Transcend the boundary of genres and languages: Multilingual genre knowledge in cross-genre and cross-language writing

The goal of this individual presentation is to provide the audience with a window into English as an additional language (EAL) writers' composing process where their linguistic, generic, and cultural resources are marshaled in approaching a cross-genre and cross-language digital composing task. The primary audience for this session are second language (L2) writing instructors in higher education who work with culturally and linguistically diverse students and are exploring how to enhance students' rhetorical flexibility by capitalizing on their language and cultural resources. The secondary audience for this session are the college writing instructors who are interested in genre-based pedagogy and are working on enhancing students' genre knowledge development in an increasingly digital and linguistically-diverse context. To accomplish the stated goal, in this session, the speaker will share the strategies and knowledge at work during EAL students' composing process of accomplishing a digital bilingual genre redesign assignment assisted by modern technological composing tools, such as infographic-making platforms and machine translation tools.

This study is developed from the observation that learning to write at universities requires students to learn to write across diverse genres. For the growing number of multilingual students in higher education, learning to write across academic genres also requires learning to write across languages, as they may be familiar with genres in their home language but not in English. Though there is theoretical support for instructions in writing classrooms facilitating the process of learning new genres across languages, few studies have offered empirical insight into such instruction. To bridge the gap, this classroom-based study explores how multilingual writers apply their genre knowledge in the process of writing across a text-based genre and a digital open genre in two languages. The study examines the learning potential of English as an additional language (EAL) writing instruction that engages students in writing across languages and genres in the context of a US first-year writing (FYW) classroom, which aims to enhance students' rhetorical sensitivity through employing their multilingual genre knowledge. Through presenting the results of the analysis of students' screen recordings and interviews, this study seeks to contribute to an empirical understanding of how EAL students' multilingualism can be employed as resources. The goal of this individual presentation also aims to offer pedagogical implications for writing instructors on the potential affordances and challenges in implementing an assignment of cross-genre and cross-language writing as described in this study. The study invites the audience to consider how writing instructors may spark EAL student writers' creativity in the writing task that transcends the boundary of genres and languages by mixtaping students' language, literacy, and cultural assets.