2 • Research Design

As I describe in chapter 1, I chose to use translation moments as my primary unit of analysis in this project, in an attempt to ground conversations about language fluidity in the lived practices and experiences of multilinguals. When I analyze translation moments, I consider language not only from the perspective of language theories and policies but also from an orientation of practice and situated performance, paying attention to how and when multilinguals make specific rhetorical choices in their interactions. Further, I theorize and analyze translation moments through multimodal frameworks that consider not only linguistic or alphabetic negotiations but also embodied, material, and digital practices that are embedded in contemporary communication (Haas; Ríos). In this way, I aim to bridge research in multimodality with work that advocates for the value of linguistic diversity in and outside of writing classrooms (Bowen and Whithaus; Canagarajah; Guerra; Fraiberg).

By blending multilingual/multimodal frameworks for studying language fluidity and by grounding these discussions in situated ethnographies that showcase the affordances of combining and blending languages and modalities simultaneously, I hope to expand work in multimodality to further consider the value of linguistic diversity. In addition, by illustrating how multilinguals leverage digital and analog modes, I suggest that conversations about language diversity and linguistic fluidity could benefit from further acknowledging multimodalities as critical components of students’ linguistic repertoires. Through this work, I present methods and theoretical models of language and writing that reflect the diverse communicative practices of contemporary classrooms and workplaces, thus extending and contributing to Adam Banks’s call to “build theories, pedagogies, and practices of multimedia writing that honor the traditions and thus the people who are still too often not present in our classrooms, on our faculties, [and] in our scholarship” (14). By bridging multilingualism
and multimodality in research and pedagogy, we can “commit fully to altering our pedagogical and research practices—to consider how concretely engaging with different modes, genres, materials, cultural practices, communicative technologies, and language varieties impacts our abilities to make and negotiate meaning, how it impacts both what and how we come to know, and perhaps most importantly, how it might provide us with still other options for knowing and being, and for being known” (Shipka, “Transmodality,” 251).

In this chapter, I describe how I blended multilingual/multimodal methods and methodologies to study translation moments at two different research sites. After providing a short overview of emerging studies engaging with multilingual/multimodal research, I briefly introduce my two sites of study, describing how the relationships developed with my communities guide and inform my analysis and presentation of translation moments and A Revised Rhetoric of Translation. Finally, I describe the specific methods and emerging analytical frameworks that I used to identify, analyze, and visualize the rhetoric embedded in translation moments across contexts.

Multilingual, Multimodal Methods and Methodologies

Recent studies illustrate different ways that students work across languages and modes simultaneously in their daily interactions, both in and outside of the writing classroom (Álvarez; Jiménez et al.; Jordan; Kramsch; Lorimer Leonard). These scholars draw from a variety of disciplines to trace students’ composing practices beyond the limitations of standardized written English. For example, drawing from the extensive work of Ofelia García and other sociolinguists (e.g., Jan Blommaert), Steven Álvarez studies how “bilingual youth [act] as language brokers for homework in immigrant families,” layering several semiotic resources and practices to translate communication between their parents and teachers, to help both parties understand each other (326).

To analyze translanguaging, Álvarez draws from Shirley Brice Heath’s concept of a “literacy event,” an analytical unit in which writing, reading, or speaking mediate participants’ agencies and relationships (Heath, 200, qtd. in Álvarez, 329). Stemming from the notion of literacy events, Álvarez proposes “translanguaging events” as an analytical unit for examining how writers adapt ideas across languages and modes. Translanguaging events, Álvarez explains, are “multilingual collaborative practices [of] shuttling
between languages while responding to texts situated in local contexts” (329–30). Examining translinguaging events through an ethnographic study (including interviews, observations, and textual analyses of student work), Alvarez illustrates how translinguaging pedagogies can be implemented into classrooms “by inviting students to language broker, translate, paraphrase, and code-switch, reflexively calling attention to language differences for discussion and analysis” (337).

Similarly calling attention to the translation practices of multilinguals in classroom spaces, Rebecca Lorimer Leonard illustrates how learners who regularly move between languages exhibit an acute “rhetorical attunement” that helps them communicate effectively across modes and with diverse audiences. Drawing on Canagarajah’s discussion of translinguaging as a process of “recontextualization,” Lorimer Leonard argues that communicative resources are “externally influenced and socially practiced” (232). Based on her analysis of life history interviews, Lorimer Leonard suggests that multilingual writers’ linguistic transitions help them develop unique rhetorical strategies to navigate communication (228). These linguistic experiences and developed rhetorical strategies expand multilinguals’ “attunement,” or orientation, to communication, allowing these writers to leverage a wide range of semiotic resources to reach their audiences effectively. As Lorimer Leonard concludes, in communicative situations, “monolingual writers hear a note; multilingual writers hear a chord” (243). While Lorimer Leonard does not specifically reference multimodality, the layering of semiotic resources used by multilingual communicators in her study echoes the “rhetorical sensitivity” emphasized by scholars in multimodal composition (Ball, Arola, and Sheppard; Shipka).

In his situated analysis of multilingual and multimodal literacy practices in Israeli society, Steven Fraiberg proposes “code mashing” as a framework for describing “the complex blending of multimodal and multilingual texts and literacy practices in our teaching and research” (102). Drawing on theories of literacy ecologies, knotworking, remediation, and actant-network theory, Fraiberg offers rhetoric and composition a way to conceptualize “language as situated, dynamic, heterogeneous, co-constitutive, and contested” (104). Through this analysis, Fraiberg illustrates how writers negotiate “complex arrays of languages, texts, tools, objects, symbols, and tropes” as they move more fluidly than ever across metaphorical and physical boundaries between languages, modalities, nations, and other composing contexts (107).

In table 1, I present just a few examples of some recent methods used to study multilingual/multimodal composing. While no means exhaustive,
the table illustrates the similarities in the methods that have been used to study the blending of languages and modes in writing, as well as the relatively small sample sizes represented across these studies. As evidenced in table 1, some studies exploring multilingualism and multimodality together have relied heavily on interviews, observations, and analyses of texts or other artifacts. While these methods are incredibly valuable and have contributed greatly to our understanding of linguistic diversity, some of these methods also seem to privilege the “product” of translation rather than valuing the process. Further, as table 1 shows, some studies threading

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Author</th>
<th>Participants</th>
<th>Methods</th>
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| Alvarez                       | 10 families (10 mothers, 22 children) | Observations / field notes
|                               |                               | Interviews
|                               |                               | Textual/artifact analysis
| Barton and Lee                | various                       | Observations / field notes
|                               |                               | Interviews
|                               |                               | Autoethnography/storytelling
|                               |                               | Textual/artifact analysis
| Berry, Hawisher, and Selfe    | 12                            | Interviews
|                               |                               | Autoethnography/storytelling
|                               |                               | Textual/artifact analysis
| Canagarajah, “Negotiating”    | one class (number of students not specified) | Observations
|                               |                               | Field notes
|                               |                               | Interviews
|                               |                               | Textual/artifact analysis
| Canagarajah, “Rhetoric”       | 1                             | Textual/artifact analysis
| Fraiberg                      | unspecified                   | Observations
|                               |                               | Field notes
|                               |                               | Interviews
|                               |                               | Autoethnography/storytelling
|                               |                               | Textual/artifact analysis
| Kramsch                      | 10                            | Observations
|                               |                               | Field notes
|                               |                               | Interviews
|                               |                               | Autoethnography/storytelling
|                               |                               | Textual/artifact analysis
| Lorimer Leonard              | 6                             | Interviews
|                               |                               | Textual/artifact analysis
the connections between multilingualism and multimodality tend to have a relatively small number of study participants (perhaps due to the important in-depth, longitudinal nature of this work), limiting our insight into the practices of a handful of students or professionals at a time.

For example, Canagarajah (“Rhetoric”) studies one student’s translanguaging practices through the student’s written products. Barry, Hawisher, and Selfe’s use of video recordings to capture twelve student narratives pushes toward a more situated study of multilingualism and multimodality, by providing an additional layer of understanding in reference to students’ multilingual, multimodal composing practices. Together, these scholars have developed important frameworks and methods to understand the intersections of multimodality and multilingualism. Yet I would argue that more work needs to be done to develop situated multimodal coding methods or replicable processes for analysis that account for the blending of languages and modalities simultaneously during multilingual composing processes.

Using emerging work that highlights the connections between multilingualism and multimodality (e.g., the similarities in method depicted in table 1) and drawing on methods from rhetoric and composition and from technical communication in my ongoing collaborations with over fifty-five participants across two research sites, I analyzed how individuals move across languages and modalities simultaneously through translation moments. Through the present study’s discussion of that work, I argue that translation moments help us understand how and when individuals leverage rhetorical resources to transform information from one language or discourse to another, thus providing researchers with an additional framework for studying language fluidity in ways that are culturally and rhetorically situated. Developing replicable methods and processes for analyzing multilingualism and multimodality in practice can help us expand our approaches to teaching and researching writing and communication outside the boundaries of named languages, alphabetic modalities, and disciplinary-specific conventions.

Research Sites: Translation Moments in and across Latinx Communities

To understand how multilingual and multimodal practices are enacted during translation moments, I worked with two communities of translators over a period of three years. I expand on the research sites and their
Respectively communities in chapters 5 and 6. Rather than working with participants who speak languages in which I am not fluent, I specifically chose to work with Latinx translators who work across Spanishes and Englishes. To make arguments about the connections between language, identity, culture, and technology and to honor the role that identity plays in the negotiation of multimodality and multilingualism, I have to acknowledge and leverage my own positionality in this analysis; that I identify as a South American emergent bilingual (García and Li Wei) (more specifically, as a person who can speak Englishes and Spanishes to equal capacities but learned to speak English as a second language) inherently influences the way that I interacted with my participants and analyzed their practices. Although my training in rhetoric and technical communication might be useful to some degree if I were to navigate multilingual contexts with languages that are unfamiliar to me (e.g., French, Arabic, etc.), that I speak Spanish and identify as a Latina affords me an analytical frame of reference that would not be present if I was analyzing the work of participants in another language. For this reason, while I acknowledge the colonial histories embedded in both Spanish and English, I chose to work with communities with which I identify, namely immigrant, Latinx individuals who speak Spanish. In this way, I can use these relationships with my participants to present a more nuanced and thorough analysis that accounts for multilingual/multimodal processes, products, and lived experiences.

To study the rhetorical choices and decisions that communicators made during their process of translation, it was important for me to work with multilingual communicators who work as translators in various contexts, both within and outside of academia. Although we can argue that any communicator from any linguistic and cultural background(s) experiences translation moments, I wanted to work with individuals who have various degrees and training in the long-standing profession of translation. Grounding conversations discussing language fluidity in rhetoric and composition with conversations in translation studies and technical communication can help researchers further understand the multilingual, multimodal language transformation practices that are taking place in our classrooms and professional spaces.

To illustrate the rhetorical activities embedded in translation, chapters 5 and 6 present stories from my work with two organizations: Knightly Latino News, a bilingual, student-run organization in news broadcasting, located at the University of Central Florida; and the Language Services Department, a small translation and interpretation business, located
within the Hispanic Center of Western Michigan, a nonprofit organization serving Latinx communities in Grand Rapids. Although I reference the translators in these organizations as participants throughout this book, the people in these two organizations have become part of my family in so many material ways. While the period of data collection for this particular project was approximately three years, the period of relationship building that allowed this project to come to fruition was much longer. Without the relationships, the analysis presented in this book would be inaccurate and superficial at best, not encompassing the trust and mutual commitment to Latinx representations that will continue to support the efforts of this project beyond the publication of this particular monograph. None of this work would have been possible without the ideas and active contributions of the translators whose stories are featured on every page of this book. Every piece of this project is a product of a participatory methodology that centers the stories and testimonios of Latinx communities as integral to the gathering and representation of data (Torrez, “Translating”).

My goal in working with both of the organizations included in this project was to build relationships that would help us (me and the members of each organization) collectively highlight the multilingual, multimodal communicative strategies enacted by translators in their daily work activities. Because these communities reflect various aspects of my own identity as a multilingual, I approached this project as a reciprocal act that allowed both me and my participants to highlight various aspects of our relationships to meet our own goals. I did not approach either organization only to advance my own research agenda; the purpose of our partnerships was to build community and find multifaceted ways of representing our collective work across languages and modalities, for my own purposes as a researcher, for my participants’ purposes as members of organizations that need publicity and funding, and for our collective purposes as human beings working to navigate communication in English-dominant spaces in and outside of the United States. As I present the data of this project in the remaining chapters, I weave my own analysis and interpretation with my participants’ stories, perspectives, and testimonios.

Method

One of my primary goals in sharing this project is to highlight the importance of using multimodal, multilingual methods to study multimodal, multilingual practices. Following Shipka’s call (in Toward a Composition)
to move from merely seeing and assessing multimodal products toward a further understanding of the multimodal process, I argue for a multimodal methodology that leverages visual methods to clearly illustrate the value of multilingual communication. I want to move from simply analyzing final products of translation to visualizing the processes and practices of translation themselves, including the voices and experiences of translators within my analytical framework. To do so, I blend a variety of visual methods in my data collection practices, using video and audio recordings, as well as visuals and diagrams, and presenting my data both through written dialogue and through brief video montages and visualizations, further introduced in chapters 3–6.

Many scholars in rhetoric and composition and in technical communication have discussed the value of visual methods and methodologies (Brumberger; McKee and DeVoss; Hawisher et al.). As Hawisher et al. explain, visual methods (including, in their case, the use of video recordings) “add additional semiotic information and more to alphabetic representations of research.” In addition, visual research methods can support data collection and analysis in ways that account for and highlight the embodied and embodying nature of interactions (Gonzales, “Multimodality,” “Using ELAN”). Although I do not consider myself a visual designer or filmmaker, I have followed emerging calls for visual methods and technical communication by incorporating visual methods of data collection and analysis to help me understand data in various dimensions beyond the limitations of written language; that is, I use visual methods not only to account for what my participants were doing during my data collection periods but also to understand and acknowledge the environments, locations, and positionality of this work within their broader rhetorical and cultural contexts (Pigg). In table 2, I provide an overview of the specific methods used to collect visual data in this project. These methods borrow from scholarship in rhetoric and composition as well as in technical communication, thus leveraging the multiple ways that multilingual, multimodal communication has been studied and practiced across disciplines.

As evidenced in table 2, the methods employed in this project yielded 449 hours of data, not including the three years of physical observation and the relationship building encompassed in the various stages of this project. My data collection processes were not only granted clearance from an institutional review board but also adhere to the professional ethical standards of the American Translators Association and received multiple recursive cycles of consent from all participants involved in the project. All personal information included in translation documents was protected
Table 2. Multimodal Methods of Data Collection

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Method</th>
<th>Amount Collected</th>
<th>Description</th>
</tr>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Screencast recordings</td>
<td>30 hours</td>
<td>Screencast recordings allow researchers to record participants’ computer screens as they compose, noting where participants click and how they move their cursors on-screen (Slattery; Pigg). This situated method was particularly useful for analyzing how participants coordinated digital resources to complete translation projects in digital contexts.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Video footage</td>
<td>403 hours</td>
<td>Although screencast recordings allow me to see what participants are doing on their computer screens, this method was not sufficient in accounting for participants’ embodied practices (Pigg). For this reason, I installed video cameras at my two research sites, not only to record what participants were doing as they translated on their computers but also to see how participants were using their bodies to transform information.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Artifact-based interviews</td>
<td>16 hours</td>
<td>While the screencasts provided an illustration of participant’s digital movements (e.g., mouse clicks, typing), the screencasts do not provide insights into participants’ motivations for making these moves; that is, the screencast data allowed me to see what sources and tools students were using to translate, but they did not explain why participants chose to use these resources (Blythe and Gonzales). For this reason, each of the participants was asked to participate in a follow-up artifact-based interview, where the participant and I watched the screencasts together and discussed why the participant chose to make specific moves during the digital translation process. For example, I asked participants why they decided to use or not use a particular definition or why they went to a particular website. In this way, artifact-based interviews provided an additional layer of analysis for understanding my participants’ translation practices.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Field observations</td>
<td>150 pages</td>
<td>In addition to the video footage and screen recordings, I used a field notebook to write down specific moments of translation during my observation at two different research sites. Using this notebook to sketch specific instances and to write time frames during the video recording allowed me to streamline my analysis and to make space for my own interpretive lens during the data collection process.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>TOTAL</strong></td>
<td><strong>449 hours</strong></td>
<td></td>
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and stored in encrypted servers. Due to the reciprocal research methodology and analytical methods embraced in this project, participants at both of my research sites asked that their names not be changed in this manuscript, provided that all drafts were shared and approved by participants before final publication. By keeping my participants’ names in the manuscript and by referring my partnering organizations by name, I seek to give additional credit to the people who inform this work and to provide those organizations with tangible representations of their involvement in this project. All publications related to this project, including but not limited to this monograph, are cited and distributed by individuals at both of my research cites (at community events, on grant applications, and in other materials). In this way, these publications are shared as examples of our collective work together, rather than merely as representations of my authorship or research agenda.

At both research sites, I triangulated my methods of data collection and data analysis with my participants’ own descriptions and practices. As I recorded and analyzed how participants navigated translation moments (to visualize the actual practices of translation), I asked for feedback from my participants during semi-structured artifact-based interviews and during more informal conversations on observation days. During these feedback moments, I asked participants to describe their translation practices in their own words, and I then incorporated this discussion into my evolving coding scheme. The coding scheme I present was developed both through my own analysis and through conversations and data triangulation exercises with fifty-five participants.

I went through three rounds of coding to analyze my data. First, I coded data to identify the frequency and length of translation moments as they took place at both research cites. Second, I went through a round of coding using a preliminary coding scheme developed through a pilot study that I conducted with user-experience researcher Rebecca Zantjer (see Gonzales and Zantjer). In that pilot study, we developed a preliminary list of codes that we could expect to see when coding how multilingual communicators navigated rhetorical decisions during translation moments. For instance, we learned that when analyzing translation moments, we would frequently find multilingual communicators using gestures or drawing sketches to communicate ideas with various audiences. We also learned that multilinguals would sometimes tell stories during translation moments, to illustrate how they have experienced specific words, ideas, or concepts in previous interactions. During this second round of coding, I used the preliminary coding scheme developed with Rebecca, while simul-
taneously looking for additional patterns that emerged from my data (Saldaña). I adjusted my coding scheme to reflect the specific patterns that I was seeing participants use to navigate translation moments at my two new research sites. I then went through a third round of coding with my revised coding scheme, where I also triangulated my analysis with my participants through the artifact-based interviews.

Ultimately, after three rounds of coding, I identified 2,871 translation moments that took place across both research sites during my data collection period. In analyzing these translation moments in collaboration with my participants, we identified 5,734 second-tier codes describing what took place as translators made decisions during translation moments; that is, while there were close to three thousand translation moments in my data, each translation moment often encompassed the use of more than one rhetorical strategy on the part of the translator. For example, participants used digital translation tools, such as Google Translate or Linguee (an online dictionary), to find options for their translations. Often, these digital translation tools alone did not provide adequate translations for my participants’ projects. In addition, translators deployed other semiotic resources and rhetorical strategies to translate information—reading aloud, sketching, gesturing, and/or storytelling across languages to accomplish their work. These rhetorical strategies, or second-tier codes, are further described in table 3 and represent the activities and practices that translators used to navigate translation moments as they decided how to translate a specific word or phrase in a specific rhetorical situation.

The eight codes or strategies presented in table 3 represent the discreet activities most frequently used by translators to navigate translation moments. As evidenced in the table, these strategies contain multimodal components to various degrees. For instance, gesturing, or the use of your body to signal meaning, encompasses multimodality in that it requires participants to move beyond words in their description of ideas (Arola and Wysocki; Shipka, Toward a Composition). Although gesturing strategies do not necessarily entail the use of digital technologies, these strategies represent emerging definitions of “digital” writing, echoing Angela Haas’s argument (in “Wampum as Hypertext”) that digital technologies begin with our fingers and our bodies’ movement. To understand the affordances of digital writing, Haas contends what we must account for both the material tools through which digital writing happens and the cultural/rhetorical contexts in which this work takes place. Hence, as I analyzed translation moments, I aimed to understand both what was taking place on my participants’ screens while they typed information and what was taking place in the physical environment that housed the translation offices. In this
way, I could account for what Ann-Shivers McNair describes as “bodies and knowledge in the making,” specifically by paying attention to how participants were interacting with various technologies, with each other, and with their own experiences as they composed across languages. As Gabriela Raquel Ríos clarifies in her discussion of Nahua rhetorics (“Performing”), “we must struggle to (re)consider the separation between metaphor and materiality with respect to space in a literal fashion” (87), understanding that “knowledge is formed vis-à-vis relationships” with ourselves, each other, and the land (86).

Similarly, translation strategies such as “repeating” and “storytelling”

<table>
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<tr>
<th>Code</th>
<th>Description</th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Use of Digital Translation Tools</td>
<td>Digital translation tools used by participants in this project include Google Translate, Linguee, a Spanish–English dictionary, and WordReference, a bilingual synonym finder.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Deconstructing</td>
<td>Deconstruction strategies include word conjugation or adaptation, when participants take an initial word and adapt it to meet the context of a single sentence or section in the translation.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Gesturing</td>
<td>Gesturing strategies include the “gesticulations on the fly” (McNeill) made by participants as they discuss a word or phrase during a translation moment.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Reading Aloud</td>
<td>Reading aloud is used by participants when they are testing if their translation “makes sense” in the context of an entire document. Participants frequently read their translations aloud several times to ensure accuracy.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Negotiating</td>
<td>Negotiating strategies were often used in conjunction with the use of digital translation tools. Participants negotiated when they were deciding between possible options for translating a single word.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Storytelling</td>
<td>Storytelling took place when participants would have a conversation about how to translate a specific word or phrase. In these instances, participants would tell stories about how they have heard or used a word or phrase in the past.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Repeating</td>
<td>Often, participants would repeat a word or phrase several times during a translation moment. Through this repetition, participants cued their own indexed cultural knowledge, deciding which word “sounded right” based on the ways in which they have heard that word used in previous contexts.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Sketching</td>
<td>Sketching strategies were used when participants tried to make sense of a word by drawing a figure or object. These strategies were often used when participants tried to explain a concept to another translator in order to come to a common understanding.</td>
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do not always require traditional conceptions of digital tools and technologies. However, these strategies were frequently accompanied by gestures and coupled with research that took place in online environments, as participants Googled, downloaded, and manipulated images, videos, and other information to help them understand particular concepts and ideas in both Spanish and English. As they decide how to best say or write a word in a different language, translators have to recall their previous experiences hearing and saying specific words and phrases, reliving their histories in order to make information accessible in a new language. Thus, to understand translation as a multimodal activity, it is important to account for all the elements embedded in translation moments—elements that encompass the intricate layering of semiotic resources in recursive, iterative cycles. As I further demonstrate in the remaining chapters of this book, translation is a multimodal activity not only because it increasingly requires the navigation of digital technologies but also because it requires the rhetorical coordination of semiotic resources beyond alphabetic language. Understanding multimodal communication through translation can help researchers, teachers, and practitioners further understand how languages, modalities, and media intersect in the rhetorical work enacted by multilinguals.