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This book seeks to reframe discussions about US-informed writing research, pedagogy, and administration by foregrounding the notion of transnationalism. Given the range of perspectives (and “dispositions”; Bourdieu) evident across the essays, the collection is a challenging read. Ideologically, the collection works both within and against a neoliberal agenda for higher education: some authors foreground transnational writing pedagogy and research as activism toward social justice while others seem to accept as legitimate the global expansion of universities in the center and North; some authors explicitly challenge the historical and contemporaneous exporting of US-style composition from North to South (both materially and symbolically) while others seem to accept a unidirectional relation. Some seemingly accept the privileged position of English in academic writing pedagogy while others seek to make visible multiple sociolinguistic realities. And core theoretical notions—notably, superdiversity (Vertovec)—are anchored to different ideologies and social agendas.

But perhaps that is the key contribution of the book: to make visible the different and contradictory ways in which scholars are currently grappling with the meanings, values, and consequences of imagining a transnational orientation toward academic writing. As such, the collection lays bare some important questions and constitutes a welcome contribution to an important debate about what it means to engage with writing—as teachers, researchers, administrators, students—in the contemporary academic world.

The foregrounding of the notion *transnational* is one (current) way of signaling the need to acknowledge that academic writing is a highly consequential social practice, impacting on opportunities for participation in knowledge production and exchange globally. Writing occurs at the intersection of particular material and socially imagined boundaries: geographical, linguistic,

racial, ethnic, cultural, disciplinary—all, of course, problematic categories in different ways. Conceptualizing what we are doing in the name of *academic writing* therefore involves necessary but uncomfortable intellectual labor (see Chadwick), including deep listening and deep theorizing toward decolonizing (see, for example, Virtanen) to ensure that structural and material inequalities are not erased even while dynamism, complexity, and fluidity are foregrounded.

Here we highlight three key conversational threads that the collection clearly signals and will usefully feed into future scholarship.

Using Binary Discourses

Throughout the book, explicit binary discourses proliferate: North/South, center/periphery, monolingual/multilingual, domestic/international, white/Black, and we/they, and implicit binaries are also evident, such as experts/nonexperts. These binaries are useful: they help make visible the material and semiotic realities shaping people's lived experiences of writing research, pedagogy, and administration and the challenges faced in attempting to transform these experiences. These binaries are crucial, in particular, regarding race, which we return to below.

However, at the same time—and as we know from a large body of work in feminist, critical, and poststructural theory—binary framings also reify aspects which are in reality far more complex and fluid, potentially limiting our understandings in profound ways. The book's co-opting of the concept and prefix *trans* is one way of emphasizing the need to dissolve binary framings, but of course there is a need to develop further meaningful discursive terms. The collection uses a cluster of terms to resist rigidity. Nancy Bou Ayash and Brooke R. Schreiber usefully draw on Anna Tsing's notion of "friction"—"the awkward, unequal, unstable, and creative qualities of interconnection across difference" (4)—to articulate compositionist theory and practice across the United States, Lebanon, and Serbia. Esther Milu uses *flattening* to capture the pedagogic failure to recognize and legitimize the sociolinguistic realities of students from African countries in US-style composition classes. Rebecca Lorimer Leonard uses Jan Blommaert and Ad Backus's notion of "literate repertoires"—"biographically organized complexes of resources" (8)—to explore experiences in a multiyear community literacy partnership centering on a driving literacy curriculum. Tuli Chatterji, Ahmed Mulla, and Olga Aksakalova foreground the notions of "crossings," "cross-border discourses," and "cross-border practice" (after Lunsford and Ouzgane; You; Runyan et al.) in their exploration of "virtual exchange" between students taking composition courses in New York and students at the

University of French Guiana, a notion echoed in the use of “cultural travelers” by Parva Panahi, Hadi Banat, Rebekah Sims, Phuong Tran, and Bradley Dilger. The value of *translingual* (after Horner et al.) is underlined by Chris Anson, Amy Hodges, and Mysti Rudd in their discussion of writing-enriched curriculum with students at Texas A&M University, Qatar. And in terms of the core notion of the book, the *transnational*, Joan Turner clearly articulates this notion’s value regarding the positioning of English: “the transnational uproots English from its national contexts, disrupts the certainties of English’s nationalized standards, and sets in motion unpredictable centrifugal force.”

There is still much to do in developing a transnational discourse, including working at the notion of *trans*, which involves engaging with disciplinary areas beyond writing studies, rhetoric, and applied linguistics. It is hard, of course, to break into US-based conversations even from within writing traditions if these traditions are outside of Anglophone academia, as illustrated in the essays by Andrea Scott, speaking from a German writing heritage, and Violeta Molina-Natera and Karen López-Gil, talking back from Latin America. Although not discussed in the essays, by using *trans* as a core notion the book (albeit implicitly, we think) signals a connection with a hard-fought-for intellectual and social space: trans or transgender studies. Trans studies is an academic field in its own right (e.g., Stryker and Whittle) but is increasingly being used to inform research and pedagogy on academic writing (see Inman; Thieme and Saunders). Carolyn McKinney explicitly recontextualizes the core notion of heteronormativity in her use of “Anglonormativity” to theorize how languages other than English “are censured in post-colonial schooling systems.” In working to reimagine and articulate a transnational writing space, our dialogues around writing can usefully draw on the praxis of trans studies, in particular the study of developing discourses that are decentering and nonbinary.

Working with Race to Avoid Erasure

Yet, as we reimagine a transnational writing space, there is a contradiction to unravel with regards to praxis and race. Many of the contributions in this collection provide powerful accounts of the injustices experienced in academic writing pedagogy and knowledge production around the world, deploying the binary discourse that seems to be challenged by a trans theoretical space. Federico Navarro highlights the constraints imposed on knowledge production by “racial and social segregation and inequity in intellectual labor” when such labor is perceived as “racially non-white,” and Esther Milu discusses race-based language marginalization

stemming from a conflation of the complex linguistic repertoires of transnational African students and those of African American students in writing classrooms in the United States. Rebecca Lorimer Leonard acknowledges the difficulty of challenging linguistic and racial ideologies from a self-confessed position of whiteness. Engaging with diverse voices across East Africa, Julie Nelson Christoph and Haroun Ayoub Maalim contribute to current understandings of the material constraints on composition pedagogy, which, the authors argue persuasively, may help to stem the unidirectional flow of ideas. Raymond Oenbring and Vivette Milson-Whyte work with a troubling metaphor of the farm or plantation to illustrate the problematics of drawing on US-based composition while seeking to talk back against colonial assumptions and practices from within Caribbean university writing spaces. The use of binaries, and the discomfort binaries provoke in us as readers, illustrates the vexed need to work with the very discourses many of us in the field of academic writing seek to challenge. When authors confront the legacy of colonialism, race, and material inequalities head-on, the discourse that emerges exposes some of the sensitivities of reporting these issues. This framing creates uncomfortable reading. Yet there is a need to continue to operate within current discourse to make boundedness and structural inequality associated with race and “linguistic injustice” (Baker-Bell) visible: to avoid erasure at the expense of fluidity.

The collection invites the reader to broach difficult conversations about race, whiteness, and inequality as an essential component of any transnational writing dialogue. A key conversation in taking this dialogue forward is critical race theory (Degand; Dixson et al.; Donnor and Ladson-Billings), which provides analytical vocabularies of enquiry through which to critique difference. Indeed, Nicola Rollock argues that no other set of theoretical or analytical tools provides the means through which to speak back about racialized discourses.

Decentering Methodologies and Theoretical Tools

The collection illustrates the potential, and need, for expanding methodologies for exploring languages, discourse, and race that transcend national and disciplinary hierarchies. The attention to empirical research to ground and anchor theory is a crucial strength of the essays. The collection draws on a broad range of qualitative and ethnographic approaches: autoethnography, the use of narratives and counter-narratives, vignettes, semi-structured interviews, content analysis, reflective writing, and literacy histories. Such qualitative methodologies help us to avoid building abstracted understandings which are strong on theory but weak in terms of being

anchored to lived realities. Tony Scott’s use of “[w]ork and educational histories” of writing instructors in the United States helps ground transnational concerns in conditions of labor. Claudia Ioana Doroholschi and Cristina Ana Băniceru’s use of retrospective interviews with Romanian students grounds the frequently abstract(ed) notion of mobilities in discussion of material resources and economic inequalities. While the use of these methodologies, to us at least, does not signal that new (methodological) tools are needed to “dismantle the master’s house” (Lorde), the methodologies do underline the need for all methodologies—understood as empirical, theoretical, and ideological tools—to be inflected with a critical questioning about who is seeking to speak about whom (and what), why, and with what consequences. We suggest that looking to southern theory (Connell) and work that foregrounds epistemic justice beyond the “coloniality of language” (Veronelli) may help take forward a conversation about transnational writing. Drawing on Miranda Fricker in discussing the limitations of some dominant ontologies of language, including translanguaging, Chris Stroud and Caroline Kerfoot argue, “Epistemic justice requires a form of life that is informed by the social experience of everyone and freed of the narrow interpretive practices of a privileged minority” (4). Engaging in empirical research, which does not continue the exclusion of certain voices, necessarily directs us toward “participatory research methodologies” that place epistemic justice at their core (Walker and Boni).

This collection clearly signals the need to decenter conversations about writing research and pedagogy. How we do this—and where we move from, across, between, and to—cannot be taken for granted. In closing, we are reminded again of the importance of deep listening, which involves not only hearing an other but reimagining a new ontological self. This is necessarily difficult and often uncomfortable work, but it is a key endeavor in any search for a project of transnational writing.

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