

Chapter 42

Translingual and Digital Ecologies: A Cloud Pedagogy for Second Language Classrooms

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ABSTRACT

Scholarship in cloud pedagogy has provided intriguing lenses through which researchers enhance pedagogical approaches for digital composition classrooms. However, there is a lack of discussion on how cloud pedagogy could be employed to benefit second language learners of writing. Scholars in both digital and translingual areas of research have touched on conceptualizing their theories through multimodal, collaborative, and ecological perspectives of writing. Therefore, this article looks into the theories and practices of translingualism, and explore how translingual writing can be merged and integrated into the multimodal applications of cloud-based learning. Following and expanding the practices of digital composition, this paper aims to argue for an ontological shift to a translingual view of cloud-based writing and examine how it informs second language learning.

INTRODUCTION

With the growing population of international multilingual learners in English speaking countries, the issue of student mobility has been propelled into the limelight. As classrooms in U.S. colleges are becoming increasingly globalized and multifaceted, researchers and teachers are faced with the challenge on how to better address the needs of diverse populations of second language learners. As second language students move across national and cultural borders, they are no longer confined by fixed definitions and dispositions of the places and cultures from which they come. International students' mobility has also contributed local knowledge to the process of globalization, challenging the structure of extant forms of education (Collins, 2012).

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Through this lens, writing is no longer bounded by predefined norms and locations. Rather, it encompasses joint networks of local and global encounters. As international students move across their home and target language and cultures, their local knowledge could be utilized for translingual and multimodal practices to co-construct meaning in digital composition. A cloud pedagogy from the angle of translingualism may enhance students' inquiry into language and culture, endorse the collaborative nature of translingual and multimodal writing, and enact both human and non-human resources in the learning process. Cloud pedagogy therefore is closely linked with translingual perspectives that manifested critical resistance to the dominant ideologies and modes of representations through encouraging multilingual students to utilize multiple semiotic resources (Kress, 2010; Van Leeuwen, 2005), or socially-made and every-changing means of meaning making, from their diverse linguistic and cultural backgrounds. The use of diverse semiotic resources leads to students' engagement with writing on an ecological scale. The translingual and digital ecology builds the connection between students' living experience of their local cultures and study-abroad environments.

Scholarships in digital composition and translingualism thus have a shared understanding on the multimodal, collaborative, and ecological aspects of writing. This being said, however, translingual and digital multimodal studies exist mainly as two separate areas of research, despite a few scholarly efforts to conflate and combine these research interests. For instance, Horner and Selfe (2013) stress that "despite their common points of origination, discussions of modality have remained largely separate from discussions of translingualism, to the impoverishment of both" (p. 2). In other words, the two conceptual frameworks in general have not benefited much from a collaborative work. For this reason, there is a need to bridge the theoretical orientations of translingualism and multimodality through exploring the complexity and diversity of translingual cloud-based learning. Following and expanding the practices of digital composition, this chapter aims to argue for an ontological shift to a translingual view of cloud pedagogy and examine how it provides pedagogical implications for second language learning.

The argument of this chapter will be presented in four sections. First, cloud pedagogy in second language writing will be discussed, in terms of three types of learning opportunities enacted through the cloud pedagogy; namely, multimodal affordances, collaborative affordances, and ecological affordances. Secondly, the framework of translingualism will be presented and discussed through the lenses of translingual writing and translingual ecology. The next section will focus on the pedagogical implications of translingualism for cloud-based second language writing. Special attention will be paid to the themes of bridging print and digital modalities, negotiating linguistic and cultural differences, and conflating human and non-human ecologies. Finally, the chapter offers general thought on future research directions for using translingualism and cloud pedagogy in second language writing classrooms.

CLOUD PEDAGOGY IN SECOND LANGUAGE WRITING

Scholarship in cloud technologies has been under the influence of theories in multimodality. Cloud pedagogy incorporates cloud technologies in classroom teaching, including but not limited to Facebook, Google docs, wikis, blogs, Twitter, and mobile apps that have been shown to facilitate second language writing. Current literature demonstrates that cloud technologies have empowered the voice for second language learners, and provided the opportunity for cross-cultural communication (Lantz-Andersson, Vigmo & Bowen, 2013; Lee et al., 2016; Limbu, 2013; Mitchell, 2012; Nelson, 2006). Lying at the heart of such benefits is the use of cloud pedagogy to meet the needs of linguistically and culturally

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