betty, an ENGL 1304 participant, thought of and used code-meshing as a means to celebrate her community, end community shaming, and advocate for community causes. In her first survey, she explained how much "shame" there was concerning using one's local language practices in a non-local setting, hoping to "diminish these feelings [of shame]" and to "acknowledge" the use of one's local discourse in academic writing. Along the same lines of community advocacy, Betty code-meshed in her final assignment for the class in order to highlight the feelings of fear and anxiety among her community peers. Her code-meshing came in the form of writing in Spanish what some of her community members were feeling, the fear of being "*hechados a la migra*" by immigration authorities. When asked in the interview what role she was conscious of in her writing, she stressed that she was very much "conscious [of her role] as a community member, and [what] this writing would mean to my community." As for the message she tried to convey, her response was: "the code-meshing choices I had were meant to instill a feeling of connection with those of my community members."

The political appeal of my students' code-meshing choices was quite obvious in their code-meshed writing, but less so in my other data sets. For example, Patrick, an ENGL 1303 participants, code-meshed a phrase in his second essay, 위안부 ("comfort women"), in order to refer to Japan's wartime sex enslavement of Korean women during the Japanese rule over Korea.

Patrick explained in an interview that he was hoping that both Japan and Korea could forgive each other. In the essay itself, Patrick explained that the Japanese officials should offer an apology to Korean women victims, which had long been overdue. He also thought that his 위안부 was a "powerful" code-meshing choice, which came from real experiences, "what I learned and heard from [my high school] teachers." In other words, Patrick utilized code-meshing in order to offer a corrective discursive lens to Japan's cultural narrative with Korea, which Japan could reconsider for mending its relationship with its Korean victims.

While not presenting as strongly as the rhetorical and community themes in all three data types, the personalizing potential of code-meshing still featured for some participants in their code-meshing examples and *other* data sets. For example, Lauren, an ENGL 1303 student, used code-meshing examples in her second assignment from her community of 21st century Internet users, whose code-meshing examples she explained in her interviews were "personalized" choices. To her, expressions, such as "IMHO" and to be "given the facepalm," were code-meshing elements that personally spoke to her. Lauren explained in one of her surveys that to her code-meshing was valuable and relatable to her audience because it aided in "adding [one's] personal touch to their academic writing."

Conclusion:

As demonstrated in the course writing of my ENGL 1303 and ENGL 1304 research participants, my student participants utilized code-meshing in their writing as a way to reach different audiences with different rhetorical purposes. The fusion of more than one language or discourse in the same academic text was justified by the different exigencies their compositions warranted: some of these purposes may have been to get some audiences to pay closer attention

to important issues, to offer "new ways of knowledge" (Horner et al. 307) to certain audiences, to widen one's audience pool (Tan), and to "enlarge our perspective about what good writin is and how good writin can look at work, at home, and at school" (Young, "Should Writers" 112). On many occasions, the fact that the rhetorical exigency and the rhetorical context of a code-meshing choice should primarily, sometimes solely, be determined by the rhetor should "disarm [any] criticism" (Canagarajah, "The Place" 606) or condemnation the rhetor may suffer from unwieldy audiences. With code-meshing, student writers can assert their rhetorical sovereignty (Lyons) and can affirm their individual and community identities in any writing situation through their personalized and localized linguistic incorporations.

Secondly, allowing, better yet encouraging, college student writers to embed discursive elements from their local-community language practices into academic discourse restores some of said students' "sense of self" and "identity" (Anzaldúa 39) and can do away with their sense of "shame" (40) brought on by well-intentioned educators' previous, often unwitting, attempts to marginalize and disenfranchise less academic discursive traditions in academe. In fact, Gloria Anzaldúa has long called for such hybridity of tongues in her *Borderlands* as a means to assert one's personal and community "legitimacy." Code-meshing now becomes this community-bonding instrument that signals to and solidifies the rhetor's group affiliation and community membership.

Thirdly, much of the student writing above has utilized code-meshing so as to make several political statements about an assortment of key issues, domestically and abroad. Since the political (deliberative) branch of rhetoric is as old as rhetoric itself, this makes the composing strategy of code-meshing political by birthright. For many of my ENGL 1303 and ENGL 1304 research participants, their code-meshing insertions came as more than just a bunch of witty

retorts to the dominant, politically harsh situations they were trying to critically respond to in order to eventually transform their material conditions (Freire). In other words, code-meshing has evolved for them into a democratizing tool of educating the audience on a pragmatic problem (Dewey) a given individual or community is having. Consequently, the convolutedness of the political realities college students are currently grappling with spawns this newly unraveling need for more complex interdiscursivity (Fairclough) of texts that get composed for college and for the professional world. In the end, code-meshing could be this go-to practice for much of college writing's various needs (rhetorical, individual, community, and political), particularly during our current historical moment with the start of the third decade in the 21st century.

CHAPTER SIX:

Conclusion: Takeaways, Contributions, and Implications

A substitute teacher walks into a classroom in a country school, reviews information covered from a previous class, and demands answers to questions she glibly raises. When some students finally muster up enough courage to propose an answer, she ridicules them, not for their content, but for the *way* they answer: their syntax, their lexis, and their phonology. She then lectures to the students on the importance of conforming to the "standard" if they ever wish to be *somebody* and get taken seriously in school, work, and public life. Next, she proceeds to lament the state of literacy in this part of the region. Finally, she closes her tirade blaming their current condition on their traditions, habits, and worldviews, laughing all by herself. Thereupon, the class goes defiantly dead silent, mortifyingly embarrassed for her.[106]

While this will not likely be a recurring scene for teachers and students who do not see eye to eye on what good discourse is, some good teachers still believe that the discourse they teach and preach is the only form of good communication, even when their students may see their home discourses as more meaning-making forms of communication, at least to them. However, in order to help create much more convivial learning environments and more productive learning situations, both teachers and students would do well to meet each other's beliefs halfway about what effective discourse is. By allowing and encouraging the use of a hybrid discourse that acknowledges the worth of each other's forms of discourse, teachers and students may be better able to find value in the discursive habits and modes others bring in with them into the classroom.

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[106] This story is inspired by a short narrative recounted in Silas House's "In My Own Country" (193-94).

With the overly growing bodies of college students coming from (formerly) disenfranchised student constituencies from within the US and from international communities, teachers of writing and scholars in Rhetoric and Composition and education may find it prudent to take advantage of the different languages and discursive traditions college students bring with them into the classroom. Nonmainstream students' meaningful linguistic deviations from academic discourse could no longer be stigmatized and explained away as hurdles to one's communication but should be utilized as means for one's intellectual and professional advancement. Working out a composing practice for the integration of the local discursive traditions of college students into the larger academic discursive system can be an effective way to enfranchise college students' local language practices that get discounted in the greater scheme of the academic apparatus and academic interests. While the field of Rhetoric and Composition has been pushing for and has obtained increasingly fuller representation for the traditions and histories of some historically underrepresented groups in academe, this dissertation has come to extend the field's cross-representational reach to include the local discourses of college students in the FYC classroom.

This dissertation project has examined the code-meshing practices of FYC (first-year composition) students at the University of Houston for Spring 2019 and Fall 2019. Using a qualitative approach grounded in IRB-approved surveys, interviews, and student writing informed by the methodological tradition of teacher research, my classroom-based inquiry was conducted in an effort to elicit students' responses on their code-meshing experiences and practices and to trace and analyze their code-meshing choices in their writing for class. The study has aimed to contribute to current Rhetoric and Composition scholarship and pedagogy by pursuing three major lines of inquiry:

1. How has code-meshing operated rhetorically in FYC student writing?

2. How favorable or unfavorable have FYC student writers' responses been vis-à-vis utilizing code-meshing in their writing assignments?

3. How has the code-meshing of FYC students' home discourses vindicated college writers' discursive identities and projected their realities?

As for the first inquiry above, my student participants' writing has shown various and varying levels of rhetoricity with code-meshing; the rhetorical mastery of code-meshers can be understood based on different factors, including their own writing abilities, their time investment in selecting and inputting their code-meshing choices, the nature of the assignment, their code-meshing choices themselves, their reasons for code-meshing, their audiences' familiarity with the code-meshing examples used, and the discourse they used for code-meshing. Overall, better student writers, regardless of class—whether ENGL 1303 and ENGL 1304—generally performed better in their code-meshing, at least in my class-informed teacher-research-supported estimation.

As for how positive student writers' experiences have been with code-meshing, almost all student writers understood the purpose of code-meshing and offered some explanation of its value: code-meshing should be used rhetorically based on the audience, purpose, writer, genre, and so on; code-meshing can be used to build rapport with one's readers; code-meshing can be wielded to make a more vivid representation of the severity of some situations; malicious language practices and choices can be repurposed by code-meshing to provide counter corrective effects; code-meshing can be used to cement community and family connections and garner community and family support; code-meshing can be used to vindicate and celebrate one's community affiliations; code-meshing can be used to make political statements and advocate for

social justice; code-meshing can be used to make certain points about equity and power; code-meshing can be used to respond to academe's and the dominant culture's linguistic elitism and exclusionism; and code-meshing can help legitimate the practice; among others.

As for employing code-meshing to showcase and celebrate one's local and community practices and modes of discoursing, student participants had varying degrees of being forthcoming about this point. A few of my respondents were quite explicit about code-meshing's role in doing away with their fear of being judged or being perceived as "stupid" for using their local languages in public more generally and in academic writing more particularly. For others, code-meshing has helped reduce the "sense of shame" for incorporating their home discourses in what is supposed to be too "proper" for them. Although not always explicit in their responses, my study participants' levels of comfort with embedding their home codes into their writing for class have risen with every code-meshing example and every writing task. All in all, a good number of my respondents experienced being vindicated in their individual and community discursive identities due to being allowed to employ code-meshing in such formal settings as college essay writing. Last but not least, code-meshing was also used by many of my research participants to make advocacy statements and policy proposals about oppressive but corrigible situations, theirs and others'.

Framing my project within the tradition of teacher research and using qualitative research methods have helped me empirically test out existing code-meshing theory and my own assumptions about code-meshing within the FYC context. Teacher research and ethnographic techniques have allowed me to become more acquainted with my research subjects and better able to utilize a variety of research practices to gather and analyze three different types of data about code-meshing from within our UH's FYC student population. The flexibility of teacher

research has eased my navigation of the three different research sites I selected for analysis; it has facilitated my concurrent study and comparison of the locally complex variations coming from all three sites at the same time. My primacy of student data in the tradition of teacher and qualitative inquiry in this study has also helped draw out my students' roles as co-researchers and co-producers of pedagogical knowledge useful for fellow writing students, teachers, and researchers.

My Study's Conclusions:

Additionally, teacher research and qualitative methods have facilitated the validation of my research findings in this dissertation by confirming my past and generating new thematic categories. Based on all my data comprised of my surveys, interviews, and student papers gathered from my three FYC classrooms, I've been able to come up with a list of conclusions, which I share here based on the type of data used to support them:

Survey-Supported Conclusions:

- While some student participants commented on more than one aspect of code-meshing's rhetoricity, each one of my participants addressed at least one of those rhetorical aspects: message, author, audience, or time and place.

- For a few of my research participants, code-meshing could be a subtler response to academe's linguistic exclusionism, but it still extends to conventional audiences the chance to appreciate local and community ways of languaging.

- For many participants, code-meshing can become a tool for vindicating their individual and community identities and their local ways of learning, writing, and communicating.

- Some responses in Survey II (the end-of-study survey) recorded a greater use of code-meshing among participants and a more sophisticated appreciation for code-meshing than responses in Survey I.

Interview-Supported Conclusions:

- According to interview respondents, the writing assignment itself played a big role in how long it took them to come up with code-meshing choices and how many sessions they needed to complete the selection and incorporation of their code-meshing choices.

- Reaching and teaching about their communities scored the highest in interviewees' responses regarding the messages they wished to relay through their code-meshing selections.

- While an overwhelming majority of my study interviewees noted that they didn't or "didn't really" experience any moments of anxiety or tension while code-meshing, most respondents thought their code-meshing choices came from real experiences.

- The majority of my interviewees identified "college student" as a primary role or their only role they assumed while code-meshing.

Student-Writing-Supported Conclusions:

- Over a third of my student examples came from discourses that were qualitatively downplayed and under-investigated in most popular and scholarly conceptions and conversations of code-meshing.

- More than half my student writers signaled their multiple community affiliations by embedding items from more than one discourse community.

- A few code-meshing choices were repurposed from being initially malicious linguistic choices to being calculated code-meshing adoptions utilized to more graphically picture a

cultural or political wrong and to more explicitly articulate the urgency of the offensive situation at hand.

Conclusions Supported by All Three Data Types:

- Due to the versatile nature of the code-meshing selections, code-meshing could be thought of as a multipurpose tool adaptable to a number of writerly needs.
- The extent of most of my study participants' code-meshing was based on whether code-meshing choices still "made sense" or were "easy" enough for their audiences to understand and relate to.
- Code-meshing was used when writing about issues close to home: personal, family, community, and ethnic group, among others.
- Code-meshing examples were used by my student participants to raise community morale and garner community support from the communities themselves.
- My student writers utilized code-meshing in order to better visualize to their audience the severity of some political situations.
- Code-meshing may at times be necessary to make certain points about equity and power in language, society, and history.
- The increasing use of code-meshing by more college writers should eventually normalize and legitimize the practice in academic writing.

More Tentative Conclusions:

These conclusions either were based on one or a few participants from one data set from the study or were largely speculative inferences on my part. Since tentative, I believe the following conclusions warrant future study:

- Writing strictly in academic jargon may alienate readers.

- Some of my student participants who chose to code-mesh from only one discourse community may have done so because of a desire for convenience, a desire for consistency, and/or a desire for the affirmation of one community affiliation as opposed to more than one.

- Those study participants who didn't identify the discourse community their code-meshing examples came from may have intentionally wanted their readers to put in an extra effort to figure out what community they belonged to, a rhetorically-savvy but community-proud move on their part.

My Study's Scholarly Interventions:

As for the research and scholarly interventions, my dissertation has contributed to the code-meshing conversation in the following ways:

- Studying students' code-meshing moves from several writing assignments and from several classes

- Extending previous research foci of code-meshing

- Offering new research foci and data for code-meshing within FYC

- Providing new thematic categories for analyzing code-meshing choices

- Foregrounding FYC student voices in code-meshing research

- Suggesting new interpretations for students' reasons for code-meshing

- Bringing the focus to FYC classes for code-meshing research

- Suggesting wider participant pools for code-meshing research

My Study's Limitations:

While my study has yielded actionable takeaways (identified throughout my data chapters), conclusions (above), and implications (further below), I still realize that the study has sustained some limitations:

- While my sample holds value for me as a teacher researcher and for my classroom practice and provides concrete and context-rich information, it is not large enough to produce broadly generalizable knowledge about FYC classes on a larger scale.

- My study only investigated visible code-meshing choices and didn't examine more implicit, less explicit translingual moves my students made.

- My study was not longitudinal enough like other longer-term qualitative studies in Rhetoric and Composition; it didn't investigate students or their code-meshing practices past their class or semester with me.

- My student participants could have crafted their code-meshing choices for my benefit and self-edited their responses in the surveys or interviews.

- My study didn't examine why students code-meshed from more than one discourse community in the same paper assignment.

- Perhaps, I should have been more assertive in interrogating my student interviewees about whether their code-meshing choices progressively improved with every subsequent code-meshing instance, either by revising my interview questions about process or by adding another question to specifically inquire about that particularity.

My Study's Implications:

I am also hoping to contribute to the ongoing scholarly debates about code-meshing by offering the following recommendations and implications as deduced from my analysis of the

code-meshing data issuing from my three prominently diverse UH FYC sites of code-meshing.

Despite some writing teachers', researchers', and scholars' other-leaning ideological inclinations

toward what counts as good writing for college, through my implications and recommendations

suggested below, I am hoping to validate that the incorporation of college students' local

language practices and modes of discoursing is a rich resource of rhetorical potential for all three

pedagogically-committed groups named below:

Implications for Teachers:

- Code-meshing's worth in identity affirmation: teachers should seriously consider the
  validating potentials that code-meshing will hold for their different student groups,
  especially for those coming from nondominant backgrounds.

- Assignments and class activities that include code-meshing: teachers interested in making
  code-meshing part of their pedagogy should make sure their prompts, class activities, and
  various writing assignments provide much latitude for students to experiment with code-
  meshing with no fear for repercussions on the students' parts, especially so long as
  readers can still understand the intended message and not get confused about what the
  writer is trying to say while code-meshing.

- Diagnostics for code-meshing: teachers can always have their students complete online or
  in-person diagnostic tasks or surveys (named or anonymous) at different points in the
  semester to figure out if students would be interested, are no longer interested, or would
  appreciate some modifications to their teachers' current code-meshing assignments,
  requirements, or recommendations.

- Eliciting verbal feedback from students about first stabs at code-meshing in college
  writing: teachers can informally ask students to share their previous experiences with

code-meshing. Alternatively, teachers can engage students in brief code-meshing exercises and then collect their thoughts on the activity.

- Revising one's pedagogical practices with code-meshing based on teacherly reflections and student feedback: after conducting some reflecting upon how certain code-meshing assignments, class activities, and readings went, teachers can revise, add, or delete different materials to their lesson plan. Also, students' responses about code-meshing-focused classroom practices should be taken into account for any pedagogical modifications to current lesson plans.

- Code-meshing potentials for personal writing: teachers engaging their students in different tasks that involve personal writing (in part or in full) should be keen on making the rhetorical appeal of code-meshing available to students, should students choose to use it for their personal writing needs.

- Allowing students to embrace and verbalize their home discursive identities by incorporating their local language codes into writing that matters: one way to encourage students to code-mesh is to have them write about topics they genuinely care about and then deploy their code-meshing skills and practices in such writing.

- Normalizing the idea of students' knowledge-making through engaging them in ethnographic research done for class: through requiring students to engage in ethnographic research, students become more embroiled in local language use in the communities they investigate and thus more willing and alert to the potentials local language practices hold for communication and advocacy.

- Helping students own and (re-)shape any writing or representations about them using their local ways of meaning-making: when students write about their own experiences,

communities, or social justice interests, they have the opportunity through code-meshing authentic language elements specific to these discourses to capture real-life language acts and sentiments.

- Grading and assessment of code-meshing in student writing: this area of code-meshing assessment is still underdeveloped and so necessitates further research. I believe that assessing a student on their code-meshing should be done within assessing the larger picture of the assignment. Put another way, code-meshing attempts should not determine a student's grade, especially if the teacher had already promised that they would not.

Implications for Teacher Research:

- Making students' local languages and rhetorics less invisible through investigating code-meshing in more college classrooms: by using teacher research to study code-meshing data from their own classrooms, teacher researchers are better able to figure out their students' impressions and listen to their reactions (through interviews and surveys), report their students' composing behavior in class (through fieldnotes and class observations), and examine students' writing moves that avail of code-meshing in the student writing done for class.

- Tightening the connection between teacher research and empirical research: through using ethnographic and qualitative methods in a teacher research project, the teacher researcher interested in code-meshing gets to triangulate empirical data findings, themes and categories, and implications through using more than one type of qualitative data methodology with a preselected and subsequently deduced number of research emphases.

- Utilizing teachers' journals for further research on code-meshing: studying journals kept by teachers engaged in code-meshing in their classes could help spark new or revise

exiting lines of inquiry and research about matters relevant to code-meshing in terms of teachers' feedback and documented student behavior.

- Normalizing the idea for teachers to conduct research outside their jurisdiction: while this project was intended to span more than one institutional site, plans for an outside institutional research site fell through, and thus the project became UH-based only. Had this project been conducted at more than one classroom research site across more than one educational institution, the project would have had the opportunity to propose that collaboration of more than one teacher researcher at multiple institutional sites could present another form to triangulate code-meshing data and findings.

Implications for Rhetoric and Composition:

- Extending Rhetoric and Composition's awareness of including nonmainstream language codes so as to eliminate learning inequities in the writing classroom and in society at large: allowing greater rhetorical space for heretofore disenfranchised discursive and linguistic practices makes any composition classroom site a more emancipatory space for those discursively-fluid student groups. Promoting more space for such community-grown-and-restricted language practices in the writing classroom will teach those language practitioners to become more acutely leery of and corrective with prejudicial treatment they might encounter later in life (e.g., the workplace) based on nonconformist language use.

- Expanding the reach of research findings emanating from Rhetoric and Composition: while several code-meshing studies have been done with different college or non-college-student writer demographics, conducting wider studies on college-student code-meshing—more specifically FYC students—would make current code-meshing findings

from within Rhetoric and Composition more authoritative and representative. Expanding the pool of study participants across different major assignments is another way to make more room for code-meshing implications with the Rhetoric and Composition community.

- Rhetoric and Composition research outlets on code-meshing: it would do the field, educational institutions, and more specifically writing classrooms a great service for more qualitative studies on code-meshed writing and student practice to be shared in more public, accessible venues. Encouraging dissemination and publication of less "formal" research, such as research conducted locally on code-meshed student writing and student impressions toward code-meshing experiences, may ultimately make more researchers and scholars in Rhetoric and Composition come forward and help out by offering broader theoretical and empirical contributions to code-meshing pedagogy.

- Researching code-meshing in other disciplines: Rhetoric and Composition could contribute to other disciplines that use different composing modalities by conducting research on code-meshing within these disciplines. While other fields of study and research may already be engaged in some sort of code-meshing or interdiscursive composing unbeknownst to them, it would be useful to learn of college writers' attitudes toward their existing "code-meshing" practices and their reactions toward incorporating additional or more explicit code-meshing.

Lastly, code-meshing makes the pedagogical mission of incorporating student writers' languages, cultures, and identities in college writing more conceivable and more manageable. In a way, code-meshing becomes another rhetorical strategy to re-politicize the mainstream FYC course and thus re-ideologize the composing that ensues from it. Code-meshing will now be

more apt to offer the "Freirean humility" (Peckham) that opens up the space for students'

discursive ways to develop in academia and combat linguistic othering. In practicing code-

meshing in their academic writing, ultimately college students are allowed to contribute to

writing pedagogy and research by producing locally saturated student writing and offering

experiential responses to their realities. As opposed to being formerly seen as inert consumers of

content, college student writers can now be viewed in a more favorable light: as producers of

lively prose, generative knowledge, and propagative language constructs with material bearings

for college writing, writing pedagogy, and student empowerment.

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Appendix A

Interview Questions for Research Subjects of ENGL 1303 and ENGL 1304

1- May I ask why you decided to participate in this study?
2- How long did it take you to come up with appropriate code-meshing examples/items for your assignment?
3- Did you write these all in one sitting, or did they take you several writing sessions to finalize?
4- How much of that came from real experiences and how much was staged? Were there any romanticized elements?
5- Trying to entertain your audience considerations, did you have a certain audience in mind? Or did you feel like you were performing for yourself—such as you would in a journal or diary—or for others—such as your readers or instructors—or for both?
6- Do you care to share some details you chose to leave out, and why?
7- Were you conscious of your role as a college student, a professional, a family member, a community member, etc.?
8- Did you experience any moments of anxiety or tension when code-meshing that you would like to share?
9- Were you trying to convey a certain message through your code-meshing choices?
10- Would you be willing to share your writing for research purposes intended to improve the quality of first-year writing at UH?
11- Anything else you would like to add?

Appendix B
Code-Meshing Recruitment Survey (Survey I)

This research study has been reviewed by the University of Houston Institutional Review Board. The purpose of this research study is to collect your thoughts on code-meshing and how effective you think it has been or will be for academic writing (including writing you've done/will do for your ENGL 1303). Your eligibility for this study is based on the criteria that you are a member of my Fall 2019 ENGL 1303 and you have expressed your willingness to participate in the study.

The time commitment required for the survey (1-4 total) is approx. 5-10 minutes. You may take the survey in your ENGL 1303 class, online, or at any place of your preference.

The time commitment required for interviews (also conducted on UH campus, on the phone, or over Zoom/Skype) is that you engage in 1-6 interviews, with each interview taking approx. 10 minutes.

If you have questions, concerns, or complaints, you may talk to my adviser, Dr. Nathan Shepley (Email: nshepley@uh.edu OR Phone: (713) 743-1573)

You may also talk to UH's IRB office at (713) 743-9204 or cphs@central.uh.edu if:

- Your questions, concerns, or complaints are not being answered by the research team.
- You cannot reach the research team.
- You want to talk to someone besides the research team.
- You have questions about your rights as a research subject.
- You want to get information or provide input about this research.

Please complete this survey and provide as much detail as possible (you may use the back for more space):

1. Please state your name for study purposes.
2. Do you speak or write in another language or another form of English besides the one you use for college or academic writing (i.e. do you use a home/community language different from standard academic English)?
3. Do you mind sharing what your home language/dialect background is?
4. Would you share some examples of items from your home language/dialect as used in a sentence?
5. Do you think this or other items from your home language/dialect may be successfully used in academic writing (in other words, do you think that you could/should *meaningfully* code-mesh items/features from your home/community language/dialect with those of Standard English in academic writing)?
6. How much of your academic writing do you think should utilize code-meshing?
7. How will you make this code-meshing experience relatable and of value to your own audience/readers?
8. Would you be willing to participate in 10-minute interviews (approx. 1-6 interviews total) to talk about code-meshing in your writing?
9. Would you be willing to share your writing for research purposes intended to improve the quality of first-year writing in college writing classes?

Appendix C
Code-Meshing Survey TWO (Survey II)

1. Please state your name for study purposes.
2. How has your code-meshing experience been thus far?
3. Would you say that your knowledge or your command of the composing technique of code-meshing has become by now:
A- Advanced B-Very good C- Good D- Medium E- Poor F- Unsure
4. Do you mind sharing 2 examples of what you believe were successful instances of your code-meshing this semester? Where (or in what class or context) did these code-meshing instances occur?
5. What were some pedagogical materials or teaching techniques (readings or activities used by your writing instructor to help explain the concept of code-meshing) you found to be especially helpful to your understanding of code-meshing?
6. Do you think your code-meshing choices may be successfully used in other forms of academic writing? Why? How?
7. How much of your academic writing has utilized code-meshing this semester (this, other classes, or any other occasion where you've code-meshed in academic writing)?
8. Do you think that you could/should code-mesh more often from your community language/dialect in academic writing? Could you elaborate?
9. How do you think other instructors or employers will feel about your use of code-meshing in texts you're submitting for their review?
10. Do you think your code-meshing choices have been made relatable and of value to your own audience/readers? In what ways?
11. Do you have any advice on how to best teach or practice code-meshing in academic writing?
12. Would you be willing to share your writing for research purposes intended to improve the quality of first-year writing in college writing classes?

Appendix D

The Reliability Test Survey

1- In her conclusion to her summary/strong response essay on the issue of Brazil's Amazon fires, Fannie chose to code-mesh one of her appeals to her audience to signal the urgency of the fires as "important issues that need to be addressed lo más pronto posible (as soon as possible) … It is essential that people stand up for the environment." Which of the following is the most likely thematic category for her code-meshed appeal?:

    A. An appeal solely based on her personal stake in the situation
    B. An appeal driving at political action and community attention
    C. A merely rhetorical appeal with no political implications

2- In response to one of her interview questions, Nour explains the audience considerations she entertained while code-meshing in her literacy narrative essay: "I kept it [code-meshing] simple with one-word phrases. I was trying to appeal to the general audience." Which thematic category of the following fits her mindfulness of the audience the most closely?:

    A. The rhetorical category or her rhetorical awareness of her audience needs
    B. The personal category or her awareness of a personal issue of hers
    C. The political category or her awareness of an imminent political complication

3- In one of her responses in the second survey, Alexa states that her own code-meshing choices have "helped my audience feel more comfortable using their own voice in their writing as well." Which of the following is she suggesting that code-meshing is an effective tool for?:

    A. Advancing one's rhetorical purpose
    B. Injecting one's personality into one's writing
    C. Promoting a social cause that one is invested in

Appendix E

The Literacy Narrative Essay (Cont.)

The Literacy Narrative essay was about identifying a memorable and/or challenging composing experience or event which the student writers had encountered. Since the Literacy Narrative essay aimed at getting students thinking about the role composing had played or continued to play in their lives, their essays should articulate the significance and value that they had developed for the literacy of writing because during that literacy event or experience they were to recount. This literacy event might be the time when they acquired or developed a particular literate skill as pertaining to composing or writing or the time when they started thinking about (the role/impact of) writing in a new way.

Students were to find a meaningful story/recount a worthwhile literacy incident that had wider implications for the art of composing/writing outside themselves, namely implications for them as writers and for other fellow writers. Their literacy narratives should also be supported by observations and examples that they acquired first-hand. They had to include first-person references (I, me, my) to give their story agency and voice.

It was necessary for the students at several points throughout the essay to connect their literacy narratives to their current situations in college and their positions as composers of texts. They could include visual elements such as photographs, maps, cartoons, etc. to enhance your narrative, but this was not required. More specifically, students were to heed the following five in their literacy narratives:

1- Language: Your language is clear, coherent, focused, and undistracting (free from aimless deviations from the conventions of academic English).

2- Unity: Your narrative essay should center around one major point you'll be making throughout the essay—a thesis, if you will—prefaced in the introductory paragraph of the essay.

3- Development: Your essay should explain how this literacy event/experience has helped you develop your attitudes/beliefs about writing, improve your composing practice, and/or contribute to your identity formation. Since this is a narrative, you need to make sure you provide some basic elements of a dramatic story (a protagonist—you—a lead-up to the literate conflict, a resolution of the literacy conflict, etc.).

4- Specifics: Your narrative should be supported with concrete details and examples from before, during, and after the literacy event you're describing so as to render a more vivid mental image of your experience and its aftermath in the reader's mind. Also, provide specific details about the different things you went through for the writing you did during and after that literacy experience you were engaged in. What are the rhetorical choices/decisions/moves you had to do for the writing you composed? How often did you draft?

5- Significance: Explain throughout the essay (but also in its conclusion): A- the payoff for you (e.g., Was this literacy event your gateway/entry point into [more meaningful] writing territory?) B- the implications for your audience, such as "Why should the reader care?" and "What is the takeaway for the reader?", and C- your contribution for the greater community of fellow (college) writers.

Appendix F

The Summary/Strong Response Essay (Cont.)

To structure their responses more effectively, the Summary/Response assignment sheet stated that student writers should set up the topic of the selected reading in their introductions followed by a mention of the article's title, author's name, the publication outlet, and the main idea the article revolved around. At the end of the introduction, students were asked to explicitly state the kind of response their paper would be developing. As for the summary paragraph/s of the assignment, students needed to provide an objective, neutral representation of the article's major claim and key points without interjecting their own opinions. To help navigate the flow of the summary, students were recommended to use author tags to highlight the main ideas the author made. They were also supposed to include one example of compelling supporting evidence the author used and one quotation that spoke of the central claim the author was advancing.

As for the response paragraphs they composed in order to offer a critique to their selected article, students were supposed to compose 3-5 paragraphs using different types of evidence to support their positions: "concrete evidence from the article, from your own experience, and from outside sources, using examples, paraphrases, and direct quotations." Students were supposed to have at least two outside sources to support their critical positions vis-à-vis the article they selected for response. For each response paragraph, students were encouraged to start with a sentence (like a topic sentence) to introduce the response idea that that paragraph was dealing with by pulling specific examples from the article to respond to. Then, they were asked to support their responses with their own analyses and with outside sources, whenever possible. For the conclusion section of the essay, students were supposed to provide the audience with a clear understanding of where they stood toward the article, encouraged to suggest broader implications of their response, and recommended to supply a sense of closure to their audience.

Appendix G

The Analysis/Synthesis Essay (Cont.)

As explained in class and in the textbook, analysis/synthesis was defined as an intellectual activity that student writers encountered in many academic settings. In fact, the foundation for thoughtful and effective research began with demonstrating writers' awareness of a larger conversation while staking out their own claims and place in it. This assignment was meant to show that students had wrestled with different perspectives and had eventually articulated their own independent views and solutions around an ethical question. Also, they were supposed to consider not only how they'd speak back to the texts they selected but also how the texts were speaking with each other and what ideas, questions, or conclusions that conversation left in their minds.

Students were advised to follow the MEAL Plan in structuring their body paragraphs as a reminder that each paragraph should have a main idea, adequate supporting evidence, appropriate analysis of the evidence deployed, and a final closing statement to link the whole paragraph back to the main idea discussed. To help illustrate their ideas more visually, students were required to incorporate two visuals (e.g., an image, a map, a cartoon, etc.) into their essays, one of which was recommended to be crafted by the individual student writer him/herself. Students were also provided with an essay outline for key essay elements to check off when crafting their own essays.

Appendix H

The Annotated Bibliography Assignment (Cont.)

The Annotated Bibliography assignment was not a traditional essay but rather a document/report that demonstrated their engagement in the research process. Student researchers learned that they needed to devote significant time to completing each of these steps in the research process, which meant that the assignment could not be completed in one sitting. It rather consisted of three parts, described below, each of which would record the steps they would take in investigating their research question, understanding and evaluating their sources, and figuring out the direction they planned on taking in their subsequent research argument paper (Essay III). The purpose of this assignment was for students to move from a research question, in Part I, to a tentative claim/thesis, by the end of Part III.

Part I: Exploratory Research Narrative (300+ words):

For this section of the Annotated Bibliography assignment, students were supposed to write a first-person narrative describing their intellectual journey, beginning with their research question/s (which they should state explicitly at the start of this section). Here, students were asked to describe the chronological path of their research process: where they began, what sources they found said, where that led them, etc. I also advised students that it might be helpful to draft this section as they went through the process (or at least take notes as they forded their way through the research). I also cautioned them to try to find sources that voiced a diversity of standpoints. Additionally, I let them know that books, articles, database materials, and websites did not have to be the only relevant sources for them; primary research materials, such as interviews, surveys, observations, and other less traditional sources (e.g., visual data), might be helpful sources of research and evidence.

Part II: Annotated Bibliography (6 entries, 100+ words per annotation):

The Annotated Bibliography part of the assignment was like a Works Cited page except that readers saw not only students' citations for the sources used, but also a paragraph containing a summary and explanation of each source. For this section, students were asked to list their sources alphabetically and provide the formal citation followed by an annotation of the source that described and summarized the source and assessed its credibility, authority, and bias. Also, in the annotations, students needed to provide a brief statement of how this source would (or would not) fit into their own research.

Part III: Conclusions and Tentative Thesis (150+ words):

This final section of the Annotated Bibliography assignment was also a first-person narrative of the conclusions student researchers had drawn from their research thus far. Students were required to conclude this section with their tentative/working thesis, a proposed solution to the problem they had been investigating. Additionally, students were encouraged to answer the following questions: What solution did they think they would or might argue for in their researched argument in Essay III? How did they think they would approach that type of argument (by tentatively listing 3+ ways/steps/grounds?)? Furthermore, since the thesis was tentative, I explained that it could always be changed or revised as they wrote their third and final assignment (Essay III) for the class.

Appendix I

The Community-Oriented Research-Supported Solution Essay (Cont.)

In this final ENGL 1304 assignment, students were also encouraged to utilize rhetorical appeals (including the code-meshing and visual-data appeals) to reach as broad an audience base as possible. The emphasis on supporting their claim/s with "SUFFICIENT, RELEVANT, AND SPECIFIC evidence" (original emphasis) was an important pedagogical refrain preached throughout this final unit of the course. To make sure that students understood the research process as multiple iterations of one stretchy, interconnected process of thinking and writing, students were also required to use at least two sources from their Annotated Bibliography assignment, which they had gathered during their research journey for that assignment. As for source evaluation, students were required to make their source-material incorporations based on sources' reliability, recency, and applicability to their topic. They were also given directions on how to best locate relevant, useful materials from their textbooks and where to locate source materials online.

The assignment also had a "Primary Research/Ethnography" component where students needed to conduct first-hand research using at least two types of primary/ethnographic research in quest for a deeper analysis and a better conceived solution plan to the community problem they were studying. The examples given in the assignment for primary research were "in-person or online interviews, polls, surveys, or observations." The purpose of the ethnographic component of the assignment was for students to show that they had engaged with affected community members and had given them the platform to speak on the problem impacting their community. Another mandatory component of this essay was the incorporation of visual data in the analysis and/or the solution of the community problem. The rationale for this component was explained as a rhetorical exigency: "Since we are increasingly living in a world bombarded by multimedia messages and visual arguments, you must support your argument by using at least TWO non-traditional sources" (emphasis in original). The Essay III prompt goes on to say, "that is, you're to locate one non-textual source AND design one non-textual source and appropriately embed them in the body of your argument. Visual data components (interactive or traditional) may include, but are not limited to, graphics, tables, images, charts, cartoons, maps, timelines, screen shots, and videos" (emphasis in original). These two components (the ethnographic and visual) were given about 15% of overall grade for this assignment.