

BTS' A.R.M.Y. Web 2.0 Composing: Fangirl Translinguality As Parasocial, Motile
Literacy Praxis

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Abstract

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As a transcultural K-Pop fandom, 아미 [A.R.M.Y.] perform out-of-school, Web 2.0 English[es] composing to cooperatively translate, exchange and broker content for parasocially relating to/with members of the supergroup 방탄소년단 [BTS] and to/with each other. Using **critical linguistic ethnography**, this study traces how 아미 microbloggers' digital conversations embody Jenkins' principles of *participatory fandom* and Wenger's characteristics of communities of learning practice. By creating Wei's multilingual *translanguaging spaces*, 아미 assemble interest-based collectives Pérez González calls *translation adhocracies*, who collaboratively access resources, produce content and distribute fan compositions within and beyond fandom members. In-school K-12 and secondary *learning writing* Composition and Literacy Studies' theory, research and pedagogy imagine learners as underdeveloped novices undergoing socialization to existing "native" discourses and genres and acquiring through "expert" instruction competencies for formal academic and professional "lived" composing. **Critical discourse analysis** of 아미 texts documents diverse learners' initiating, mediating, translating and remixing transmodal, plurilingual compositions with agency, scope and sophistication that challenge the fields' structural assumptions and deficit framing of students. 아미 ontic languaging practices and nonhierarchical networking invalidate perduring *expert needs discourse* and the standard *teaching writing* model of task-driven, factitious procedures as means not to empower learners, but to preserve power. Furthermore, the intercultural translinguality practiced by 아미 repudiates the unacknowledged, nativist ideology of *English Exceptionalism* infecting English research, scholarship and pedagogical epistemologies. Reengineering English classrooms to be sites for cultivating learner motility, with both *teaching and learning writing* enacting cooperative translanguaging praxes is advocated. Preliminary experiments in revising instruction and assessment for high school and college composition to legitimize composers' interest-driven assemblages and sharing of critical interpretation and textual production are described.

In loving memory, Marlboro College 1946-2020.

Introduction: Dropping Our Expert Gaze



Then perish meme featuring Barack Obama's downturned eyes ([knowyourmeme](#))

As a public high-school-college-writing instructor for decades, my career has been an experience of dual residency in the strangely noncontiguous yet overlapping academic domains of English's Composition Studies and Education's Literacy Studies. Crossing back and forth, veteran educator/novice researcher, I possess a niche, interstitial position that grants access while restricting movement. Like border-crossing people everywhere, I *experience* translating—for others: lived college/high school is different than high school/college imagines; of myself: being who I am/can be differently than what I can be/do.

What my transduction—exceptionally privileged as it is⁷—reveals is, in part, known. Our fields' boundaries lay upon undeniably common ground of shared mission—generating best practices for understanding, cultivating and sustaining language arts and the people performing them—and shared constituencies—The Public, special interests governmental and otherwise, jurisdictions, colleagues and, of course, the bodies who pass (are passed) through. But, my migrant perspective allows me to see also how educational institutions at both levels are always “a process of colonizing learning, of claiming a territory, of deciding what matters, and of defining success and failure, it is a contested

⁷ Analogous to enjoying the status of a diplomat compared to a refugee, an Academy parallel to elite versus folk bilingualism (Guerrero).

terrain” (Wenger 269)—with and against each other as well as with powers beyond them. Experiencing my rarefied form of migrating causes me to question the very concept of *movement—territory* as a construct that grounds our fields’ imaginary (Appadurai) of English in the widest possible sense. For, English as temporospatial (*located* historically and socially as well as geographically) logically entails a second construct: *placement*—a concept with consequences K-12 and higher education know all too well.

In this dissertation I wish to *revision* temporospatial English from the inside out. Beginning with a wide focus, I zoom in to Street View, and then step out away from our mappings into the territory of ***experiencing English***. The journey I hope takes us from point A: our current conceptualization of English as enveloping habitats, which writers adapt *to* (Cooper)—ontologically, sociolinguistic structures *within* which people (border crossers and domain dwellers, experts and novices) move—to a destination that is something other than a point B. To make this move, I explore composing not *in* contexts but as **constellations**, people networking (Latour) sociolinguistically—an ontology of English as *connecting* rather than *situated* (Lave and Wenger) actions, not a process of pro(in)duction but social(izing) **practices**. My explorations depart from our research and theoretical literature’s well-marked sites—classrooms, workplaces, social groups—but this does not mean that I leave them. I enter into English that is “off the grid” of our fields even though it is taking place in these same spaces, right in front of our eyes, by our own students.

This dissertation is a study of composing practices *connecting* fans of/with the K-Pop supergroup BTS, analyzing how they transcend conceptualizations of *English, learning, writing* and of *learning writing English* (Horner, “Ideologies”) and drawing implications for our fields from ways and means for their doing so. To conduct this study,

I sojourn in a brave, new [to me] deterritorialized world of digital composing, where I encounter **learning writing English**—a process I thought I knew inside and out—in eye-opening ways: as a means to become literate in Korean; as multimedia, translingual texts read-written simultaneously; as mass, multiplicitous (Lynn) meaning construal (Halliday and Matthiessen), construction and contestation; as learners’ lifework—painstakingly creative and profoundly personal literacy developing—taking place within contingent relationships and without designed structures. I share my reconnaissance of **learning writing English** in three layers: a scholarly survey of our fields’ imaginary of it (to see what we think we know); an interdisciplinary Baedeker introducing its digital ecology (to see what other fields think they know); and critical ethnography of learners experiencing it (to see what they do with what they know).

The perspective and the experience of migration informs my choice of subject. I moved to teaching high school English from being an Academy learner and speaker of other languages, and I continue to cross back and forth, resisting segregating them/me (much to the surprise of those with whom I work: a pleasant one students say; seemingly a discomfoting one to colleagues). Despite my own history, it comes as a surprise to me that research on—even *considering*—[mainstream](#) USAmerican learners’ other-than **English[es]**¹ composing in relation to their literacy development is rare (Muchiri et al.; New London Group). Excepting critical analyses in an anthology by Horner and Kopelson (Cooper; Hall; Kraemer Sohan, who addresses *the myth of monolinguality*), I find it limited to testimonials of “personal” benefits of foreign language *exposure* (e.g., for convenient travel, Weatherford)¹ and broad correlations of foreign language *classes* to

¹ My preferred representation of “English,” intended to differentiate my object of study from structuralist and modernist, standardized, monolingual and nativist ontologies of English as “a” language, in line with Milroy and Milroy.

overall academic success (e.g., Thomas and Collier). Yet, Composition, Literacy Studies, SLA, Applied Linguistics, TESOL and Bi/Multiling/cultural Education all have deep and wide catalogues of studies exploring the relationship of such “translingualism” to the literacy learning of [nonmainstream](#) learners—those speakers of *other* “native” languages including “nonstandard English.”⁵ The yawning gap between our two bodies of research cannot but suggest an ugly, uncontested assumption we make that “*normal*” *English speakers’ languaging outside of “English” is negligible and/or has no meaningful impact on their literacy because it is not English.*

Trimbur finds that a closely related conceptualization of “the presumptively normative condition of English monolingualism...*uncontaminated by other languages*” (my italics) figures into the work—and thereby the legacy—of the Dartmouth Conference [Anglo-American Seminar on the Teaching of English] in 1966. He highlights in particular Sociolinguist Joshua Fishman’s arguments to English teachers in attendance that their vision of “the native-born speaker” denied the lived languaging experience of the vast majority of the population. Trimbur quotes Fishman questioning attendees’ *placement* in the imagined apparatus of English they are endeavoring to design and manage, asking how many are

either drawn from or in touch with that reservoir from which two thirds of the white American population is drawn and for whom ethnic, non-English associations are part of the real things and real situations that language is about,

⁵ That is: those who differ from an imagined-to-be representative *mainstream* (put baldly: native-born to native parents, Middle-Upper Class, WASP). Today’s official K-12 terminology is *culturally and linguistically diverse* (CLD) *learners*—used to classify [in criticalist terms, *marked*] speakers of other-than-Standardized-English dialects, variants and languages. The semantic implication of this jargon cannot be ignored: it figures a cultural [racial] and linguistic monoverse which CLD students disrupt. Pratt (“Arts”) and Rosa critique such idealization as an underpinning of USAmerican cultural hegemony; Matsuda addresses this directly in “The myth of linguistic homogeneity in US college composition.”

and to which real literature and great traditions and linguistic insight must also somehow be related. (51 qtd. by Trimbur, “Dartmouth”)

Trimbur then comments on that historical confrontation from his present-day position:

If the African American population of the United States is included, Fishman's indictment becomes even more sweeping. To say that he is accusing his American listeners at Dartmouth of not knowing their audience is putting it mildly, and much the same could be said, in a more qualified way, about their British colleagues. (“Dartmouth” 164)

Trimbur explicates their view as this: “there is a learning of language that takes place within the native speaker that is simply unavailable to the non-native speaker[...], in effect, a privileged position—a natural embodiment—through which the language flows” (“Dartmouth” 157-8). He calls this imagined property of language *geohistoricity*.

Distinguishing the monolingual [[mainstream](#)] English speaker from Others—the former, “naturally native;” the latter, unnatural converts—as Dartmouth’s teachers did, is, to me an expression of Anglo ethno/native supremacism couched in pseudoscientific language. And I see its ideology perduring in the continued exclusion of languages-other-than-Standardized-English from our conceptualizations of literacy and literacy learning broadly. Both align discomfotingly well with the systemic nativism well-documented in histories of USAmerican educational, academic and, of course, political institutions (Russell, *Writing*; Luke; Bloom et al.; Ianetta; Murphy; Ritter and Matsuda; Kloss) and the hegemony of Anglophone colonialism in global systems of knowledge production (Tymoczko). By adhering to it, I see us aiding and abetting the confinement of K-12 and collegiate learners, teachers, scholars, researchers and institutions within controlling nationalistic discourses of language planning and policy-making and majoritarian

popular/ist language ideologies (Cassidy et al.; Wible; Gonzáles and Melis; D. Johnson; Kibler and Valdés; Martínez et al.; Menken and García; Matsuda, “Myth;” Horner, “Ideologies;” Prendergast; Ricento; Trimbur, “Linguistic;” You).

Our fields claim to have debunked and rejected previous idealization of *The Native Speaker*.¹ Yet, Dartmouth’s discursive framing I see intact in our **English Exceptionalism**,² the prejudicial corollary to Dartmouth’s principle: *Natural English is superordinate, superseding Other languages and cultures*. Imagining The **Natural English Speaker** begets imagining **Natural English**, one free of Others. We in Composition and Literacy Studies reproduce idealization of unadulterated “English” monolinguality by our failure to acknowledge *mainstream* plurilingual/cultural languagers. This is not a mere lacuna. **Natural English** plurilingual/culturality by being erased is de facto *abnormalized*, reinforcing an overarching supremacist narrative: [Lingual, cultural, racial, ethnic, national] *miscegenation threatens the integrity of “English”*—which is to say, it endangers the supremacy of those who historically and today position themselves its *rightful Natural Speakers*.² Good [language] fences make good neighbors.

English Exceptionalism is now, as in 1966, denial of the actual etiology of languaging and learning in the US and globally. Translinguality—life-long experience of crossing languages, dialects, registers, modalities and semiotic systems both **hybrid and plural**—is the norm. Kraemer Sohan’s *myth of monolinguality* is not explanatory of reality; it is fictionalization. Translinguality in the US has, since Dartmouth, expanded in its *diversalité*. The 2017 Census finds 21.8% of all residents (48% in the largest urban

¹ That my institution and others with high status still enforce a “native speaker” qualification for hiring its TESOL instructors—yet, like K-12 as a rule, invites “non-natives” to teach foreign language—is concrete evidence of our hypocrisy.

² Parallel to American Exceptionalism, which sees the US as singular in the history of nations, superior to preceding and concurrent other states, and thus deserving of privilege and prerogatives it accrues.

areas and approximately 25% of all K-12 students) speak a [recognized] language other than English at home (Zeigler and Camarota).² Languages' plurilingual lived experience can be extrapolated even further based on their *geohistory*—in 2015, the percentage of the population who are first or second generation immigrants was double that of 1966 (Pew Research Center)—suggesting that we English teachers today even more egregiously [purposefully?] than Dartmouth's, misread our learner audience.

magister: teacher, tutor, master, expert, chief; pilot of ship; rabbi
discipulus: student, pupil, trainee; follower, disciple (Olivetti).³

Confining learners by means of language ideology, while most intensive when it targets ***nonmainstream***, does not exclude ***mainstream*** students. Mingle as I do with both Composition and Literacy specialists, and you are guaranteed to hear aired a laundry list of what our students *should* be—but woefully are not—able to do, accompanied by war stories and commiserating about grappling with the problem. Adolescent, undergrad, doctoral student, R1, community college or Title I program, the ways we depict our students are nearly indistinguishable from each other, scripts from an ***expert needs discourse***⁴ that is not, despite the changing times, at all new. It has evolved symbiotically along with our fields' curricula. In it, ***mainstream*** students' shortcomings have morphed to match humanist belles lettres, formalist grammar, cognitive behaviorism, self-expressivism, epistemic socialization and, today, criticalism (Bazerman; Russell, *Writing*; Beale; Bloom et al.; Ianetta; Murphy; Ritter and Matsuda; Palmeri;

² ***English Exceptionalism*** is in action: The official formulation not only disallows marked dialects and *English[es]* as possible alternates to Standardized English, it explicitly segregates anything not-“English” from public language (Rodriguez). One speaks these “other” languages *at home*.

⁴ Fraser develops this term to describe how policy specialists and administrators deploy a self-serving narrative that defines, diagnoses and ***contains*** welfare recipients as a class in need of intervention/control, constituted by “[institutional] practices [which] construct [a subject group’s] needs according to certain specific and in principle contestable interpretations, even as they lend those interpretations an aura of facticity which discourages contestation” (105).

Harris; Hawk; Tate et al.; Massey and Gephardt; Duffy et al.; Horner and Kopelson; Kett). But throughout the changes *the learner*—as The Expert’s Other—remains a remarkably stable positioning. Despite institutional upheavals in enrollment, governance and funding and through wars, civil rights expansion and major restructuring, we collectively have conducted K-PhD ***schooling***—gerundive and transitive—in ways that *contain* the learner in dialectical place, as the Other who must be *reformed*—the not yet *us* (Lesko). And our positioning has been largely successful in remaining uncontested, enough for Sanchez to declare “the writing subject [...] has remained relatively untouched, untheorized” (qtd. by Alexander and Rhodes, *Multimodality* 173).

Even when at odds with each other’s agendas, secondary and college English in the US have for the last century consensually figured learners as *future workers* requiring public [*viz*, institutional] management of their labor—*instruction*—to repair deficits in their development, a discourse of schooling endorsed outside of educational institutions as necessary and proper for the nation’s economic, moral and political well-being (Russell, *Writing*; Burnham; George; Hawk; Lesko). While children and adolescents most likely to come to mind as the target of promoting cognitive development, the same Fraserian discourse is constructed no matter the learner’s age or life experience (Ritter and Matsuda; Crowley, “Evolution;” Clifford; Kroskrity; Halasek; Huot and O’Neill; Stygall; Dryer; Bourdieu cited by Grenfell and Kelly)—the all-encompassing range of developmentally-deficient learners is well represented in English research: see Shaughnessy; Sommers and Saltz; Carroll; Turner; Lillis and Curry; Addison and McGee; Lewiecki-Wilson and Wahrab; Emig, “Writing.” Tellingly, that deficit positioning is echoed in nativist discourse about immigrants in the West:

‘They’ are not like ‘us,’ [...] becomes culturalized. This is one of the reasons why a

common response to the highly mediated and mythologized ‘crisis’ of multiculturalism is to focus on the cultural shibboleths of integration, notably the language and citizenship tests, designed to elicit appropriate cultural knowledge. [...Their] purpose is explicitly performative. The aim is to subject migrants to the public [gaze](#), where the state can be seen to exact a particular form of linguistic or epistemic tribute. (Cronin, “Translation and” 500-1)

Learners’ inchoate intellectual, social and personal development, whatever the approach du jour [*de jure* in K-12], we field experts univocally profess, is a *literacy* learning curve. Disagreement arises around the particular trajectory appropriate for literacy acquisition (Tate et al.; Massey and Gephardt; Mendenhall; Villanueva). Competing views get expressed through what Taczak and Yancey call instructors’ *lived curricula*—our imaginary of how experts *outside of schooling* practice composition, which conceptually entails what we design and implement in the form of *delivered curriculum* (142). Our view of expertise determines the endpoint toward which our learners grow, are pushed or fall short [the tribute they must pay]. The *difference we interpellate between what we imagine to be our learners’ point of origin and that imposed endpoint* is where our [needs discourse](#) is made manifest.

Our *imagined* expert composers are conveniently fitting to ourselves as instructors and theorists. So, where current-traditionalist imagination was [still is] invoked, schooling is the grand tour of a canon (Corbett; Berlin and Inkster; Beale) to enculturate the provincial. For contemporary rhetorical genre theory, it is a guided genre exhibition curated to make *legible* ⁴ to the public, living species and habitats of exotic academic/professional communication (Bawarshi, “Sites;” Kinneavy; C. Miller, “Genre;” Beaufort; Tardy and Swales qtd. in Schiffrin et al.). New critical and new rhetoric are

competing schools of therapeutic talk analysis (Ratcliffe; Beale; Anstrom et al.; Schiffrin et al.; Richards) to improve the well-being of the citizenry at large. Epistemicists [among whose ranks I have served] mediate learner-outsiders' socialization into unfamiliar communities of discourse, practice or affiliation by coaching intellectual conversation with their texts (Bruffee; Halliday and Matthiessen; Horner, "Rethinking;" Matsuda, "It's;" Moll et al.; Hornberger and McKay; Lave and Wenger; Guerra *Language*; Gutiérrez et al., "Building;" Reynolds; Kells; Hofstede; Hymes; Collins and Slembrouck; T. Donahue; J. Young; Cornelius and Herrenkohl; Herndl)—a semiotics analogue to cleric-guided lay exegesis of scripture and doctrine, with sacred/secular hierarchy largely intact. Expressivists guide novitiates through an intellectual conversation *within*—self-actualization through mindful reflection leading, it is hoped, to appropriately civil or civilly disobedient discourse behaviors (Elbow, "Some;" Bruffee; Britton; Lunsford, "Toward"). Neocognitivists focus directly on work training, drilling learner-recruits in the routines of privileged registers for deployment in active Academic/career duty (Flower and Hayes; Bizzell, "Cognition;" Schleppegrell; Zappa-Hollman and Duff; Hulstijn et al.; Prior and Bilbro cited in C. Donahue, "Negotiation"). Communicative language teaching rehearses trainees' role-playing—operant, sociolinguistic conditioning for future worklife interactions (New London Group in Cope and Kalantzis; Haswell, "Documenting;" Lampert et al.; Estrem; Nasir and Hand; Rex and Schiller; Hyland; Kett; Wells; Burnett and Huisman; Ritter and Matsuda; Lillis and Curry). Critical theory, deconstructing other approaches' Foucauldian control mechanisms, instantiates its own: a conversion experience to lift veils of learner false consciousness and evangelize the [antihegemonic] Word (Smitherman; Gutiérrez; Kumaravadivelu; Rosa; V. Young, "Keep;" Kubota; Lunsford and Ouzgane; Shor cited in Palmeri; Motha; Horner, "Ideologies"). All our

imagined learner-to-expert trajectories, disparate as they are, originate from the same premise: every struggling learner needs rehabilitation; every progressing learner needs optimization; *no learner comes to schooling sufficiently developed or skilled*. To progress further, they need us.

Academy theories of *language* incrementally but inexorably shifted, also, from modernist to structuralist, accelerating in the post-war era from cognitivist to sociolinguistic to social semiotic to co-constructivist conceptualizations, with the burgeoning influences of Psychology and Anthropology upon empiricist Linguistics (Lightbown and Spada; Block; Kroskrity; Lippi-Green; Geertz; Labov, “Social” and “Language;” Pennycook *Critical*; Hull and Schultz; Kloss). The changing theorization of language altered the [delivered curriculum](#) for adult Second [Foreign] Language Acquisition, spurred on by national military-industrial interests designating (native) multilingualism a critical Cold War need after WWII (Block). Thereafter the curricula and instruction sustained by USAmerican and UK state projects set out to “sell” English SLA to international markets of non-native adults (Park and Wee; Prendergast; Canagarajah, *Translingual*; Lu, “Essay;” Kubota; Le Ha; You; Motha; Lin and Martin). Eventually, although substantially muted in transit, changes in language teaching method and content flowed from these extra-academic pinch points into public school literacy programming, radiating outward from specialized instruction and curriculum for [nonmainstream](#) learners to the general student population (Peregoy and Boyle; Norton and Toohey; Hornberger and McKay; Rosa; Espinosa; García and Wei; Walqui and Van Lier; Zappa-Hollman and Duff).

At the same time, public school reforms spurred by the US government-imposed assessment of student learning outcomes explicitly tied to future employability and

productivity (the iconic examples are Spellings, Gardner—the link explored by Huot and O’Neill; Inoue). Today critics from both English and Education charge that such test-based, nonacademic regulation stymies implementation of current theory and research in favor of an outdated Taylorist scheme that conserves the racial, ethnic, class and cultural inequities of the US American status quo (Yancey, “Looking;” Smitherman and Villanueva; Alim and Paris; Kibler and Valdés; MacSwan; Flores and Rosa; Gonzáles and Melis; Wiltse). The debate between [needs discourses](#)—the governmental vs the academic—is arguably a proxy for competition over resources; and *each* has real consequences. Fraser warns that just as political [needs discourse](#) is reductive, so too are most academic critiques of it. She observes,

Usually, analyses of social complexes as "institutionalized patterns of interpretation" are implicitly or explicitly functionalist. They purport to show how culturally hegemonic systems of meaning are stabilized and reproduced over time. As a result, such analyses often screen out "dysfunctional" events like micro-and macro-political resistances and conflicts. More generally, they tend to obscure the active side of social processes, the ways in which even the most routinized practice of social agents involves the active construction, deconstruction and reconstruction of social meanings. It is no wonder, then, that many feminist scholars have become suspicious of functionalist methodologies; for, when applied to gender issues, these methods occult female agency and construe women as mere passive victims of male dominance. (116)

This dissertation expands Fraser’s point: To pursue our mission in Composition and Literacy Studies of understanding, cultivating and sustaining our research and teaching subjects, we must “see” our own [discourse](#) without seeing learners *through* it.

What we claim about learners describes *our* view of them, not how they experience who they are/what they do. Accepting that, theorists, researchers and practitioners must acknowledge that we “see” our subjects—human and theoretical—through ***the expert gaze***, the discursive camera which “images” our students as objects in need of [what *we* offer as] literacy and ourselves as possessors of the skills, knowledge, practices and techniques that comprise and are necessary for [teaching, defining and deploying] it. Dropping that gaze is, I think, a necessarily radical act, going beyond awareness of and incremental *relocating* of student/expert subjectivities. It mandates sabotaging the ideological point of view that permits imposing and sustaining such subjectivities at all.

contingere: to secure, maintain, sustain; fasten, hold in position; retain, keep safe, preserve; hinder, contain, shut in, confine; stay; restrain, hold back; comprise, form basis; keep, hold, hang together, fast; surround, enclose, contain, limit; concentrate. ([Olivetti](#))

Acknowledging [the expert gaze](#) exists is a first step. We specialists, Said warns, get caught up in our project of production of rarefied knowledge and thus “lose sight” of the experience of being a nonspecialist (qtd. Gustavson 102-3). We can begin to regain that sight if we reverse our lens to “see” our teaching from *students’* vantage point: learners’ “de facto, ***constructed curricula***” (Taczak and Yancey 149), their response to the shaping they “go through” being schooled by us in literacy (the experience [contained](#) by our [lived and delivered curricula](#)).

Look at our—to us, highly varied—approaches to teaching from the perspective of their target, and methodological distinctions^o blur. At their receiving end our many specialties fall into just four reformatory schemes: ***hermeneutic, cartesian, processive*** and ***conversive***. **Hermeneutic** schooling induces learners’ Piagetian self-

^o Applying Mignolo, these can be seen as intradisciplinary borders we assiduously build and defend.

effacement (Eyman). Students experience a studied abandonment of self-generated [immature] expression in favor of received [mature] rhetorical stances and styles, figured by pedagogy as fulfillment of human [uptake] potential—gaining fluency by association. **Cartesian** schooling positions students in opposite orientation, as generating mimesis of the authentic self. Its chief advocate Expressivism (and “process” related reflective practices across other approaches) constructs writing as externalizing oneself through the vehicle of language. Learners’ thought—nascent moral and philosophical expression—gets coaxed [coached by instruction] into discursive form and style amenable to circulation. Underlying both *cartesian* and *hermeneutic* schemes is an erected divide between learners’ *natural* everyday text reception/production and the interpretations and articulations which full [schooled] development realizes and makes valuable in the [imagined] communities of *English[es]*. Similar, too, is their representation of students who do not *master* emulating the prescribed discursive persona, judged to be underdeveloped *people*—perpetually in need of remediation for the good of (the) order of [the communities of] *English[es]*.[⋈]

In contrast to those mirror-imaged learning curves, **processive** schooling promises students an egalitarian, Chomskyan automaticity of language and literacy acquisition. Generalizable habituation (often reinforced with Skinnerian incentives/punishments) is offered to every student (accounting little for contextual or cultural diversity, let alone personal ambitions, of said students).⁵ Personal expression and thought—and, by extension, the *innate* generative intellectual capacity (varying by

[⋈] A substantial overlap with the pathologizing (Motha) and positioning of social services expert needs discourse Fraser analyzes as well as the nativist discourse regarding integration of immigrants (Cronin, “Translation and;” echoed by Pratt et al.). It jibes, too, with Lesko’s analysis of the historical cultural constructions of adolescence as a nationalist and masculinist (as well as White and middle class) project.

individual) from which [cartesian](#) and [hermeneutic](#) approaches imagine these spring—is substituted with “neutral” autonomous (Lea and Street) communicative subroutines that assembled together fulfill writing tasks. Learners who fail to demonstrate facility with these are judged to be wrongly- or under-motivated [dispositionally deficit] or (seemingly more generously) wrongly- or under-resourced [contextually deficit] (Peregoy and Boyle 53; Alim and Paris on [the culture of poverty](#)).

Criticalists contest the imposition of *norm*-adaptive uptake by problematizing [processive](#) assumptions about learners’ disposition and contexts (acknowledging [nonmainstream](#) writers’ resistance as valid, intentional responses to situations rather than deficiencies). On the side of normatization in the realm of schooling is powerful opposition: psychometrics, which explicitly promulgates the [processive](#) variant of learning, using “objective” accountability regimes⁶ to exert broad and comprehensive pressure to teach (and learn) **to the text**—whether testing a school genre or other constructed task-object.

While we in the Academy roundly criticize large-scale standardized testing,⁷ our schema for “seeing” students’ development is not so different. Consensus assumptions about learning transfer (Brent; Yancey et al.; Anson and Moore; Reiff and Bawarshi; DePalma and Ringer) also rely to some extent upon [processively](#) induced [automaticity](#)—which we frame as *enculturation* [a kinder, gentler normatization] to communities of [English\[es\]](#)—incited by exposure and instrumentalist applications. Although Criticalists and Transfer Studies stress learners’ intentionality in uptake, their and [processive](#) approaches’ ends are the same: properly un/learned values are evaluated through demonstrations of learners’ un/alterred writing behavior. Even Sociolinguistics’ context- and culture-centered models presume universal, subconscious cognitive mechanisms

exist *to convert* social input *into* individuals' register/dialect/discourse; Labov ("Academic") used this as irrefutable proof of "Black intelligence." In this view, behavior-modification—adapting oneself *to* one's enveloping habitat—is, to us, the essence of being schooled in language, even outside of school contexts.

Explicitly differentiated from [processive](#) approaches, **conversive** schooling downplays routines and emphasizes literacy as egalitarian, dialogic [sociolinguistic] *socialization* of students. Epistemicist, genre theory and other social semiotic approaches "scaffold" learners—[place them in contact with](#)—target communities' texts, norms, conventions and ideologies. Students master target habits through grooming, guided attunement and adaptation (Lorimer)—a case of second *socioculture* acquisition, whose instruction overlaps substantially with SLA techniques and frameworks. Enough so that Mota-Altman, a Bilingual educator, can write an article for colleagues entitled "Academic language: Everyone's 'second' language."

The [processive](#) and **conversive** curves are, ironically, quite similar. In both, learners are taught that communities are social structures in which language is a medium (content/form) through which people act (represent themselves); literacy is trained manipulating of the medium to—in the first case—*fit* oneself *to* sanctioned tasks and—in the second—*fit* oneself *in* sanctioned roles. **Processive** cognitive scripts get activated/disabled according to the *task* at hand; **conversive** repertoires, according to the *role/context* at hand. Their objectives—efficiency and efficacy of language product(ion)s respectively—are functions of familiarity with pre-existing "real world" community expectations (which expert teachers "know" and, through corrective curricula, convert deficient learners to). **Conversive** tasks are derivative of roles; **processive**, determinant of them. Otherwise these ostensibly opposing approaches and their positioning of

un/successful students as well/badly trained are doppelgängers.

Pedagogy's imaginary of language communities in general equates adaptivity mechanisms with learning, even if we deny behaviorism as a premise of our practice.⁸ SLA and [nonmainstream](#) English pedagogical frameworks are transparent in their endorsement of a combination of [processive](#) [formalist/structuralist] and [conversive](#) [sociolinguistic/semiotic] automaticity and modification. Schooling is discipline for retraining *deviant* language use to the usages (we claim) knowledge/language communities reproduce as *normal* (Lightbown and Spada 115; Peregoy and Boyle).^{*} [Mainstream](#) literacy pedagogies now mostly avoid rote recitation; stock phrases and memorization are seen as essentially throwbacks to reductive structuralism (Nishino and Atkinson) and anathema to [natural](#) literacy learning (Lea and Street; Gee, "Discourse"). Expanding inclusivity of language communities through *codeswitching* was proposed and then came under fire by Criticalists as a [conversive](#) method for adding "academic literacies" (Horner, "Ideologies") to [nonmainstream](#) learners' [natural](#) literacies.⁹ In it, adaptation remained a cornerstone, not only of assessment but instruction throughout K-12 and college programs (Inoue).

Bateson's Learning Theory condemns this as schooling's ideological *placement* of learners, "conditioning acquisition of the responses deemed correct in the given context [...and of] the deep-seated rules and patterns of behavior characteristic to the [schooling] context itself" (Engeström 58). Critical Race Theory sees it, too, as thinly disguised, systemically enforced subaltern acculturation, which offers false promise: in reality, admittance into ostensible target communities is nowise egalitarian (Gilyard; Duffy et al.;

^{*} Critics charge that the usages selected for adoption are not representative of ontic language use, but through ideology, are *coded* as normal (Rosa; Alim and Paris; Trimbur, "Linguistic;" Kroskrity; Horner, "Ideologies;" D. Johnson; Hornberger and McKay; Silva and Leki).

V. Young, “Keep;” Flores and Rosa; Skutnabb-Kangas; Kumaravadivelu; Davila). Emdin challenges the fundamental model of learning imposed by USAmerican schooling as colonialist, contrasting it with indigenous and minoritized (what he calls *neoindigenous*) forms—the former “individualistic and competition-driven,” the latter “focused on building or supporting community or being successful together” (157). His 2016 *For White Folks Who Teach in the Hood* extends Brice Heath’s findings that literacies are *located* meso and macro social complexes—which, more than 30 years ago, prompted our fields to ask Gee’s (*Social*) question, “to which community are learners being socialized” by our teaching? Horner’s depiction of our answer to it still stands:

There are two interdependent assumptions governing [teaching “English”]: (1) that the conventions [...] are largely fixed and (2) that the social order which has determined the appropriateness or nonappropriateness of certain conventions is largely fixed. The language of privilege is settled, and students must, if they are to have access to privilege, learn it. (“Rethinking” 177)

Seen from the *disciplinee*’s perspective, *community* and *language* reified by [processive](#) and [conversive](#) approaches are synonyms to *procedure* and *awareness hermeneutics*. [Cartesian](#) learning’s flattened concept of community is also implicated. Myopic individualism (Shipka) erases [fixes as “settled”] hegemonic meso and macro constraints and affordances—*placement*—acting to [contain](#) learners’ expression, reception and interaction within classrooms and outside of them. As a result, it benefits those who are already accepted members of the target language community (hooks; Delpit)—a point Richard Rodriguez argues in opposing bilingual educationists’ sheltering of [nonmainstream](#) learners from acculturation to instrumental [mainstream](#) “public language.” Relying, too, upon [automaticity](#) and adaptability *as* learning, he and others

fault “student-centered” approaches’ veiled gatekeeping, denying marginalized learners the repertoires necessary to *move into* [“settled”] communities of [English\[es\]](#) privilege.

situation: (early 15th century) Middle French/Medieval Latin place, position, location; from Proto-Indo-European *tkei-* to settle, dwell, be home. ([Harper](#))

At its heart, our fields’ theoretical locating of students *outside* of any communities—most recognizably when it involves second language learners, but epistemologically through and through—is a colonialist construct of *us* (producers of knowledge) over *them* (receivers of it). Circulating [expert needs discourse](#) is not inert or even neutral; it causes tangible and significant damage to individuals as well as groups.¹⁰ Semiotician Mignolo, highlighting the complicity of such discourses with global politicoeconomic disparities and exploitation, advocates a radical decolonizing of these positionings: delinking self-serving ideologies and practices from their reinforcing epistemological constructs and a remapping of reality as it is, *pluriversal* [accepting [multiplicitous](#)¹¹ experience and identity]. He enjoins us to dwell *in* borders, which “is not border-crossing, even less looking and studying the borders from the territorial gaze of the disciplines” (“Pluriversality”).¹¹ To me, this takes abandoning *placement* altogether.

Mignolo’s cartography metaphor is apt for “seeing” how we map learning writing English. Our reifying of it as tasks flattens its contours as lived experience; drawing it as linear movement through structures (Nordquist, *Literacy*) denies its multidimensional entanglements. Even criticalist approaches in our fields territorialize. Pennycook, for example, early on proffers Translingualism as an Applied Linguistics framework for

¹¹ This term is central to Lynn’s discussion of Deleuze and Guattari as well as Derrida in terms of the conceptualizations of (architectural) edifice production, a fascinating analogue to our fields’ conceptualization of text production.

experts to understand “The changing cultural and linguistic worlds in which many English users live pos[ing] challenges for how we conceive of culture, ethnicity and language” (“Future” 683). Kubota contests this framing on the grounds of that it “creates a privileged location, in which ‘the identity of the postcolonial is no longer structural but discursive’ (Dirlik 1994: 332). [...] In applied linguistics, our academic status as scholars corresponds to [that] privileged position of postcolonial academics” (8). Like Mignolo and Cultural Theorists, Kubota calls for us to erase the parameters of our [expert point of view](#), because it only serves to “legitimate and reaffirm our own hybrid and plural subjectivities rather than [...] those of the] linguistically, racially, and economically marginalized (11).

Critical Translation theorists offer what I believe can be a “move” that leads us to an alternative view. Translation Studies disentangled itself from modernist, belles lettres Literature, like English and Education, by leveraging *language’s* ontological shifts (Bassnett and Trivedi; Kaindl; Delabastita), in particular Linguistics’ turn to functionalism (Nord, cf. Halliday)¹² and, ultimately, performativity (Snell-Hornby, cf. Austin).¹³ Denied the exigency of required freshmen courses to administer (S. Miller, *Norton*; Trimbur, “Linguistic”), Translationists’ lenses have been *introverse*—studying themselves as performers of translation. Critical Translationists locate themselves as actors in [multiplicitous](#) borders. Cronin and others apply, like Mignolo, Postcolonial ideologies to interrogate their practice of expertise—a self-critique largely decoupled from [student needs discourse](#),⁼ focused away from the objects of production and “imaging” composing not as task-fulfillment, but *as contingent, pluriversal praxes*.

⁼ There is an unacknowledged endorsement of SLA expert needs discourse regarding trainees’ language education (Cronin, “Translation and;” Dimitrova) and calls for inculcating historical knowledge (Cronin, *Translation*). Otherwise, Translationists’ needs discourse primarily targets their texts’ audiences.

There has been border trade between Translation Studies and our fields,¹⁴ with Translingualists in Composition Studies and Sociocultural Theory (SCT) proponents in (nonmainstream-focused) Literacy Studies who deny that the English[es] of privilege are settled. They propose a translatorial counterpremise to adaptation: *adoption*—agentic use of English[es]’ *situatedness* (Scribner and Cole; Lea and Street; Barton and Stygall). They argue that expert, novice, second language, plurilingual, “native” and learner writers’ repertoires (what Nasir and Hand term *practice-based*; Moll et al., *funds of knowledge*) are naturally assembled (not automatically absorbed) from *lived* communication experiences. Rather than existing on a scale of deviant to normative or educated to ignorant, literacy is always and for everyone hybrid, heteropraxic and intersemiotic (Hall; Munday, *Routledge*; Halliday and Matthiessen; Pérez-González, “Multimodality;” Canagarajah, “Multilingual” and “Teacher;” Lu, “Essay;” Lee et al.; Le Ha; Kim Young; Kupka et al.; Park and Wee; Byrnes; Lave, “Situating;” Salomon and Perkins), even in what have been “seen” as traditionally formal monolingual environments (Matsuda, “Myth;” Bou Ayash, *Toward*).

In this view, all literacy praxes are contingent on what Translationists Reiß and Vermeer conceptualize as what informs expert “translational action,” *skopos*: the ecology of agents, environments and resources affording/constraining personal and shared composing objectives.¹⁴ For learning writing English[es], Translingualists advocate learners’ participating as provisional members of what Lave and Wenger, also describing experts, define as ***Communities of Practice***; enacting what Toury imagines as an extra-institutional, community-assigned role of *translatorship* (qtd. in Bassnett, “Culture”

¹⁴ English Exceptionalism, I conjecture, severely limits it. Graduate students and scholars are not expected to connect [contaminate] their English[es] subject with other languages.

18). Schooling, in SCT and Translingualism should be a [welcoming] “community that acts as a living curriculum” of practice (Wenger). Classrooms should be microcosms of discourse communities, and pedagogy should integrate learners’ repertoires (through teacher-facilitated, *legitimate peripheral participation*) into collaborative, critical study of “public language” and micro and meso level skopos—this will change the “settled” macro system from within. That approach, like critical language awareness approaches in general, still *places* and *moves* learners within imagined language community structures. To engage in bottom-up [conversive](#) socialization of others inhabiting it, learners must acculturate to fit in first.*

That said, Translingualists’ and SCT’s premise that literacy education should be based on the fact that multiliteracies exist, while it may be assumed to be widely endorsed in our fields, is a countermovement to predominantly [Exceptionalist expert needs deficit discourse](#). Even with the wide influence of New Literacy Studies in secondary and collegiate settings, pedagogy dedicated to learners’ developing (or even applying) ontic multiliteracies is still rare. The very fact that allying with learner repertoires is *countervailing* to pervasive schooling as literacy indicts our barricading of other than [mainstream](#)-adaptive practices from it.

The wall between schooling and social literacy has been a fixture of our fields’ practice since the early 1970s, when SLA icon Krashen, to challenge Chomsky, theorized a neobehaviorist view of language learning built upon a Saussurean dichotomy: out-of-school “[natural, native](#)” communicative language gained through [imitative] ***acquisition*** versus conceptual, normative language ***learning*** dependent upon

* Wenger’s reconsideration of enculturative *legitimate peripheral participation* and theorization of contingent with agentive identity *duality* is, I think, a response to the implicit neoliberal ideology necessary to justify such compromise. I will take these up in more detail in chapters [1](#) and [2](#).

receptiveness to formal [transmissive] schooling. Krashen's wall stands today in reigning approaches to [mainstream](#) and second language literacy education, Cummins' model of *basic interpersonal communication skills* versus *cognitive academic language proficiency*¹⁵ (Lightbown and Spada; Peregoy and Boyle).⁷ The epistemological linking of language development to teaching carries forward, too, in Composition Studies. One need look no further than Gee. His Academic and other "D"iscourses are handed down through **learning**, ideological socialization shepherded by experts.⁸ He argues, "we do not invent...we inherit our language" (2):

nearly all human beings, except under extraordinary conditions, **acquire** an initial Discourse within whatever constitutes *their primary socializing unit* early in life. [...This] primary Discourse gives us our initial and often enduring sense of self and sets the foundations of our culturally-specific *vernacular* language (our "everyday language"), the language in which we speak and act as "everyday" (*non-specialized*) people. ("Discourse" 3, my emphases)

Translingualists and SCT proponents forward *adoption* to collapse this dichotomy. They propose a criticalist reformulation of "[natural, native](#)" *acquisition* as constitutive of all language *learning*, always situated, improvisational and—Translingualists add—*polyliterate*. Doing so delinks *literacy* from both the modernist colonial ideology of (monolingual, privileged) *native*, informing the structuralist binary *langue/parole* that perdures as "everyday" versus "specialized" in Gee and other approaches influenced by Social Epistemicism, including Critical Language Awareness. Translingualists lay out

⁷ Discursive borders drawn, too, in the irreparable organizational split between English and Communication as institutional disciplines (Russell, *Writing*).

⁸ Like Beale, Bartholomae and other Epistemicists Gee figures [conversive](#) approaches as "mentoring" learners through participation instead of top-down normatization.

these precepts in their place (Lu and Horner, “Introduction” 208):

- language (including varieties of Englishes, discourses, media, or modalities) as performative: not something we have but something we do;
- users of language as actively forming and transforming the very conventions we use and social-historical contexts of use;
- communicative practices as not neutral or innocent but informed by and informing economic, geopolitical, social-historical, cultural relations of asymmetrical power;
- decisions on language use as shaping as well as shaped by the contexts of utterance and the social positionings of the writers, and thus having material consequences on the life and world we live in;
- difference as the norm of all utterances, conceived of as acts of translation inter and intra languages, media, modality during seeming iterations of dominant conventions as well as deviations from the norm;
- deliberation over how to tinker with authorized contexts, perspectives, and conventions of meaning making as needed and desired by all users of language, those socially designated as mainstream or minority, native or first, second, foreign speakers, published or student writers;
- all communicative practices as mesopolitical acts, actively negotiating and constituting complex relations of power at the dynamic intersection of the social-historical (macro) and the personal (micro) levels.

Enacted, this approach is imagined *against* “transmission models of pedagogy [which] assume the stability of that which they would transmit to students, a stability that the translingual orientation to language practice calls into question” (214). The proposed

alternative—negotiation within an expert-led community—is echoed in learner-controlled *cooperativity*, the concept which grounds SCT approaches (Lantolf, “Introducing;” Gray; Perego and Boyle; Wertsch; Walqui and Van Leer).

In place of development still induced *through teaching*, Cushman pushes Translingualism toward Third Space **translinguality**,[□] schooling based in an epistemology that encompasses—rather than marginalizes—hybridity, “within which diverse elements encounter and transform each other as signifying the ‘in-between,’ and also incommensurable (that is, inaccessible by majoritarian discourses) location where minority discourses intervene to preserve their strengths and particularity” (Bhabha qtd. in Jin 13-4). To destabilize marginalizing *placement* of learners in academic communities, she calls for

meaning making processes that involve students and scholars in translanguaging, translating, and dwelling in borders. These three epistemological and pedagogical moves imagine translingual approaches to meaning making that might further epistemic delinking and border thinking (Mignolo, “Delinking”). (235)

Translanguaging is García’s term for the semiotically-sophisticated, hybrid communicative strategies employed by plurilinguals, but denied value by monolingualist and culturalist ideologies and discourses. Invoking it, Cushman marshals a number of related English pedagogy critiques—Pratt’s of the idealized imagined English language community, Creese’s and Blackledge’s of ideological dimensions of interactional communication, Lippi-Green’s of appropriacy, Norton Peirce’s of affective di/investment

[□] Ceding Matsuda’s (“It’s”) point regarding the interchangeability of terms, I use *translingual/ity* to indicate Canagarajah’s (*Literacy*) intentionally and unconsciously (but always purposefully) “merging of different language resources” to construct new meaning (1). Many use the term *translingualism* for this activity. I avoid its confusion with theory/approaches describing it, which I will call *Translingualism/t*.

in language learning/use, and Kroskrity's of contestation and disjuncture as language resistance. With these, she grounds [translinguality](#) as *both expert and learner* praxes, Horner's "writing English as opposed to writing *in it*" ("Ideologies"). She imagines learners and teachers as interlocutors engaging with Others and others' texts intra- and interlingually as well as transmodally (Canagarajah, "Negotiating;" Kalantzis et al.; Lea and Street; Guerra, "Putting"), *performing* New Literacy Studies' multiliteracies interpersonally but not within/outside of communities.

Lesko, concluding her sociological analysis of USAmerican cultural discourses—including [expert needs discourses](#)—built upon acculturative behavior-modification, asks, "what other possibilities exist?" She offers this answer:

What I am suggesting here is that ideas of growth and change must be investigated and not presumed in *a priori* frameworks such as development or socialization [...which are] rationalized concepts, while growth and change are highly contingent, not cumulative but, rather, recursive. I think that if we assumed that growth and change are contingent, we would need to specify the contingencies and that would lead us to examine and document multiple microcontexts. I also think that a conception of growth and change as recursive, as occurring over and over as we move into new situations, would reorient us. Rather than the assumption of cumulative and one-way development that is now in place in both science and popular culture, a recursive view of growth and change directs us to look at local contexts and specific actions of young people, without the inherent evaluation of steps, stages, and socialization. (183)

She—like Translingualists and SCT proponents—redirects our [gaze](#) toward the heterogeneity of ontic communicative acts to "see" learners not *through* our discourse.

But, she, too, invokes contextual *placement*—and learners’ movement within them. Cushman cautions us, “Emancipatory projects in composition studies fall short of their social justice goals because they critique a content or place of practice without revealing and altering their own structuring tenets” (239).¹⁶ I see just this flaw in Translingualist epistemology. Reviewing the positioning of learners and conceptualizing of schooling in [hermeneutic](#), [cartesian](#), [processive](#) and [conversive](#) approaches, it is clear that fully delinking border-thinking from writing pedagogy, dropping [our expert gaze](#), expunging harmful [expert needs discourse](#)—these entail not remapping but *unstructuring* to revise our fields’ foundational tenets.

prōiectus: [discarding]; prominent, protruding; unrestrained, immoderate, excessive; despondent, dejected, humiliated; vile, despicable; inclined, ready to ([Olivetti](#)).

To “see” *learning writing English* without placement within structure, I set my sights on, as I. A. Richards says, “what may very probably be the most complex type of event yet produced in the evolution of the cosmos (1953:250)” (qtd. Cronin, *Translation* 62): ***translation***. In this dissertation I engage with and observe learners in what Wei redefines (more capaciously than García and our fields currently) as *translanguaging*:

both *going between* different linguistic structures and systems, including different modalities (speaking, writing, signing, listening, reading, remembering) *and going beyond them*. It includes the full range of linguistic performances of multilingual language users *for purposes that transcend the combination of structures, the alternation between systems, the transmission of information and the representation of values, identities and relationships*. The act of translanguaging then is transformative in nature; *it creates a social space* for the multilingual language user by bringing together different dimensions of their personal history,

experience and environment, their attitude, belief and ideology, their cognitive and physical capacity into one coordinated and meaningful performance, and making it into a lived experience. I call this space “translanguaging space,” *a space for the act of translanguaging as well as a space created through translanguaging*. [...] It is a space where the process of what Bhabha (1994) calls “cultural translation” between traditions takes place; it is not a space where different identities, values and practices simply co-exist, but combine together to generate new identities, values and practices. *The boundaries of a translanguaging space are ever-shifting; they exist primarily in the mind of the individual who creates and occupies it, and the construction of the space is an ongoing, lifelong process.* (1223, my italics)

Globalized social media, I find, not only affords creating such nonspatial spaces, (beyond even Wei’s imaginary) it hosts [mainstream English\[es\]](#) translanguaging learning and learners challenging [English Exceptionalism](#). I look at such digital composing for my observations and interpretations [as] the analyst of [naturally occurring](#) [translanguaging] behaviour, resul[ting] in what might be described as a double hermeneutic, i.e., “the participants are trying to make sense of their world; the researcher is trying to make sense of the participants trying to make sense of their world” (Smith and Osborn, 2008). (1225).

Sense-making in translanguaging spaces turns out to be very different than what [we experts envision](#) and deliver as adaptive literacy curricula. Learners together practice what You frames as cosmopolitan *transliteracy*, adapting Ortiz’ “deculturalization of the past-with-métissage of the present” for a

construct of transliteracy emphasiz[ing] that in globalization everyone is a cultural and linguistic métis. When being respected and taken seriously, one has to, and

can, come to recognize oneself in the Other through reading and writing across languages and through engaging diverse cultural discourses. (20)

Transliterate learners' translanguaging spaces do not transmit-receive messages but interact as Baudrillard's "reciprocal space" of speech-response (qtd. in Booth, *Digital* 106). They *share* content (from transmodal texts to personal knowledge and intimate feelings) not *through* [English\[es\]](#) but *as* transliterate English[es] languaging. I find in observing learners' composing—with Leppänen studying writing on the Web—that “in many cases speakers/ writers do not operate on the premise of separable and distinct languages, but orient themselves to and make use of linguistic resources available to them, no matter which language they may technically be associated with” (236).

To “see” what our [expert schooling gaze](#) is overlooking—how our learners are growing and changing [translingually](#) without (rather than *within*) social structures like schooling, employment and discourse communities—takes two deterritorializing conceptual moves: *universalizing language expertise* and *democratizing its praxes*. In [chapter one](#), I argue that our ontologies of *language* and *language-learning* should be revised to “image” their essential *motility* and sociality. [Chapter two](#) lays out theories of digital [translanguaging spaces](#) and introduces my study's learners, [English\[es\]-read/writing fans of BTS](#), called A.R.M.Y. (아미) and the “foreign” techno-ecologies of social media. [Chapter three](#) analyzes *fanstlation* by 아미 as writing praxes connecting/creating (rather than occurring *in*) a worldwide critical, interpretive *learning community*. In [chapter four](#), 아미 participatory practices of cultural reception/production, sociality and activism I examine as *fanactantism*, learners' applied literacy *motility*. Finally, in my [conclusion](#), I synthesize what my sojourning with

◦|▣ teaches me about *revisioning* my own FYC and high school teaching *praxes*.

The research I present here employs **innovative mixed methods** (Riazi; Talmy; Polio and Friedman) beginning with emic-centric data collection methods from **critical linguistic (digital) material ethnography** (Blommaert and Jie; Stroud and Mpendukana; Kincheloe et al.; Sarangi's *thick participation*; Carbaugh's *cultural research*). For examining materials gathered, I employ **grounded theory** (Boeije; Blythe; Charmaz; Cornelius and Herrenkohl), recursively collecting while also coding artifacts via a **heuristic** of characteristics of **individual intercultural** communication (Byram, Chapter 5) and *translation/mediation* (Lu and Horner, "Introduction;" Pratt et al.; Pérez-González, "Multimodality;" Guerra, "Cultivating;" Bou Ayash, *Toward*; Melton; Lorimer Leonard; Hulstijn et al.; Pennycook, "Translingual;" Canagarajah, *Translingual* and "Multilingual;" Munday, *Routledge*; Bassnett, "Culture;" Anderman; Alred et al.; Kupka et al.; Venn; Cushman; Dasgupta; Lu, "Professing;" Saldanha). I conduct **comparative interpretivist evaluation** of artifacts with those heuristic criteria (Barton and Stygall; Talmy; Kincheloe et al.; North). To minimize etic framing of the data, I used **thick description/translation** (Geertz, Appiah) for annotating rounds of artifact coding and for reviewing compiled annotations to derive a set of salient languaging *moments* (Wei; *transduction*, Stewart cited in Jay Jordan, *Redesigning*; Lillis; C. Donahue's *locatable dynamic textual movements*, "Negotiation") as a dataset.

Repeating the same GT process to categorize characteristics of **(co)languaging**, I re-interrogated my artifacts and extended my coding and annotating, applying **critical discourse** (Fairclough) and **functional linguistics** (Halliday and Matthiessen) analyses as well as traits for **communities of practice** (Wenger), **expansive learning** (Engeström and Sannino; *expansive play*, Ang et al. qtd. in Richardson) and

participatory culture (Jenkins' *collective intelligence*; Rosen; *narrativity*, Booth, *Digital*; Reynolds; Sandvoss; Hills qtd. in Booth, *Digital*; Derecho; Rice; Bruns). For this I apply models taken from **interactional sociolinguistics** (Gumperz; Varis and Blommaert), **sociocultural activity analysis** (Mehlenbacher and Kampe; Russell, "Looking;" Shipka; Wertsch and Tulviste; Gutiérrez; Lantolf, "Bridge"; Goffman; C. Donahue, "Transfer;" Lave, "Situating;" Poe; Jerskey; Norton Peirce; Halasek; C. Miller, "Genre;" Bazerman), **transtextuality** (Yau citing Stam and Genette), **actant networking** (Lillis; Latour) and **brokering** (Canagarajah, "Multilingual" and "Teacher;" Byram; Lee et al.; Le Ha; Kim Young; Kupka et al.; Park and Wee; DePalma and Ringer) **descriptors**. To map meso relationships between artifacts and between artifacts and contexts, I use **Media Studies** frameworks (Eyman; Androutsopoulos; Kytölä; Derecho; Oxford; Fjaellingsdal cited by Richardson; Hawisher and Selfe, "Studying;" Miller and Kelly; DeVoss; Fraiberg et al.; S. Miller, "Why") and **rhetorical genealogy** (Queen cited by Carpenter):

[A] process of examining [transnational] digital texts not as artifacts of rhetorical productions, but, rather, as *continually evolving rhetorical actions that are materially bound, actions whose transformation can be traced through the links embedded within multiple fields of circulation*. Rhetorical genealogy is *rhetorical analysis that examines multiple processes of structuring representations* rather than seeks to identify the original intentions or final effects of structured (and thus already stabilized) representations. (p. 476) (208, my italics)

Typical in conversation analysis is the dichotomy of speaker performance versus audience reception. Davidson dissolves this, imagining conversation as a collaborative performance, involving speaker and audience *prior* theory—their [what I will explain as

*intra*locutive] entering predictions and choices—converging or diverging through *passing* theory—the actual [*inter*locutive] discourse negotiated through participants’ continuous adjustments to their prior theory (261). To capture the multivalence of discursive moves, Riker’s political science “systemic analysis” of discourse offers an additional layer. He defines *interaction* as rational actors’ strategic “tak[ing] into account what others may do before making decisions” rather than unilaterally pursuing desired outcomes (Cline). Voeten explains that Rikerian interaction is thus made up of strategic moves judged by interlocutors as “likely to generate the best outcome” (259) based on engagement and dis/alignment with conversation partners in and beyond the spatiotemporal context. Riker’s model argues such negotiating takes rhetorical form—meaning-making through suasive language (264)—as well as what he coined *heresthetic* form—manipulation of *the situation* (260), an extension I apply.

Performative (Riazi; Powell and Takayoshi; Jarratt) and *constructivist* research epistemologies mandate an acknowledgement by the researcher that “Reality is multiple, processual, and constructed—but constructed under particular conditions [...and] data are a *product* of the research process, not simply observed objects of it” (Charmaz 402). Or as Lemke and van Helden put it gently to Education researchers:

it seems very clear today that we need to combine first-person phenomenological accounts of experience and feeling with third-person semiotic analyses of meanings and affordances, if we are to give adequate accounts of how people learn with media and social networks... (166)

Taking up these premises, I conducted intermittent participant checks and **ethnomethodological** self-reflective and participant retrospective accounts/interviews (Lillis; Clifford; Takayoshi et al.; Crumpler et al.; Rogers and Schaenen;

Saldanha; Wei). As a researcher and analyst, I look for *heteropraxia* (Munday, *Routledge*; Halliday and Matthiessen) and *rich points of languaculture* (Agar) to make bisociative sense and meaning of, and I invited participants into my research process to “reflect the interactive, dialogic nature of writing and research processes, [...] honor and preserve the voices of others, and [...] allow authors [my informants and myself included] to situate themselves in specific social and cultural contexts” (Kirsch cited in Powell and Takayoshi). I seek to avoid *placing* either myself or my informants. As Spivak asks, I try to speak *with* and not *for* learners and avoid Alcoff’s scholarly retreat into a “privileged discursive position safe from challenge” (cited in Jarratt 115, 128).

Chapter 1: Zone of Proximal Translatorship



Is this a pigeon? screencap from *The Brave Fighter of Sun Fighbird 1:3* ([knowyourmeme](#))

læran/leornian: Old English/Kentish, to teach; make known; get knowledge, be cultivated; study, read, think about; early 13th century, learn ([Harper](#)).

Composition and Literacy Studies’ deficit positioning of “perpetually becoming” (Lesko) learners and socialization epistemologies, Berlin argues, have long propped up two pillars of schooling: Standardized “English” as *the* public language and transmission as *the* vehicle for literacy acquisition. Contesting these means disputing the very terms *learning language*. For such a campaign, it helps to recruit allies. Outside of English we find one already at hand: Vygotsky’s 1930s learning theory, commonly referred to as his Sociocultural Theory.¹⁷ Influential Cold War era USAmerican and British child development researchers through their translations brought Vygotsky to prominence as a means to challenge Skinnerian behaviorism. However, the concepts articulated in their source texts (through what Venuti dubs *domesticating* translation choices) were, in the process, reconstructed to serve the researchers’ own scholarly goals and to communicate if not anti-communist views, at least communist antipathy.¹⁸ Their domesticated iterations of Vygotsky’s learning theory now saturate education literature (as SCT, cooperative learning, Activity Theory and related approaches).

The source and translated versions of the theory differ in significant ways. Excerpts

first translated by Cole et al. as *Mind in Society*, include *Zone of Proximal Development* and *scaffolding*,¹⁹ terms now yoked together and understood ubiquitously in our fields as learners' *acquisition of knowledge buttressed by peer or teacher support*—with ZPD a psychometric scalar defining the deficit between the current and a target developmental points, the locus for intervention.⁷ This very much fits [expert needs discourse](#) operating in our fields today: a learner *needs* to gain literacy, which is *transmitted* by the social environment. Chaiklin seeks to correct misapprehension of the translated core of ZPD, “what the child is able to do in collaboration today he will be able to do independently tomorrow” (2). He notes Vygotsky is contesting rather than reifying helping-hand premises of learning theory with his ZPD. For example, Vygotsky argues that in order to imitate, even a preverbal learner must *first* understand, which is a result *of* learning. In contrast to “being helped” to learn, Chaiklin explains, this means *the learner* directs learning:

This new-formation [understanding] is organized in the social situation of development by a basic contradiction between the child's current capabilities (as manifested in the actually-developed psychological functions), the child's needs and desires, and the demands and possibilities of the environment. *In trying to overcome this contradiction (so that it can realize its activity), the child engages in different concrete tasks and specific interactions, which can result in the formation of new functions or the enrichment of existing functions.* (6, my italics)

To Vygotsky, context is a source of contradiction, demands and resources; learners motivated by personal desires act to resolve conflicts and thereby develop their own

⁷ Ironically, the term was coined by Vygotsky *in opposition to* contemporary Russian psychometrics for developmental level (Shabani et al.)

understanding. Learners are not *developed*. Understanding is not *acquired*. In the source version of Vygotsky’s theory, *ZPD* is *natural* and autonomous, synonymous with *lifelong* intellectual development (Zavershneva 117). Vygotsky explicitly and comprehensively argues learning is intentional *action*.

I see Vygotsky’s source version as a **Theory of Motile Learning**, drawing from biology, where *motility* denotes “the capacity [of an organism/cell] *to move itself* as opposed to *mobility* (the capacity *to be moved*)” (Allen). *Motility* captures semantically the profound challenge Vygotsky’s theory represents, in my view, to our educational *needs discourse*, in which learners are Freirean receivers of learning *socialized* to “already settled” systems (imagined to have the capacity, when *made* conscious by teaching, to *evolve into* resistors of social force). In Vygotsky, we see a counterimaginary: learners *always already sovereign*, social agents engaged with *skopos*—not *placed* by nor in it. The essence of *motility* he works out in this archived note:

1. Why do concepts liberate action? [...]

Thinking allows us to overcome the forces.

2. Most important in thinking is freedom: *ich kann was ich will* [my translation: *I can do what I want to do*]. From there it is transferred to the action.

But freedom is born in the thought.

Thinking provides the way out of the [environment]. (Zavershneva 115).

Vygotsky describes the *ZPD* learning process as *обучение* [ä bŭ ‘chə ñə], in Russian meaning *teaching-learning* [the gerund denoting both *training* **and** *trainee*, [bab.la](#)]. Where source texts employ *обучение*, the English term *learning* was substituted[⌞] by

[⌞] Without translator acknowledgement of the imprecision between the source and target texts, what Hatim and Mason (*Translator*) label translating “invisibly”—with the connotation of stealth. Yasnitsky and Van der Veer address the specifics of mistranslation of Vygotsky comprehensively.

translators (Teale; Yasnitsky). Resolving these terms' denotative contradiction brings us, along two routes, to a linguacultural *rich point*—

when you realize that you have got a problem with language, and the problem has to do with who you are [...when] '[natural](#)' or 'right' meanings, the ones that tell you who are and how the world works, turn arbitrary, [becoming] one of a number of possibilities. (Agar 20-1)

As Agar predicts, to solve our problem, **first** we *recognize* and then probe *a* newly recognized semantic inequivalence. To reconcile it, we *reconstrue*—*reconstruct*—our understanding of the concept. Eliding *teaching-learning* with *learning-from-teaching*, an English speaker necessarily confronts diametric Anglocentric ontologies foundational to our discipline: not only learn/ teach, but self/ other; internal/ external; thought/ speech.²⁰ Vygotsky's most basic proposition of **learning as experiencing self-teaching** contradicts English and Education epistemologies of **learning as movement**, in which *learning* is the self's internal reception of ideas *from* outside and *teaching*, external, communicated transmission of them *to* learners (Gredler and Shields; El Kadri et al.; Chaiklin; Teale; Duffy et al.).

To reconstruct our understanding of *обучение*, we compare what we *thought* we knew with the framing (Agar) that is *new to us*. Vygotsky stakes his critique of then-contemporary cognitive psychology: “only interacting with the environment or people [...] awakens [...] internal developmental processes” (*Mind* 90)—we are enacting this. The chain of events which, to him, replace development theories of conditioning [response *to* teaching *from* others] as the social mechanism for maturation is this: minds living in the

world encounter challenges to their understanding—cognitive dissonance.[□] A learning mind opts to *recognize* experiencing discord *as a problem* and commits to resolve the discrepancy (enter the [ZPD](#), “give attention”). Internal reconciling of the before/after—*developing* (transitive) new conceptual understanding—manifests the mind’s *development* (intransitive). In direct opposition to Sapir’s view that “meanings are not so much discovered in experience as imposed upon it, because of the tyrannical hold that linguistic form has upon our orientation to the world” (578), Vygotsky argues minds *act* in response to sociocultural stimuli, “The role of *thinking in reality exactly resides* in the introduction of new dynamic possibilities *in activity*” (Zavershneva 118; my italics). The teaching-learning mind reflectively *moves itself* to more “developed” understanding. No mind is moved to it through imprinting, transmission or inscription. Neither the mind nor reality autonomously impose meaning; the mind interacting with reality co-constructs it, using—Vygotsky most famously argued—language as a tool, not the *material* of meaning (Gredler and Shields; El Kadri et al.). Vygotsky’s relating of *thinking to language* thus conceptualizes [the precepts Translingualists advocate](#): **language is performed, entailing difference as an act of translation internally and externally**. Reconstructing our [expert needs’](#) domesticated version of [ZPD](#) means experiencing confronting and intellectually reconciling inequivalence between two semiotic systems to reach our own, reconstructed sense of *language* and *learning language*.

“The child’s acquisition of some concept or technique is in her ability actively to deploy it” (Van der Veer 72)—in the [motile](#) version of Vygotsky’s theory, we *apply*

[□] Difference perceived due to its *proximity*—his term closely approximates Butler’s [legibility](#).

meaning in order to develop our sense of it. One's *choice* to reason through data, research, test solutions, etc. *teach-learns* oneself more sophisticated understanding. Seen this way, Vygotsky's universal phenomenon of [обучение](#) and Agar's anthropological and linguistic *rich points* are, in fact, synonymous. And the experience of encountering, recognizing and reconstruing to reach this conclusion for me and, I wager, **you**—if your knowledge of Vygotsky's concepts comes, too, through the vehicle of its pervasive [English\[es\]](#) version translation—is, in fact, enacting the very self-development being described by them both.²¹

Vygotsky does discuss, among other means of [teaching-learning](#), interaction with/observation of peers/elders in a shared activity. This scenario was transmogrified by Cole et al., Wertsch and Bruner (Pea) into social stimuli *guiding* learning, the conceptualization broadly cited today. Zuckerman frames a [ZPD](#) event in exactly opposite terms: *not* where “a developed mind meets an *under*-developed mind, but that precisely *different* minds meet” (qtd. in El Kadri et al. 7, my italics). Roth and Radford argue that Vygotsky's theory of [ZPD](#) and the concept [scaffolding](#) intersect, and “*the word* is the meeting point,” a tool used by the learner to effect change in understanding. [Обучение](#) is entangled and embodied thought *and* language (the literal English translation of Vygotsky's title), an “intersubjectivity... grounded in a common world of historical significations and ways of life (p. 304)” (qtd. in El Kadri et al. 3).

Vygotsky's [motility](#) challenges still-dominant Piagetian and other paradigms Lesko identifies as Structuralist stages, steps and socialization that inform our fields. In his theory, even preverbal infants move themselves developmentally, by *using the tools of language* (gesture). Chaiklin points to Vygotsky's caveat regarding [ZPD](#): development *only* occurs if a self interprets the *significance* of another's speech or action (11) *as*

dissonant from their own sense, and then uses language to re/construct that sense intentionally—the converse of transmissive, *acquisitive* framing of *learning*. His conceptualization of *language* challenges our fields directly with an undeniably [translingual](#) framing: **Development is translation. Learning is translating. Language is a tool. Meaning is co-constructed with—not *by* or *in*—it.** Vygotsky’s notes translated by Zavershneva capture this as engagement between learner and skopos:

Vygotsky pointed out that the child’s first orientation is semantic, the first questions are about *the sense* and not about *the meaning* of the surrounding world [... He writes:]

Two paradoxes of **thinking**:

1. Why thinking ≠ associative reproduction
2. Why thinking ≠ logical [...]

Because it proceeds *in the struggle against tendencies with semantic fields and in the consciousness of these fields* (cf. **inner speech**—creates the fields—**external speech** proceeds *through* these fields). (114, my emphases)

communicator: sharer, partaker; one engaged in acts of [participatio](#) (from [per₂](#)).
negotium: engagement; activity; work (Olivetti).
per₂: Proto-Indo-European grant, allot; get in return; share; divide. (Harper).²²

[Motile](#) lifelong learning Vygotsky identifies with the Marxian term *tätigkeit* (*Mind* 90) [an association also domesticated unrecognizably in English translations]. Stahl contextualizes the German for English speakers: It

has a transitive sense of **doing something with something in a context**. With this term, Marx merges cognitive, goal-oriented behavior with sensuous physical involvement with things in the world [...] combines idealism and materialism and

overcomes the mind/body split from within his theory. Vygotsky (1930/1978) spells out a theory with a similar approach in the realm of psychology and learning, providing a **unity of cognition and artifacts in this domain**. (my bold)

Given Vygotsky's frequent, explicit engagement with Marx and Engels in his theorization—it is difficult to justify his theory of learning being represented by Cole, Bruner, Wertsch and others as transmissive “socialization/development *by others*.” Vygotsky's *tätigkeit* is, rather, [self] teaching-learning by *doing something with language* (as a tool)[≠] *in the context of* cognitive dissonance—experiencing a motivating problem and “going to work on it” (Bartholomae and Petrosky). He defines this in ways remarkably similar to Agar:

The **word** is the inexhaustible source of new problems. The **sense** of a word never appears to be full. Ultimately, *it rests in the understanding of the word and in the inner structure of the personality* as a whole. In fact, the infusion of the diverse *semantic content* into a single word presents itself as a form of an *individual, intranslatable meaning* every time (*Thought 54*; my emphases).

Russian criticalist translator Kozulin elaborates on Vygotsky's conceptualization in terms quite compatible with [Translingualists' imaginary](#):

While *meaning* stands for socialized discourse, *sense* represents an interface between one's individual (thus incommunicable) thinking and [one's] verbal thought comprehensible to others. [*...In e]xternal speech thought is embodied in words, in inner speech words must sublimate in order to bring forth a thought. [...] Inner speech becomes a psychological interface between [...] culturally*

[≠] The tools for learning Vygotsky explicitly named are “language, numeration, mnemonics, algebraic symbolism, works of art, writing, schemes, diagrams, maps and blueprints” (Gredler and Shields 21).

*sanctioned symbolic systems and private “language” and imagery. The [individual’s] concretization of psychological activity in this context [is] a psychological mechanism for creating new symbols and word senses capable of eventually being incorporated into the cultural stock. (xxxvii-viii, my italics)*²³

Underrecognized in its translated version, Vygotsky’s [обучение](#) theory resonates with current English theory and research bridging psychology to the theory of Dialogism (more widely applied in the Academy than in Literacy Studies and K-12). Its chief architect, Bakhtin [writing as/with Vološinov—authorship is debated] argues, “Meaning comes about in *both* the individual psyche *and* in shared social experience *through* the medium of the sign, for in both spheres *understanding comes about as a response to a sign with signs,*” which Holquist notes aligns closely with Peirce’s Semiotics’ axiom that “meaning may be defined as the translation of a sign into another system of signs” (49, my italics). T. Donahue draws attention to French Linguistics’ combining [from *French* version translations of] Vygotsky with Vološinov/Bakhtin to ground an explicitly translingual epistemology in the same vein: “text, produced for and by discursive spheres of activity, functions as a negotiation through *reprise-modification* [François’ term], literally, re-taking-up-modifying *as one interdependent event* that is the essence of *all* discursive function” (325, my italics).

Bakhtin’s, Peirce’s and François’ convergence with Vygotsky’s social co-constructivism provides a viable, thoroughly tested counterconceptualization to Composition and Literacy Studies’ deeply ingrained premise that *learning language* is a process of transmission and socialization of a learner *to* a “public” discourse already in place. They center *the learner* as translator, meaning as *pluriversal*; and they decenter language (a tool, not material) and social context (not “settled,” but [skopos](#)). In this

alternative imaginary, *motility* replaces deficiency; sense and meaning (translation of) replace acculturation (*to*). The act *обучение* replaces passive *being taught*. *Constructed curriculum* becomes the *only* curriculum.

As the entry on *traduire* in the *Vocabulaire* points out, the word... is relatively recent in French (1520; in English from 1300 [OED]): in Greek there were six words for translation, in Latin eight (none of them *translatio* until the medieval *translatio studii*), in German four.... earlier forms such as “Englished,” “done into English” (cf. German *dolmetschen*), and, importantly, “traduce” and “traduction:” after the latter fell out of use, the English and French forms, with their very different implications for the nature of translation, moved apart. (R. Young 52)

As a counter-epistemology *motile* learning aligns as well with Translationists’ description of their praxes as necessarily *reflective*. Hatim and Mason (*Translator*) explicitly define *translation* as “an act of” *communication*²⁴ “which attempts to relay, across cultural and linguistic boundaries, another act of communication (which may have been intended for different purposes and different readers/hearers)” (1) involving *mediation*, “incorporating into the processing of utterances and texts one’s own assumptions, beliefs, etc.” (220). Munday (*Evaluation*) defines *translation* as inherently *motile*, too. He frames it as a mediating, “truth-seeking activity” (Newmark qtd. 36) based on the recognition that *every* “text is a site for competing textual voices in a communicative context of socially constructed individuals” (22). He “images” translators as *intervenient beings* (Maier qtd. 19) negotiating the interface of source text and target audience. When they confront a *critical point*—equivalent to an Agarian *rich point* and Vygotskian *dissonance*—their negotiation of resolutions, Munday finds, gets textualized [Wenger uses the term *reified*] in the form of translator’s implicit and explicit *evaluation*. In very Vygotskian terms, he argues evaluating is “a fundamental speech act,” which positions the writer and the reader, interfacing between [societal] ideology and [personal] axiology, the ‘factual’ world and the inner world of subjective and

individual value. It represents and helps to constitute both the view of that world and the self-identity of the writer (Lemke 1998, Fairclough 2003: 164). (40)

While to Munday translation makes Vygotsky's connection between semantics and Affect, Cronin connects translation even more deeply to *sociocultural motility*. He acknowledges pluriverses of *translatorial*,²⁵ *intervenient mediating* between individuals and their social context, arguing translation is not merely a linguistic act, but an *experience*—under duress—by those who are Othered (pressured to “be integrated” and to “translate themselves”).²⁶ His reflective *cultural translation* bridges Butler's *embodiment* of alterity—one's undergoing of translation by/ for others—with *translinguality*, highlighting learners' *mediation* as both instrument of²⁷ *and* means to resist acculturative *containment*:

Cultural translation highlights an even more fundamental feature of contemporary societies than the oft-repeated lingering hegemony of nation-states—namely an intolerance of conflict. As even the most rudimentary translation exercise soon reveals, translation is above all an *initiation into unsuspected complexity*. The simplest of texts turns out to be not as straightforward as we thought [...which] throws up *unsettling questions about our sense of our own language and makes the familiar alien*. *What this schooling in complexity reveals is the radical insufficiency of cultural shorthand*. [...] Nothing can be taken for granted (novices take a lot for granted, hence the culture shock of translation). [...] However, translation as conflict is not confrontation: it is conflict *as engagement with the multidimensionality of texts, languages and cultures*. It contests the culturalis[m...] which denies translation and interpreting rights to internal [racial, religious, sexual, gender, ability and other] minorities [...] where all conflict is

presented as confrontation through the binary stereotyping of Us and Them.
 (“Translation and” 500-1, my italics)

Butler, echoing the pluriversality tenets of Standpoint Theory (Stoetzler and Yuval-Davis), urges Academy experts to engage personally with intralingual cultural translation to interrogate our disciplinarian and ideologically conservative tendencies:

translation cannot be a simple assimilation of what is foreign into what is familiar; it must be an opening to the unfamiliar, a dispossession from prior ground, and even a willingness to cede ground to what is not immediately knowable within established epistemological fields (2012, 12). (qtd. Bermann 295).²⁸

Synthesizing these critical approaches to translation with a reconstructed premise of [motile](#) learning gives us a viable, revised, [translingual ZPD](#): the *Zone of Proximate Translators*, a universal way of being in and dealing with the world through [translanguaging](#).

Bateson brings the experience of [translanguaging](#) to bear on epistemologies of learning directly. Famously, he challenges educators to recognize that learners experience dissonance with schooling’s [covert] enculturation. Attending to that conflict [choosing to engage with and reconcile it] is, for the learner, a *double bind*, inciting one to “radically question the sense and meaning of the context and to construct a wider alternative context” (Engeström 58)—that is, to take [motile](#), [translational](#) action.²⁹ Lorimer Leonard and Nowacek reference [English\[es\]](#) learners’ *double bind* in calling for the application of lenses of [translinguality](#) to our studies of *learning writing*:

transfer studies in composition [...] have not yet attended in sustained, systematic ways to language negotiation, despite the fact that such choices and navigations are indeed being made, even among primarily monolingual students and

instructors. More intentional interplay between transfer and translanguaging is poised to open new directions of research. (260)

Here we hear echoes of DePalma and Ringer, who argue our fields' applying "researcher-defined transfer objectives" to inquiries about learners' actions blinds us to the very thing we are attempting to measure. They call attention to the fact that we

miss out on trying to understand the mental processes that individuals employ in transferring prior learning—that is, we make little effort to understand what individuals are actually attempting to transfer ([Royer et al. 2005] p. xvii). (4)

They advocate for us to reconceptualize literacy learning as teaching-learning embodying and entailing translating, to "envision student writing as a form of brokering (Wenger, 1998) or negotiation (Dyson, 1999)" of sense and meaning with others (142).

Engeström's findings from Activity Theory validate DePalma's and Ringer's *adaptive transfer* concept and connect it directly to Vygotsky. Much in line with Goffman's concept of *underlife* (students' transgressive, subordinated discourse in schooling environments; see Brooke), in *Expansive Learning* he highlights not only the existence but the catalytic role of *competing uptakes* (Bawarshi "Beyond") in even highly regulated social learning. Recalling both García's and Wei's strategies of multilingual translanguagers, Engeström documents participants' *socializing meaning* to [mediate double binds](#) in professional [skopos](#):

some individual participants begin to question and deviate from [...] established norms. In some cases, this escalates into collaborative envisioning and a deliberate collective change effort. An expansive transformation is accomplished when the object and motive of the activity are reconceptualized to embrace a radically wider horizon of possibilities than in the previous mode of the activity. A full cycle of

expansive transformation may be understood as a collective journey through the *zone of proximal development* of the activity. (57)

gemænscipe: Old English community, fellowship, union, common ownership; from ***mæne*** [*mean*] common, public, general ([Harper](#))

Adopting the democratizing counterpremise that rather than being socialized, learners [mediate](#) with co-actors for [translingual](#) (socializing, not normatizing) learning draws attention to what has long been a black box at the center of our fields’ ontologies of literacy: ***the social***. We routinely invoke it as enveloping structure, an abstract but influential force, a linguistic and rhetorical re/source, an instrumental motivator and—beyond the act of writing—also the determinative cultural points of reference and subjective identities of the writer, “settled” and not. That said, we avoid defining it or its characteristics or specifying ***how*** it works in relation to writers’ choices.

Latour recognized the same gaping lacuna at the heart of Social Sciences and called for *the social* to “be explained instead of providing the explanation.” With Actant Network Theory (ANT), he forwards this provocative claim: “there is no society, no social realm, and no social ties, *but there exist [translations](#) between [mediators](#) that may generate traceable associations*” in human activity (108). ANT’s other two major theorists, Law and Callon note that ANT resists imagining knowledge in terms of [placement](#), as an object moving within structures: “we are not primarily concerned with mapping interactions between individuals...we are concerned to map the way in which they [actors—sic] *define and distribute roles, and mobilize or invent others to play these roles*” (1988, p. 285)” (qtd. in Cressman 4). The *reconstructing* of [meaning](#)—the nonspatial spaces created by actors *for* translanguaging—is its focus. Cressman attributes Latour’s emphasis on the act of *association* “to semiotics, which posits that signs have meaning only in relation to other

signs” (3)—the same Peirce maxim that Holquist sees driving Bakhtin’s Dialogism. ANT’s radical conceptualization of [translation](#), Cressman elaborates, emerged from Kuhn’s work on *paradigm shift*. “Imaged” as itself an actant, ANT’s *translation* aligns with Toury’s role of [translatorship](#):

Translation, as developed by the French philosopher Michel Serres, is a term that attempts to overcome the arbitrary divisions between [“politics, economics, the social”]. [...] Translation “appears as *the process of making connections*, of forging a passage between two domains, or simply as establishing communication” it is “*an act of invention* brought about through combination and mixing varied elements” (Brown 2002, pp. 3-6). Within ANT [...] “*Translation involves creating convergences and homologies* by relating things that were previously different” (Callon 1981, p.211). [...it is] *the process by which “the identity of actors, the possibility of interaction and the margins of manoeuvre are negotiated and delimited”* (Callon 1986b, p. 203; see also Callon 1981; Latour 1993). (9, my italics)

ANT conceptualizes ***the social*** not as an external environment or structure, but as emergent interpersonal entanglements, coalescing **acts of [translanguaging](#), in[ter]ventions that co-transform meaning, co-generate roles and/ or co-connect associations.**▫ Echoing DePalma and Ringer, Cressman emphasizes that ANT researchers should focus on “The question *what is being translated*” by the actants who take up [translatorship](#) so as to arrive at “an understanding of the social that accounts for human experience outside of pre-established categories or models” (10). Dwelling *in* borders rather than mapping territory as researchers, scholars and instructors, imagining

▫ *Actants*, Latour specifies, can be human or not-human. His explanation coincides closely with Vygotsky’s [theorization of tools](#).

writing [English\[es\]](#) as creating [translanguaging spaces](#) rather than *placed in* “settled” social structures, reconceptualizing learning as [motile](#) actants negotiating in [zones of proximate translatorship](#)—I adopt these moves as means to explain the social in *learning writing English[es]*.

[competence](#): 1590s rivalry, adequate supply; 1630s sufficiency of means for living at ease from French [competence](#); Latin [competentia](#) meeting together, agreement, symmetry, [competens](#) fall together, come together, be convenient or fitting ([Harper](#))

Socially-constructed [meaning](#) and [traditional notions] of [translation](#) have been central concepts of my own scholarly and pedagogical practices from the beginning. Only years into applying them did I read Wenger’s follow up to *Situated Learning* (where Jean Lave and he introduced *communities of practice*)—at the time, to learn to better facilitate my students’ socialization into academic discourse communities. Surprised, I found Wenger challenging [conversive](#) applications of *legitimate peripheral participation* (the lynchpin of my and others’ Epistemicist approaches)—particularly, assumptions regarding expert mentoring of novices and [what I thought of as “cultural” or “social”] community cohesion and stability of identity/roles. He ends his book with advice to educational institutions, concluding from the highly dynamic (not hierarchical) interrelating he observed in workplaces that:

the scope of our interdependencies expands at the same time as our societies remain fragmented. To be able to have effects on the world, students must learn to find ways of coordinating multiple perspectives. This observation is rather commonplace. What is not so widely understood is that *this ability is not just a matter of information and skill. It is not an abstract technical question, nor merely learning the repertoires of multiple practices. Rather, it is a matter of*

identity—of straddling across boundaries and finding ways of being in the world that can encompass multiple, conflicting perspectives in the course of addressing significant issues. Exercising this sort of identity is a result of participation in a learning community challenged by issues of alignment. It is one of the most critical aspects of education for the kind of world we live in. (274-5, my italics)

Prior to this comment, he defines *learning* as not just **acquisition** of “competence” but the “**experience** of meaning as well” (137) and links it to identity as a feature of innate **motility**, for learning “changes who we are by changing our ability to participate, to belong, to negotiate meaning. And this ability is configured socially with respect to practices, communities and [real world] economies of meaning where it shapes identity” (226).

Reading again now, I see Wenger advocating reform of our fields’ **expert gazes**—our **hermeneutic**, **cartesian**, **conversive** and **processive delivered curricula** that attempt in different ways to transmit instrumental knowledge and skillsets for fitting to/in preestablished structures. His study, much like Engeström’s and ANT, demythologizes participation in adult/ professional communities as following an outsider-to-insider adaptive progression, reframing as collective, individual “trajectories of agency” (not achievement). His subjects applied the tools of practice for strikingly **motile** rather than mobile³⁰ *interactive* sense and meaning making. As is his wont, Wenger attempts a reconciliation between this and conventional views:

we need to think about education not merely in terms of an initial period of socialization into a culture, but more fundamentally in terms of rhythms by which communities and individuals continually renew themselves. Education thus becomes a mutual developmental process between communities and individuals, one that goes beyond mere socialization. It is an investment of a community in its

own future, not as a reproduction of the past through cultural transmission, but as *the formation of new identities* that can take its history of learning forward. (263-4, my italics)

Here he tacitly endorses acculturative child “development” (Lesko) paradigms, but also argues that educational experiences (*constructed curricula*) earn “relevance by [virtue of] the experiments of identity students can engage in” through them (268).

Such an equivocation is common in social learning approaches. The same is found in ANT’s split of the *what* and *how* of *translation*³¹ and in the vacuum between Vygotsky’s *Zone* (the word as problem) and learner’s *translating*. I trace these to unresolved contradictions in Humanities’ and Social Sciences’ relating of conceptualizations of *language* to those for [communication] *practice* (Russell, *Writing*; Bazerman; Beale; Palmeri; Harris; Hawk; Kett). To “see” the discontinuities, it is useful to return to the wide, territorial map of our fields and its byways of Latourian academic networking between disciplines—actants *translating* and *associating* these concepts. Tracking them closely allows us to put our finger on the gap in our fields’ application of theory. Addressing that gap gives us our bearings for reconnecting *experiencing learning* with performing *translatorship* as overlapping *acts of translanguaging*.

As I came to know their “out-of-school” work better, I could see how their ways of working within my class were often prescriptive and unimaginative [...] the same students were constructing sophisticated processes to do their out-of-school work. They were fashioning discourses in which to communicate with others. They were continuously representing themselves in refreshing ways as readers, writers and thinkers. They were also evaluating their work and performing it. [...] This characteristic of youth engaged in creative practices, to me, is the “intrinsic aesthetic or crafting that underlies the practice of everyday life” that Aristotle speaks of [with *techne*, Cintron 1997]. And through this conscious and unconscious “mapping” and constructing of their everyday lives, youth employ a “grounded aesthetic” [Willis 1998]. Their creative practices are part of who they are and how they understand the world around them. The way they live their lives informs their practice, and their practice influences the ways in which they live day to day. (Gustavson 81-2)

Largely siloed from English (Valdés; Inoue), USAmerican Bi/Multilingu/cultural Educationists in the Civil Rights era worked to dismantle *linguicism* (Skutnabb-Kangas)—systemic disenfranchisement of [users of] languages-other-than-idealized-English (Pratt “Linguistic”)—by bringing emerging Linguistics research to bear on curriculum, teaching and assessment in K-12 [nonmainstream](#) and remedial [English\[es\]](#) language programs. Among others, Cummins, Smitherman, Villanueva and García associated findings from Sociolinguistics (especially Hymes, Labov, Brice Heath, Gee) to learners’ writing, to displace Structuralist, (Chomskyan) formalist and monolingual teaching and assessment paradigms (based on [Krashen](#)), then largely uncontested in schooling. Putting Firth’s, Halliday’s and Fairclough’s social semiotics[▫] in conversation with Whorfian relativist linguistics, educators and community activists debated the validity of [English\[es\]](#) usage normatization, worked against dialect extermination (Wible) and refuted the dehumanizing discourse of subaltern *semilingualism* (MacSwan).[^] In place of grammar drills and current-traditionalism, advocates promoted *communicative competence* encompassing a range of registers and won concessions regarding officially-sanctioned literacy education through 1965’s *Elementary and Secondary Education Act*, Title VII, the ground-breaking federal legislative precursor to the CCCC’s nonbinding *Students’ Right to Their Own Language*.

Prior to Translingualists Pennycook and Canagarajah theorizing “Englishes” as a challenge to the apparatus of “Imperial English” (Phillipson; Cushman; Mignolo, “Geopolitics”),³² these Educationists had managed to destabilize USAmerican

[▫] Theorists who themselves stand out for challenging monolingualist Structuralism with Functionalism based in research and theory encompassing *multiple* language systems (Hatim and Mason, *Discourse* 26).

[^] Gains in inclusivity would be stymied—if not fully reversed—by nativist revanche, not only in literacy education but for civil rights generally, [according to the surviving members of Johnson’s Kerner Commission](#) (Gooden and Myers), driven through accountability regimes for public schools.

conceptualizations of so-called *Standard English*—as patrimony or [natural, Native](#) language—in favor of a more dynamic and socioculturally-bounded entity: *code*. That theorization prepared the way^o for [mainstream](#) English and Literacy pedagogies to take up an SCT-influenced, hybrid *medium-performance* paradigm of language (García; Silva and Leki; Trimbur, “Consensus”), which today grounds Translingualist reformulation of “literacy as practice[s]” led by Canagarajah and Pennycook.

Converting from curated high culture *object* (à la Durkheim) to *system* of distributed intelligence (Pea), from unitary entity to **bi-natural phenomenon**, language’s ontology hybridized, becoming imagined as both *situated* (Firth and Wagner) and agentive (Austin). The state of interdisciplinary theory is such that **language** is now associated with both **a materialized archive** of utterances (verbal and otherwise) from which specie of codes, Discourses and significations [through [legibility](#)] are available for use³³ **and simultaneously, quantized performing**—self-generating, emergent instantiating of significations³⁴ at micro, meso and macro scales—across Modernist ideological boundaries of languages, dialects, registers, forms, modes and defying controlling colonial narratives of history, geography and population (Mignolo, “Geopolitics”).^x As our fields’ subject of academic study, then, **language** has been [translated](#) into an interactive, evanescent and deictic praxis—a descriptor identical to that of *learning* in Lave’s theorizing. She cites Engeström’s criticism of “decontextualized” learning theories’ problematic approach to “knowledgeability:”

^o Pennycook (“Towards”) summarizes the criticalist challenge that would later be made to conceptualizing language as *code*: that language is neither fixed nor agreed-upon and thus should not be presented as “the” language any community of people uses to express ideas (11).

^x Although these still have [containment](#) effects. Wenger’s *economies of meaning* is useful as a heuristic for seeing how actors’ *valuation* of language particularities rather than language itself operates. I will consider the *revisioning* of this as ecologies of meaning in chapter 2.

Certainly, any simple assumption that *transmission* or *transfer* or *internalization* are apt descriptors for the circulation of knowledge [language] in society faces the difficulty that they imply *uniformity* of knowledge [language]. They do not acknowledge the fundamental imprint of interested parties, multiple activities, and different goals and circumstances on what constitutes “knowing” [“speaking”] on a given occasion or across a multitude of interrelated events. These terms imply that humans engage first and foremost in the reproduction of given knowledge [language] rather than in the production of knowledgeability [linguality] as a flexible process of engagement with the world. (qtd. “Practice” 204, my additions)

Figured as *knowledgeability* [mediated](#) through [translatorship](#) and [translanguaging](#), *language* ontologically aligns with Giddens’ comprehensive Social Structuration Theory—as an emergent, [multiplicitous](#) (Lynn) coalescence: constituted through autonomy-*with*-sociality, individuality-*with*-aggregation, the material-*with*-the quantized. Bakhtin (Holquist) and Derrida—like Vygotsky and François³⁵—define *language* in just such a way, arguing an utterance/ knowledge is never ours *nor* not-ours because it is always *as human social action* both derivative *and* originary. Literacy Studies’ conceptualization of **linguaging** (Swain) captures, too, its phenomenological tautology: **authors *language* because *language* *author-izes***.^{*} *Language, learning, knowledge, identity* are **performed** by, with and through (not within) communities; *to language* is to [translate](#), to [mediate](#) meaning for and of others, to teach-learn understanding, to resolve problems.³⁶

* One of Wenger’s defining traits of practice is *ownership of meaning* (adoption by others of one’s proposed meanings). I conjecture that Vygotsky, Bakhtin, Derrida and Giddens would concur: without adoption, proposal and negotiation have no incentive to occur, causing any system to stagnate.

schola: Latin intermission of work, leisure for learning; learned conversation, debate; lecture; meeting place for teachers and students, place of instruction; disciples of a teacher, body of followers, sect; Old English ***scol***;

skhole: Greek spare time, leisure, rest, ease; idleness; that in which leisure is employed; learned discussion; a place for lectures, school; a holding back, a keeping clear; from ***skhein*** to get. ([Harper](#))

There is a wide gap between the current ontology of *language* and our practice. On its surface our theoretical literature celebrates the contingency and dynamism of *linguaging*, but as Downs and Wardle observe, our *delivered curriculum* figures *learning linguaging* in composition as *internalizing* writing procedures (Bazerman; Russell, *Writing*; Beale; Bloom et al.; Ianetta; Murphy; Ritter and Matsuda; Palmeri; Harris; Hawk). Like SLA's scripts, writing for/in school is exercise for acquiring procedural fluency (Yancey, "4.3"), an explicitly task-based framing represented by the most recent iteration of the Hayes' and Flower's Neocognitivist model of the writing process: writers *propose* [remember] knowledge, *translate* [match] that knowledge to (verbal) text, *transcribe* [organize] that text into written form and *evaluate* knowledge, text and transcription *against task goals* (Hayes 371). Even in post-process classrooms, *the* ubiquitous writing process—drafting, reviewing, revising, editing, publishing (Yancey, "Looking")—fabricates a product out of language. It is neither the activity of *authorizing* nor *performing* [let alone *instantiating*] text.³

The ontological discrepancy occurs at the imagined starting point for writing. *Proposing*—writing's first canon, *inventio*—in Latin can be semantically nonagentive (to *find/come across*)—in line with the reading/remembering comprising rote recall and scanning of source texts. It is also agentive (to *contrive/plan*)—close to Blau's ("Literacy") original *metacognitive strategies*, now unrecognizably routinized in domesticated

³ Lu's oft-cited reporting on a [marked] student's creation and defense of the [English\[es\]](#) construction *can able to* is the exception that proves this rule ("Professing").

(Venuti) version “translations.”³⁷ In K-12 classrooms, the Romantic (Heilker), “originating” (Emig, *Web*) *inventio* underlying pre-WWII [“great authors”] classicism and later [“self-actualizing”] Expressivism was succeeded by *processive writing-to-learn* (Murray). Here, activating *memory* (in place of creativity) became key: writing begins as “brainstorming” to retrieve ideas to be converted into written text.³⁸ Writers “generating” ideas do not construe new content—propose *meaning*—they assemble stored, prior input from their mental compendium.³⁹ Learners’ *word work* spotlighted by Lu—probing, listening, questioning and reflecting upon content (Heilman qtd. in Heilker; C. Donahue’s *engagement*)⁴⁰ to *create* knowledge with which to compose—has no part in *the* writing process, only text *production*.

The remaining canons [although called *design* by WPA Outcomes] do not, in practice, enact the *conversive* intertextuality and multimodality we celebrate as the basis for New Literacy, New London Group’s multiliteracies (see Black; Kress and Leeuwen) or Rhetoric’s intervenient attunement (Lorimer Leonard; Roozen; Lu, “Professing;” Fish cited in Palmeri; DePalma and Ringer).³⁹ Certainly, they are not a process of negotiation with others. In schooling writing, learner-writers move from selecting input directly to *outputting* (Murphy, Shütz)—pegging *prewriting* verbalization into the generic slots of a final *composition* (Yancey et al.). Metacognitive evaluation and *mediation* we reframe as quality control, assessing the *fit* of the writing product(ion) to “specs” of context, audience and exigence (Bitzer). *Languaging*—agentive-and-dialogic (autonomous and interactive), embodied *construing* of knowledge, *dealing with*, *adaptive transfer* (Lorimer Leonard; Shipka; Jay Jordan, “Material;” DePalma and Ringer), *tätigkeit*—we reduce to the labor

³⁷ A parallel to *comprehensible input* in Krashen’s model of non-native:target language relationship; defined by Hayes as the accessed set of “declarative knowledge stored in long-term memory” (375).

³⁸ Arguably the conceptualization in our fields closest to Vygotskian interpretation through *mediation*.

of moving cognitive knowledge objects from storage in our memory to packaged-for-consumer finished knowledge products.

The difference jibes with Lave's contrast between *transmissive* and *situated* epistemologies of learning and [experts' discourse](#) about them:

a view of knowledge as a collection of real entities, located in heads, and of learning as a process of internalizing them, versus a view of knowing and learning as engagement in changing processes of human activity. In the latter case, "knowledge" becomes a complex and problematic concept, whereas in the former it is "learning" that is problematic. ("Practice" 203-4)

Baaijen and Galbraith test how the conflicting paradigms play out for writers. In their Connectionist model, much as Vygotsky and François describe, composing is imagined as a responsive act, a process of a thinker's "inner structure of personality" (Galbraith dubs this *writer disposition*) proposing a response to an emergent problem of understanding. Connectionism's premise contrasts with our Neocognitivist [needs discourse](#) which divides *experts* who problem-explore—transforming their knowledge through higher-order reasoning—from *novices* who answer-seek, applying only lower-order reasoning to knowledge-tell (Yancey et al.).⁴⁰ Baaijen and Galbraith find, however, "Writers produce high quality text precisely to the extent that they do not develop their understanding, and, conversely, when they do increase their understanding it is at the expense of producing high quality text" (218), which they note is a "direct contradiction" of prior studies that operate on the Neocognitivist premise.

The inverse relation of knowledge reproduction to knowledge construal occurring here is predicted by Wenger: "one can articulate patterns or define procedures, but neither [...] produce the practice as it unfolds. [...] One can design work processes but not

work practices; one can design a curriculum but not learning” (229); because participation “is a social practice of negotiation and renegotiation,” if there is “no mutual engagement in the pursuit of a joint enterprise, then all that is left is the repertoire” (290-1).^{*} Fleckenstein’s critique of Neocognitivism echoes this:

For Flower and Hayes, the mind is analogous to a central processing unit that deploys discrete mental activities in the service of a set of dynamic goals and subgoals. However, for Bateson, there is no central processing unit; there is only the distributed intelligence of an ecology of mind formed by an assemblage of “differences that make a difference” (459). [...] What becomes information is that which is important for the individual at that moment. [...] To comprehend *the mind as it creates meaning rather than manipulates information*, we have to consider the entire context because *it is the context—the ecology of mind—that thinks, reads, and writes*. (90-1, my italics).

For Connectionism, too, “there is *no central executive*” (Rumelhart and McClelland, 1986; p. 134)” (qtd. by Walker). Instead, as in Jay Jordan, writers’ “expressive behavior is driven by [their] internal affective states” (Baaijen and Galbraith 202-3). The alignment to Vygotsky is unmistakable:

While **meaning** stands for socialized discourse, **sense** represents an interface between one’s individual (thus incommunicable) thinking and [one’s] verbal thought comprehensible to others. [...In e]xternal speech thought is embodied in words, in inner speech words must sublimate in order to bring forth a thought. [...]

Inner speech becomes a psychological interface between [...] culturally sanctioned

^{*} His justification is that participation in and articulation of practice necessarily balance out—“making up for [each other’s] inherent limitations” including repairing misalignment and ambiguity (63-4). The hierarchical relationship between teacher/assessor and learner-writer punishes misalignment.

symbolic systems and private “language” and imagery. The [individual’s] concretization of psychological activity in this context [is] a psychological mechanism for creating new symbols and word senses [...]. (Kozulin xxxvii-viii)

Reconciling inner sense with contextual discrepancies is by Connectionists “associated with discovery [development of understanding] when it produces ideas different to those currently stored in episodic memory” (202). Rather than retrieval of cognitive objects—declarative “stored propositions” (Hayes 15)—here *thought* is a phenomenon of Affect intertwined with the act of interpretation. Communicating as *actants*, writers *mediate* their sense with others’ (also mediated) meanings internally, then *translate* externally by *linguaging*. They author-ize. “Thought is disarticulated into speech” (Gan 57), “not expressed but completed in the word (Vygotsky, 1987, p. 251)” (qtd. in John-Steiner 137). Connectionist accounts, too, frame *linguaging* as *always* a practice of higher-order thinking, and, thus *always* learning.

What findings by Baaijen and Galbraith reveal is that *what we teach* as school writing⁷ is not what we theorize as *linguaging*—it is, rather, text repetition. It is thus not surprising that their conclusion about writers is converse to our fields’, that the fault lies with (deficient) *learners* not *linguaging*—just imitating (e.g., for FYC: Sommers; Brent; Yancey et al.; Anson and Moore; Reiff and Bawarshi; Macrorie’s *Engfish*). *Lave’s* point that *our gaze* overlooks the complexities of knowledge in setting its sights on the problems with learning/ers is made.

Our schooling writing process puts in the place of *content*—“learning as a living experience of negotiating meaning”—*form* as *lived and delivered curriculum*. Yet, ontic

⁷ The text produced by participants in their study was, by design, writing for academic purposes, evaluated by the criteria used in college composition settings.

professional practice is “informal, not without form, but its form is emergent, reflecting *the logic of improvisation* inherent in the *negotiation of meaning*” (Wenger 229, 244—my italics). This is the very blindspot [DePalma and Ringer](#), [Lorimer Leonard and Nowacek](#) and [Cressman](#) warn against. Writing process curriculum is designed to [automatize](#) “appropriate” responses to [teacher-defined] “writing situations” (Matsuda in Heilker).⁴¹ Stable, portable reproduction “work processes” we teach—as the term *appropriate* connotes—explicitly preclude improvisation and negotiation. We who set out to engage students in a facsimile of expert writer practice, remove its core *linguaging* constituents—interactional [translanguaging](#) for meaning—and core *learning* constituents—engaging to reconcile Affect with dissonance—leaving learners with only experiences of sterile repertoire and tasks of knowledge-telling it, which we assess as demonstrations of *their* deficiency.

medium: intervening substance through which a force or quality is conveyed (1590s); intermediate agency, channel of communication (1600). From the former, one’s environment or conditions (1865); from the latter, a print publication (1795) which grew into ***media***. ([Harper](#))

In proposing their alternative *hybrid* model of composition for academic purposes,⁴¹ Baaijen and Galbraith privilege writers’ reconciling *meaning* [dispositionally](#), which, in Wenger’s terms, is [experiencing ownership](#) of it. They thus echo Expressivist and Feminist Compositionists’ critiques of logocentric (Hull) formulations of *writer* as reasoner and *text* as proof rather than person and artifact of embodied personal engagement with the world (Jay Jordan, “Material”). In that latter formulation, writing is profoundly entangled with *felt* (Elbow, “Friendly”) connection—stemming from basic

⁴¹ A not coincidental analogue to the figuring of students’ classroom willingness to work as appropriate and equally factitious response to the [teacher-defined] “learning” situation, as in Pratt’s *pupiling* (“Arts”). That the Latin term *pupil* denotes “a ward/orphan” adds semantic depth to Pratt’s critique of this deficit positioning.

aversion/affinity, the Affect dimension of language theory.⁴²

The contrast between these is most apparent when we address *motive*. In line with schooling generally, learner-writers' motivation is defined by Hayes as “*willingness to produce high-quality text*” (372, my italics)—a tautology that embodies the logic of *pedagogization*, Street's and Street's observation that our fields “define literacy solely by means of reference to teaching and learning” (Hull and Schultz 586-7). In limiting writers' intention to non/compliance as a “result of motivated choice” (Hatim and Mason, *Discourse* 4), it denies its own rhetorical situatedness, erasing the existence of [constructed curriculum](#), reducing learners' identity to receptors, silencing learners' languaging as itself *practice*, ignoring what Carbaugh calls the ever-present *cultural premise*, “The deeper, often taken-for-granted meaningfulness of expressive acts and sequences to participants, a typically unspoken yet expressive active resource for the practices to be indeed what they are” (5). Criticalists in our fields contest such decontextualization, arguing that every writer, text and meaning is *always* simultaneously and dynamically situated and construed on micro, meso and macro levels.⁴³ Wenger, in fact, frames *knowledgeability* in similarly nesting relationships:

knowledge is not just a matter of our own experiences of meaning or even our [communities'] regimes of competence [... but is also constituted by] the positions of our practices with respect to the broader historical, social, and institutional discourses [...] to which we orient our practices. (141).

On the other hand, Fraser's caveat about the limits of situatedness applies. Functionalist views of learners' languaging being (over)determined by [the social](#) equally dehumanize lived experiencing of schooling. It is this latter problem of agency that [Translingualism's precepts](#) attempt to address by imagining *all* writers as [actants](#) *associating with* complex,

contested and participatory writing *situations* (Canagarajah, “Negotiating” and “Multilingual;” Reiff and Bawarshi; Collins and Slembrouck; Gutiérrez et al., “Rethinking;” Pérez González, “Multimodality;” Pratt, “Linguistic” and “Arts”).

It is clear that Cushman’s call for Translingualists to dwell *in* borders with our students requires us to “see” languagers’ situatedness not *through* [our expert positioning](#), to imagine writing *not* located within [a/the social structure](#)—but as [mediating and associating](#) *by* actants within a co-created Third [translanguaging](#) Space (reconciling Compositionists’ and Educationists’ conceptions of *Third Space*—Gutiérrez). Such a *revisioning* of *and* for learning, I think, very much aligns with Rhetorical Listening as *writerly* practice, Ratcliffe’s “willingness” to *participate* with others through text. She encourages writers to make a [motile](#) choice to

hea[r] what we cannot [yet] see. In this process the unknown becomes [...] "more simply and more radically a limit to [our current] understanding" (Rayner 14). Limits may be moved and re/moved. According to Rayner, *the agency for moving and re/moving such limits involves a "capacity" and a willingness (7): listeners possess that capacity and what we must supply is the willingness*. This focus on willingness, on conscious action, on listening does not deny the socializing power of discourse on people's unconscious. Rather, *it simply articulates the space within which we may interject our own agencies, albeit partial and complicated, into our own socializations*. (204, my italics and additions)

Unlike many critics, Ratcliffe couples her acknowledgement of languaging’s power to acculturate (Butler’s and Cronin’s pressures to translate oneself) with a call not for resistance to such forces, but intellectual engagement with their embodied and perceived dissonance. She “images” composing as focused [mediation](#) (Hatim and Mason,

Translator) of others' meanings, an act of "cross-cultural" [translatorship](#) to develop one's own understanding:

As I employ it, then, understanding means more than simply listening for a speaker/writer's intent. It also means more than simply listening for our own self-interested intent, which may range from appropriation (employing a text for one's own ends), to Burkean identification (smoothing over differences), to agreement (only affirming one's own view of reality). Instead, understanding means listening to discourse not for intent but with intent—with the intent to understand not just the claims, not just the cultural logics within which the claims function, but the rhetorical negotiations of understanding as well. (205)⁴⁴

Her epistemology, like Wei's (and unlike Mignolo's), takes cultural borders for granted. Like Wei, she imagines speakers [translating](#) difference internally (*intra*locuting to reconstruct understanding)⁴⁵ as well as externally (*inter*locuting to negotiate meaning). Cronin "sees" especially Postcolonial [translating](#)—if there is willingness to *understand* dissonance on the composer's part—[containing](#) opportunities for transformative *bisociativity* (cf. Koestler). So, while Ratcliffe, Wei and Cronin do not explicitly detach acts of [translanguaging](#) from a given structure ([the social](#)), they, like Mignolo, accept Vygotsky's conceptualization of [translation](#) as *the quintessential human experience of learning*: "[One] overcomes nature outside [one]self but also in [one]self, this is—isn't it—the crux of our psychology and ethics" (65-6).

In *Youth Online*, Thomas makes the case that we scholars, researchers and teachers (intentionally?) structure *learning writing*—as our domain, an object of study and for students—in ways that exclude that quintessence. She calls for experts to listen to and with learners, to approach ours and their

Subjectivity as ‘lived experience’ (Ellis and Flaherty 1992), g[o] beyond discursive notions of ‘the subject is language’ (Mansfield 2000:38), and focu[s] on the attributes of emotions and physicality as applied to social contexts. [This] draws upon Lacanian notions of subjectivity, where the self is governed by both the imagination and by fantasy and desire. Accord to Ellis and Flaherty (1992), the emotional processes within social experiences are crucial components to that experience. (35)

Her study includes transcripts of learner participants describing *in situ* their outside-of-school composing praxes. Listening to Violetta is a wake up call:

I need to make a confession right now, I am talking to you but at the same time I am talking to this cool guy Matt who I know from school, and trying to do some homework—an essay, for which I am hunting some info on the web—you know, throw in some jazzy pics from the web and teachers go wild about your ‘technological literacy’ skills. Big deal. If they ever saw me at my desk right now, ME, the queen of multi-tasking, they’d have no clue what was happening [...]

Oh yeah, and my email and ICQ are on in the background too right now, but I’m not on the phone to Sarah. Last week at school I was voted for student president, and people told me that it was because I could juggle 100 things at once. But, back to the ways how my talk-writing changes from one cyberworld to the other. You *have to* change the way you are depending on which space you’re in at any given moment. Although I am always ‘me’ underneath, I present my words and actions very differently depending what space or place or window or whatever you like to call it, that I am in. (qtd. 42-3)

Here on full view is what our [expert gaze](#) blocks us from seeing: *experiencing learning*

writing is profoundly Affective; it constitutes agentive social author-izing; it is legitimate (*not* peripheral) languaging practice.

My critique of our fields' conceptualizations and my own study of participants' learning writing follows from (finally) rhetorically listening to Violetta and learners like her. Similar to Thomas, I look to their online, outside-of-school composing—its features and its phenomenology—to attempt to “understand not just the claims, not just the cultural logics within which the claims function, but the rhetorical negotiations of understanding” (Ratcliffe) that learners' [intra-](#) and [interlocuting](#), [translate](#) there.

Chapter 2: 피리소릴 따라와 / *I'm Takin' Over You*⁷



Screenshot from [a fan-created gif excerpting a fan-subtitled version](#) of BTS' official music video for *Dope*/ *떨어* (dorkprincess).⁴⁶

πρακτική [prak ti ki]: [*practice*] Greek, fit for action, fit for business; business-like, practical; active, effective, vigorous ([Harper](#))

I find myself, researcher-teacher-languager, experiencing my own [ZPD](#), what Takayoshi et al. frame as *academic dissonance* (citing Blakeslee and Fleisher):

You sense a gap in what you are reading, something that is not addressed that you think should be. It may be a gap in the author's argument, or it may be a contradiction between what the author has claimed and what you have observed or experienced personally. Some scholars refer to this perception of a gap in the literature as a *felt difficulty* [Young, 1981]. You sense that something isn't quite right. [...] The gap, or felt difficulty, you perceive in your reading may well become the seed for the research question you formulate. (99)

The difficulty I feel is a disjunction with Education studies of literacy learners—etic, formalist error analysis of learners' usage⁴⁷—and Compositionist studies assessing learner Academic English products through nomological and strategy analyses similar to that used in structuralist, empirical language acquisition research (see critiques by: Flores and Rosa; MacSwan; Skutnabb-Kangas; Kubota; V. Young, “Keep;” Gutiérrez et al.,

⁷ *Follow the pipe-sound, I'm takin' over you*, the final lines of the refrain of BTS' *Pied Piper* (my translation). Song credits: Pdogg, Jinbo, KASS, Kim Nam Jun [RM], Min Yun Ki [Suga], Jung Hoseok [J-Hope], Bang Shi Hyuk [“Hitman” Bang].

“Building;” Nero; Scribner and Cole; Bou Ayash, *Toward*; Milroy and Milroy; Arnaut et al.; Vandenberg et al.; Kress; Fairclough). Contrarian findings in our fields from Berthoff to Brandt, on the other hand, jibe with my experience of my own learners. They are like Violetta, [mainstream](#) and marked students negotiating [languaging](#) and composing in ways that are academically (as well as personally, socially and even commercially) legitimated—although only *sometimes* in their school[ed] assignments (Hull and Schultz; Gere; Lorimer Leonard; Fraiberg et al.; S. Miller, “Why;” Black; Lemke and van Helden; Gutiérrez; García; Gee, “Learning;” Moll et al.).

The need to resolve this discord led me to Pennycook’s *Critical Applied Linguistics*, which calls upon his field—whose “principal concern has often been considered...language teaching” (12)—to take up Dean’s *Critical Theory* praxis of a “**restive problematization of the given**,” continual questioning of underexamined assumptions about [English\[es\]](#) and its teaching. He is seeking a remedy for the disparities and inequities critical practitioners inevitably confront when they drop their [expert gaze](#) and “see” learners as people. However, he notes that “Far too little has been done to make critical academic work [...] show at the very least pathways that connect theory and practice” (26)—a claim validated in [my reading of schooling writing pedagogy](#) above. Much like Latour, he draws attention to our fields’ black boxes, citing Foucault’s assertion that

“it is in discourse that power and knowledge are joined together” (Foucault, 1980a, p. 100) [...] Rather than relying on a prior sociological analysis of power on which we can base an analysis of language and ideology, Foucault’s view demands that *power remains that which is to be explained, specifically, the analysis of power does not exist prior to the analysis of language.* (81)

Applying such analysis of discourse, I “see” in our Composition and Literacy Studies’ [expert gaze](#) that [needs discourses](#) *position* researcher and instructor practices as “[natural](#)” [[English Exceptionalist](#)] literacy praxes and [associate](#) learning [that we value] *through* teaching directly to teaching *through* expertise [that we privilege]. This reinforces our economic, political and cultural power and institutions through which we deploy it, while abnormalizing—*displacing* from structures we construct—[O]ther ways of literacy, learning and expertise. Explaining power by analyzing the language of our fields makes this clear: for us and for our structures to exist, there must be learners who need our teaching (or else, apologies to Voltaire, we would have to invent them).

Studying ontic literacy, learning and expertise within operating professional settings, Wenger patently rejects “learning inherently [being] linked to teaching” (266). His book’s conclusion is a warning to educational institutions to accept that “an[y] organization is not so much an overarching structure as it is a [boundary object](#)” (247)—a real or conceptual “objec[t] that serve[s] to coordinate the perspectives of various constituencies for some purpose” (cf. Star), a non-human [actant](#) for [translating](#) meanings, roles and associations. Shared practice—say, ours with our students, their families, employers, government agencies, etc—forms what Wenger calls *localities*. These get situated into slots of discursive structures, but they function as **constellations**. He is explicit: *placement* of localities—*positioning* people and practices—is *imagined* structure even in extant organizations. The Organization Gaze is Panoptic, the power-structure it maps out, an illusion. While “diagrams of the formal versus the informal (elements of organizations) almost always place the formal on top and the informal below” (246-7),

reality is dynamic, unmappable,⁴ unformed exchanges, **it is *what is being translated***:

[...U]nderstand organizations in terms of relations among localities with their own perspectives on how they belong to the organization, their own interpretation of its charter, and their own forms of knowledgeability. [...] As a consequence, *a constellation, even from the inside, is always known with respect to specific forms of engagement, and therefore always known partially*. There is no global view of a constellation that can be achieved at the level of practice. Of course, certain views can have more currency than others. [...] *But it is important not to confuse the institutional privileges certain perspectives obtain within an economy of meaning with intrinsic qualities putatively possessed by these perspectives.* (246, my italics)

My border-crossing through disconnected localities of English and Education reveal that *expertise, learning and literacy* as well as *language* are functioning for our fields as **boundary objects**. Between and within localities, meanings and practices associated with these actants are constantly being contested, adopted, altered, excluded and proposed—while power determines whose version gets privileged/ devalued by and through institutions of the Academy and K-12 education. Keeping in mind Wenger's caveat that no representation of languaging practice is the reality on the ground and the advice of Butler, Pennycook and Cushman to be critical of the mapping of languaging practice imposed by our fields' tenets, I next survey *other* domains' territorial views of these actants. I find these academic and nonacademic localities translate these boundary objects in ways that problematize—and thus have the capacity to *revise*—our fields'

⁴ I remix Baudrillard, who repurposes Borges' fable of the map and the Empire (cited in Bordo), with the Harry Potter Universe in imagining *mappability*.

representations and understanding, if we “see” them.



(artifact 052518-4)[□]

Schooling in our fields’ literature is rarely challenged as the [given](#) site for learners’ developing literacy.⁴⁸ One alternative gets characterized almost universally as its diametrical opposite (Alim; Hull; Goffman; Brooke; Lemke and van Helden)—the location for regressing schooled “development:” *Youth Culture*. For my research, I conducted thick participation (Sarangi) for 3 years with today’s most prominent Youth Culture scapegoat,⁴⁹ social media—specifically one cluster within its vast constellation: [Tumblr](#), a US-based, global, relatively low profile microblogging platform whose loose user-identification standards, reputation for laissez faire implementation of Fair Use copyright protections and proprietary features attract users interested in *assemblage* (Deleuze and Guattari; Bateson; Cox; Burkean *antinomy*, Fleckenstein qtd. in Lewis) through hypertextual composing around the “five pillars of Tumblr:” aesthetics, fandoms, social justice, memes and porn.⁵⁰

When “on” Tumblr, bloggers compose “new” material—home pages, posts, messages, tags [searchable index markers using #] and replies. They also *recompose* existing material—constructing posts that remix source sound, images and/or text; making comments, marking likes [in the form of a clickable ♡] and appending tags to others’ posts; answering anonymous “asks” sent by fellow users. Tumblr writing takes the form of what New Media Studies categorizes as *discourse 2.0*⁵¹ (Herring and

[□] A screenshot of a [tweet](#) [Twitter post] posted on a Tumblr blog, then reblogged by another.

Androutsopoulos; Barton and Lee; Kytölä; Miller and Kelly; Eyman; Hess and Davisson; Zenger) the messages *being* the media (cf. McLuhan) constituting interactive, digital conversations (Carbonell i Cortés; Hall; Djonov and Zhao; Block; Halliday and Matthiessen).[≠] Communications in this space are transnational and, in most cases, also multimedia and/or transmodal (Nordquist, *Literacy*; Hawisher and Selfe, “Transnational;” Androutsopoulos; Stroud and Prinsloo; Barton and Lee; Athique, *Transnational*). Bricolage of genres, composing elements and [English\[es\] languagings](#) is typical. In fact, DeVoss cites Media Law specialist Vaidhyathan and Constitutional Law icon Lessig for the consensus [outside the Academy and Education] that “remixing is *the* contemporary composing paradigm” (15)—writers not situated but *situating discourse* 2.0. Remixing means that even where digital conversing, using traditional definitions, is “mono”lingual, Tumblr users’ heterogenous composing generates Wei’s [translanguaging spaces](#).

Tumblr’s blogger-blogger interactivity is tracked (Kohnen; Cox)—with likes, reblogs, messages, [tags](#), etc available. [□] And other composing actions (formatting, hyperlinks, watermarks, filters, etc) are also afforded visibility—a boon for tracing *what* is being translated and *how* by and in [actants](#).⁵² Logistical perks aside, I selected Tumblr for its intangibles. My child, on departing for college, gifted me with the right to follow them on Tumblr. This introduced me to its intimacy-*with*-publicity practices of communicating, representing and relating, and it repositioned me as a *noob* needing to

[≠] Posts from bloggers one selects to *follow* (in addition to advertisers’ posts) appear as discrete original or appended rectangular packets scrolling vertically in chronological order on each user’s home *dashboard*; user-user messages appear similarly to phone texting screens, on the same *dash*.

[□] Others’ activity vis à vis posts is measured and the results displayed to bloggers. However, the extent of searchability is arbitrary, to say the least—actions such as [tagging](#), flagging and de/activation as well as programming limit [mappability](#).

figure out how to navigate her way around. I suddenly “saw” profoundly differently than I had through my mother/teacher [gaze](#). The dissonance means assumptions about my and others’ identities, established social roles and my long-standing associations with [linguaging](#) I had—am *having*—to rethink.[⊖]

My selection of data was also affected by *irl*[⊗] experience. Several years ago, Angela, one of my FYC students, selected a particularly intriguing media product to analyze through the lens of Bhabha’s hybridity—a digital series following a Korean boyband living with and learning from African-American urban Hip Hop artists and community members in Los Angeles called *American/Bangtan Hustle Life* ([IMDB](#)). That band, known as BTS (*Bangtan Sonyeondan*/ 방탄소년단)[⊙] began to show up on my Tumblr [dash](#), the subject of posts by a self-assembling network of international fans conversing about K[orean]-Pop, which “Catalysed by [social media platforms] site media and online fan clubs, [...] has emerged as the epitome of digital youth culture: a social-media-friendly, fan/ user-steered, and participation-conducive anthropological occurrence” (Choi and Maliangkay 8). BTS was rising meteorically to globally-recognized stardom in 2016-17—a status achieved and celebrated with American, Billboard and Grammy Music Awards’ nominations, awards and appearances in the US in addition to album sales success and multiple, sold-out stadium concert world tours. Encountering interactions between the group’s fans—officially named *A.R.M.Y.* (아미)—on Tumblr at this juncture was serendipitous and fortuitous:[⊗] the scope and range of 아미 involvement was expanding,

[⊖] Terms of public school employment preclude me using social media in relation to my students. My institutional review board imposed no barriers for me using it outside the context of my teaching.

[⊗] Acronym for *in real life* which indicates, often humorously, one’s off-line behavior versus online.

[⊙] Translated officially as *Bulletproof Boy Scouts*.

[⊗] The fan theory explaining affirming events involving BTS is this: *Fate is an 아미*.

with new fans enthusiastically interacting with experienced ones to share questions, answers, feelings, thoughts and content. As teacher and as scholar I was intrigued by what I witnessed learners doing: Is this raucous, joyful, intelligent, creative... *group work*?! I set out to learn more.

오!미's practice is cacophonous exchanging with and between constellations of localities engaging with K-Pop—itself, a boundary-challenging, arguably *new* art form.⁵³ Shin Hyung-kwan, head of MNET [South Korea's "MTV"]⁵⁴ predicted, "K-pop w[ill] continue to break the language and culture barrier and become a huge global influence." And this, he argues, is because

Music is very direct. Even if you don't know the lyrics, the sound goes into your inner ear and vibrates. The sound of a bass line moves your body; everyone reacts the same to this. Nationality and language can be overcome, because it's so directly felt. You can make instant friends with someone if you like the same music, even if you don't speak the same language. K-pop is beyond your imagination. (Hong, *Birth* 133)

Choi and Maliangkay categorize K-Pop as "sui generis *augmented entertainment*" (5), a commodity "at the fulcrum of what might be termed an entertainment-diplomatic complex" (6), not "to be reduced to a mere subgenre of popular culture" (9). In that role, BTS is the ideal *promo*⁵⁵ for the [South] Korean Ministry of Culture, Sport and Tourism's "cheeky" plan for world pop culture domination (Hong, *Birth*), called *Hallyu*/ 한류 or what Epstein calls *Korea, Inc*⁵⁶—state-supported, globalized cultural content production

as a national economic survival strategy for the post-Fordist world marketplace (Jin).⁵⁸ The Republic of Korea has a population of only 50 million, yet BTS' global fanbase has garnered at this writing more than 9 billion (with-a-B) YouTube views (Elfvig-Wang, "K-Pop Fans;" Herman, "BTS' Pied"). At a mere 4 years' young in 2017 (the year preceding its most explosive growth), BTS was already estimated by the Hyundai Research Institute to have singlehandedly brought \$US 3.6 billion into the Korean economy (Suntikul).

International fans' activity [problematizes](#) Shin's claim that barriers of nationality/language are "overcome" by K-Pop. Cultural/linguistic difference is by no means neutralized [as it might be imagined to happen with cultural exchange (Jin 27)]—rather, K-Pop fans invest heavily—their time, energy, money and attention—in the Koreanness [associated](#) with K-Pop. BTS' popularity is not a cliché case of music acting as a universal language/culture to get *through* borders to reach fans; BTS' global [오빠](#) dwell *in* those borders. Particularizing diversalité of language/culture/identity is a strategic goal of their work. "Korean" is a lucrative [boundary-object](#) and, thus, gets valued and exchanged by [오빠](#) along with BTS products as an immaterial cultural commodity.⁵⁷ Given that, I[nternational]-ARMY⁵⁹ languaging during the period of my study offered me a chance to observe an ecology of *learning writing English[es]* rich in [translinguality](#), Postcolonial, ANT and Communities of Practice [translation](#), [mediation](#) and negotiation of meaning, identity/roles and associations.

⁵⁸ Kang I. reports that the country's president was inspired by *Jurassic Park* to promote creative cultural arts—"pure commodity for exchange rather than use value" (51)—as a sustainable industry to shore up its economy, proven vulnerable to global financial crises.

⁵⁹ BTS fans outside of the Republic of Korea and those not self-identifying as K[orean]-ARMY.



artifact 060218a-2¹

[W]e must pay attention to BTS' ARMY for defining a new notion of fandom as the product of powerful unity and comradeship. ARMYs are not passive fans who simply go to concerts and buy CDs. They generate critical discourse within the fandom, analyze music and lyrics as much as critics if not more, and strive to exonerate BTS from misconceptions about them. The international ARMY has already achieved beyond what any PR department of K-pop agencies is capable of. (Kim Youngdae)

I-ARMY is a vast and eclectic constellation of localities—a veritable United Nations of resident and home countries, languages, knowledge bases and ethnic and cultural affiliations, numbering in the tens of millions [even including *non-Youth*]¹ (Morimoto). It continues to grow, despite enjoying the distinction for several years of being the largest pop music fandom in the world (Kelley, “BTS Lead”). Tumblr is not its primary venue. Its members interact via both global (YouTube, Instagram, Twitter) and regionally centered (KakaoTalk, Weibo, V-app) networks, often through multiple, simultaneously active accounts. Tumblr particularly attracts I-ARMY seeking through [English\[es\] languaging](#) to find, create, share and discuss⁵⁸ translation/subtitles of original, remixed and fan-created content, broadcasts, streams, (subscription) fansite exclusives, news, songs, interviews, photoshoots, chat/posts, live performances, merchandise, broadcast appearances, promotional materials and side project products connected to the band, who produce substantial content in Japanese and Mandarin in addition to their Korean[s]

¹ A Tumblr reblog, with appended comments and [tag](#), of a screenshot of a [tweet](#) employing orthographic expressives, image and textual allusions and meme-slang as examples of [discourse 2.0](#).

¹ Thanks to a Tumblr-er who, in response to BTS signing a 7-year contract, invited fellow [ㅍㅍ](#) to reply with their ages at its end (artifact 100718-6), I was able to compile *in situ* a (nonscientific) age distribution for 253 I-ARMY bloggers who answered the call. They average between 20-21 (in international age) and include a sprinkling of middle-aged and older fans. Another case of Fate being an [ㅍㅍ](#)?

and English[es].⁵⁹

Tumblr I-ARMY connects by networking diverse, self-elected learners—of “Korean,” of “English,” of K-Pop, of dance, of music, of videography, of fanfiction, of fanart, etc—individually connecting each other with content *through* participation. Some volunteer (and get recruited) to broker, intermediate, and negotiate languages and cultures both as core ㅇㅍㅁ and as fandom **boundary-crossers** (Engeström and Sannino; Wenger). Mono and multilingual, these volunteers perform **translatorship** by serving as archivists, consultants and social docents for each other and at large. Their contribution is crucial. I-ARMY resembles a mass version of the hypothetical cocktail party imagined by Pratt (“Linguistic”), where no mutual intelligibility is assured between any two given interlocutors—but the critical mass ensures a third is available to **intermediate** and so mingling continues. Pratt predicted that studying such a plurilingual gathering would destabilize the *givens* of our fields’ theory and practice; my inquiry shows this to be true—and that it touches on more than just language.

ㅇㅍㅁ are extraordinarily active—voting, posting, **tagging** and commenting on behalf of their Idols at rates that earned the fandom its own fame (Blake)—justifying their still-undisputed title (bestowed by MTV), **the World’s Most Powerful Fandom**. Generating as well as consuming and distributing content as media traffic ensures BTS keeps **trending** on social media as well as [sales] “charting” nationally and internationally and winning popularity-based awards; constant **discourse 2.0** co-**linguaging** is thus ARMY’s signature practice (Seo and Hollingsworth). Its full name *Adorable Representative eMcee for Youth* telegraphs its self-defined role: not merely consumption but active co-performance—*representing* as it is imagined in Hip Hop (Leung; Alim; Dutheley). Fan

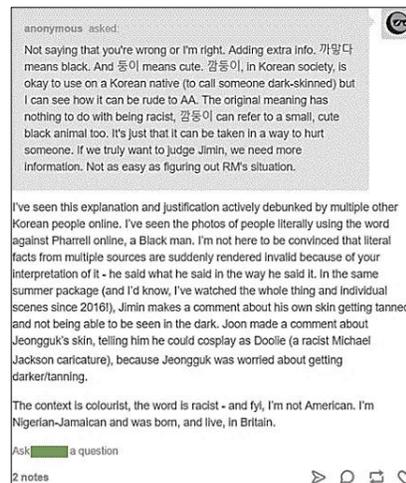
representing is [hyping](#) their Idols to new audiences, and it is tangible [irl](#) collective involvement in Youth causes and social issues associated with BTS (Ganzer; Seo and Hollingsworth).

o[~] emceeing is, in a New Media word, [Artivism](#) (Sandoval and Latorre)—which Ribero and Licona note is common on Tumblr “where activists can respond creatively and critically to sociopolitical hostilities while encouraging community education and activism through shared awareness and the corresponding possibilities for coalition” (153-4) facilitating movement(s) by means of “[relational literacies](#) (Licona and Chávez) ‘a third-space concept related to borderlands rhetorics, coalitional gestures, relational knowledges [....]’ (96) [that] signal the desire for shared understandings and meaning-making through participatory multimodal practice, performance, and action” (155). Linguaging [artivism](#) instantiates [Latourian translations between actants](#), associating constellations of texts/sources with fans (through research, campaigning, etc) and engendering complex and intricate bodies of knowledge, a communal repository of diversely-referential indexical content and a wide range of communicative situations and roles through which content gets co-created and remixed. I-ARMY as a network possess the resources, the labor and the political exigences/purposes, and so are able to act as a global mass *translator ad-hocracy* (Pérez-González, “Fansubbing”).

Tumblr, more than other platforms, may attract such adhocracies because it affords what pioneering New Media theorist McLuhan calls the holy grail for Youth Culture, “R-O-L-E-S”—self-selected postures made available, he says, by “the lack of fixed representations within digital culture” (cited by Rice). Beyond fandom, Tumblr’s self-fulfilling reputation is a (comparatively) *Safe Space* for LGBTQIA+ and other non-normatively identifying users to pursue their interests while at the same time accessing,

building and sustaining supportive community for each other (Byron and Robards; Cox; Kohnen; Lemke and van Helden). Norm transgressing, engagement with complexities of performative identity, anti-hegemonic ideology and an ethos of embracing—nay, *celebrating*—difference are its distinguishing characteristics. Tumblr I-ARMY overtly grapple with and [problematize](#) power-saturated [givens](#) of *normality* and *appropriacy* regarding sexual and gender identity, as well as for language, culture and fandom itself, as part of their practice.⁶⁰ Pande, studying racial dynamics of Tumblr fandoms, emphasizes a caveat, however:

At any given moment on my Tumblr dashboard, fans are engaged in interrogating their own [ideological] biases, arguing about notions of representation, finding new ways of engaging with source texts, and organizing around certain social justice issues. [...] within the act of squeeing over the latest Marvel movie. To try and posit these as somehow entirely separate spheres of fan activity, as some theorists have done [...] is to miss the *interlinked rhetorical strategies that position these spaces as progressive while also eliding consistent patterns of erasure*. (46, my italics)



(artifact 071918b-1)

During my data collection race/color came to the fore of I-ARMY composing about and in support of BTS—making possible an examination of its practices with such erasure and elision in mind ([here](#), chapter 4). Above is an example of its **discourse 2.0**. This Tumblr posted reply to a direct messaged “ask” [in gray; here, as is often the case, not interrogative but declarative] conducts [translatorial](#) mediation through paraphrasing, quoting, interpreting and evaluating semantic, pragmatic, ideological and axiological meanings, integrating 한글 (Korean script), Romanized Korean[s], and English[es], focused on BTS’ and ARMYs’ racialization and elision, is performed.

Contemporary media fandom revolves around social action—not, as stereotypes would have it, around the shared object of desire (*bias*).⁶¹ “**The people formerly known as the audience [...] the writing readers**”⁶¹ is the identity New Media Studies theorist Rosen assigns these fans, who disrupt [given](#) production:reception binaries (Booth, *Digital*; Kristeva; Ede and Lunsford; Ong; Bermann’s *transformation-as-translation*) in contriving fandom as *profoundly*—intertextually, interpersonally, interactionally, intermediately, experientially—**participatory** (Jenkins; Booth, *Companion*; Reynolds; Sandvoss; Derecho; Oxford). So participatory is fandom composing that it [problematizes](#) fundamental [givens](#) of our fields—well-fortified, Mignolonic borders delineating orality/ literacy, reading/ writing, text/ author/ audience and constituents of genre and rhetorical situation (You; New London Group; Athique, *Transnational*; Bitzer).

Banks offers a Queer Theory take on [participatory](#) fan composing as expanded

⁶¹ Like a sports fan’s chosen team, *bias* refers to one’s favorite (usually one person or character in a show or group). An intensely committed fan [called a *stan*—combining *stalker* and *fan*] may boast a bias, an *ult-bias* [all-time favorite] and numerous *bias-wreckers* [additional persons/characters who threaten to steal away the stan’s interest] for each fandom in which they participate.

embodiment—associating by [translating](#) Affect, motivated by desire to [share](#) experience with others rather than to achieve deferred, instrumentalist goals. In this view digital composing *ecologies* contrast with our fields’ imagined epistemic *contexts* explicitly. The former hosts distributed, subjective and extemporaneous (quantized) [linguaging](#), a violation of the latter’s bounding in *situatedness* the writer, the text and a process of production (which are [mapped](#)):

A queer/trans rhetoric of intentionality underscores that “outcome” is not necessarily the purpose of ‘being’ and it certainly isn’t the only or most appropriate way to “read” a text (or a body). As media moves across networks [...] to less “controlled” spaces such as microblogging (Tumblr) [...] it becomes difficult to imagine an agreed upon or pre-established “outcome” for what emerges. What’s more[,] evidence is that a host of creators in different spaces create with intention, with the idea that they are adding something to the mix even if they are not sure what or to what particular end. *Where our academic reading practices tend to privilege a critique for which we can know the totality of the object or idea—its genealogy, its teleology, etc.—transmedia calls attention to the hyper-present nature of new media, the same hyper-presence that queer/trans theorists have been working to articulate through theories of embodiment and affect rooted in new materialist frameworks.* (348, my italics).

Alexander and Rhodes (*Multimodality*) join Banks, emphatically contesting scholars’ reducing *transmediation*—which they classify as an act of creative *excess*—to mere composing [*placing* writing, writer and text]. Treating [discourse 2.0](#) as *transmedia* [problematizes](#) not only our framing of *inventio* and [writing process](#), but the [given](#) erasure of the writer-body in our fields generally (*stringently* applied in K-12).

To analyze ㅇㅈㅁ enthusiastic responding to 7 attractive and talented young men and to each other mandates putting, as ㅇㅈㅁ do, *ludos* in conversation with *logos* (Illich’s *conviviality*, cited by Pennycook and Otsuji; Appadurai). For, *experiencing* enjoyment and *feeling* satisfaction (present-oriented criteria) are the fandom’s and band’s unabashedly expressed desires. Studying material expressions of Affect as I-ARMY literacy practice (Goodfellow and Lamy; Appadurai; Athique, *Transnational*; Leys; Micciche; Jay Jordan, *Redesigning; subjectivities*, New London Group; the *personal*, Lu, “Redefining;” Shipka; D. Johnson) gives us a Youth Culture perspective on the “irrational” (Alexander and Rhodes, *Multimodality*) communicated—connected, expressed, [shared](#), [mediated](#)—alongside the “rational” *language* in exchanges. This challenges borders between the affective and the semantic implicit in our theories of composition. Baaijen and Galbraith point out,

self-monitoring—is assumed to reflect the extent to which writers direct their writing toward rhetorical *or* dispositional goals. According to Snyder (1974), high self-monitors use cues from *the rhetorical context to guide their expressive behavior*, whereas low self-monitors’ *expressive behavior is driven by their internal affective states*, rather than tailored to the social situation. (202-3, my italics)

Their contrast represents a rare delineation of our fields’ conceptualization of [the social](#) (semantic attunement to situation) in relation to the *personal* (*felt* disposition; Vygotsky’s “individual intranslatable meaning”) for writing. Their framing is taken from Anthropologist Edward T. Hall, who applied Sapir and Whorf to theorize communication-based mechanisms for cohesion of social groups ([Wikipedia](#)). Neocognitivism applies his

spectrum of *high-* to *low-context* cultures/languages—outer to inner driven relating—through [expert needs discourse](#) to [mainstream](#) writers. Through its influence, we “image” writing/ers developing toward maturity (fitting to social expectations; pursuing Banks’ “outcome”) by moving away from immaturity (attending to Affect; expressing excess). Just such a spectrum of “readiness” for expert status is laid out in Bartholomae’s “Inventing the University,” position [the social](#) as sublimation of *the personal*, based on a Modernist binary of “public language” and private *felt* thought.

The Postcolonial Korean-English activity of I-ARMY learners [problematizes](#) social:personal cultural and [linguaging](#) dialectics. In Hall’s framework, Korea/n is categorized as quite high-context/-monitoring while mainstream USAmerican/English is low. Contrastive rhetoric (using Hofstede’s similar framing) labels the former as being *collectivist* and the latter, *individualist*. Park, analyzing Korean-American cross-cultural encounters, posits linguaging as a [translatorial ZPD](#), where different minds[ets] meet:

All [this] boils down to a single statement: the difference of *psychocultural orientation patterns between two cultures is what actually happens in the process of communication* between the affective communication-oriented people and the instrumental communication-oriented people; the situation-oriented people and the self-assertive-oriented people; the total communication-oriented people and the partial communication-oriented people; the indirect-intermediated interpersonal communication-oriented people and direct face-to-face [communication-] oriented people; the non-dialectic oriented people and the dialectic oriented people (cf. Yoshikawa 1974). (121)

Kang H.’s contrast amplifies the divergences in Banks’ Affect/logos distinction:

L[ow] C[ontext] culture has an analytical thinking style and is field-independent.

Analytical thinkers attend more to focal objects and specific details, and what is going on in the environment is less important. They also tend to place detailed elements into a cause-effect, linear or sequential frame, assuming that there is a clear cause leading to the effect. [...] Koreans see the context as a whole, and do not feel the necessity of looking at individual details analytically or solving problems immediately. [...] H[igh] C[ontext] cultures believe that truth will manifest itself through non-linear discovery processes and without having to employ rationality.

Intuition performs more in the processes (Hall 1976). (20)

Wenger offers a nondeterministic middle way: *identity as experience*—not the inhabiting of social persona or roles, but the *connecting* of oneself with constellations of others. His theorization imagines a duality between “our ability to get things done and our ability to live meaningfully” (208) hybridizing (social/outer) outcome and (personal/inner) Affect. To gain power (*why*), his view has [actants](#) constantly [translating](#) and [associating](#) the personal (*what*) with [the social](#) (*who*) through networks (*how*):

Identity is a locus of social selfhood and by the same token a locus of social power. [...]It is the power to belong, to be a certain person, to claim a place with the legitimacy of membership; [...]and] the vulnerability of belonging to, identifying with and being part of some communities that contribute to defining who we are and thus have a hold on us. Rooted in our identities, power derives from belonging as well as from exercising control over what we belong to. [...]It requires or creates some form of consensus in order to become socially effective, but the meaning of the consensus is something whose ownership always remains open to negotiation. Power [...] reflects the interplay between identification and negotiability. This view takes power to involve a tension—a kind of inherent double bind, as it were—

between [them]. (*Communities* 207, my italics)

To him, Bateson's *double bind* is always in play (rather than emerging only from conflict). It motivates [motility](#): relational (Ribero and Licona) social power provides Latourian exigence for [mediating](#) difference. Conceptualizing that duality—and experience of it as [translatorial](#), *relational motility*—recalls Wei:

The act of translanguaging then is transformative in nature; *it creates a social space* for the multilingual language user by bringing together different dimensions of their personal history, experience and environment, their attitude, belief and ideology, their cognitive and physical capacity *into one coordinated and meaningful performance, and making it into a lived experience*. [...] it is not a space where different identities, values and practices simply co-exist, but combine together *to generate new identities, values and practices*. The boundaries of a translanguaging space are ever-shifting; *they exist primarily in the mind of the individual who creates and occupies it, and the construction of the space is an ongoing, lifelong process*. (1223, my italics)

For I-ARMY and other digital composers, [translanguaging](#) need not be “multi”lingual nor “cross”cultural; not geared *either* toward the social or the personal. Booth (*Digital*) finds languaging *for* social identity [personal author-ity] characterizes fan composing generally. “[F]ans write in order to be read and to be interpreted by a community” (Bacon-Smith qtd. 36); their invitational [transmediating](#)—Fiske's *producerly* texts, “open for audience engagement”—embodies Wenger's dual self/social negotiation-as-communication.

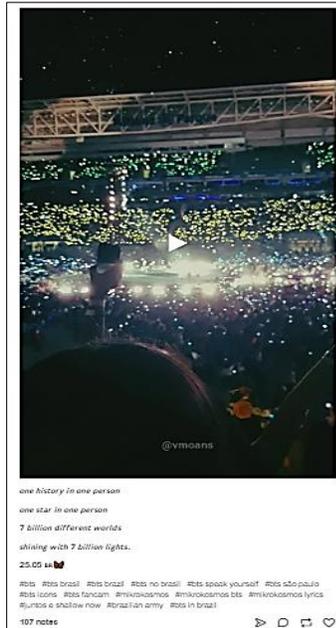
◊| [translanguaging spaces](#) come into being *for* negotiating between members. Discourse 2.0 gets used as a tool for localities, highly-productive, high-involvement, high-energy *communities of passion* (Choi and Maliangkay), who **write to transmediate**:

translate desire for/into belonging, develop and perform identity, translanguage to negotiate meaning and share art and ideas. The complexities and sophistication of fan translatorship has been displaced by clichés, fans as mobs of hysterical preteen spectators (Roth).⁶² Disruptive of stereotypes, too, is fans’ embrace of a criticalist *ethos* in pursuing their passion, their framing of their own and pop artists’ work as legitimate cultural production worthy of investing time and effort to inquiry and debate (Athique, “Crossover;” Mapes and Kimme Hea)—even if others ridicule it—a stance B. Williams defends against *our* expert misapprehension of its naivete:

not to argue that power does not remain important in issues of popular culture, technology, and literacy, or that mass popular culture is without influence on issues of identity and rhetoric. Still, the interpretation and appropriation of mass popular culture texts by youth literacy demonstrates that they are “also playing the role of active cultural workers, reshaping and recontextualizing global materials in the particular communities and local settings” [...] developing knowledge, defining oneself, and producing symbolic goods and materials takes place through active engagement with heterogeneous cultural sources and multilayered identifications (Lam, 2006, p. 223). (23, 30) [...] The result is that participants have to think about and adjust to cultural differences and respond to others in ways that are sensitive to and thoughtful about issues of cultural power and subject positions (Bury, 2005; Williams, 2009). These negotiated communications do happen and provide opportunities for cross-cultural contact and understanding that none of us could have imagined [before 2000]. (28)

Merely refraining from devaluing fan composing as “play”⁶³ enables a problematization of dismissive givens about them modeled by Feminist critiques of industry and Pop

Culture Studies criticism. My inquiry thus picks up the gauntlet thrown down by one of its doyennes, Jessica Hopper in her iconic tweet: *Suggestion: replace the word 'fan girl' with 'expert' and see what happens* (qtd. by Cowie).



난 너를 보며 꿈을 꾀

칠혹 같던 밤들 속

서로가 본 서로의 빛

같은 말을 하고 있었던 거야 우린

You got me

I look at you and dream

I got you

In the dark nights

We saw each other's light

We were saying the same things

—Refrain from BTS' *Mikrokosmos*⁶⁴

Tumblr post with embedded [fancam](#)⁷ footage of BTS' Love Yourself concert stadium tour in São Paulo, Brazil and quotation of [English\[es\] translated lyrics](#) of BTS' *Mikrokosmos*' third verse (artifact 9918-71)

Hopper's suggestion transforms Tumblr I-ARMY from hyped-up consumers to prolific, globally engaged, *credible* [cultural workers creating, remixing, interpreting and associating BTS-related content](#) through collective [translatorship](#), a joint enterprise that connects the five dimensions of fandom, “a particular mode of reception; a role in encouraging activism; the function of an interpretive community; a tradition of cultural production; and the status of an alternative social community” (*Textual* 1-2), theorized by Fandom Studies' pioneer Jenkins. From pre-Internet days, Jenkins notes, “the emergence of digital networks altered the ways that [participatory](#) fan culture⁶⁵ operates, [...] creating a context where forms of expression flow quickly and broadly, both within and between social networks” (18). I-ARMY combine [transmediating](#) with [translinguality](#), departing

⁷ Audience-produced recordings of live performances.

from conventional constructs of [English\[es\]](#). Examining *what* gets [translated](#), transferred and (inter)[mediated](#) by, with and between I-ARMY digital ecologies thus challenges conceptualizations of locality, culture, context and [the social](#) infusing our fields' work.

As to *how* [transmediating](#) works, Williams and Zenger argue that the advent of [Web 2.0](#) brought to fruition Cope and Kalantzis' new media "shift in the balance of agency, [...] from a society of command and compliance to a society of reflective co-construction (p. 89)" (qtd. 6). The concurrent proliferation of (affordable or pirated) software applications for creative arts⁶⁶ altered the previous balance of power between consumer and producer:

For young people, participatory popular culture texts are regarded as available for interpretation, but also for critique, appropriation, response, and reuse. A growing emphasis on speed, visuals, and combining multiple modes of communication on any given text means that *individuals* now have the same concerns and capabilities that have been available to popular culture *producers* for decades. (Williams and Zenger 5, my italics)

Because Web 2.0 tools enable interactive, interpretive [sharing](#) (Varis and Blommaert; Jenkins, "Fandom;" Booth, *Digital*)⁶⁷ of/in fan [produsage](#) (Bruns; Anderson's *prosumption* cited in Alexander and Rhodes, *Routledge*; de Certeau's *productive consumption* cited in Booth, *Digital*), they reify (in Wenger's sense) collaborative, *textualized* negotiation of meaning in an individual-with-collective, composing-with-learning process (Ribero's and Licon's *productive power to create assemblages*; observed, too by: Nordquist, *Literacy*; Byrnes; Munday, *Routledge*; Pérez-González, "Fansubbing" and "Multimodality;" Choi; Canagarajah, "Multilingual;" Gray qtd. in Cox; Yau; Dunne in Bermann and Porter).⁶⁸ Anyone who has marveled at the access to

information afforded by the triad of digitalization, search engines and globally connected volunteer content-providers has glimpsed the constellating potential for transmedia *assemblage* that Web 2.0 realizes. Bourdaa notes:

Levy explains how collective intelligence created what he calls “cosmopedia,” a collaborative and universal space of thinking: “the members of a thinking community search, inscribe, connect, consult, explore. Not only does the cosmopedia make available to the collective intellect all of the pertinent knowledge available to it at a given moment, but it also serves as a site of collective discussion, negotiation, and development” (Levy 1997, 217). [...] The affordances of the [Web 2.0] interface allow fans to post texts, GIF sets, videos, comments, drawings, and make it easy for fans to share the productions via the reblog button. Fans use the culture of remix (Allard 2005) to underline their additive or their transformative comprehension of the texts. This is what Henry Jenkins (2009) coined performance, where fans can actively identify “sites of potential performance in and around the transmedia narrative where they can make their own contributions.” (392-4)

◊-□] employs Web 2.0 tools to connect to each other as what Goodfellow and Lamy call digital *learning culture*, based on “‘idioculture’ developed by Gary Alan Fine and cited by Cole and Engeström (2007) [which is] our definition of culture online” (35). “[Native](#)” and credentialed “English” speaking I-ARMY, by joining in a learning culture for works and creators of a “foreign” art, culture and language devalued/ dismissed (as Youth Culture) in schooling culture, fundamentally counter the logic of colonial hegemony, Imperial English (Phillipson) and Kochru’s [English\[es\]](#)’ periphery-toward-center

trajectory for increasing social capital (Lillis and Curry; Bourdieu).⁷ And [오}ㅁ|](#) is aware of itself as a countervailing phenomenon. As they pursue nonWestern literacy competence, I-ARMY reflectively evaluate their practice and membership for signs of coopting or Orientalizing nonWestern products/ producers.⁸

Aggregated surveys (e.g., Reddit voluntary censuses) as well as [fanlore](#)⁶⁹ indicate that the majority of I-ARMY identify as other than White,⁹ are not affiliated (through family, study or residence) with the Republic of Korea and mostly live outside of the US and Britain, in Southeast Asia and Pacific Islands but also the Middle East, the Americas, Africa and Europe/Eurasia.⁷⁰ Location aside, [the statistical overlap](#) of diversalité in our [mainstream](#) students and I-ARMY debunks myths of learner homogeneity still tacitly informing our fields, beyond even the monolinguist myopia critiqued by Bou Ayash (“US”) and Matsuda (“Myth”). This community of learners—outside our classrooms—act *against* [English Exceptionalism](#) even if their teachers, institutions and experts do not.

I-ARMY should, applying our fields’ conceptualizations, be outsiders reliant upon “insider” K-ARMY for socialization to appropriate norms and conventions as well as interpretations of repertoire (Fish’s *interpretive communities*); K-ARMY should be transmitters modeling discursive routines or liaisons who generously [scaffold](#) the *learning* of deficient I-ARMY [legitimate peripheral participants](#) toward the core of the fandom. K-ARMY, in turn, we would expect to depend upon *acquiring* training in the discourses of non-Korean markets, media, etc from I-ARMY when seeking to promote

⁷ And does so as a rule, not exception. Bloomberg finds 80% of all K-pop online views in 2016 were from outside of Korea (cited in Kim S.).

⁸ A significant portion of I-ARMY conversations in my dataset is devoted to policing *fetishizing* and *cultural appropriation* not only *of* but *by* both BTS and ARMY. See [chapter 3](#) for discussion.

⁹ Inherent validity problems with identifying and authentically representing the racial makeup of individuals and thus of fandom populations more generally are compellingly argued by Pande.

BTS' commercial success overseas. Predictable divisions, segmentation and barriers in belonging, repertoire and practice would be present, resulting in differential access, strata of knowledge and skill and hierarchies of authenticity and authority based on proximity to BTS culturally, linguistically and socially.

Yet, Kim Youngdae—music critic and Korean Music Awards Committee Member—insists, “we must pay attention to BTS' ARMY for defining a new notion of fandom as the product of powerful unity and comradeship.” I- and K-ARMY describe their relationship with each other as mutually dependent—what Bauwens calls *equipotent* (cited by Bruns). A humorous depiction of this “images” BTS as romantic “third wheel” to the intra- ㅇㅈㅍ relationship in the form of a meme post [remixing](#) a still shot from a V-live streaming broadcast featuring three BTS members. The moment, annotated with the subtitle *what?* and allegorical name labels, is being read-written simultaneously by the blogger as a trope of publicly affectionate lovers oblivious to their mutual friend's discomfort, with commentary implying that global ㅇㅈㅍ —by being engrossed with each other as much as with Idols—act in culturally unsanctioned ways:



(artifact 121717-2)

The fandom gets celebrated as a fluid, meritocratic *heterarchy* (Bruns' term) rather than a hierarchical community. Witness, for example, the unnamed poster to a Reddit thread responding to the question, “Is the ARMY fandom really that unique?”

I have never seen this kind of fandom in my whole life. I remember "Who is Bangtan" project, the

first international project I saw when I came to this fandom. This project started with 2 ARMYs from Chile during I Need U era [2015]. And then it came back in Fire/BST era [2016]. Translated in more than 13 languages. They hand and post the posters on the street. The funny thing was people really came [online] to BTS' MVs after seeing the posters. After that I've seen no one but only creative hardworking people. BTS ARMY is the best place for everyone who likes to create things and work on projects. Due to diverse age and fandom theory,[≡] this fandom can be the biggest researchers.

[...] From time to time, I always think about how can I help BTS and reach their songs to others. When I start thinking, I can't stop myself. Nobody told me to do it. I didn't even know their history nor where they came from. I met new ARMYs under BTS' MV,[▫] surprisingly they all felt same as me. Nobody told them to do it. We all somehow made projects in this fandom.

[...] As family wise, we are really close. If I say BTS opened ARMYs heart to BTS through opening their hearts. That makes ARMYs heart open to each other. There are many case happened to me irl. I never met them before but somehow we relate to each other a lot. we are like "Are you reading my mind?" (SongMinho)

As translation, ㅇㅈㅍ]'s "source texts" [both BTS' and fan productions]' "target audiences" contravene the existing multinational market flows and constituencies for publishing, distribution and reception of non-[English\[es\]](#) texts. Yet, they are generated nearly-simultaneously across numerous languages and cultural contexts thanks to "armies" of volunteer translanguagers, subtitlers, imagers and documentarians reproducing, annotating, collecting and publishing to individually-assembled localities

[≡] Referring to the intensive interpretative analyses conducted by fans of BTS' material related to BigHit Universe—a still-running, interlinked fictional narrative embodied in noncontiguous songs, MVs, concert images and myriad other content, finally in 2019 commissioned by BigHit to be told, partially, through [a serial Webtoon, Save Me by LICO](#) and a broadcast [drama promised for 2020](#) (Cho).

[▫] That is, conversations began between commenters who post "below" YouTube video screens and can through its portal be replied to/messaged directly. This Redditor's example is a case of [translanguaging space](#) completely superseding [geophysical space](#) for fan socializing.

which share them with others: activity and constellations nearly completely independent of control or direction by BTS' management company BigHit. (Commercial fansites and others who invade artists' privacy and counterfeiters of *official* merchandise are the notable few exceptions.) [Fancams](#) and [remixes](#)—although ostensibly proprietary material—are encouraged by BigHit rather than restricted (a significant divergence between new and traditional media and between contemporary and prior monetization models and the patterns of their endowment of power if not BigHit's own outlier behavior, Kim Youngdae). The [communality](#) of 아미 [adhocracy](#) is impressive, especially with Wenger's advice to educational institutions in mind:

The challenge of organizational design is thus not to find the one kind of knowledgeability that subsumes all others, but on the contrary to coordinate multiple kinds of knowledgeability into a process of organizational learning. *Sharing a vision, then, is being able to see each other as well as envisioning common goals.* (247)

아미 self-organizes autonomous [constellations](#) of I- and K-ARMY practice by "[seeing](#)" each other and, through crowdsourcing rather than formal roles or assigned positions, coordinates their multiple knowledgeabilities. They succeed at scale and in volume at negotiating their own meanings for high-value pop culture, media, music and art [boundary objects](#) long considered to be off-limits, the property of privileged institutions and producers. This is suggested by a second response to SongMinho's Reddit thread (above), by jjdude:

Almost everything done by ARMY is done in other fandoms. ARMY just does it such a large scale it feels really impressive. 3 things makes ARMY stands out for me:

1. ARMY has such strong sense of family that most fans proactively help each other, from offering food and

water at concert queues, to helping each other with personal or mental issues. This is actually pretty amazing to witness. Sometimes this even carry over to feeding/caring other fandoms/antis.

2. ARMYs world over has great relationship with each other. Korean fans and International fans are almost in competition in how much they care about and help each other. This is pretty rare among KPOP fandoms. I-ARMYs in the West even worry about disconnects between various country ARMYs, like J[apan]-ARMY and C[hina]-ARMY and wanted to reach out proactively.

3. ARMY has greatly organized online presence for organizing local ARMY activities. Others fandoms do have them but ARMY literally feel like an well-trained army. The relentless radio-request campaign organized by the various local US ARMY "chapters" is one of the key reasons for BTS' successful Western advancement.

I-ARMYs' propulsion of BTS into lucrative commercial entertainment contexts outside of Korea is proof of its highly-competent literacy practice, grown [autochthonously](#) as localities outside of Korea/n-affiliated communities (Kim Youngdae).

Eppur si muove. [Apocryphal]
Galileo Galilei's words upon completing abjuration.

◦|▣| xenophilic and anti-hegemonic idioculture and translingualist/interculturalist norms (Canagarajah, "Multilingual;" Byram) are a particular form of what has been called the unifying identifier of fandom, *resistance sensibility* (Gwendllian-Jones cited in Booth, *Digital*). They have gained attention (and admiration) from Korean Culture Studies and Popular Culture critics for it. Kim Youngdae argues,

[T]he cultural ownership of K-pop groups, including BTS, is considered to belong to Korean fans. However, within the particular context of the BTS phenomenon—especially in the U.S.—the North American ARMY's agency in their devoted effort does not lack in any way compared to their fans in the motherland. Witnessing the borderless phenomenon that BTS is creating together, they respect the presence of each other and display an exceptionally strong attachment as a group. [...] *This is how international BTS fans, endearingly called "I-Lovelies" have become the first*

historical agents among K-pop fandoms.

I-ARMY stands out even when compared with the ground-breaking, plurilocal evolution of [Hallyu](#) broadly. Jin, a political economist, argues that Hallyu’s cultural products represent a Web 2.0 transnationalism not as “the flow of culture” (as with contagion or invasion) (16-17) but, he theorizes, as a “hybridity generat[ing] [new creative cultures](#), which are free from Western dominance” (18). Global, [autochthonous](#)⁷¹ constellations of [ㅇㅈㅁ](#) certainly offer a case in point.

Kim Youngdae’s remarkably Postcolonial frustration that Korea dismisses BTS’ overseas fanbases, who grew and who sustain themselves rather than having been intentionally cultivated and managed through commercial strategy, also [problematizes](#) our fields’ [mapping](#) learners and languages, calling geohistoricity itself into question as a [given](#) of literacy. Traditional and Poststructuralist approaches bound [languaging](#) territorially—even in the case of diaspora, it flows over geographic space (Appadurai; Kell; Pennycook and Otsuji; Lorimer Leonard; Bou Ayash, “US;” Jay Jordan, “Material;” Fraiberg et al.; Bandia; alternate takes by Canagarajah, “Multilingual;” Shipka). The [translanguaging spaces](#) of [ㅇㅈㅁ](#), however, emerge *in* demographic, cartographical, linguistic, cultural and political borders, coalescing a “borderless” learning ecology—perhaps the distinction of Jin’s new creative culture—that tests even Bateson’s and Canagarajah’s theorizations⁷² of interchange and proximity.

These critics join New Media, Digital Rhetoric, Fandom and Pop Culture Studies in *reconceptualizing* literacy. As a scholar-teacher-researcher in Literacy and Composition Studies, they cause me to question if I-ARMYs’ collective [sharing](#) is an example of literacy (and cultural?) practice we have failed to “see” (because they resist

mapping to our structure-based epistemologies) but also—privileging our own perspective and organizational designs of languaging communities—failed to look for, [Exceptionalism](#) and erasure of Affect/sociality blinkering our [expert gaze](#).

If so, it is a shame. I-ARMY are learners who invite learning *from*, if for no other reason than they undeniably relish the [intellectual and emotional labor of critical writing, reading, researching, interpreting and discussing](#)—**our work**, which in our classes, we complain, students must be directed, disciplined, cajoled to perform. Yet, they *are* our students. Like Violetta and Thomas’ other *Youth Online* participants, their out-of-school composing praxes clashes with my/our traditional [understanding](#) of learning—“knowledge as a collection of real entities, located in heads, and learning as a process of internalizing them”—but is compatible with [motile обучение](#), “knowing and learning as engagement in changing processes of human activity” (Lave, “Practice” 203).

Critical Classroom Discourse researchers Cornelius and Herrenkohl, applying the [Educationist] concept of Third Space, ask us to *revise* how we “see” our students’ [languaging](#) with the “view of power as [...] within human relationships [mediated](#) by [language and other] tools [and research’s function as] explicating the locations of power in interactions and for conceptualizing the dynamic ways in which persons and tools influence each other in sociocultural settings” (470). Expanding (in Engeström’s sense) our expert learning about *learning writing English[es]* can be spurred by “seeing” the territory anew—bringing into focus digital learning [Youth] Culture topography. To access *what* learners are (inter)[mediating](#) (Cressman) and intending to transfer (DePalma and Ringer) there, I turn next to *experiencing* I-ARMY’s [discourse 2.0](#) “interest, focus, persistence, awareness, engagement, and enthusiasm” (Rex and Schiller 42) and the “conditions of self-efficacy, aligned purpose, identity recognition, personal and

common understanding, shared assumptions, and meaningful choices [that] comprise community” (43) [associated](#) with it. I-ARMY, flying in the face of [Exceptionalism](#), feel these not *in* but through constellating *with* BTS and ㅇㅈㅍ] **content** worth caring about and *sharing—digital learning writing English[es]* that defies our current mapping.

Chapter 3: What Happens When Fangirls Are Experts? *Fanslation*



Tumblr text post obliquely referring to *Pied Piper* translation controversy (artifact 9918-50).

However, not all the answers are to be found in the source text; the researcher also needs to take into account other parameters that crucially affect translations: the [mediator's](#) interpretation of the original; the purpose of the [mediation](#)—bearing in mind that the purpose the translation is intended to serve may differ from that of the original; and the audience for the translation. (Malmkjær qtd. by Saldanha 101)

Conversation is just beginning between Translation Studies and the even younger fields of New Media and Fandom Studies. However, Bermann and Porter identify a significant nexus between them which also intersects with our fields' domain: *digital learning culture* (Goodfellow and Lamy). They note:

Globalization has brought with it a major technological revolution that has enabled the emergence of a non-hierarchical, participatory culture in which numerous individuals, both translators and non-translators, collaborate to produce free translations for public consumption. This type of “user-generated translation” is “based on free user participation in digital media spaces . . . [and] undertaken by unspecified self selected individuals” who are also part of the user community (O’Hagan 2009, 97). (21)

Nornes arguably kickstarts Translationists’ attention to “fan” translation in 1999 with analysis of Japanese “abusive subtitling” of imported films. In it, he explores the agency—possessed by both receiver and producer—inherent to what we in Composition and

Literacy Studies today recognize as [translingual](#) and multimodal composing:

the abusive subtitler uses *textual and graphic abuse—that is, experimentation with language and its grammatical, morphological, and visual qualities*—to bring the fact of translation from its position of obscurity, to critique the imperial politics that ground corrupt practices while ultimately leading the viewer to the foreign original being reproduced in the darkness of the theater. This original is not an origin threatened by contamination, but *a locus of the individual and the international* which can potentially turn the film into an **experience of translation**. (18, my italics)

Through third-party [translatorial](#) intervention, Nornes' subtitlers collapse boundaries between target audience and source text and hegemonic center from occupied periphery, “abusing” [subverting] print-based conventions set by established publishers as well as the political goals underpinning West-to-East translating post-WWII. The result is peritext-with-text that embodies Mignolo’s pluriversality “in” borders:

Abusive subtitles circulate between the foreign and the familiar, the known and the unknown, just as they shift between sense-for-sense and word-for-word modalities. [...] The subtitled moving image is a [constellated figure](#); both the original and the translation are simultaneously available, as if they were en face. Most important, *viewers work off the original text whether they understand its language or not*. (32, my italics)

Counterconventional translating of popular media for and by school-aged fans “went viral” with the explosion in global Internet use and the *technological turn* (Cronin, “Translation Crowd”) of the Web 2.0 era (Lee H.). By 2007, Pérez González, examining Japanese-to-English [fansubs](#) of anime,⁷³ can accurately predict that “the interventionist [translation]

agenda of anime fandom is only the tip of the iceberg which subsumes all current and future initiatives taken by the viewers to assume more power following the decentralisation of the media establishment” (“Fansubbing” 276). In 2010, Hu proposes *affective translation communities* as a descriptor for “the global proliferation of media texts and their official and unofficial discourses [in] multiple translational sites of affective engagement along lines of gossip, fashion, sexuality, and especially race” expanding outward from online fan forums. He suggests that scholars’ continued adherence to print media conventions and essentialism (manifest in a narrow focus on “cross-ethnic reception” of texts) then blinded academia to the heterogeneity and hybridity of global fandoms like those for Korean media, which he finds are comprised of “an international network of English-reading fans, mostly of Asian descent” (37). Observation of such phenomena crossing diverse national, ethnic and linguistic borders is applied in 2013 to support “a theory of transnational fandom” by Chin and Hitchcock Morimoto.⁷⁴ Although not a central argument in either work, transnational [fan communities](#)’ idiocultural treatment of expertise as universal and their acceptance of heterogenous and hybrid praxes figure into their conceptualizing of the “newness” of them and of the languaging they perform. Similarly “new” flattening (Friedman) of [given](#) sociolinguistic structures (the assumed nature of communities underlying our [conversive](#) pedagogical approaches) is reported widely in research on learners using multimedia technology across the globe (Curwood et al.; Hill and Vasudevan; Alvermann and Hinchman; Thomas; Goodfellow and Lamy; Deumert; Chandler-Olcott and Mahar; Thorne et al. “Semiotic;” Greenhow and Gleason; N. Johnson; Ito et al.), as well as those engaged with the global language and style culture of hip-hop (Alim et al.) and with [Hallyu](#) in different regions of the world (with K-Pop specifically: Aisyah et al.; Han; Marinescu;

Shin and Lee).

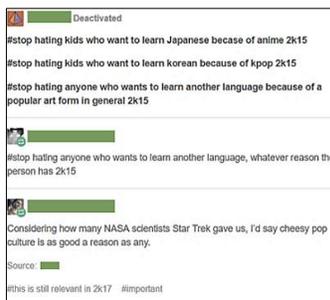
I-ARMY on Tumblr exemplifies a participatory, affective translation [community of passion](#), with young member translators *and* nontranslators (re)producing BTS-related material in English[es] across a transcultural network (Dodson; Kelley, “Meet”). As M. Baker (“Reframing”) and Cronin (“Translation Crowd”) argue, their amateur activity challenges fundamental assumptions grounding academic theories of translating and translation in terms of [diversalité](#) in expertise and democratizing of praxes, but also in the [abusive](#) qualities of their [translatorial mediating](#). Cronin describes the epistemologically disruptive nature of what I call ***fanslation***—*learners’ collective envoicing* (Canagarajah; Leppänen), *double voicing* (Sterponi) and *revoicing* (O’Connell) *translanguaculturally*:

Dynamic and formal equivalence, semantic and communicative translation, foreignization versus domestication, [skopos](#) theory, Descriptive Translation Studies, [...are all] production-oriented model[s] of externality. *In the case of crowd-sourced translation, however, it is the potential audience for the translation that does the translation. The model is a consumer-oriented model of internality. The consumer becomes an active producer or prosumer.*⁷⁵ It is no longer a question of the translator, for example, projecting a target-oriented model of translation *on to* an audience but *the audience producing their own self-representation as a target audience*. (“Translation Crowd” 4, my italics)

Fanslation is not simply a case of mass scale, DIY⁷ functional translating—it is, rather, a [constellated, adhocatic](#) “joint enterprise” (Wenger) of collaborative, distributive and

⁷ Acronym for *do it yourself*—applied to self-managed, amateur arts, crafts and performances. The contrast is stark in comparing fanslation with fans’ DIY *cosplay*—dressing up and performing as a character at fan conferences or events—a widely-practiced offline fan activity that privileges the inventiveness and knowledgeableability of the individual fan’s representation against that of the Industry (proprietary media, merchandise, appearances, etc).

generative knowledge development. Transcultural fans engage with content through **complex, shared practices of languacultural learning**, as promulgated in this continuously circulating [Artivist Tumblr post](#):



(artifact 111817-7)

And in the observation by BTS translator, Gloria Jun ([@glojunjun](#)) (qtd. in Kelley, “Meet”):

[Translation-focused social media accounts are] able to make not just BTS, but K-pop in general, very accessible *to people who don't understand or are learning or people who may not have the means to learn just yet*. And I also think they're a form of inspiration sometimes. Especially fan translators who are not Korean ethnically and have learned the language and have become fluent enough to translate for people, they are an inspiration *for others to keep learning and to keep working hard*. Because they did, so you can too, pretty much. (my italics)

Fanslation is [contained](#) by Web 2.0 technological affordances (ease of access to material, software and platforms as vehicles for “borderless” sharing) as well as constraints on “ownership” of meaning—in both the Wengerian and capitalist senses. Cronin credits resistance to the latter and desire for the former as the primary motivation for fans’ assembling [translatorial](#) collectives. They provide solidarity against the power of controlling producers and influential institutions (including the Academy) in the post-Fordist, real popular culture [economy of meanings](#)—a use of technology against

technology, as it were:

If a tendency in [commercial] localisation⁷⁶ discourse has been to accentuate the role of automation in translation activity and to minimise the intervention of the human agent, what we are witnessing in these crowdsourcing initiatives is a reinvestment of translation technology by the human, a strategic use of technical resources to further human concerns or agendas. In a sense, what is emergent in the practice is a *version* translation⁷⁶ technology as a tool of *conviviality*⁷⁷ and an instrument of human political intervention. Implicit in such a representation of translation is a move away from the monadic subject of traditional translation agency [...] to a pluri-subjectivity of interaction. (“Translation Crowd” 5)⁷⁸

His observation is borne out by translation collective Bangtan Translation,⁷⁹ who say

Fan translations help to fill the gap that exists where official subtitles (released by broadcasters and networks, like KBS World) do not, as not all content that is released on Korean programmes gets subtitled. That has definitely made K-pop more accessible to fans worldwide, as it would be very difficult to become a fan of an artist when you have no idea what the person is saying. In addition, as fan translators we try to deliver not only the shallow but the deep ends of what BTS really has inside themselves. We as fans understand not only the quality of their music and content, but the ‘behind the scenes’ and emotional process they may go through for this content to be produced. This differentiates our translations from the ‘official’ or ‘brief’ translations done by professional translators/ subtitlers whose only aim is to deliver meaning accurately and in the space allotted. (qtd. in

⁷⁶ Information technology term for adapting original content (software, lyrics, etc) for distribution in varied, specific sectors of the global market.

Kelley, “Meet”)⁸⁰

An example of their work is illustrative of the [constellated](#) experience of [translation](#) (Nornes)/ [translatorial](#) self-representation (Cronin) [fanslation](#) embodies. Upon the “original” video of the band practicing and rehearsing a live performance—which embeds the BTS Bomb logo (top right)—Bangtan Translation has layered *its* logo (*Bangtan Subs*, top left) over BigHit’s embedded company logo. This, along with a change in title (adding *[ENG] 160923*—indicating language and indexing the content’s original release date) marks it [[abusively](#)] as a fan [version](#) translation (differentiating it from BigHit’s and “watermarking” its provenance to ensure credit when is [shared](#) and [remixed](#) by others). [BangtanTV’s (BigHit’s YouTube channel) logo currently appears (bottom, right) in [the official video](#), but it was added as an edit after Bangtan Translation’s sub was created.]



Screencaps of 0:07 and 3:23 frames from Bangtan Translation’s subtitling of [BigHit’s *BTS Bomb* Sept. 22, 2016](#).

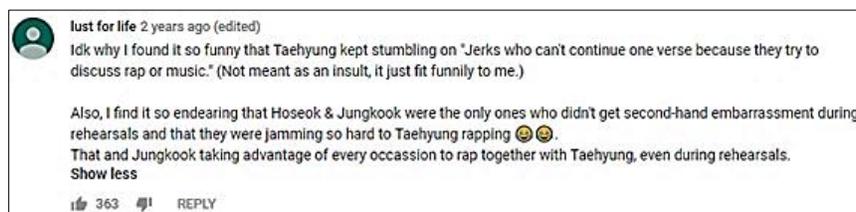
Manipulating alphabetical elements, (in 0:07 using italics for lyrics; in 3:23 parentheses signaling interpretation of tone and ambiguous subject) its subtitling identifies speaking members (identified by initial—*V* is V/Taehyung; *JH* is J-Hope/Hoseok) and offers synchronized [English\[es\]](#) text (in white, center bottom) to represent what is being communicated, along with occasional (highlighted in red, top center) translator’s (*T/N*) paratextual notes. The notes’ comments reflect two types of supplemental content common in fanslation: in 0:07, direct narrator discourse assigning a particular emotion/attitude to the scene/action; in 3:32, glossing of culturally-inflected

terms/actions.

Bangtan Translation “owns” meaning here that hybridizes the *affective* (V’s *felt* struggling) with the *semantic* (the impression V makes on his bandmates)—dwelling in the very interface of Wenger’s duality of the personal with [the social](#), constellating low- with high-contextuality. The collective has a purpose (*feeding* ^{o|□} BTS content[□]) but the subbers’ and translator’s [transmediating](#) does not intend an instrumentalist *outcome* (Banks). They create an [actant](#), which associates the fan-audience with the band—an intermediating, abusive and self-representing (rather than functional) [translation](#). Embodied in it is not one but the potential for unlimited, pluri-subjective transactions: other fans read-writing to *retranslate*/[mediate](#) the representation through [convivial sharing](#)—this video has been viewed, at this writing, almost 500,000 times (BigHit’s original has more than 10 million views). Participating in *reself*-representation, fans transmediate the affective and semantic meaning of the video/sub further, crowdsourcing an expanded body of hybrid, [producer/prosumerly](#) interpretations. An example is [a posting by lust for life](#) (below), one of the video’s nearly 1,300 comments on YouTube alone. The comment explicitly *remediates* the subbers’ [mediation](#) of material. V/Taehyung’s slurring/mumbling (called *stumbling* by Bangtan Translators) is *reinterpreted* in context of the rap’s lyrics and other members’ expressive behaviors, in context of the band’s history. New narration is integrated (verbally and iconographically) for self-representing the poster’s affective experience and implicit *retranslation* of “the ‘behind the scenes’ and emotional process” captured in the video, while opening up that

□ An online idiom (and telling metaphor) meaning an artist or corporation releasing fan-targeted content. It is a compliment to apply “feeding” to a fan producer (suggesting their contributions are equivalent in importance and value to the fandom), which I here extend.

remediation to others’—an invitation subsequently taken up by repliers to lust for life’s comment, who, in turn, invite remediation of their remediation of a [transmediation](#):



I-ARMY’s [prosumer](#) practice [abuses](#) semiotic boundaries we have long figured as holding composers in place—“inside” languages, cultures, nationalities, physical/ temporal = locations, social roles—and separating them from “output,” material compositions—position(ing)s of author-ity:⁸¹ ob/subjectivity, languaging, reader-ing, writer-ing.

Translation, Media and Fandom Studies and observing [fanslation](#) in action lead to one conclusion: The media revolution, like Gil Scott-Heron warned in 1970, was not televised. Rather, it is being streamed, screencapped, animated and [remixed](#) as well as subbed, dubbed and [transmediated](#) by the masses, on their own terms. *In* geographical and sociocultural borders and outside of the control of “the Establishment” [the entertainment industry, education, cultural/national authorities], fans are revoicing media content for, by and with themselves. Their [translanguaging](#) connects the personal and [the social](#) to generate knowledgeability, negotiate meanings and experience identities at meso scale—as Wenger and Engeström document at micro scale in professional [expansive](#) learning communities. In place of career exigence, fans coalesce around a principle set out by Jenkins (just prior to the advent of the World Wide Web, based on self-published fan [zines](#)), that fandom “function[s] as a community [for] critical,

⁸¹ The comment is posted more than a year after the release of the fansub; comments and replies remain open—the posters (of the video and of the comment) receive notification when new activity occurs.

interpretive practice,” whose practice “effaces distinctions between reader/writer” through joint [reception] analyzing-with-constructing [production] of *metatext* (*Textual* 278, cf. Genette).

Fanslators—from organized collectives like Bangtan Translation to individuals like lust for life—dwell in *inventio* (simultaneously finding *and* contriving material), *construing-while-creating* knowledge. Fandom writing practice is all that we theorize: intertextual, multimodal, conscientiously designed, metacognitive, rhetorically dialogic. Yet, members’ engagement with each other does not take the form of *conversive* socialization. In fact, the free-for-all *sharing* that characterizes the comments/replies section for YouTube also plays out in Tumblr person-to-person I-ARMY interlocutions [analyzed below], *despite* what *our expert gaze* would “see” as differentials of competence and status. While Jenkins’ analysis of fandom shows that it possesses idioculture, fans’ languaging “moves” neither centrifugally nor centripetally (Bakhtin) vis à vis a structural hierarchy or organizational design. Instead, employing *discourse 2.0*, fans join-create ad hoc, heterogenous constellations of *translanguaging spaces*, negotiating (*not-being-at-leisure*) *transmediating* (*being*) “in the now.” In the biological sense, rather than being a population, fandom is an ecology, an *autochthonous digital learning writing* culture.

As disruptive to our *discourse* of learners as this is, fans’ conflation of what Wenger theorizes separately as *repertoire* and *competence* coalescing around intellectual pursuits and governed by peer evaluators should be readily recognizable to us. It matches the ideals of our own academic practice. Sociological studies of academic composing practices even provide a ready-made framing for it: as *invisible college* for *ad hoc* popular media study (cf. Crane, cited by Lillis and Curry). Less “*mappable*” than networking, *digital learning writing culture* constellates interests and topics fans *find-contrive* while

interacting with digital media through [conviviality](#). By virtue of fandom’s global and open enrollment—more so even than for the scholars joining the ad hoc multilingual “scientific networking communities” Poe documents, working with “highly consequential” professional writing mentors whom Lillis and Curry track or sheltering in institutional “crowded safehouses” of literacy brokers Jerskey creates—I-ARMY invisible colleges are spaces *for* [обучение](#). Interactions are a participative, [translatorial](#) enterprise that engenders intimate social-with-personal connections of learners *with* content, *to* word work (Lu) and *between* not only co-members, collaborators and evaluators, but *through* them *with* artists, critics, corporations, regulators and other human and nonhuman actants associated with the work. And unlike networks, fans do not enter, exit and progress *within* fandom structures. They are not *mobile* but [motile](#).

Despite its ubiquity, more than two decades after the inauguration of New Literacy Studies, our fields’ exploration of digital culture as an [autochthonous](#) ecology of learning⁸² still remains quite limited. Hu’s observation is borne out: our scholarly analysis of learners’ use of globalized media has focused on its usefulness “cross” lingually for SLA (examples spanning 1998-present are: Chapelle; Ibrahim on Black English through music videos; Fukunaga on anime for Japanese; Black on fanfiction for English; Thorne et al. “Second;” B. Williams, “Multilingual;” Choi and Yi and Isbell on pop culture for Korean; Bregni on video games for Italian)—but much less so for (and almost always separate from multilingual) [mainstream](#) “English” literacy learning (Gee, “Learning;” Lunsford, “Our;” Hawisher and Selfe, “Studying;” Blummer; Lankshear and Knobel; Ito et al.; Goodfellow and Lamy; New London Group). We link online transnational/cultural languaging—studied by Athique, *Transnational*; Leppänen and Peronen; Sebba et al.; Madianou and Miller; Thorne et al. “Second;” Androutsopoulos; Messina Dahlberg and Bagga-Gupta;

Park and Wee; Sharma—to [nonmainstream](#) learners’ migration/mobility (Lorimer Leonard; Nordquist; Canagarajah; Horner, “Rethinking;” Lu; Pennycook; You), but not to [natural](#) “mono” linguals’ literacy learning at “home.”⁸³ Similar to Canagarajah’s use of [translingualism](#), Lewis challenges us to [problematize](#) our imaginary of language in order to “see” the *personal-social* experience that is [motile translinguality](#):

privilege the transformation of a communicative act by one community (or an individual from that community) into a meaningful communicative act for another community (or an individual in that community) [and, as a result] the focus is effectively shifted from knowledge of a 'language' to knowledge of the cultural, social and situational possibilities in communicative acts. (23)

Despite the dearth of our attention to it, probability (as well as media reporting on fandom and anecdotal evidence from my own students) suggests that from early adolescence on, our own [mainstream](#) students have involved themselves with fandoms and engaged in the [participatory](#) composing described by New Media, Pop Culture and Fandom Studies. Using their lens to recognize the digital learning culture inherent in this activity, it stands to reason that our learners’ multiliteracy extends, as well, to Translation Studies’ crowdsourced acts of [cultural translation](#).

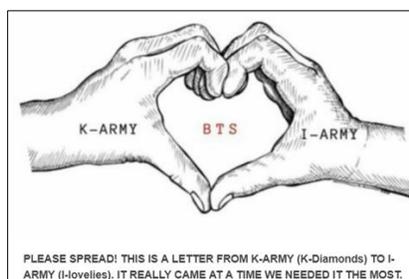


Illustration of a heart created by K- and I-ARMY connecting around BTS, included in mimibtsghost’s reposting on Tumblr of [@museofbts](#)’ letter tweeted to I-ARMY (artifact 110818-1).

[Fanslation](#) connects an [invisible college](#) neither writing *in* nor writing English (Horner, “Ideologies”) but *learning writing* beyond [English\[es\]](#). Williams and Zenger

observe these *transliteracy* learning practices in what might be mistaken for “mono”lingual fan spaces:

On popular culture fan sites it is easy to find people posting who come from a range of different cultural and linguistic backgrounds. Though they may be writing in English (or, more to the point, in Englishes) there is not a single set of usages that govern the conversation. Instead, usage and rhetorical style varies from the participants and they often engage in a back-and-forth of negotiations over words or usage or genre until a meaning is found that satisfies all sides. It is intriguing to observe such negotiations and the patience and generosity—rather than judgment or exclusion—that participants usually show each other. (“Introduction” 9)

Pérez González (“Multimodality”) highlights evolutions in New Media compositional design emerging from collaborative fan interpretation, which—for translators and non, and interlingually and not—enable the textualized pluriversal/linguality Nornes credited to fan movie subtitling:

practitioners articulate and explore the intersemiotic dimension of Kwame Appiah’s (2004) notion of “thick translation.” Hybrid texts consisting of written and spoken material, straddling singly and multiply authored content, and representing a constellation of participants whose voices need to be acknowledged and conveyed individually [...] translated within a hypertextual environment. The mediation of such pluralized and non-linear textual material often results in complex artifacts made up of multiple layers of text, allowing for multiple individual reading experiences through intertextual resonance and the interplay between verbal and nonverbal signifiers (Milsom 2008). (126)

Routine I-ARMY languaging in my dataset corroborates these and Leppänen’s findings

that even “rare and minimal multilinguals [...] when sharing particular cultural interests online—opt for linguistically mixed style on the grounds (it would seem) that this is the normal or even preferred communicative style in the arena in question” (234; found, too, by Dodson; Canagarajah). [Mainstream](#) learners who are also engaged fans thus not only rebut our fields’ [English Exceptionalism](#) but challenge the power ascribed to Imperial English (Phillipson).

In analyzing the writing in artifacts I collected, I observe I-ARMY *heterarchically* negotiating with minimal Korean[s]- as well as [English\[es\]](#)-speakers—and something else, which drives it: what Leppänen calls *translocality*, “a specific understanding of culture [...] as outward-looking, exogenous and focused on hybridity, translation and identity” (235).⁸⁴ You, also looking at [translingual](#) ([English\[es\]](#) to Chinese[s]) discourse 2.0 communicative acts, identifies an overarching ethos of *cosmopolitanism*,⁸⁵ believing

though sometimes defined by kindred relations, ethnicity, nation, race, or class, all people are first and foremost members of the human race and as such are morally obligated to those outside their categories; further, they have the agency to develop and sustain new allegiances across cultures, communities, and languages. (6)

Cultivating that ethos is Tumblr’s broader idioculture of inclusivity, which encourages even “mono”cultural I-ARMYs’ embrace of transcultural, [translatorial](#) fandom. The intersectionality is espoused satirically in this post:⁸⁶



(artifact 040218a-2)

In fact, translocal/cosmopolitanist, beyond-[English\[es\]](#) *learning writing* saturates the **I-ARMY Invisible College of BTS**. Analysis of select examples of its intersemiotic *metatext* demonstrates how fans' [transmediation](#) comprises *experiencing* identity (Wenger) by/as experiencing translation (Nornes), fans' [motile](#) learning by/as reconciling dissonance in- and externally:



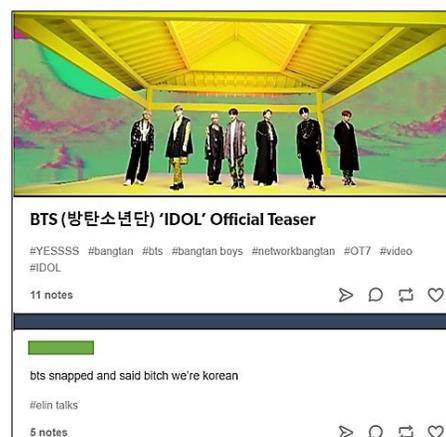
(artifact 11817a-7)



(artifact 082218-2)



(artifact 111917-5)



(artifact 082218-1a)

Artifacts above excerpt I-ARMY *discourse 2.0* regarding pressure for “English” use by BTS, a topic that *trended* on Tumblr and Twitter during BTS’ US pre-American Music Awards promotional press tour in 2017 and then reemerged during subsequent Billboard Awards, Grammy Awards and UK Wembley Stadium concert promotions. **What** is being translated here? Bloggers remix content ranging from (counterclockwise) quotations of

Western press interviews and online listener/viewer comments (from YouTube, etc); a screencap of a tweet [@jhswave], an Anglocultural idiom [the folk game “[the floor is lava](#)”], a screencap of choreography from BTS’ 2017 AMAs live performance of *DNA*; gifs⁸⁷ of a fansubbed [Korean broadcaster] [MBC interview of BTS](#); a screencap of BigHit’s [English] YouTube channel for the [official BTS Idol \[MV\] Teaser](#). Posts constellate images with formatting and alphabetical text and not only unmarked English but *textspeak* (e.g., *lol*, *jfc*), meme-slang (e.g., [BIG MOOD](#), [X snapped and said bitch Y](#)) and expressive (e.g., #YESSSS, #OT7—what McCulloch calls *metacommentary* tags) as well as *indexical* (e.g., [#bts memes tags](#)).⁷

Shared through Tumblr posting, viewing, liking, reblogging, commenting, replying and messaging, these and concurring I-ARMY *fanslators*’ compositions perform as *actants*—they translate to co-construct *assemblage*, reifying an ㅇㅈㅍ identity to counter lingual/cultural chauvinism.⁸ **How** is this *mediating* (the personal with [the social](#)) meaning? Because it is Tumblr,⁸⁸ the *metatext* transcends [English\[es\]](#) and verblivity (a contrast with discussion forums like Reddit). Transmodally, it *acts* to tie BTS members’ Affect—their *felt* self-identity, attention, emotions (Bangtan Translation’s focus) and artistic and celebrity performances to/with felt identities, attention, feelings and performing of individual I-ARMY. Fans translating these materials—even when no actual interlingual transduction occurs—*mediate experiencing translating* (of BTS by others, of *themselves* by BTS and by them of BTS); they compose a *new* translingual/ cultural

⁷ Tumblr’s search queries rely on tags, unlike web search engines which index words, images or other content of posts. Tagging is thus equivalent to a headline or other journalistic attention-grabber.

⁸ In the [next chapter](#), additional artifacts embodying I-ARMY critique of Western media bias related to monolingualism, ethnocentrism and racism are presented.

meaning of/with the texts, one which *owns*⁵ cosmopo/translocality by/as *embodying* it. “Seeing” meaning these artifacts communicate not as a message *about* but as [translatorial](#) experience itself, we encounter something “missing in action” in composing for school: intimacy. Author-izing, *mediating the personal socially* through writing, drives [fanslation](#). Exactly converse to traditional academic translation as *audience*-focused and *language*-mediated and schooled composition as *readerly* text wrought by *rhetorical* wordsmithing.

The sample artifacts here may appear a remarkably mild case of social media serving the “inchoate rhetorical exigence [for] cultivation and validation of the [personal] self” (C. Miller, “Genre” 2). Arguing that fans connect affectively to *content’s* particularity and potentiality, Jenkins highlights—against insulting stereotypes of “fixated” fans “having no life”—that a fan simultaneously **relates to** and *through* content **with other fans**. Fans compose about content to connect socially (Wenger; *relational literacies*, Licona and Chávez; Nishino and Atkinson *alignment*)—seen in these artifacts’ implicit but nonetheless assertive [cosmopolitanist](#) stances. They mobilize communicative acts *for* trans/forming relationships, both performing and evaluating others’ knowledgeability. Their writing, rather than [“meeting specs” of task-purpose-audience](#), is generative *self*-representation (Cronin, “Translation Crowd”)—with all the hallmarks of discourses for face-to-face *socializing*: it is invitingly “playful” (skilled), insightfully “speculative” (imaginative) and candidly “subjective” (authentic) (Jenkins, *Textual* 278). BTS’ (imagined and expressed) pride in I-ARMYs’ countercultural acts is not just an outcome devoutly to be wished. Instead, RM’s recognition of I-ARMYs’ respect for Korean

⁵ [Urban Dictionary’s entries](#) make clear that *owning* is agentic embracing of experience, to the point of *motility*: a “cool person ‘so owns it’” in which *so* is an intensifier and *it* is rhetorical rather than referential, can be interpreted as a statement endorsing (perhaps enviously?) autonomous *self*-positioning.

language[s], culture[s] and people; their labor to learn (rather than have converted for them) the unknown, the different, the Other; their dismantling of exclusionary industry, artistic and commercial Pop Culture boundaries—is *owned* as a signifier of the bonds formed *by fans with fans*. RM’s “text” carefully demotes BTS who *sing in Korean* to elevate fans who *try to understand and learn*, ensuring that I-ARMY, not the band, get credit for the phenomenon. The set of artifacts together capture the axiology of cooperatively self-constructed $\circ\}\square$ subjectivity—*belonging to* a community of [translocal](#), [motile](#) learning practice *with* BTS.

Focusing on the not-rational and not-explicit in these compositions, we can infer additional layers to the experiences of identity being artfully (re)presented here. The seemingly low intensity of affective validation gains considerable poignancy when read [felt] against what these composers individually (and the assemblage collectively) act to *silence*: pervasive ridicule. Experiencing even for brief interludes, an alternative reality where one’s (often considerably time- and resource-draining) work, the performance of one’s embodied identity and the application of one’s competence are valued by those one admires—Idols *and* like-minded others—serves an important, self-validating expressive purpose. Textualizing these—here as open-ended conversations integrating humor, testimonials and real as well as imagined turn-taking by Idols and interlocutors is [transmediating](#) and it is *representing*, affirmation of one’s “real” community in the Hip Hop sense (Leung; Alim; Dutheley).

To make a rhetorical argument *for* being I-ARMY is to textualize resistance *against* objectification of (especially nonAnglo) boybands as effeminate “eye candy,” derision of fans as prurient and/or obsessive (Elsvig-Wang) and—as Pande explores—suspicion that [especially White] K-Pop fans exoticize Asians (Yoon; Khan; mimibtsghost). A through

theme of the fandom's [metatext](#) (one assumed to be familiar to those interacting with these posts) is I-ARMYs' critical self-reflection on whether their behavior, language and emotions regarding BTS makes them a *koreaboo*, one of a set of heavily-loaded terms used for [originally White, Western] fetishizers of [non-White, non-Western—read: *subaltern*] cultures, languages, art and people.⁸⁹ Choi and Maliangkay relocate this in a macro context:

The *New York Times*, the *New Yorker*, the *Wall Street Journal*, the *Times*, the BBC, Canal+, and the *Asahi Shimbun*, to name but a few, have all fervently commented on the enigmatic discharge of cultural energy from a country unmarked on the map of global culture. Their search for convincing narratives illuminating the inscrutable incident is quite reminiscent of the hurried invention of tales to decipher the furious rise of Japan during the 1970s and 1980s. Our observation is that this K-pop phenomenon fortuitously undrapes the inner layer of ethno-cultural psychodynamics concerning cultural creativity. To put it bluntly, this global fascination with K-pop unveils a covert tenor of racism in the very hyperreaction to the success of K-pop. (13)

Belonging, I-ARMY know, must be [translated](#) carefully. Rather than uninhibited, their expressions of Affect must be interrogated, tested for their alignment with relational rhetoric *allying* the [especially, the privileged] fan *with* BTS and ㅇㅈㅍ] and *against* their Othering (and the Othering of admiration for them). [Sharing](#) Affect is coalitional (social) as much—or more, even—than it is (personal) emoting.

To me (teacher, mom, woman and nerd), it is painful to encounter, for example, the cautious [translation](#) shared in the I-ARMY interaction below. It is a screencap of a tweet sent from Indonesia reposted to Tumblr by mimibtsghost (a North American) with

an appended declarative comment that also serves as a link to her own blog devoted to BTS. @BTS_twt is the band's Twitter handle; their attributed speech paraphrases lyrics of BTS fan songs:²



(artifact 9918-1)

Experiencing imposed embodiment (Butler), living socially translated, being identified as an undesirable Other *irl* is here transformed *artivistically* into its nurturing alternative: being loved *for oneself* and *as one's self-identity* by one's (similarly mistreated) beloved, BTS. This learner's metacommentary is sophisticated critique: the emotional power inherent in what we say about and to one another is its *cosmopolitanist*, *felt* subtext and its verbalized text. It manages *transmediation* of affect (Banks) and *for* a rhetorical outcome: analysis of language. BTS/their songs—and *fanslating* them—step into the breach created by unaccepting society, family and culture to nurture the fan.

It is unfortunate that in neither its emotional intensity nor its claim does this post stand out. Rather, [*because of rampant deficit positioning and ethno-cultural/racist ideology?*] Wenger's *belonging* is a core concern of I-ARMY composing practice, and *parasocial* relating with BTS (Horton's and Wohl's 1956 theory of the appeal of mass media, cited by Booth *Digital*) is their key vehicle for proposing and negotiating experiencing belonging. In their composing *for* personal-social *mediating*—their abusive

² BTS are known for producing particularly candid, emotionally vulnerable songs directly addressing their fans—including *2! 3! (Hoping for More Good Days)*/ 둘! 셋! (그래도 좋은 날이 더 많기를), released in 2016 on *Wings*, whose refrain closely mirrors the message (en)voiced by @BTS_twt here.

[translatorial](#) praxes notwithstanding—I see a provocative intersection of I-ARMY’s [cosmopolitanist translanguality’s](#) with Postcolonial translation. Baer summarizes Spivak’s advice to (particularly women) translators:

the characteristic—perhaps ideal—position for the translator [i]s one of “surrender” and “intimacy” in the mode of erotic love: surrender to and intimacy with the text and language to be translated. The possible alternative to the colonizing agenda of translation is located at the level of such intimacy, which is a giving over of the translator’s self in “responsibility to the trace of the other in the self” ([“Politics”] 1993, 179). (235)⁹⁰

In her essay Spivak’s claims about **experts’** translating praxis are startlingly applicable to **fangirls’ fanslation**:

Making sense of ourselves is what produces identity. If one feels that the production of identity as self-meaning, not just meaning, is as pluralized as a drop of water under a microscope, one is not always satisfied, outside of the ethicopolitical arena as such, with “generating” thoughts on one’s own. [...] *One of the ways to get around the confines of one’s “identity” as one produces expository prose is to work at someone else’s title, as one works with a language that belongs to many others. This, after all, is one of the seductions of translating. It is a simple miming of the responsibility to the trace of the other in the self.* (“Politics” 397, my italics)

Language is not everything. It is only a vital clue to where the self loses its boundaries. **The ways in which rhetoric or figuration disrupt logic themselves point at the possibility of random contingency, beside language, around language.** Such a dissemination cannot be under our control.

Yet in translation, where meaning hops into the spacy emptiness between two named historical languages, we get perilously close to it. **By juggling the disruptive rhetoricity that breaks the surface in not necessarily connected ways, we feel the selvages of the language-textile give way, fray into *frayages* or facilitations** [cf. Freud; equivalent to Connectionist *internal affective states*, Baaijen and Galbraith—my addition]. Although every act of reading or communication is a bit of this risky fraying which scrambles together somehow, **our stake in agency keeps the fraying down to a minimum except in the communication and reading of and in love.** (398, my bold)

Some think this is just an ethereal way of talking about literature or philosophy. But no amount of tough talk can get around the fact that *translation is the most intimate act of reading. Unless the translator has earned the right to become the intimate reader, she cannot surrender to the text, cannot respond to the special call of the text.* (400, my italics)

Compare her views with what, in Feminist Fandom Studies, Katie Speller names *the fangirl ethos*: the liberating feeling of “unironically putting yourself into loving something.” Phillips explains the concept further:

On Tumblr and Twitter, what you love and what you long for are of primary importance to teen users. Unlike Facebook, where detailed profile information is the norm, [on] Tumblr and Twitter [...] It’s often impossible to tell where the user lives, how old she is, what she does when she’s not online. But you’ll find out plenty about what she wants, her blog or Twitter feed creating a digital ladder of desire. *On social media, she is what she crushes on. She creates herself through the things that give her “the feels,”* Internet slang for an intense emotional reaction to

something [...]. (my italics)

McCormick defines (especially youth) experiences of fandom as centered on *sharing feels*. She cites Louisa Stein's description of "millennial fandom" as rooted in

feels culture [which] thrives on the public celebration of emotion previously considered the realm of the private. *In feels culture, emotions remain intimate but are no longer necessarily private; rather, they build a sense of an intimate collective, one that is bound together precisely by the processes of shared emotional authorship.* In this equation, emotion fuels fan transformative creativity, and performances of *shared* emotion define fan authorship communities (156). (qtd. 372, my italics)

I-ARMY are, when they *mediate* BTS content, seeking like *Spivak's experts* to "create themselves" and like Stein's fangirls to bond with others who are/like them. Toward those affective and relational outcomes, they *share feels* about BTS through Banks' *transmediation* (Pande's emotive and well as analytical *squeeing*).⁹¹ Because they are *transcultural/ lingual/ local* fans, their *feels* are *multiplicitous* (Lynn); they compose to express love *for* but also to *experience* BTS. *Fanslation* actively reconciles (internal-external) Korean[s]-*English[es]* *disruptive rhetoricity*. For example, Bangtan Translation's description of the purpose driving their uncompensated work:

as fan translators we try to deliver not only the shallow but *the deep ends of what BTS really has inside themselves. We as fans understand not only the quality of their music and content, but the 'behind the scenes' and emotional process they may go through for this content to be produced.* This differentiates our translations from the 'official' or 'brief' translations done by professional translators/ subtitlers whose only aim is to deliver meaning accurately and in the space allotted. (qtd. in Kelley "Meet,"

my italics)

Fanslation is Spivak’s academic’s [surrender to the Other](#)—perhaps so successful at such scale precisely because it is a right earned through ad hoc “play,” fangirling rather than experting. What makes an I-ARMY is their choice (against countervailing pressures) to become intimate with BTS *for* and *through* (inner) [mediating](#) and (outer) [translating](#) content—and, tellingly, that decision is “imaged” by a K-Pop fandom meme—*I just wanted to learn their names*—as Alice’s descent down the rabbit hole.

There are two versions of I-ARMY intimate **parasociality** [Steinberg calls such consumer-product relating, “technologies of connection” (qtd. in Galbraith)]: one projects a fan-Idol peer/kinship relationship and the other—recalling [Spivak](#)—*eros*. Elfving-Wang argues that forming the first type, quasi-familial relationships with Idols, is a strategic intention of K-Pop contents’ design. The K-Pop industry works to entice Korean and international fans to identify personally—empathetically and analogously—with the artists, for

the idols appear as objects of admiration and of examples of successful living, making idols particularly effective avenues to promote not only new fashions but also desirable ways of living [...]. K-pop aesthetics are constructed as both **extraordinary yet attainable to anyone** willing to invest in themselves, **an opportunity to mirror the idol’s life** (if not success). This identification process is further enforced by a frequent and calculated series of social media posts and appearances in variety shows that are **designed to allow the fans to feel part of the idol’s circle of friends**. (“K-Pop Idols,” my bold)

Idols’ training and work are infamously brutal physically and emotionally (they must handle not only high-stakes training and performances as artists, but draconian strictures

on their private lives, including prohibitions against dating and physical sequestration from family and friends for the duration of their years-long contracts). Relating to/with Idols' lived struggles, worries, dreams and achievements [exploited labor/learner solidarity?] motivates fans' purchasing, voting, viewing, posting, etc to express support.

An I-ARMY interviewed

got so drawn in to BTS that she began having dreams about them. She finds comfort in their message of "love yourself"—and leaves comments on their online live streams, hoping that they'll notice she exists. She doesn't see BTS as gods—but it's still personal. "It's like proud parents watching their children grow up [...] We helped them to be who they are now, and thankfully, the band is grateful for what we do." (Seo and Hollingsworth)

Fans' psychosocial identification with Idols' personalities, situations and actions fuels their composing to make sense/create themselves, in the (re)image of/through compatible Idols. The relating is simple: *you struggle, worry, dream and experience accomplishment like/as I do; you express emotion like/as me. We are "there" for/with each other even (especially?) when no one else is.* Through empathy as interlocutors, fans and Idols "earn the right to be intimate readers" of/with each other. Surrendering in [translating, as Spivak observes](#), comes from the desire to *fray* the self by engaging with personal-social dissonance. For I-ARMY reimagining themselves with/through a relationship with BTS, [motile](#) sociocultural *self*-development springs from "the spacy emptiness" where precisely different minds (but similar hearts?) meet.

Liu views (particularly female) fans' *erotic parasociality* as having additional layers of performative identity self-creation—echoing many Queer and Feminist Studies scholars. With Tumblr's intersectionality and express blending of fandom and

pornography, she finds learners' composing here, in particular, serves as a vehicle for sometimes serious, sometimes tongue-in-cheek discussions of extremely unconventional and outlandish sexual attractions [which] are, indeed, as much about power as they are about sex—working to establish oneself as the looker of another, rather than the one looked at. And for young women often denied the right to dictate our own sexual script, these very unconventional desires—this willful lust for that which they aren't supposed to want—becomes an empowering act of self-fashioning unto itself.

I-ARMY, like fans on Tumblr as a rule, *ship* BTS members [imagine, often graphically, their romantic/ sexual involvement with each other in various combinations] as well as declare (again, often graphically) their *thirst* [sexual arousal] for them, describing in detail *feels* of romantic as well as physical attraction. They do so in an ecology of meanings where *sexualizing* [objectifying] of Idols (especially underage and/or female) by their contracted agencies (in poses, costumes, choreography, lyrics, etc) and by their fans (in images, comments and fanfiction) is a frequent subject of contestation—a proxy for the negotiation and contestation of objectifying societal expectations and standards imposed upon composers themselves. Fans' textualizing *eros* creates/images their sexual selves—and given how fraught experiencing and negotiating sexual identity is everywhere, for everyone—*sharing* erotic *feels* is a tool for connecting and bonding with supportive others, especially on Tumblr (Pande).

belong: (mid-14c) to go along with, properly relate to, from *be* + *longen* to go; from Old English *langian*, pertain to, go along with; yearn after, grieve for [literally, grow long, lengthen]. ([Harper](#))

Desiring and needing to have that desiring validated/valued for one's *irl* security and personal well-being are essential acts of being and—as the etymology suggests—of

belonging. Wenger links the personal to [the social](#) through belonging *because* to identify is to enact author-ity (“own meaning”), to self-create (“experience identity”). Belonging is not socialization, but [motility](#) afforded through sociality:

Identity is a locus of social selfhood and by the same token a locus of social power. [...I]t is the power to belong, to be a certain person, to claim a place with the legitimacy of membership; [...and] the vulnerability of belonging to, identifying with and being part of some communities that contribute to defining who we are and thus have a hold on us. Rooted in our identities, power derives from belonging as well as from exercising control over what we belong to. [...I]t requires or creates some form of consensus in order [for one] to become socially effective, but the meaning of the consensus is something whose ownership always remains open to negotiation. (207)

More than most communities of practice, perhaps, fandoms explicitly critically engage with members’ [desire as being](#), their longing as belonging. I-ARMY are demonstrably attendant to K-Pop’s selling of *eros*, Idols’ packaging as socially sanctioned role models and the tension between these as marketing and as [felt](#) desires. Who would know better? The dualities mirror the balancing of fans’ own [irl](#) sexual and public identities. Belonging through fandom, they thus engage themselves on multiple levels at once—consuming, performing and co-creating theirs and others’ experiencing personal and social identities. [Astraeapop posts a hot take](#) on allkpop which implicitly endorses [sharing feels](#) to *belong* in its defense of Idols’ performing *eros* to *be longed for*:

I think people are weirdly prudish about how artists choose to present themselves. Obviously there are some cases where it's clearly uncomfortable and exploitative, most obviously when the idol is underage (foul) and particularly with women but also some male idols where they are uncomfortable or a line is being crossed by how the company chooses to market them (also foul) etc. But in just as many, if not more cases, your fav[orit]es actually love feeling themselves [idiom for expressing self-confidence], they relish the fantasy of being both the subject and object of sexual desire, and being onstage can be an outlet for that. Let them enjoy touching themselves suggestively onstage, fondling each other, ripping their clothes off, shaking various extremities at the camera and whatever else.

And always remember it's part of the illusion or fantasy, and they have lives separate from that.

It's only a problem when people don't realise the above OR shatter the fourth wall by sending messy things directly to the idols or doing whatever else.

When our fields position learners as lacking maturity, we often cite the necessity for them to *develop* critical awareness and assume, like parents, that if not innocence, naivete or deficiency of information hinders them from recognizing and resisting exploitation as consumers. I-ARMY composing suggests the opposite: mutual engagement in [prosumer](#) practices affords a far more sophisticated criticality than our classrooms (and perhaps not only my own parenting). Media Studies and its related subfields show us that the sociality of fandom—the Affect connecting fan with objects of desire as well as to fellow fans—*centers* on navigating Wenger's identification-negotiability tension, it textualizes and thus makes real (“owns”) the meaning and experience of intimacy, which explains its magnetism. As a Composition and Literacy specialist, I “see” another perspective as well, however: Because it is outside of schooling's Panoptic monitoring of languaging and other behavior, fandom creates spaces (*power*) for our learners to [mediate](#) and perform their identities. In our classrooms and offices, those same learners experience being socially translated and identified as an Other by us—and thus we are unlikely to “see” them or their writing (what we see is what we get: acts of compliance, not author-ity). What learners are doing as sophisticated composers outside of our domain is exactly what we purport to be “teaching” learners inside of it. In the case of I-ARMY learners in my study, learning writing to belong goes beyond conversing expertly with fellow fans, bloggers and posters; it is performed, too, as learners' [translating](#) of disruptive spaces *within* BTS' texts—their uptake of [Spivak](#)'s “responsibility to the trace of the other in the self.”



Tumblr post remixing footage [from a performance](#) of *Pied Piper* on V-app as two gifs with appended text comment,⁷ embedded link to blog and illocutionary and expressive tags. (artifact 1319-99).

Full translations in [Appendix](#).

만약에 내가 널
망치고 있는 거라면
나를 용서해 줄래
넌 나 없인 못 사니까
다 아니까

If it's the case that I'm your
Ruin—if it's [really] so—
Then, please forgive me
For you not living without me,
And for you knowing [all of this].
—final lines of BTS' *Pied Piper*.⁹²

September 2017 the intimacy of the 아미-BTS relationship became *the* topic of I-ARMY discussion on Tumblr. BTS released *Pied Piper*, a “B-side” track on the mini-album *Love Yourself 承 Her*. A search for *Pied Piper* by BTS [it has no “Korean” title] on Google serves up millions of results just in English. One stratum comprises (licensed and un-) mp3 files, [fancam](#) and “officially” recorded/ digitalized performances, and related [epitexts](#) (Genette): interviews, tweets, chats, V-lives and other social media material “created” by the seven band members. Outnumbering these items exponentially is a deeper stratum of song-related fan-creations: *reaction videos*,⁷ curated, enhanced, remixed and *restored*⁸ — still images, photos, video clips and sound files, [fansign](#)

⁷ *I feel attacked* is an idiom used to describe a fan's visceral response to content (originally anger/hurt but expanded to include arousal), figuring the viewer as the victim of an assault. In response to V performing *Pied Piper*, the blogger translates such [feels](#) by means of a hyperbolic extension of the idiom, a roleplay of reporting to law enforcement that such an “attack” was fatal (*hello yes I'd like to report my own death*). The tags *#guess who just died* *#it was me* signal the post's function as [transmediation](#).

⁸ A *discourse 2.0* genre introduced as an American YouTube phenomenon in which commentators capture their immediate impressions first viewing a performance or recording for others to review and comment upon ([knowyourmeme](#): Oh, “Black” and “K-Pop;” Magoncia).

⁹ Refers to “correcting” “bleaching” or whitening of Idols' skin tones in images (to enhance their attractiveness—a practice I-ARMY criticize).

memorabilia[□], original drawings, paintings, graphic designs, comics, *fanfic* and images, lyrics and dialogue (re)constructed as art pieces, memes, *incorrect quotes/fake subs*[≡]—the genres go on and on. In *discourse 2.0* writing culture, “originals” of content are constantly individuated and reassembled—*paratextualized*—in the process of being *shared*. Thus, *Pied Piper’s metatext* diverges from Genette’s antecedent print-based (and producer-controlled) concept. I-ARMY production and distribution of material does not operate as a digital conveyor belt of *intermediaries* transferring texts to receivers. Instead translations, adaptations and *remixes* are each *multiplicitous* (Lynn) instantiations (with unique Voloshinovan *evaluative accents*), resulting in literal millions of invocations of the author-function, much as Porter’s Translationist reading of Foucault predicts:

Foucault hypothesized in 1969 that the author-function was evolving toward a time when a different set of questions would be pertinent: “From what standpoint was [this discourse] articulated, how can it circulate, and who can appropriate it?...Who can fulfill the various subject functions?” (1969, 95). If questions such as these are asked about a translated work [and “the translator-function”], it becomes clear not simply that the act as well as the effects of translation must be taken into account, but that translation is now, to use Foucault’s term, one of the work’s *modes of existence* in discourse. (448)

From diverse entry points[□] masses of *fanslators* merge to constitute a “traffic of

□ At official events to meet with fans, BTS members reply, often by hand-writing answers, to fan-created questions (example: *Which band member is hardest to wake up early?*). Pictures or video of the fans’ questions and the members’ responses are then posted by the fans for analysis and commentary by the fandom.

≡ Scenario-based, tongue-in-cheek, imaginary interactions between band members in the form of screenplay-like dialogues.

□ Fans employ software to track and notify them when content is posted on topics of interest via indexing tags in addition to their following established accounts and sites. In keeping with Dasgupta’s roadways metaphor, there are diverse means to “map” the traffic of meaning.

meanings” that dynamically and contingently constitutes *Pied Piper* (Dasgupta 42). Dispersed as content [feeding](#) the fandom is, in real terms, its mode of existence [similar to the “brand” BTS itself (Steinberg)]; as “text[s]” it is neither autonomous nor stable (Lynn). I-ARMY’s (re)interpreting-experiencing *Pied Piper* means it is (still is being) continually [constellated](#) peritextually and epitextually as well as [quantized](#) transtextually (Genette) at meso and micro scales. Additional layers to its translation come from the affective [feels](#) of fans. Their translation—whether abusive or traditional—as a rule reaches beyond merely interlingual/cultural elements to what Varela theorizes as [filmic] *perceptual hermeneutics*—the *en scene* “gestalt” meaning translators must try to capture for multimodal art (cited by Pérez González, “Multimodality” 121). Like dramaturgical adapters, I-ARMY *not* engaged with understanding the Korean words/symbols, experience-interpret the song as a holistic performance and thus [invent](#) [find-contrive] intersemiotic *gestic* [≠] meanings for it. For *Pied Piper*, gestic polyvalence creates a [translatorial](#) paradox. The one consensus among $\circ\text{-}\square$ —that the emotional intensity of the fan experience is the song’s *raison d’être* and its subject—is also the point-of-intercept for diametrically-opposed meanings [[feels](#)] [mediated](#) and [translated](#) for it. For example, this Tumblr post remixing the [distracted-boyfriend meme](#), self-deprecates $\circ\text{-}\square$ humorously. In reversing cliché gendered roles an interpretation of the song is proposed: BTS upending the expected consumer:producer, fan-Idol relationship.



(artifact 9918-56)

[≠] That is, “the inner text that exists within any written play through performance [...] (Bassnett 2000)” (qtd. by Pérez González 121)—the imagined inner/outer text imagined here by Translationists is an intriguing analogue to fans’ experiencing of translation as personal/social, affective/semantic interface.

For a thread called “On the Subject of Pied Piper,” a Redditor frames the song *parasocially*—as a platonic *loving, weird and magical relationship*. That framing gets adapted by a responder, who *reexperiences*-interprets the song’s gestic *polysemy* (McCormick; Wenger’s *ambiguity*) as an authentic performance of (R)omantic entanglement of BTS with their fans (and—narrating *feels*, this fan’s with BTS):

Sugagofer: BTS does what they do for themselves and the ARMY. And ARMYs in turn do what they can for BTS. It's a loving, weird and magical relationship. They wouldn't be where they are if it weren't for us. But we wouldn't be here for them if they weren't themselves. Does that make any sense to anyone else?

Kpopology: It's interesting that you get a loving/weird/magical relationship vibe from it too, because so do I. Sometimes, I was wondering if it was just me twisting the tone of the song to be what I wanted, but I get a sense of... almost desperation from it?? Like, "We know you love us like crazy, and we know it's kind of bad for you, but we can't stop doing what we're doing either because we need you too". Idk, I feel like that makes me sound like a crazy *stan* for some reason lol... (velvetfield)

A Tumblr post satirizes the song as performance of an authentic relationship, too—but (tongue-in-cheek) a disingenuous one. BTS’ *Pied Piper* here gets recast as elder peer/kin advice (*focus on school*) contending with other BTS content enticing ㅇㅈㅍ] to play a parental role, to *play as a manager and raise^ the members*. The competition between identification and negotiability (fandom self versus *irl* self; Affective desire versus public responsibility) is transformed into caricature of the fan-brand relationship by the insertion of a meme, a screencap of [Oprah Winfrey confronting Lindsay Lohan regarding substance addiction](#) with *So what is the truth?* as voiced metacommentary:

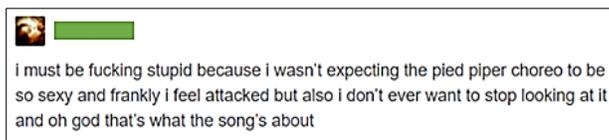


(artifact 9918-5)

Other Tumblr text posts use sarcasm, *remember we are hard working goal-driven individuals first*

^ An instance of English[es] rhetoric that reveals the strength of the familial relating BigHit cultivates.

and *BTS fans second* (artifact 9918-34b) and *wow I can't believe bts singlehandedly instilled a work ethic into all ARMYs* (9918-43)—a riff on a [meme poking fun at pop music fan hyperbole](#)—to frame the song, too, as quasi-parental relating of BTS to their fans.



(artifact 9918-45)

The range and depth of [fanslation](#) regarding *Pied Piper* is exemplified by this artifact. The blogger [transmediates](#), juxtaposing and eliding peer/kin [parasociality](#) (implying the song's meaning is what another I-ARMY names *a loving chastise*, 9918-61) with a [Spivakian erotic surrender](#) to the text. Compact monologue of a fan experiencing *Pied Piper* is dramatized as a progression of [feels](#). The composition's narration begins as if it were a typical fan reaction post, a [hot take](#)^o on the breaking [*unannounced, new*] content, a live performance of the song (the first of scarce stages with never-before-seen [choreo](#)).^x The fan's reading-writing-interpreting is presented "in real time" through run on syntax, staccato rhythm and accelerating pacing, the text seamlessly transitioning to the now mesmerized narrator-as-viewer confessing lustful thoughts. Then signaled by an interjection (*oh god*, a double entendre expressing both orgasm and epiphany), the post becomes stream-of-consciousness self-talk, a *dénouement* recasting the whole episode as embarrassed self-critique. This is meta-experience of fan translation-as-self-

^o [Merriam-Webster](#)—widely lauded for its social media languaging interpretations since the 2016 presidential campaign—defines this as “a published reaction or analysis of a recent news event that, often because of its time-sensitive nature, doesn't offer much in the way of deep reflection.” The term has evolved to current usage as [meme-slang](#) referring ironically to a conversational contribution that takes the form of an insightful (implausible) interpretation or idiosyncratic (unjustifiable) reaction.

^x Refers to (usually live rather than MV) dance performance, which in this case was special for fan events. It was widely characterized by fans as provocative—with sexualized body rolls and members wearing leather harnesses. One text post imagines BTS' producer planning the event cunningly as “mixed messages” from the song to ㅇㅈㅍ (artifact 9918-68). [The poster reporting their own death](#) above reacts to a subsequent, also unannounced, *fully* choreographed performance of *Pied Piper*—a year later—[a live-streamed stage](#) that, to use a fan hyperbole, “broke the Internet.”

representation. By inserting a fan character into the meaning, the composer orchestrates a constellation of [plurisubjective](#) (Cronin) experiences of meaning/identity. The text is simultaneously a blogger’s (meta)commentary offered up for our interpretation; a fan [mediating](#) BTS’ texts; ourselves [mediating](#) the narration; ourselves [remediating](#) BTS’ texts; and our [mediating feels](#) the post elicits to negotiate our identification (our relationship to the blogger, the fan-character and BTS).



Screenshots of 21:49, :51 shots from [V-live broadcast](#) with official Korean subtitles (RM).

My subs: **RM [bashful]: [I] wanted to write [it] in a way that...is a little risky.**

According to members who co-wrote it, *Pied Piper* reenacts their own experience as music fans (kpopviral) and “express[es] gratitude in a unique way [that] I was worried might offend some fans. It was a bit [said in English:] *dangerous*,...but is [meant to be] fun” (RM, official subtitling, my italics and additions).^{*} Most fanslators in my dataset do interpret it as a wry *mea culpa* for fans’ being distracted from other responsibilities, both [exposing](#)[‡] and encouraging [오미](#)’s emotional attachment to BTS—and playing with the tension between peer/kin and erotic [parasociality](#) to do so. However, the song provokes an extremely negative [hot] take from some I-ARMY. Rather than validating, they re-experience the song gestically as boasting about asymmetrical, even predatory sexual power of Idols over their fans. They [translate](#) it as sexualization committed *by* BTS, an identity that they [experience](#) as severely disempowering.

^{*} The official Korean subtitles translate *dangerous* as 조금 위험해, the phrase used in *Pied Piper*’s refrain, variously translated as *risky/dangerous*. My subbing includes frames where RM uses the Korean term.

[‡] *Exposing* refers to publicly calling attention to an embarrassing flaw, often used by the “victim” in a self-deprecating way, as in, *don’t expose me like that!* It carries connotations much less severe than *shaming*—which connotes condemnation designed to humiliate the victim).

I'm fucking crying!!!

I always look through the notes on things and seeing all of things people say when they reblog something. And all of this about Pied Piper song from BTS. Okay let me break down the lyrics no matter how much this will probably backlash on me. Either no one will see this or a lot of people will and I will have 2 followers after this. And I am honestly taking the chorus because that's what triggered me and that's fucking me! I'm not everyone okay!

"You're not getting punished
Come here, I'm your paradise
Can't close your eyes
Can't close your eyes
This is gonna get you nowhere
(Don't reject me)
Just close your eyes and listen carefully
Follow the pipe sound, follow this sound
I'm a little dangerous yet so sweet
I'm coming to save you, I'm coming to spoil you
You called me, look, I'm sweet
Follow the pipe sound"

Okay let's break this down as to why to me it's triggering. It's triggering because this just made me think of really bad times in my life. I know the rest of the lyrics are okay. Telling the army to study and get back to work and to not obsess too much. But this part just when I read it I got really depressed. I didn't tell anyone at first then I saw a few other people online lol somewhat the same. But what got me was the people who try to counter this argument.

IF YOU HAVE NEVER BEEN SEXUALLY ASSAULTED OR RAPED DONT FUCKING START WITH ME TELLING ME TO NOT SEE THESE LYRICS LIKE THIS!!!

I know BTS would never intentionally write a song insinuating rape or sexual assault just the lyrics can be seen that way. Like I don't want people to hate me for saying this either. And the fact people keep saying this is drama and that it is fake. Like you never lived my life. You don't know what makes me triggered. You don't know what can get me super fucking depressed. And people are saying that people are going to start saying they are "abuser status" sure some people but none of you know what happened to me. And sure fucking harass me that's exactly what I need more people in my life thinking my sexual assault is a lie. So I might not post anything for a little while because I just can't take all of this. I mean I've dealt with this for over 6 years and this song brought it back into my mind. And I know what the song was intended for and I am supportive for it but please know that some people are sensitive and have had things happen in their life where things do trigger them.

4 notes

!! THERE IS NOTHING FUCKING WRONG WITH PIED PIPER !!

This bitch has had the nerve to attach the word "pedophilic" to the song, and to BTS.

Let me just clear my throat before I clear some SHIT OUT.

"ahem"

FUCK YOU. It wasn't BTS who took my first sexual encounter from me at only seven going on eight. Nor do the lyrics even slightly resemble what my BABYSITTER said to me to make it "okay". I have experienced vaginismus and overall aversion to sex for the past 14 years because of what happened to me, and still can't have sex with my s/o because of it. I posted a while ago asking for tips on obtaining birth control without having to get a pelvic exam. Why? The shit that happened to me as a child.

I've had people telling me how I should feel about what happened to me through the media, through friendships, and no one actually knows what it's like. I did not have any control when what happened, happened. But now, **I'm not going to fucking let you accuse BTS of the vile shit that turned my life on its head, stuck me in counseling for eight years, and medicated me for five.**

Learn how to fucking properly interpret the context of the song.

@ [redacted] Thank you for calling a bitch out. You da real mvp.

4 notes

(artifacts 9918-29 and -30)

I-ARMY composing gets excruciatingly personal around this. In the above pair of artifacts bloggers [mediate](#) the song through their lived experiences of sexual assault and sexual abuse—opening up their intimate identities for others' interpretation in almost identical ways, although with diametrically opposed [feels/identities](#). “Seen” through the lens of high and low context orientation argued by Park M. and Kang H., the [disruptive rhetoricity within](#)—and when subjected to side-by-side analysis, *between*—these enact “difference of psychocultural orientation patterns between [...orientations being] what actually happens in the process of communication” (Park M.) in a [ZPD](#).

The first (left)—despite stating it will *break down the lyrics* and *explain why to me it is triggering*—details only the blogger's reception. Carefully refraining from indicting the lyricists' intent or disrespecting other ARMYs' interpretations (anti-coalitional evaluative moves), it repeatedly calls attention to its [mediating](#) of an *intuitive* (personal/affective

rather than analytical/semantic) response: it “owns” a wholly *gestic* meaning. Instead of an interpretation of *BTS*’ messaging, the *blogger*’s reading-experience is asserted as [actant translation](#), with a purpose: as a plea for $\circ\}\square$ to permit negotiability for identity/meaning, sensitivity to the particularity of fan experiences (others’ belonging) over their identification with *BTS*. *Being* the object of *BTS* internally for this blogger *cannot* be reconciled with external meanings proposed by others (or even the remainder of the lyrics). This is not a failure to comprehend. We teachers would likely label it an “idiosyncratic” reading—privileging a semantic-over-affective analysis of authorial intent/rhetorical logic [[Spivak’s claims](#) make assessment of this as unsuccessful *close reading* ironic]. Herein lies the rub: the blogger articulates a [high-context](#) semiotics/orientation claim regarding the text’s meaning. Those who accept that text and its reception are *by nature* entangled would “see” it as valid; those who do not, would not.

The second post (on the right) possesses the latter orientation, and yet is equally poignant in asserting intentionality for both text production and reception (curtailing pluriversality/particularity). It denounces “wrong” intuitive experience-[mediating](#) as incompetence (*not properly interpret[ing] the context of the song*), making an inductive claim that [put clinically] *BTS* and its languaging do not fit the semantic category *pedophilic* because *the lyrics [do not] even slightly resemble what [a pedophile] said...to make [sexual predation] “okay.”* The contrast in orientations is mirrored in emotional reaction: the first, triggered, seeks validation; the second, angered, invalidates.

The second blogger privileges agency, assigning authority to [external $\circ\}\square$ culturally-sanctioned symbolic] meaning inhering to text. Reception [inner sense-making], too, equals readers’ *intention* to synthesize [appropriate—both verb and

adjective] knowledge available (the connotation of *the context of the song*). The abuser’s words embodied intent that, as a child, she did not apprehend; now knowledgeable, she requires that the *same* contextual elements (vulnerable child, predatory adult, intent to harm) be explicitly attached in order to construe the *same* meaning. “Owning” an empowered survivor identity, this blogger seeks to mobilize affiliation with BTS and its defenders, by **calling out** and **shouting out**.⁷ She frames self-fashioning—fans’ *creating* their relationship to BTS as rational decision-making—dismissing intuitive *experiencing of meaning—low-context* semiotics paradoxically “proven” by the same means as its companion [translation](#) above. The song is each survivor’s *felt* reading of it—the **hows** of their sense-making are polar opposites.

It is worth noting that there is something missing from the read-writing process of both bloggers. Their link and quotation show they are referencing a fan-translated [English\[es\]](#) version of *Pied Piper* lyrics as “BTS’ song.” Neither engage with Korean-English linguistic transformation—even though this is the equivalence of meaning debated. Social mores—Anglophone and Korean *cultural premises* (Carbaugh)—are not deemed relevant to performing or evaluating interpretation. Treating the material text as [multiplicitous](#)—the result of collaborative, multilayered production situated within a consumer-oriented [skopos](#)—this, too, is rejected in favor of critical reflection on *experiencing* meaning/identity as a fan. The nature of their personal identifications with the Idols themselves stands in as the determining epitextual resource for a wholly gestic, irrational [transmediation](#). They perform [Spivak’s intimate reading](#) as [sharing feels](#), the song neither lexicosemantic object nor consumer product. Reversing Spivak, these I-

⁷ Idioms for antonymous gestures for solidarity. *Calling out* is criticizing behavior/intent through public direct or indirect confrontation (often in the form of commentary *shaming* the target). *Shouting out* is endorsing behavior/intent in/directly through coalitional shows of support (*hyping* the target).

ARMY, “to make sense of themselves...mime the responsibility to trace themselves in the other.”

Evaluating semantic accuracy—performing interpretation as [version translation](#)—is taken up as the subject in other bloggers’ commentary. Two examples of this take place through bloggers’ text response to [asks](#). The first (left) interaction performs [translatorial intervention](#) in line with Jenkins’ theory. The interlocutors express, *subjectively*, their [hot takes](#) on the conflicting interpretations via claimed identities (loyal ARMYs, *older*, *credentialed expert*); *speculatively mediate* the song’s axiomatic and ideological meanings vis à vis fandom (teasing out interactional, sociological and psychoemotional premises) and motivations/attitudes; and—conspicuous among the seriousness of the bulk of the discussion—*playfully voice* the respondent’s and BTS’ ([feels](#)) [irl](#) responses to the controversy:

anonymous asked

Ah dont tell me u believe any of this pied piper crap ppl talk about, I even didn't know ppl accept the song as sexual assault in sexual way or whatever. Seriously WTF? All i've seen so far as opinion by army's n especially older army's as myself is that they diss the young girls/mostly that r irrational that stay n watch bts instead living their own life n study n all, the fandom reality... N then they say even tho i ruin u/nnot all of us/but will u forgive me because i cant be without u

answered

2. They just say the truth, the truth about all fandoms, kpop ones mostly, but also western. Why the hell everytime everyone jumps on them for telling the truth, no matter which group u like the fandom u in if u r has the same issues, this really get me triggered. The antls seriously every time come up with worse n worse crap... [redacted]

Are these people simple antls or the new generation is so perverted minded that all they see is perversion? I dont understand... I saw one other opinion about the lyrics much more close to my own n i believe it is well explained n very plausible. Too bad im not as good with words, so explain it my own... [redacted]

Why would i believe it? Reading comprehension was one of my best subjects. [redacted] Seriously though, as a multilingual who studied translation in uni, I d know better than to take any one English translation as fact, considering how vastly different Asian languages are from English and they're almost always impossible to translate exactly. It's all about context.

Anyway, please don't waste your time and energy getting angry at them—I mean fine, I was a bit angry yesterday, but is it really worth it? Let's not give any antls that jumped at the chance to slander the boys with this out-of-context fracas even the minor satisfaction of seeing us get all annoyed and bothered over it. The boys are—well, adult men actually, and they can handle this rumor, even if it actually gets any sort of traction.

artifact 9918-28

artifact 9918-41

anonymous asked

Please explain the part of Pied Piper that romanticizes rape culture. All I see when I read the lyrics is them talking about how crazy their fans are for them and their music, and them saying they'll keep making music for fans to go crazy over.

answered

I'm quite sure that you're right, that is exactly how bangtan intended the song lyrics to be understood. I love bangtan, I love the boys, I've been following them for a long time and I am grateful for the beautiful music and the good times they've given me. This is not me attacking them.

That being said the words they chose and the phrases used are still characteristic of the type of language rapists use on their victims and I think, regardless of how good someone's intentions are, they are responsible for the effects of their words. Words have power, music has power, bangtan has power: they owe it to their fans and most importantly to themselves to be conscious of what they're saying, why they're saying it, how it might be interpreted and misinterpreted, and how it may affect others who hear their words.

I'm an English major, the first thing we learn is that there is no one way to interpret a work of art, different interpretations are valid, in fact, different interpretations are meant to come out of a work of art. One interpretation does not necessarily detract from the others. Remember all the theories for hyun? Remember the boys saying music was meant to be interpreted individually? That it means what it means to each person who listens to it?

I one hundred percent understand the intent of this song, they're singing about obsessive fan culture and the strange dynamic between a fan and an idol (or an idol group). And yet, if the song can so easily be read as sexually predatory, then this is something bangtan should have taken into account.

The conversation performed on the right employs similar “academic” ethos-establishment⁹³ and fan-repertoire evidentiary support. Its [subjective and speculative translatorial mediation](#) of the song is *recontextualized* with an even larger-than-ARMY, global contestation of meanings [then trending in English-speaking social media, the #metoo movement](#). This conversation’s playfulness is limited by the gravity of its subject matter and closing critique of BTS (ignoring collaborators in the song’s production). Rather than using humor, the respondent alludes to *all the [fan] theories for hyyh* (famously elaborate, intricate and intensive fan analyses of BTS’ texts)⁹⁴, invoking *uncontroversial*, secondhand fan-play rather than instantiating any here. Paraphrasing *the boys saying music is meant to be interpreted individually...it means what it means to each person who listens to it* likely references an interview with 10asia ([re-reported through English\[es\] translation by Koreaboo](#)), in which BTS lyricists can be seen as endorsing a high-context, intuitive orientation to fan reception of their songs. Taking up that view, the blogger assigns BTS blame for not being considerate enough of (implied [English\[es\]](#)) disruptive rhetoricity of their polysemous text. The capacity to account for the overwhelming diversalité of their audience—let alone the ability to control meaning through literal millions of fan-translated, -mediated and -interpreted versions—is not acknowledged. In both these conversations, Idols’ [parasocial](#) relationship to fans takes precedence over the vagaries of art and language.

Other fanslators do tackle the song’s transduction directly. The post which sparked the controversy discussed in the previous artifacts is one such case:

ped piper by bts is predatory and pedophilic

the lyrics [link to [geniuslyrics](#)] in ped piper start off by talking about a fan who analyzes music videos, has many posters in her room of the boys, and how they’re obsessed with them. they then go on to describe this song as the girl’s “reward” and calls them a “good girl” then it proceeds to say “you aren’t being punished, come here” and talks about how she can’t close her eyes.

and then the real kicker: "*you may struggle but it won't matter anymore*" that, ladies and gentleman, is fucking sexual assault. they are literally describing about how they're going to sexually assault the listener as a "reward" for being a "good girl" for obsessing over the band. a few lines later, they say they'll save and ruin the fan and then "you're the one who called me here, see how it's sweet?"

so... the fan is asking for it? nice. good job, guys. great fucking lyrics. scroll a bit further down and

"*i am your guilty pleasure, you can never get out of this, never*"

so um yeah. thanks bts. good to know how you see your fans and how you're so fucking open about how you know you're manipulating them and want to sexually torment them. and i wish i was exaggerating but i'm not. the lyrics are right there, that's what they say and considering the first verse, the song is very fucking literal.

so yeah bts are highkey cancelled⁷ let's not tolerate this shit and instead tell younger fans that this is really predatory and wrong because it *is*.

For the most part, I stay relatively quiet when it comes to things I find questionable or dislike, particularly within the kpop fandoms.

But I feel I cannot let this slide.

I would like to preface: I am not a BTS stan. I have listened to their music in the past. I have watched the occasional variety. But I have never found enough to pull me in to the fandom. So some may feel I do not have a place to come out and complain from

However

I am also an adult female with enough experience of ingrained misogynistic culture and rape culture to understand this is what these lyrics are based in.

They are not a simple 'roast' or 'diss' or 'call out post'. They are not 'sexy'.

I have not heard the song. I do not want to. But these lyrics themselves stand alone to me as incredibly worrying. Please, please do not think these lyrics are remotely safe. They are not. Even if you don't read them as sexual they are still highly manipulative and not even remotely 'banterous' or 'playful'. When I read them I could practically hear the voice of an abuser saying them. I cannot stress enough that if anybody is making you feel victimised in this way it is not something to laugh at or be impressed by.

Please be safe.

(artifact 9918-49a)

A nonARMY [call out-cum-PSA](#), this post performs a peer/kin [parasocial](#) identity (rejected by those who [translated](#) it as anti baiting ^{o}p]} to *interact*).⁸ This poster links her (longer) experience with analysis of *the very fucking literal* ([English\[es\]](#) version of) the lyrics—entangling meaning-context (*ingrained misogynistic culture and rape culture...is what these lyrics are based in*) to generate a new text: one that implicitly associates #metoo with BTS in order to protect women fans from being sexualized/abused. kpop-goestheweasel says it provoked them into [translatorship](#):

⁷ *Highkey* is a synonym for "totally" and *cancelled* refers to collective action to boycott someone on social media, denying them an audience due, usually, to a statement or action that is considered discriminatory, hateful or otherwise inappropriate ([urbandictionary](#)). What has been dubbed *cancel culture*—abuse of such consumer activism is a subject of wide discussion online currently.

⁸ *PSA* [public service announcement] is Tumblr [meme-slang](#) for an expression of concern; *anti* is opposite of fan—a *hater*, in current slang; *interact*, "to engage argumentatively with"—which evolved from warnings on blogger's Tumblr banners to explicitly exclude replies, asks and comments that represent certain categories (especially *NSFW*, "not safe for work"), as in "nonPOC don't interact."

As far as how I got into writing [below] post, I have been studying Korean for a while (it started out from boredom and *a drive to always be learning*), so I have an understanding of the language from a foreigner's perspective, but enough so that I am aware that things don't always translate perfectly. After seeing some articles of international fans that were upset by translated lyrics, *I felt a sense of responsibility* in pointing out the imperfections in translations and how there is never going to be a perfect way to portray a message over different languages because of underlining nuances on top of things that don't translate well. I wrote the post more so *driven to inform because the biggest cause of hatred and tension is a simple case of misunderstanding or ignorance*. Usually my writings are fictional, but *when things come up like this, I feel like I should do what I can to try to quell tensions and support my favorite artists*. (my italics)

Personal commitments to [translocality](#) as well as experience of and sensitivity to others' [feels](#) motivate this self-described learner—despite the time and effort required—to intervene *between fans* though [translatorial](#) read-writing. Deploying [competence](#) in the roles of language broker, critic, BTS fan (*not* ㅇ|ㅁ|) and intermediary *as* and *for* the international K-Pop fan, the post [transliterates](#) a [high context] reception so it becomes [legible](#) to (can be [mediated](#) by) low-context-oriented readers.

kpop-goestheweasel's [intermediation](#) here is, like the post it interacts with, [abusive](#); it is [Artivism](#) designed to [constellate](#) a *transparent experience of translation* for readers. As direct address, it delivers its *rant* through rhetoric that couches Affect in concern, respectfully concedes its particularity and thus invites self-reflection:


kpop-goestheweasel

BTS's Pied Piper Rant

Lately, I've been seeing a lot of reblogs and rants over a post on BTS's Pied Piper song on many B.A.P blogs. I usually keep my thoughts/opinions to myself on things like this.... but I really cannot help myself but to rant the crud out of it. It's 4AM and I'm probably not thinking clearly, so more than likely I'll delete later, but I really want to get this out and hopefully stop the ignorance and the static before a stupid fanwar is created over ignorance.

I'm seriously not trying to offend anyone or start any awkward tension with people, I'm just trying to shed light on something I've come across and fix the error/misconception that's come from it.

Although I am multifandom, I consider myself a Baby above all else and it kills me to see our fandom falling into this. Although I occasionally write BTS fanfics, I don't remotely consider myself ARMY. Unfortunately, the fandom has driven me to the point that I can't really even listen to the group anymore... but I will stand with them on this one.

There are so many flaws in the original post that it just hurts me.

First of all, common sense should immediately tell you that there is **NO WAY** an idol group (especially one with as much attention as BTS) would ever release a song with such a disturbing message. Obviously, with their young fan base, the boys, as well as their company, producers, and literally everyone else working with them, know all too well the focus that is on them. Every little thing they say and do is being viewed and analyzed/interpreted by millions. Could you imagine the amount of backlash they would get from parents of fans if such a song existed? Even beyond that, the Korean music industry and officials that work with the entertainment industry as well. Anybody familiar with Korean culture knows that there are hell a lot more restrictions on the things shown on TV, in music videos, in songs... they are very cautious with their image and what they release to the public. A song about sexual manipulation wouldn't even make it out of a production studio.

Secondly, the amount of ignorance in ranting about something without fully researching is appalling. Obviously, the OP is an international fan that relies on translations to get the message of a song. Did it not occur to think about the possible mistranslations before getting triggered? Also, pulling single lines of lyrics out of context could make any song out to be something it's not. Yes, some of the lyrics are seemingly questionable, but the song as a whole comes together to relay a much bigger message that I for one find to be genius.

Reading over the lyrics myself and with the variables in the translations (because there are definitely things that don't perfectly translate), it's clear they are actually saying that they understand that fans can get wrapped up in the content they (BTS) release, but they are practically begging fans to see the error, the problem in getting too obsessed with the group and losing sight of their own lives.

Need I break down the lyrics? *"I'm not fluent in Korean by any means, but this is what I've taken away from it from what I do know, and I'm breaking down the lyrics that have been most problematic."*

나쁜 거라 더 좋은 거야 ~ 'It's bad, so it's better'

In the lyrics the poster was going from, it was translated to 'I like it more because it's bad'. In Korean, often the subject like 'I' or 'You' or 'It' can be implied rather than stated; this is where the misconception comes from. Basically, this sentence it saying because 'It' is 'bad' or viewed as bad, you like it. Which is the teenage way to be. And Bangtong does have that slightly rebellious edge to them because they have stood up and spoken out about depression and things that are hush hush in Korea. (Granted, that's not exactly what they're getting at,

but you get the gist). Obviously, what the OP was going from certainly does sound way more sexual in context, but with the rest of the song the message is certainly not what the poster took from it.

If you look Rapmon's verse, the whole message is right there:
*Now stop watching and study for your test
 Your parents and director hate me
 Video clips, pictures, tweets
 V app, Bon Voyage
 I know, you can't help what you like
 But stop, interpret the music video later
 You have so many pictures of me in your room anyway
 It's not just one hour, it's a whole year that'll disappear
 So this song is an award I'm giving to you
 Good*

He is literally telling the listener to stop wasting themselves on obsessing over the music because there are more important things, and the song is a present to them to help open their eyes to the ruin they're in because they are too wrapped up in supporting the group rather than working on their own success in life.

*'You're not being punished
 Come here, I'm your paradise
 Can't close your eyes
 Can't close your eyes
 You can throw a fit but it's no use
 (Don't reject me)
 Just close your eyes, tune your ear'*

Put into context with the rest of the song, the chorus is actually kind of a narrative in a way. Bangtong is painting themselves out to be a lurking evil - which is exactly what they kind of are to some fans that let themselves get too obsessed and wrapped up in them. It's literally like any other kind of addiction. Too much of a good thing turns out to be no good at all. And BTS are relaying this message to their fans by taunting them as the piper. It's meant to sound manipulative because that's exactly what it is. They are speaking out to the fans that literally love the group so much that they allow themselves to be blindly manipulated by them. It's meant to make the listener uncomfortable, it's meant to make them think - is the way they love them and follow them healthy? What better way to get that point across without blatantly offending the fans? That's why they made themselves out to be the lurking evil, the pied piper.

The rest of the song dances around that exact form of taunting. They are pointing out that they end up charming their way into every aspect and end up becoming a controlling aspect in their fans life because the fans themselves get all wrapped up in their love and support for the group that it becomes an obsession. They're saying they understand what kind of control an artist can have on a fan, but also pointing out that it's not right, it's not healthy and the fans need to open their eyes to that.

With this thought in mind, take another look at the lyrics, and if you don't know Korean, please do your research before getting triggered over something is literally just a misconception in translation. Check around on different sites to see other ways it was translated (I guarantee you ever song as song kind of minor differences in translations over the internet). Above all else, don't attack a group with your fandom as a backing. That's how fanwars start and it's so damn unnecessary. Don't get me started on how stupid fanwars are in the first place.

Alright. Alright. Alright. I've run out of steam. Rant over.

19 notes 👍 🗨️ 📄 ⚙️

Artifact 9918-49b [*Baby* is K-Pop group BAP's fandom name; *OP* is original poster]

Readers [are mobilized to contribute their own](#) (parallel) *fanlatorial* action, [remediate](#) the song's text, others' (including the blogger's) takes, the reader's [parasocial](#) relationship, the fan-brand relationship, their experiencing of identity, of meaning and of practice connected to fandom. It conspicuously omits [feels](#) (the blogger's and readers'): this is a text pursuing an outcome, *not* [transmediation](#). It associates BTS with that same purpose, recasting *Pied Piper* as a similarly *peer/kin* intervention—advising fans to

[negotiate] perform-experience [identify] fandom in self-affirming ways through frankness (*It's meant to make the lister[ne]r uncomfortable, it's meant to make them think—is the way they love them and follow them healthy?*). BTS and kpop-goestheweasel get transformed from potential threats (the blogger as non^o-^ㅁ, BTS as abuser) to trustworthy, explicitly [parasocial](#), “friends.” They partner (in/as metatext) to [translate](#) Wenger’s identity-negotiability dilemma into caring for and empowering others.

The precariousness of the personal-social balance inherent to [fanslation](#) is demonstrated by miniminstupidduo, an avowed I-ARMY in posts below. They garner almost 2,500 notes through two rounds (the first did not achieve its outcome). Here, traditional linguistic explication (parsing an idiom, identifying grammatical gendering and formality registers) is followed by thematic and historical literary analysis, the latter *reconstructed* with additional specificity in the second round. Like bloggers’ [translations](#) above, axiological meanings are here asserted, accompanied notably by concessions of alternatives. Experiencing [mediating](#) *Pied Piper* gets transformed into *means testing* of fans’ competence. One’s [feels](#), claims the first post, reveal one’s culture awareness, knowledge of [skopos](#) and sensitivity to the complexity of (full) fandom membership (see [this footnote](#)). Artifacts 9918-22a, b:

btw, for everyone out there misinterpreting pied piper cause you just wanna be mad...“착해” **does not mean “good girl,” it literally means “being nice.”** As in, “I’m giving you a reward for being a good person” ...the sort of weird, sexual undertone of “good girl” just isn’t there. For this entire song the person being spoken to is genderless because it is easy to say all this without gender pronouns etc. **There is no way of knowing who they’re talking to in this song, just that they’re using informal speech (which is unsurprising since the song is literally about holding power over someone).**

If it creeps you out to listen to a song about BTS having power over the listener, that’s fine, but that *is* the point of the song. That’s not an interpretation?? **By calling the song pied piper they are referring to themselves as A VILLAIN?** I read it as a song about their guilt over making fans sacrifice time and money. You can read it as a toxic, gross celebration of power over fans if you want, but **even if you wanna read it that way please don’t claim that it “is” something sexual** despite the fact that it is pretty clearly about them and their fame and their fans and not meant to be metaphorical in that way? Celeb-fan relationships have a very uneven power balance, but you want BTS to just act like they aren’t complicit in that??? Personally, I think it’s cool and fun and less fake to draw attention to in a tongue-in-cheek way, but you do you.

this whole thing just reeks to me of that scandal that IU went through, where she tried to sarcastically tell the story about how she had been objectified and infantilized her whole life, and then was destroyed by [netizens](#)^ㅁ for romanticizing lolita-ism. **Like, “we’ll**

^ㅁ *Netizens* is a Koreanism for *trolls*, the [domestic] “mob” who post [hate\[ful\]](#) public comments (Kang W).

all be ok with weird power structures between idols and fans, but once you idols are honest about them, we're gonna act mad and grossed out. You're welcome to interpret music however you want, and you're welcome to like it or not, but music cannot always be easily digestible and black and white. Otherwise it's boring.

SIGH

I just wanna reblog this and clarify some of what I wrote up there, because some reblogs and some direct messages are confused about what I meant. This post was written about people who read the first eng trans of the song they saw and felt it was about, or implied, non-consensual sex. I wrote my post refuting those points, but some people felt that my interpretation was still too negative. I really like the song and think it's fun, and also thing it is talking about something important???

The structure of the song and vocals makes me think that it was written simply to create a metaphor for how music can entice and seduce you, almost against your will. But Joon's verse makes the song more complex, and more in line with the ideas of the original story.

The story of the pied piper is of a piper that is called to a village (니가 날 부른 거야 봐 달잖아-you called me, see, isn't [it] sweet?) under the threat of plague to rid the place of its rats (널 구하러 온 거야-I'm here to save you). After drowning the rats, the village mayor no longer wants to pay the full price, so the piper goes off vowing revenge (널 망치러 온 거야-I'm here to ruin you). The piper returns when all the adults are in church and entices the children away (피리소릴 따라와-follow the sound of the pipe) to the river where they drown like the rats. Not every version of the story is the same (sometimes the children are returned upon payment-나는 너를 시험해 I'm testing you/or they're taken to paradise), but it's a story of "if you don't hold up your end of the deal, you deserve to be punished." BTS takes on the voice of the piper, and simultaneously calls people who could be villagers or the children.

But then we have Joon's verse at the beginning which gives the song a more tongue-in-cheek, sarcastic tone/scope. They aren't actually singing about how they believe they deserve all our time and money. "Stop watching and study," he interrupts. His verse says, "I get it, you like us, but go outside, experience life, that's ok." This is a direct rejection of some of the more toxic aspects of fan culture. He is saying that what fans have done is enough, and they don't need to hold (or they already have held) up their end of the deal. However, the song continues with the pied piper narrative. This dichotomy, pairing[‡] the idea of "stop, this song is your reward not something you owe me for" (이 노랜 내가 네게 주는 상/착해) with "just follow along mindlessly even though it will ruin you," gives the listener a choice. They are acknowledging the fan's ability to make decisions for themselves, not denying that they ask for (or sometimes demand) their attention, but also saying that it's ok if the fan looks away for a moment.

[Opinion], this song is directly in relation to popular ideas in Korean society that idol groups waste fans' time and money in return for very little effort (or talent) on the idols' part. You see this in comments like, "10. [+8, -3] Must be nice to live off of the money of your stupid fangirls like that." And fans *do* overspend time and money, particularly in a society that demands a lot of time and work from its youth. You see this all the time when Namjoon reads Korean comments on Vlive that say "Oppa,[‡] I should be at my academy right now!!" Korean highschoolers "should" and often do spend up to 20 hours daily in school/after-school classes. That doesn't leave a lot of time for fangirling! Everytime one of them reads comments like "I'm at work!" "I should be studying!" I'm sure BTS is both thankful and sorry. Joon is always telling fans to go outside, to read books, etc. because he wants them to experience life. He doesn't put a premium on studying 24/7, but he also probably doesn't think our lives should just be BTS/work.

It is this controlling claim—and its outcome (for I-ARMY to improve their practice)—that minimistupidduo, monitoring how readers [interact](#) [with] the first post, determines has not been achieved. There is a change in tactics: the second post tangibly moderates the first's harsher tone toward less-sophisticated readers and its equation of them to [haters](#) (*cause you just wanna be mad*).[‡] The blogger takes explicit pains to associate

[‡] The lines cited here overlap acoustically in the performance. See annotated translation in [Appendix](#).

[‡] Korean address that simultaneously represents the [familial](#) (it is the literal term for a woman's older brother) and the [erotic](#) (it is the widely used intimate term for the male in a heterosexual, romantic relationship). The languacultural conflation supports Elsvig-Wang's claims about the intentionally [parasocial](#) construction of Idols by Korean media as sibling-like as well as [sexually] desirable, giving nuance to the rigid control over Idols' personal lives the government-funded industry exerts.

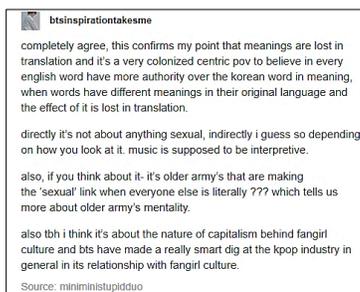
[‡] The "agitated" to "concerned" tone change is signaled orthographically by the reduction in ?s to mark rising oral pitch for statements that assume/allude to opposing views (similar to adding "don't you see?").

their critique with the main lyricist and BTS' leader (RM) Kim Nam Jun [*joon...doesn't think our lives should be just BTS/work*] and, through subtle shift in rhetoric, themselves with their readers. *I* versus *you* pervades the first post; there is no *I* (emphasized by a single quasi-exception, *imo*) only *we* and rhetorically collective *you* in the second—a move from communication through low-context, individualist *logos* to high-context, collectivist *ethos*. The result is a more caring—rather than judgmental—interventional, coalitional stance. It ultimately takes a [metatextual](#) mixing of rhetorical genres to achieve the outcome. *Call out post*, *fansub*, *fan reaction* and *fan theory* (with synopses and explications of allusions to works of influence) are integrated to perform [mediating](#) of and for I-ARMY-BTS.

The text here is, like all of the *Pied Piper* bloggers' contributions analyzed, an example of the composer's [motility](#)—that they are learners entering the [Zone of Proximate Translatorship](#) to connect an [invisible college](#), enabling personal *being* and social *belonging* through [sharing](#). Like kpop-goestheweasel's above, miniministupidduo's [prosumer](#) practice is an ongoing process of self-motivated and -directed transcultural/lingual/local learning, reconciling dissonance and negotiating identity. This is made clear in the latter's description:

When I wrote [below] I was really spending a lot of time *following BTS/BTS fans* on the internet (largely as a coping mechanism/escape for the stressful real world stuff). I've been interested in Korean pop culture (dramas mostly but also kpop/literature/etc) for the past 8 (ish) years, and during that time I learned Korean (to clarify—in case it matters for your paper—I am not fluent!) and spent some time living in Korea, and so *I know both what it is to consume Korean pop culture without having any real understanding of the cultural context or*

language, and then now having a lot more knowledge about it. So generally that's when I write things online—trying to bring perspective and context where many international fans don't have a lot. This happens with all the Korean pop culture fandoms I interact with, but the Bangtan fandom has a lot of this because there are so many fans who aren't interested in Korean culture as a whole, but just interested in BTS. I don't really use other social medial, but my understanding of twitter is that there are a lot of Korean users who clarify situations there—but from my experience (when I was a more active bangtan user) of tumblr, that isn't so much the case! So when I saw people assuming an interpretation of something based on an unclear translation, that's the sort of situation I would say something. The real summary of all that though is that I feel I have a bit more information and context than SOME fans when it comes to certain things to do with BTS and I honestly love being pedantic on the internet! (my italics)



(artifact 9918-22-10)⁷



(artifact 9918-64)⁹⁵⁴

Among the following BTS fans who reply (left) to miniministupidduo is btsinspirationtakesme, who separately posts a competing, [remixed](#) interpretation of *Pied Piper* (right). The text post reply gently contests (on [pluri-subjectivity](#) grounds) OP's Feminist critical interpretation of the song and adds to it one that could easily be from a

⁷ ??? is orthographical representation for *perplexed*. *tbh* is a textspeak acronym for *to be honest*.

⁴ The appended gif is an excerpt from [BTS' DNA MV](#), in which the vocalists sing: *Don't regret it, baby, because we're forever,...forever,...forever* (official subtitles).

Postcolonial Translationist (*it's a very colonize[r]⁷ centric pov to believe [...the connotations of the] english word [to] have more authority [than] the korean word[s]*). A high-context, intuitive orientation to meaning is endorsed [*music is supposed to be interpretive*] as well as used to account for interpretive differences [*tells us more about older army's mentality*].

btsinspirationtakesme's multimodal theory post remixes that take as a commentary creating an additional meaning-experience through mixed-genre narrative. This imagines a hybridized familial (*best friend, people close to you*)-erotic (*girlfriend, love [that's] really close, we're past that polite stage*) [parasocial](#) relationship, coupling the idiom *to your face with appended footage of the members' making direct eye contact with the viewer [even when recorded, such a pose is shown to be arousing when *believed* by viewers to be shared, Jarick and Bencic]. The lyrics of the gif also correlate to the blogger's cryptic description of BTS' intimacy with ㅇㅂㅁ as *For better or worse* (which I take to endorse the song as having a *criticalist* salvation/ruin theme). The 2-second [looped segment](#), which plays automatically when the post appears on one's Tumblr [dash](#), is an on-beat succession of BTS' members (Jin, V, Jungkook—who also take turns in the refrain of *Pied Piper*) stepping into the viewer's line of sight with no perceptible break in eye contact, mouthing 영원히 [*forever*]. An *experience* of meaning, indeed!*

Adding this to the range of orientations, genres, interpretations, responses and mediations seen above in artifacts from the [metatext](#) *Pied Piper* shows us that, contrary to dismissive stereotypes, fangirls ♪ create [communities of practice](#) not only for [transmediation](#) (expressing [feels](#)), but to ensure opportunities for deliberate,

⁷ I take the liberty of correcting this as a typographical error and rephrasing the wording to reflect my interpretation of the argument (vetted with the blogger).

♪ I use the term to denote *all* fans, in line with the tongue-in-cheek re-appropriative use of it to indicate a state of committed fanship that I have observed on Tumblr and elsewhere by fans.

sophisticated languaging to engage, understand and reconcile differences (seek outcomes) across cultures, languages, orientations and experience. Their languaging-learning praxes relies on [conviviality](#) rather than socialization—functioning as heterarchical collectives not stratified hierarchies. They respect as important [fan desires](#) and [identities](#) and compose-translate-share them as relational gestures, affording means for personal (inner), social (outer) and ([parasocial](#)) BTS-related belonging as learning/ers. What replacing *fangirl* with *expert* means, *btsinspirationtakesme*, the fan states better than I, a specialist, ever could:

I think there are a myriad of reasons to why people work so hard to interpret BTS songs, interviews etc. For myself, *I feel slightly more knowledgeable on some things when it comes to social/political issues and I'm fascinated when I see those patterns in BTS songs. It makes me want to contribute if I see things that haven't been said about a song or haven't been touched on[.]* I think I got involved blogging about BTS this way after *I realised that there were some things that weren't being said and I felt like there's good space to make comments on them.* I think as *I was writing my posts I was thinking about how to communicate my message clearly[.] How to be persuasive and also weave in my knowledge of certain topics to help support my points[.]* I'm also closer to their age group [early-to-late 20s] than a teenage fan, so I feel like I skip over some of the hysteria that naturally comes with being a teenager and tend to focus more on the message and impact this musical septet from Korea are having on the Western music industry[.] *I adore what they represent, their personalities and their music is powerful too. It's like you almost become an advocate for them when you write a post trying to explain things[.]*

Chapter Four: What Happens When Fangirls Replace Experts? *FanActantism*.

Letter to B[ig]H[it] on fancafe - Eng. Ver.

To Bang Si-Hyuk and Big Hit,

Due to recent events related to BTS's current release (Love Yourself: Tear) and since the majority of the initial problems have yet to be resolved; **we, the International ARMY (hereafter: I-ARMY), believe contacting you both personally and publicly to be the best option in correcting these issues.**

The most immediate issues to be addressed currently hindering BTS's success are the following:

1. SEO [search engine optimization—my note] tags on many of BTS's videos, including the latest release of 'Fake Love', are corrupted or improperly tagged. This includes past MVs and current album track uploads.
2. MVs are not properly linked to streaming outlets (such as Spotify)
3. As recorded by google top trends directly after the release (<https://twitter.com/BTSanalytics/status/998410542627909632>), the top general public searches included "Freaky Love". This is what the western audience will hear via radio play and will use in search. This tag needs to be added to the 'Fake Love' MV.
4. **There is no accessible liaison account for press, radio, and ARMY to contact Big Hit in either an emergency or a media advantage.**

The reason why the above are important:

Improper SEO tags on YouTube MVs works against BTS's stated goals and Big Hit's profit line. Not only does it limit streaming capacity and opportunity for newly interested general public to find it; it reduces media traction since neither the poster or the reader has easy access. Other content creators (reactions, full album uploaders, lyric videos) become listed first since they properly tag. The heaviest indirect market affected by improper tagging is the loss of iTunes and other platform sales. The bulk of the western public uses YouTube as a free preview before purchasing.

Many I-ARMY spent the first 24 hours of Fake Love's release contacting YouTube in an attempt a patch the issue caused at upload. When I-ARMY wasn't working with YouTube they were contacting google, shazam, spotify, lyric sites, billboard and other media outlets trying to get links and information corrected. All of this could have easily been avoided if ARMY had an open line of communication with Big Hit. Any staff from Big Hit with access to the YouTube account would have been able to repair the issue from wherever they were. Instead, ARMY spent the bulk of the first day release attempting to contact Big Hit in every way possible including trending tags in both English and Korean in an attempt to get the issue resolved.

Conservative estimate on sales data places Big Hit's revenue loss in the first 24 hours of release due to improper labeling is over \$1 (US) million.

Other issues you may not be aware of that have occurred during this release:

1. Amazon was not the only major outlet with premature release issues. Target was as well. **I-ARMY spent hours working with Target attempting to resolve this issue (16 May).** A compromise was reached where the albums would remain on the shelves, but purchasing would not be allowed until 18 May.
2. The deletion and reupload of Teaser 1 with the correct date cost BTS and Big Hit invaluable promotion from major outlets with a deep audience reach as their posts now contain dead links due to teaser removal.
3. For almost the full first 24 hours Google listed BTS's latest track as Drake's with Drake's lyrics.
4. Many major platforms, including Shazam, linked a teaser instead of the full MV for the first 24 hours and longer. This is attributed to improper SEO tagging which made the MV difficult to find for the general public. **I-ARMY had to contact platforms personally to correct the issue.**
5. Billboard (<https://www.billboard.com/articles/news/bbma/8457059/방탄소년단-best-moments-2018-billboard-music-awards>) and other outlets opted to link fan uploads of BTS's BBMA award win and performance since Big Hit did not upload their own to an official YouTube channel. Uploading your own videos of wins and performances is common practice in the west.
6. Many important and worthy album reviews (Pitchfork, Rolling Stone, Spin, Headline Planet) have become missed opportunities by 빅히트 [BigHit—my note] not retweeting. This is easily corrected by **having an active global liaison account for I-ARMY to share what deserves attention.**
7. Several important industry professionals have been snubbed by BTS not acknowledging their support (Ellen DeGeneres, En Vogue) or taking their support too lightly (John Legend). **This too is easily corrected with an active liaison account. I-ARMY is aware of which important players need to be given attention and can help bridge the culture gap for Big Hit.**
8. Shazam still is showing the album picture as one from 'You Never Walk Alone' instead of the current release.

Other suggestions from I-ARMY for 빅히트:

1. Lyric Videos on the official channel. This is a common practice in the Western industry, and given the language barrier of Korean songs in an English market, new Western fans are confused as to why this is not being done. **BTS and ARMY keep saying that lyrics are the most important part of their music and the connection point between the two, yet this appears to the general public merely lip service since Big Hit does not make this a priority.**
2. Add subtitles to all official content not just full MVs. Absence of subtitles excludes hungry press who would like to report, and new global fans who miss the opportunity to connect. **If you do not currently have the staff to take care of this yourself, there are many great ARMY subtitlers that would be willing to do it for you. Opening permissions to allow them access is not difficult.**
3. Post official ordering links specifically designed for the international market in places where the international market has access. By posting official Amazon links in Fancafe only; a site the majority of BTS's international fans has no access, this not only limited the correct purchasing options for ARMY but excluded the general population that is not a hardcore fan but newly and casually interested. The result was a large portion of sales going to non official third party sellers where purchases do not count for desired charts.
4. Hire English Language instructors for the members. In order for BTS to truly conquer the West, they need to be able to converse. We are all proud they continuing to sing in Korean, but to reign they need to be free of translators and able go off script. Industry analysts and press discuss BTS as "bigger than One Direction" and "the next Beatles", but by not learning the language it gives the appearance that neither Big Hit nor BTS are interested in reaching such an honor. Given that English lyrics are tucked into their songs, it should not be difficult for more than half of the BTS members to be passable by the next round of interviews with the upcoming tour. Broken English is acceptable. Memorized answers to script is not.
5. **Trust I-ARMY and connect with them. We are aware that you trust K-ARMY, but if you truly desire to be successful outside of Korea, communication lines need to be open outside your own house. AandR contact information needs to be available. An actively monitored account that is connected with Big Hit staff and able to speak; at a minimum, English and Korean needs to be available 24 hours a day. I-ARMY is the best AandR team you have. We raise the hype, we develop relationships with DJs and push BTS into new radio markets, we champion for interviews and press stories, contact television producers, and do the work behind the scenes to get BTS into doors many artists only dream. If I-ARMY has no way to share with Big Hit what has been achieved or connect interested parties with your team, those opportunities are lost.**

Final note:

We debated telling you this because it isn't pleasant; but as I-ARMY is attempting to form an open and honest relationship with you, we feel it needs to be said.

Some of us work in the industry. Some of us see clearly the true impact of all of the above listed mistakes. Some of us know just exactly how much is riding for BTS on this release and what can be gained or lost.

Although we are sure you are quite proud of Billboard recognition as a power player, **those of us who are connected to the industry also hear what is said behind closed doors.**

We hear when they ponder if "BigHit" as a singular title is a prophecy in that the company itself doesn't appear to be ready for the global platform for anything more than one hit status. We hear when they question why Big Hit doesn't appear to be taking this opportunity seriously. We hear when they discuss if Big Hit's current position is due more to luck of BTS choosing them than the skill of Big Hit.

Please understand. No one in the industry is questioning BTS's ability to take their careers further, nor are they questioning the strength of ARMY fanbase or their dedication. No one is saying BTS is a fad that will quickly pass. They are directly questioning whether Big Hit is the right fit for BTS, because it appears; from a western standpoint, Big Hit will become what holds BTS back from achieving more.

Please also understand this. I-ARMY has kept the public persona for the sake of BTS that things are fine as we quietly fixed Big Hit mistakes for years. We spun it as a "isn't this cute" and laughed it off in public. But as ARMY grows, new I-ARMY are not aware of how to work in quiet. And with the overwhelming string of recent careless mistakes, their frustration is bleeding into the public eye. The rumbling voice of new I-ARMY and old has one main theme. We will always support BTS, but whether we continue to support Big Hit or choose to lobby for BTS to find a company that can grow them to their potential remains to be seen.

Thank you for taking the time to read. We hope you will consider deeply all that has been said and that we can achieve a positive working relationship focused on what is best for BTS and meeting the desires of BTS members in the near future.

Wishing for better days,

International ARMY

Edit: In the version sent to BigHit the English tutoring and lobbying for a new label was taken out so they could focus on our concerns properly.

Fan translation of posting from BTS' Fancafe, reposted on Tumblr (artifact 061618-2b, my highlights)

Kao's Law—the power of creativity rises exponentially with the diversity and divergence of those connected into a network: in other words its capacity to innovate or create depends on dissonant and complementary ways of thinking, not on consensus (Kao 1998 qtd. by Cronin, *Translation* 41)

As the [English\[es\]](#) text above signifies, **what** I-ARMY [translates](#)—the reified (Wenger) material of its mutual practice—violates conventional conceptualizations of “source texts,” and **how** it *owns* meaning of that material—the forms of [translatorship](#) it jointly performs—encompasses positions outside of traditional reader/consumer. In fact, I-ARMY [translating](#) practice inverts the academic and professional “cross-ethnic” (Hu) focus on [localizing](#) “foreign” content *for* “domestic” audiences (Choi; Cronin, “Translation Crowd”); instead, its practice [translocalizes](#) “domestic” audiences’ relationships *to* “foreign” content. That is, rather than rhetorically tuning (Lorimer; Venuti) text, [fanslators](#) heresthetically (Riker) manipulate *associations with* text (as [Letter](#) exemplifies). They enact Latour’s [Actant translation](#):

“the process of making connections, [...] an act of invention brought about through combination and mixing varied elements” (Brown 2002, pp. 3-6) [...] the process by which “the identity of actors, the possibility of interaction and the margins of manoeuvre are negotiated and delimited” (Callon 1986b, p. 203) (Cressman 9)

I find that I-ARMY as Stein’s “intimate collective of [shared](#) emotional authorship” (McCormick) apply the expertise of [fanslation](#) by expanding [translanguaging spaces](#) to connect nonfan localities with its [invisible fan college](#). Text-actants so authored serve an (internal) [parasocial](#)-with-social (external) purpose: they relate I-ARMY to BTS affectively *and* act as agents maneuvering $\circ\uparrow\uparrow$ vis à vis commercial and other interests (the Industry, Press, etc) in **real** economies determining BTS’ value and meanings.⁹⁶

Tracing I-ARMY **FanActantism**—their negotiating with interests to *own*

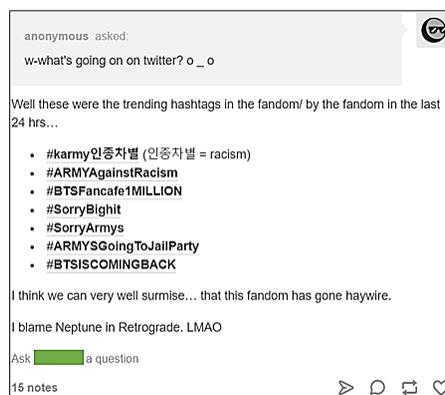
meaning of BTS-related [boundary objects](#)—reveals it to be as central to their practice as fans’ [mutual critical interpretation](#), Jenkins’ first principle of fandom. When faced with a problem to solve, I-ARMY mobilize the bonds formed and the networking learned from meaning-making through Web 2.0 social media.⁹⁷ In fact, Choi coins a neologism, *digintimacy*, to describe the rich ecology available to contemporary K-Pop fans:

Technologically rendered immediacy is afforded when interest-based information, materials, or sites on digital devices cluster together through cross-referencing and hyperlinks. Cultural/psychological *intimacy* is [...] a type of camaraderie felt among the users of close-knit information or visual materials. [...] Digintimacy is a superstructure emergent from site-media equipped with a wealth of hyperlinks, user-created threads, targeted advertising, and forums. Site-media are a base, space- and time-shifting apparatuses [...] herding mechanism[s...relating] users of variegated contents that otherwise may not be so tightly networked. (106)

(Dig)[intimately translated](#) content takes myriad forms: ㅇㅈㅍ] reify scrupulous recountings of firsthand interactions with BTS members; comments from “insiders” (as seen in [Letter](#) above); artifacts (from staging notes to price listings for designer apparel BTS wear). They also compose technical guides to etiquette and conventions (e.g., fanclub rules of behavior; USAmerican variety show format; Japanese censorship standards; minutiae of eligibility for Korean music awards and appearances) (see Seo and Hollingsworth); conduct original research to correct/add to the public record;⁹⁸ and publish critical analyses of Media and Industry praxes. While much of this fits the conventional categories of epi/paratexts, for fandoms it exists within [metatext](#) repertoire as *primary* source material. The content “originated” by fans [feeds](#) ㅇㅈㅍ] just as BTS’ content does—and undergoes remixing,

[remediating](#) and [retranslating](#) as fans reify it through [sharing](#).

To “see” learners apply their [motile transliteracy](#) as read-writers *in* fandom for this external, sophisticated composing and learning activity, I conduct discourse analysis, expropriating Hamlet’s advice: *content’s the thing wherein to catch the practice of I-ARMY*. I examine 4 representative cases in which I-ARMY strategically utilize [digintimacy](#) for [sharing](#) interpretive texts that do double duty as heresthetic [translatorial](#) actants. In these, I-ARMY marshal the communal resources Jenkins ascribes to participatory fandom—its base for **activism**, its provision of a tradition of **production** and its role as locus for [[translanguaging](#)] **sociality**—for objectives beyond those our fields imagine learner-writers [capable of?] pursuing. As Wenger predicts, rather than assuming the subjectivity of apprentice or supplicant, I-ARMY mobilize [translatorship](#) to gain social power (legitimacy) with wider constellations of more diverse communities of practice. To *own* meaning, they advocate for interpretations of [boundary-objects](#)—Wenger’s “reified” concepts and material (commodities over which communities fight for control)—transferring intrafandom knowledgeability, meaning-making and identity formation praxes to [intermediating and translating](#) relationships between such content and actors *irl*.



Tumblr I-ARMY response to an ask regarding the Twitter-sphere (artifact 071518-1)

To “see” I-ARMYs’ [transliteracy](#) put into heresthetic action, is to [problematize](#) our fields’ (Epistemic) *givens* of the dynamics of speech/ Discourse/ literacy communities. Wenger advises a revisioning of our [conversive](#) vision of “a living context that can give newcomers access to competence [...] a privileged locus for the *acquisition* of [expert] knowledge.” Instead, it is a nexus of individual trajectories:

a **well-functioning** community of practice is a good context to explore **radically new** insights without becoming fools or stuck in some dead end [...] an ideal context for this kind of **leading-edge** learning, which requires a **strong** bond of **communal** competence along with a **deep** respect for the **particularity** of experience. When these conditions are in place, communities of practice are a privileged locus for the *creation* of knowledge. (214; my bold)

In this, he echoes Engeström’s findings for [Expansive Learning](#), in which groups undertaking to solve a problem—their activity’s “object”—build the capacity to create new meanings for [motilely [develop their understanding of](#)] that object by flattening the group’s existing power relations. Divergent, diverse collaborators’ proposed meanings become equipotent, or at least *less* differentially potent than they had been (Engeström and Sannino). Construing meanings for the object becomes explicit joint “negotiation through *reprise-modification* [François’ term], literally, re-taking-up-modifying *as one interdependent event* that is the essence of *all* discursive function” (T. Donahue 325). Flattened, collaborators’ mutuality unlocks the creative potential [Kao’s Law](#) credits to dissensus. The [motility](#) of *reprise-modification* that Wenger theorizes—the social power of “choosing what to know and becoming a person for whom such knowledge is meaningful” (273)—[Expansive Learning](#) documents as empowering *community* self-development of understanding (following Vygotsky).

I-ARMY engage in such *expansive* reprise-modification. They establish and strengthen personal relationships as they generate, repair and maintain meaning and identity through praxes of [sharing feels](#) and [fanslation](#) *as social power* to collectively negotiate outward. For individual I-ARMY actants, transferring internal ([parasocial](#)) relating to social (collaborative) action requires they [remediate](#), [retranslate](#) and [reassociate](#) meanings of content *in the borders* of intra/extrafandom constellations of practice. Such extension of [translinguality](#) certainly qualifies as *adaptive* (DePalma and Ringer; Lorimer Leonard and Nowacek). Yet, grounded as it is in cooperative action, I-ARMYs' [fanactantism](#) challenges our fields' individualist conceptualizations of learning (*who* transfers) and our epistemological borders separating author/text/audience (*how*).

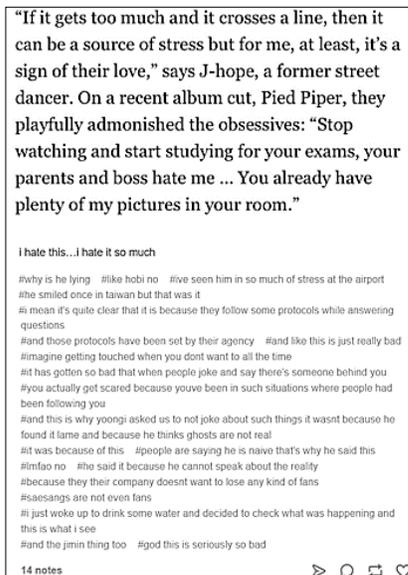
Jenkins' model of fandom cooperativity is rooted in Fiske's Media Studies' theorizing of three spheres of consumers' **mode of reception**.⁹⁹ For Fiske, there is *textual productivity* [consumers' "originating" content], *semiotic productivity* [consumers' [mediating](#) content *with others*; what Jenkins calls "the popular construction of meanings at the moment of reception"] and *enunciative productivity* [consumers' maneuvering content *for others* to [mediate](#); "the articulation of meaning through dress, display, and gossip"]. Jenkins adds, "*For the fan*, this otherwise theoretically useful distinction breaks down since the moment of reception is often also the moment of enunciation [...]. Making meanings involves sharing, enunciating, *and* debating meanings" (*Textual* 278, my italics)—in/externally.⁷

Jenkins finds fans "[translate](#) the [internal] reception process into social interaction," by combining "close attention to, emotional proximity with *and* critical

⁷ Jenkins elsewhere joins Banks and other New Media Studies' theorists in collapsing Fiske's first category as well, conceptualizing fan writerly-readerly [produsage](#) as sometimes textual, semiotic *and* enunciative in nature (e.g., when performing [transmediation](#))—a conflation that Hills critiques.

distance from” content to bring it, collaboratively, “under *the fans’* control” (278). In this view of productivity, reception constitutes a chicken-or-egg scenario (Hills): *particularity* of fans’ *experiences of meaning* and of *identity* engages with *particularity* of content (reified languaging decisions/actions by producers as well as other consumers). These producers’ content engages with fans’ meanings and identities symbiotically. The ecology of *digintimacy* interrelates immediate (textual) *feeding* of content to K-Pop fans with near-instantaneous fan crowdsourcing reactions (semiotic) and coordinating responses (enunciative) to (*adoption/rejection of*) textual decisions, a special case of double bind negotiating-identifying *with* content and community.

Adhocratic I-ARMY contestation of *textual products* [reception of versions of BTS-related content] manifests as Artivist (Sandoval and Latorre) *enunciative products*. Below, *bricolage* yokes a quotation from an uncited *Guardian* article (Glasby) to both *I hate this*, the blogger’s perlocutionary statement as evaluation, and to a stream-of-consciousness monologue performed by means of a barrage of *tags* (stylistically “telegraphing” rather than merely verbalizing its message). There is no glossing for the quotation—I-ARMY knowledgeability of the context is presumed. [While flying to perform international concerts, BTS had recently been accosted by fans—including notorious “stalker-fans” referred to as *sasaeng*—despite theirs and ㅇㅈㅍ requests to desist.] *Competent* members of the fandom can fill in the reporter’s query [Several Western press tour interviewers had insinuated that BTS’ fans’ “extreme” devotion was dangerous.] without the blogger having to [stoop to?] repeat it. Similarly unnecessary to clarify are references in *tags*: *when people joke and say there’s someone behind you* and *yoongi asked us to not joke* (referring to live-streamed fan [digital] chats with individual members) and *the jimin thing*.¹⁰⁰



(artifact 9918-13)

At stake here is the meaning of a highly prized [boundary object](#): the nature of the fan-Idol-brand relationship itself. By interpreting “between the lines” of BTS’ diplomatic statement to the Press and between candid photographs for signs of the Idols’ emotional states (perceptible by those who are [parasocially](#) “close” to them), the blogger decries (implicated) pressure on BTS to refrain from criticizing consumers of the brand (even those that pose a threat). *Logos*, *pathos* and *ethos* instantiate a meaning for the I-ARMY’s text (as complaint) aimed at the Industry, but concomitant with those appeals is *ludos* aimed at ㅇㅈㅁ . The post “plays” with rhetorical genre conventions, mixing the mundane (*I just woke up*), the theoretical (*agency protocols*), formal, transactional argument (*this is why*) and personal [transmediation](#) (*like hobi no*) as it demonstrates the poster’s legitimacy as [Spivak’s “intimate reader”](#) of BTS. Its performed [translinguality](#) is coalitional techne deployed to attract fans’ [interaction](#) (in the traditional *and* *discourse 2.0* senses of the term) with the post. As content it produces playful [semiotic experiences of meaning](#) with simultaneously sober [enunciative](#) meaning [linguistic “truth proposition” of its complaint] directed to BigHit. The former is utilized heresthetically to boost the social power (to

effect change) implicit in the latter.⁴

Intensive [오ㅏㅓ](#) discussion around this issue, in fact, got [translated expansively](#) into a grassroots I-ARMY action, [the Purple Ribbon Project](#), in which fans organized and gathered at US airports *en masse*, forming human cordons (shoulder-to-shoulder holding a length of purple ribbon) to block paparazzi, [sasaeng](#) and even credentialed media from violating the space where BTS would transit—quite a feat of logistical planning and physicality given the intensity of interest in the band, the caliber of I-ARMY’s “foes” and the security apparatus of US airports. Soon after, BigHit surprised everyone by making arrangements for BTS to access a private LAX exit—leaving throngs waiting at public exit points (including Purple Ribbon I-ARMY) in confusion. The [\[digintimate\]](#) happy ending? [오ㅏㅓ](#) globally [trended](#) the [tag #BTS1stAirportWin](#)—a clever riff on the standard K-Pop celebratory hashtag hyping a group’s earning the highest selling/streaming song rank for the week in Korea. With it [오ㅏㅓ](#) repurposed techne of its practice to shore up its social power, deftly exerting control over a gravely serious meaning. [Associating](#) [오ㅏㅓ](#) as *endorsers of* BigHit’s choice regarding BTS’ safety, they successfully [translated](#) global entertainment media practice into meanings/values proposed by fans. The episode demonstrates that *while* being consumers, [actants](#)

speak back to the [broadcast] networks and the producers, [...] assert their right to make judgments and to express opinions about the development of [productions]. [...] Fans know how to organize to lobby [...] Fandom originates, at least in part, as a response to the relative powerlessness of the consumer in relation to powerful

⁴ Perhaps an [un?]conscious mirroring of BTS’ strategy of *playful admonishment* in the unacknowledged but thematically and contextually present content, *Pied Piper*.

institutions of cultural production and circulation. [...] provides a base from which fans may speak about their cultural preferences and assert their desires for alternative developments. (Jenkins, *Textual* 278-9)

Fans' cooperation to control meanings of commodities makes fandom distinct from consumerism. Developed competence negotiating with each other and shared experiencing of identity inculcates fans' "consumer" activism. Knowledgeability of [digintimate](#) mechanisms magnifies the impact of their asserting and lobbying for meaning; their [translanguaging spaces](#) become loci of power. Mimi (mimibtsghost) performs an exemplary fan finesse in the post below, connecting I-ARMY with K-ARMY content that speaks back to Korean media conglomerate Mnet [whose decision-making regarding award eligibility [오아미](#) perceive as biased against BigHit and toward other, established labels]. [Translating](#) a heartburn medication commercial into a meme, K-ARMY reimagine the pain caused by [being [fed](#)] Mnet remedied by the American Music Awards [where BTS won top awards and performed live]. Mimi invites I-ARMY to join the unobvious maneuvering: *K-ARMY are going off already making memes!!*



(artifact 11317-2)

Alongside ludic products, [the White Paper Project](#) and [Letter to BigHit](#) exemplify fans' leveraging "intimate reader" status through content for direct [intermediation](#), exerting knowledgeability and social power to *intervene*. In these two cases, [오아미](#) [cosmopolitanist](#)

values are explicitly asserted through [translatorial](#) action, “translation as conflict, [...translating that] contests” (Cronin, “Translation and”) others’ versions.

anonymous asked:
 “slights” some radio stations are censoring the word “naega” in fake love thinking they saying nigga 🤔🤔🤔
 this is the problem!!!!!!111111
 Ask [redacted] a question #people are gonna wonder what's being censored for they might search and watch the video and think that they're saying the n word???

A
 (051718-2)

I can't believe they're gonna censor fake love just because they say naega/naega/niga... like it's clear it's their language and not an english word???

“nega” is written AND sounds *exactly* like a pejorative word in portuguese, with the same meaning as the “n” english word, but do i think they're saying that when i listen to their songs? ummm no bc i have a brain

not to mention so many words they say can sound like other curse words, such as “puta”, literally all you gotta do is have 2 brain cells to comprehend they're not actually saying that??

If you censor them speaking their own language, you're stating that they're actually saying a bad word which is not true!!!

and let me emphasize this: they only care about censoring a word that sounds like an english slur word but not any other that sounds like, for example, a spanish curse word??? the viewers won't all be americans, you know, not to mention that there will be countless immigrants or descendants of immigrants there who could hear something “wrong” as well, but only english matters, right Merica?

Source: [redacted]

#fll em bilch
 #it's a stupid decision and misleads ppl !! like theyre good bois leave em alone :(
 #bbs

647 notes

C
 (051818-3)

Ryan, JJ
 3:46 PM View details

Hi [redacted]

I first want to say thank you for listening!

In regards to your question below the version of “Fake Love” you’re hearing on KJ103 (and likely on US radio everywhere) is indeed edited. This is the only version that was sent to US radio by the record label.

My understanding is that they did this to avoid stations potentially not playing the single at all because it sounds like a word which could offend the US audience OR generate complaints with the Federal Communications Commission. For example, If the public finds anything a US radio station does or says on the radio in the offensive that person or persons can make a formal complaint. Those complaints COULD result in the stations broadcast license being revoked. They likely decided it's better to not risk it and make an edit so US radio stations would embrace it more and the audience wouldn't complain. This also gives “Fake Love” the best possible chance of becoming a hit of course which is the ultimate goal.

Remember, a majority of Americans likely don't know Korean so they won't understand when hearing the song that the word isn't what they think they are hearing. They will just think an offense word which they do understand.

I hope that helps answer your question!

JJ Ryan
 Program Director
 iHeartMedia Oklahoma City
<https://twitter.com/BluntRm/status/997595416257486848?s=19>

Source: [redacted]

#so what u r trying to tell me is that they r censoring the word T' #okay lmao

76 notes

B
 (051718-1)

D
 (052018-5)

I have more and more respect for these guys with each passing day

At the event, it was mentioned that the group used slightly different lyrics for their performance of “Fake Love” at the 2018 Billboard Music Awards.

Uses of the words “naega,” which is Korean for “I am,” and “niga,” which is Korean for “you are,” were changed into different Korean words to avoid being mistaken for the N-word. The changes were made to the parts performed by Suga and J-Hope.

RM elaborated, “There were many people hearing the song for the first time, and when you are hearing parts like that as English, there is potential for misunderstandings to occur. To prevent that, we edited the lyrics to the point of not ruining how it sounds.”

RM: RM
 1,700 notes

The cluster of posts above capture I-ARMY negotiating identifying *with* content with fandom localities and between fandom and Industry constellations. They bear out claims of I-ARMY labor and efficacy in [Letter](#), demonstrating their *discourse*—in both our fields’ and fandom senses of the term¹⁰¹—effects change. Set off by BigHit’s release of a US/Canada *radio edit version* of BTS’ lead single *Fake Love* (with jarring silence replacing Korean *I, you*—pronounced *nee-gah/nay-gah*) on May 17, 2018, it follows this sequence:

- 1) I-ARMY [mediate](#), [share](#), [translate/contest](#) the radio edit content as fan reactions.
- 2) I-ARMY negotiate with broadcasters through formal complaints; [mediate](#), [share](#), [translate/contest](#) replies as [fanslation](#).
- 3) BigHit [retranslates](#) the song; BTS stage re-edit at Billboard Music Awards, May 20.
- 4) BTS negotiate meaning of edits/decisions via statements to Korean Press, May 23.
- 5) I-ARMY [mediate](#), [share](#), [translate/contest](#) re-edit, stage, non- ϕ reception and Press statement content through fan reactions and fanslations.
- 6) I-ARMY adopt a [cosmopolitanist](#) meaning: *BTS* is culturally aware; reject radio edit content; criticize *BigHit* decision-making as “incompetent,” Media’s as biased.

A is a laconic reply to an [ask](#), with added evaluative commentary in [tags](#). **B** is a partial documentary of one I-ARMY’s direct action—combining an official [and officious?] reply, link to *OP*’s [the Original Poster] Twitter thread *and* illocutionary [tags](#) directed to Tumblr-based fans. **C** reblogs a [discourse 2.0](#) serialized rant (locution broken up into paced “sound bites”). The reblogger reacts through emotive [tags](#) expressing/inviting solidarity and assent. **D** titles a screencapped excerpt from an uncredited [English\[es\]](#) article (by Kim D., posted to *Soompi* forum—which sources a news article in Korean by *Naver*) to assert an interpretation. **Bricolage** of content as a [discourse 2.0](#) convention in all 4 artifacts gets put to heresthetic purpose, the [digintimacy](#) of shared interest making

proximate conflicting interests' meanings.

A (subtly)—by using AAVE *they saying*—and **C** (explicitly) indict the attention paid to the song's potential to offend as indicative of USAmerican media's Whiteness. **C**'s series of **takes** argue that protecting listeners from misunderstanding Korean words is both monolingualist and chauvinist.¹⁰² It concludes with a register change: *but only english matters, right Merica?* critically reading Media xenophobia as [English Exceptionalism](#). The only “professional” text by the only credentialed “expert” in the sample attempts a proof, decidedly less rhetorically and grammatically fluently—even by the standards of its formal genre—than the fans' **remixes**. **B**'s responding tagging *#so what u r trying to tell me is they r censoring the word "I" #okay lmao* is text-speak satirizing the reply's languaging and echoing **A**'s conclusion, *#it's bs*. **D**'s praise for BTS canonizes a [parasocially](#)-compliant interpretation of the episode: RM's maneuvering to both take **ownership** of the (BBMA edit) decision-making (*we edited*) and validate ㅇㅈㅍ]'s criticism of the radio edit (*to the point of not ruining how it sounds*).

What BTS recognize and respond to here is ignored by the Academy/K-12: learners' [translinguality](#) and critical language awareness. Consider that

[Jenkins'] observation that, “...not everything that kids learn from popular culture is bad for them: some of the best writing instruction takes place outside the classroom” (Jenkins, 2004, online), sparked a furor in the US, and an internet buzz of memetic proportion on websites all over. (Thomas 131)

Despite our dissent, Jenkins and others (Gershon; Derecho; Sandvoss; Black; Curwood et al.; Bourdaa; Chandler-Olcott and Mahar; Liu) document that the creative core of contemporary, [participatory](#) fandom—what, enjoining Swain's concept of *languaging*, we can imagine as **fanfictioning**—comprises an ecology conducive to imagining, designing,

conducting and experiencing highly complex composing across the age spectrum and beyond writing. Without criticizing schooling's positioning of students, Jenkins figures fanfictioning as Wenger's ideal learning community and Emdin's neoindigenous learning-collective nurtured by reality pedagogy:

Fandom recognizes no clear-cut line between artists and consumers; all fans are potential writers whose talents need to be discovered, nurtured, and promoted and who may be able to make a contribution, however modest, to the cultural wealth of the larger community [...] many who had discovered skills and abilities that they had not recognized before entering fandom [...] received there the encouragement they had found lacking from their interactions with other institutions. They often gained subsequent opportunities on the basis of these developed skills. (Textual 280, my italics)

Investigating I-ARMY *aesthetic* practice (Jenkins) reveals additional, significant divergences from learners' experience of schooling. It cannot be overstated that the scope and depth of investment in the content at hand by all involved fundamentally divides the two environments. However, Jenkins posits that it is not merely personal interests in content that sets fandom composing apart. To him the catalyst lays in the fact that *the relation of writer and content to the broader, dominating culture is reversed*. In classrooms our [lived curricula](#) elevate aesthetics, genres and practices of traditional institutional [colonialist] culture—and we [deliver instruction](#) so students may (later) achieve social capital within it. Fandoms, although they depend upon mass media institutions and products, do not endorse them—rather they “appropriate raw materials from the commercial [media] culture but use them as the basis for the creation of a contemporary folk culture” (279). Instead of reproducing “the already circulating

discourses and images [...these] can and must be *remade by [fans]* so that potentially significant materials can *better* speak to *the audience's* cultural interests and *more fully* address *their* desires” (Jenkins 279, my italics). Fans *indigenize* content.

Nowhere is this more evident than in fan-constructed **alternate universes [AUs]**.



Tumblr I-ARMY post of screencapped tweet [@jeonelysium] (artifact 9918-40)

In contrast to schooling and the Industry, “Fandom *generates its own* genres and *develops alternative* institutions of production, distribution, exhibition, and consumption” (Jenkins, *Textual* 279, my italics). Fan culture operates, thus, not as a subculture *of*, but in the role of the [generally loyal] *opposition to* the institutional and commercial mainstream.¹⁰³ Fan culture practices are demarcated most tangibly by their joint practice of voluntarism,¹⁰⁴ what Jenkins calls

a stark contrast to the self-interested motivations of mainstream cultural production; [...] As Jeff Bishop and Paul Hoggett have written [...] “The values....are radically different from those embedded within the formal economy; they are values of reciprocity and interdependence as opposed to self-interest, collectivism as opposed to individualism, the importance of loyalty and a sense of ‘identity’ or ‘belonging’ as opposed to the principle of forming ties on the basis of calculation, monetary or otherwise” (1986, 53). (*Textual* 280)

While it aligns well with Wenger’s negotiating-identifying theorization, the utopianism of this view of fandom demands testing, as do the less hyperbolic ecological affordances for

learner-writers Emdin claims for reality pedagogy and Jenkins for fanfictioning. An exemplum—at once extraordinary (in [conviviality](#)) and quite typical (as content)—well-suited for doing so, referenced as having garnered millions of tweets and spin-off AUs as well as translations overnight by [the artifact above](#) is an I-ARMY's **BTS** [subject] **Horror!** [genre] **AU** [subgenre] story, *Outcast*:

Memes, dance challenges, anecdotes; there are a lot of things that ARMYs tend to spread through Twitter. However, no one would have guessed an interactive Horror fanfiction to take a hold of the fandom and trend for weeks. Even if you weren't playing it, you would have definitely heard of *Outcast*. (BTS ARMY Guide) Because it comes seven months afterward, this fansite's interview of *Outcast*'s author [the only venue I find in which she discusses her work publicly] refers rather calmly to the global phenomenon that was *Outcast*. Contemporaneous reporting—its events caught the attention of [Newsweek](#), [Forbes](#) and [Billboard](#) among other international publications—is much less sanguine (as [Herman, "BTS Fans"](#) introduces—below, left):

In an era where *Black Mirror* has viewers questioning their every virtual action, one member of BTS' fan ARMY took things a step further with an interactive work of fanfiction resulting in thousands of Twitter users debating the dangers of a video game. "Outcast," a Twitter-based horror story about BTS, went viral after the first of six daily installments was shared on Jan. 3. 🐦 The story, crafted by a writer known as flirtaus, launched a frenzy as BTS' fans, and even those outside the Korean band's fandom, became invested in the haunting narrative.

The tale, based around a virtual game that proves to hold real-life dangers, dominated Twitter during its six-day run as each night's supplement trended worldwide, with the hashtag #BTSoutcast catching the attention of tens of thousands. On its own "Outcast" is a spectacular show of the fan experience in the social media age, but blended with BTS' social media prowess, it quickly became a phenomenon that ignited the fandom.

Coming during a lull between BTS' promotional periods, and with no new music on the horizon, the band's fans flocked to "Outcast" as participants and joint creators, bringing the fervor they used to propel the K-pop act into the highest tiers of America's music consciousness. Readers came up with their own audio-visual material, including fan art, translations, and film trailers for the story, that blended the reality of BTS' career with that of the alternate universe, known among fanfiction lovers as "AU." The Twitter

(in *Forbes*)



Image embedded by *Newsweek* ([Vultaggio](#))

Newsweek attempts to explain to a nonfan readership how a fan-composed story about

the real BTS can be *fiction*, how that fictional story can be composed and read as a *game*, and how in the fiction of the game, the game can be *real life*: “People start to go missing in ‘real life.’ (No one has actually gone missing, just in the Outcast AU. But the idea is that the game controls reality.)” (Vultaggio).[□] It seeks to offer readers a sample of the breadth and scope of fanart responses to *Outcast*, scattering images of tweets from *other* fan-creators throughout the article (above, right) without commentary—perhaps giving up on formulating an explanation of how a fan-meta-story-game could *also* be music videos, poster art, memes, dramatic readings, etc.

For music-focused fans, *Billboard’s* Kelley (“BTS Horror”) pens a review rivaling [Goodreads](#), highlighting fan experience of [parasociality](#) as much as the work itself:

The format is unique for a fanfic as the story is almost exclusively told through dialogue from screenshotted text messages. Writerly flourishes are replaced by the type of deliberate typos that characterize digital speech patterns. [...] The text message format helps the exposition feel more natural and conversational. [...] Fans drew on the mythology surrounding BTS proper to inform their theories of the story’s alternate universe, or AU, even though the author said the story was set in a self-contained universe. There’s an *Undertale*-esque element of morality to the choose-your-own-adventure storyline as the *Outcast* game creator taunts readers, “You blame everyone...but yourselves. Aren’t you the ones...making the choices?” The author later confirmed that ARMY’s votes directly impacted the number of survivors when the story ended.¹⁰⁵

Vote ◡|◡| did—metaphorically and literally. All over the world they enthusiastically

[□] Vultaggio’s title “Who is Flirtaus?” is never answered. In fact, she ignores information in the article’s embedded tweet above (*Makayla*) and erroneously refers to *Outcast’s* author as *he*.

constructed theories for, created new stories based on, translated into other languages Flirtaus' AU, posting about and participating in *Outcast*-related activities as readers, players, fellow artists and as fans of its “real person”[≡] characters. For one predicted-to-be-uneventful New Year's week—many fans commented at the time—*Outcast* uncharacteristically “unified” and “enthralled” [with something other than BTS] the “[Most Powerful Fandom in the World](#).” The attention accruing to BTS from the ingenuity of ARMY was a source of pride; [@deletingtweets7 celebrates](#): “17 days into 2018, @BTS_twt has trended #1 W[orld]W[ide] 11 times” including *Outcast* [tags](#). The fan content—created for fans, from within the fandom—went more than viral; as the poster insinuates [above](#), it achieved *prime time* global status rivaling BTS itself.

As a debut, it is difficult not to be impressed that any self-published [AU]thor, writing an experimental work with a built-in 5-days' lifespan, distributed through an obscure account to a highly-specialized [AU]dience, launching *two days after New Year's* with a complete lack of sponsorship or marketing, could achieve such acclaim and fame (420,000 readers joined the game *in 7 days* according to Vultaggio), let alone command the juggernaut that is ㅇ|◻|. Her success and reticence with the Press caused many to ask:

Just who is Flirtaus?

In an [interview with BTS ARMY Guide](#), she responds to questions about it:◻

[≡] Fanfictioning distinguishes between works that involve *real persons* (celebrity/historical figure *rpf*) and that which uses fictional characters. Like genre (horror, angst, fluff, etc), the categorization is used as part of a standardized index for finding, archiving and distributing works of fanfic.

[◻] *Prompts online* references [the huge number of sites](#) that offer suggested narrative, stylistic, subject, etc elements for fiction writers to use (these include organized contests, group-writing projects, reader requests and even commissions for purchase). *FMVS* refers to fan-made videos that are often mash-ups of video game clips and songs ([Urban Dictionary](#)).

- What inspired you to write *Outcast*?
 - *The horror genre has always fascinated me and I loved writing so mending the two was something I wanted to do! I looked up prompts online and outlined the base of Outcast as well as exploring horror fmvts online to get more inspiration! I wanted to make sure it suspenseful and scary so I did a lot of research to understand the elements needed to have both of those. Research, prompts, and my love for writing inspired me the most.*
- Were you a writer before this?
 - *Yes! I've been writing since elementary and my first fully written fanfic was on Wattpad during the sixth grade. I've always written on AO3 though – I love writing and it's a hobby I'll never stop doing.*
- How did you get into BTS? When did you become an ARMY?
 - *Around two years ago in late 2016, my friend introduced me to BTS! She started off with showing me the "Blood, Sweat, and Tears" dance practice and some of the their music videos and I immediately fell in love and that love only went deeper after finding out the messages behind their songs and how hard they work for us. They're absolutely amazing.*
- What were your expectations for *Outcast* before it went viral?
 - *I didn't have many expectations just that [I hoped] people would enjoy what I wrote. When I started the account, around 100 people followed at first and I was even happy that one person was reading Outcast. I didn't think anyone that Outcast would get big at all so I was just so surprised and grateful people loved my writing.*
- How did you feel when it did become viral?
 - *Like I said above, I just felt so surprised and grateful – I personally didn't think my writing and the way I outlined my plot was anything special, but the amount of love I got from everyone was absolutely amazing and it made me so happy.*
- What was your writing process for *Outcast* and is it similar to your writing process now?
 - *This was actually my first blown "project" in this type of texting style. I'm usually more comfortable doing metaphorical writing – I like to get deep and leave a moral – and but I've adapted to the texting style too.*
- Who is your writing idol? Who is someone that you look up to in the writing community?
 - *There's a lot of people I look up to. Each fanfic/au I read, no matter who it's by, inspires me [through] their unique writing style and I love the way each writer captures emotions in their own way!*

As it turns out, @flirtaus was the Twitter handle for Makayla, a 15-year-old, African-American living in the US who *singlehandedly* planned, composed, launched and then managed—despite being unprepared for literal millions of mentions and avalanches of direct messages, tweets and comments—her serial story-*cum*-mass-player-role-play-game during her school winter break ***because it was fun*** [as open-ended [transmediation](#) (Banks)]. The fanfictioning competence she details—as fan, reader, composer, researcher across media, genres, modalities, styles—and that which, although clearly present, she does not—technical planning, multiplatform publishing, distributing and gathering audience feedback, responding to queries—she developed outside of schooling, through her own initiative and for her own edification. To her, none of it seems particularly noteworthy, which is modest to be sure. However, the interviewing fansite's corresponding nonchalance about the competence being discussed—an assumption of typicality shared by fan commenters across platforms¹⁰⁶—contrasts strikingly with the mainstream media reaction not only to *Outcast* but the myriad fan productions created in response to it (and that, without knowing the age or background of the [AU]thor).

These fangirls’ practical, creative and technical expertise astounds the professional experts.

feztheshep | Min Yoongi's attorney | 12 points · 1 year ago
 I agree with the things others have already replied to you, but I just wanted to add some comments.

I was also thinking earlier today, after having slept and having several hours after the hype... this story, if read by itself as a regular story, would definitely be rather lackluster (honestly if it was a regular story I may have never finished it) u r c . Indeed the characters could be switched with any names, though that can possibly be with anything, and I think that was one of the ways the story kind of was able to pull us in automatically. We assume the characters have the traits of the members because they have their names, which takes off some of the work to establish characterization and a bond with them and the reader, which is one of the key qualities of fanworks.

If it had not been for the interactive quality of it, the polls, it wouldn't have been nearly as explosive. The polls and the community *made* this story come alive, and if you take those away (like turning it into a book or a movie), it would be really lacking and would need a lot of work to fill the gaps - and it just wouldn't be the same. However I think the focus was intended to be this kind of way. More focus on the interactive ability to change the outcome and change the story than focus on the complexity of the plot and characters. It was supposed to be a small story, after all. Which, it still is.

I don't really take the story as "quality literature" but rather as a fun and community-driven game that we all played. I actually agree with basically all you've said to be honest, and I really hate plot holes and weak characterization/plot, but I got swept up in it too! (Sidenote I also agree though that Yoongi being all memory-warped has its power in the whole "other people playing the game" - we don't know how far deep his mind is being messed with, so that's my headcanon lmao)

I think that, reading it after you can interact with it, after the polls are over and the story has already been revealed, it's definitely not the same. Unfortunately I also think that we readers expected a lot from it while reading, and the excitement also was a bit blinding to us, haha. This may be one of those "you had to be there" moments in the fandom, unfortunately. But we have the evidence of the emotional waves that it gave us, despite the less-than-stellar reality of what it is. I think that, regardless of the quality, it can still be something that we can be proud of, in a way? At least look back on fondly. The love and excitement the community shared to her and shared with each other, all because of a story. It's nice. And I think BTS sees that that as well.

(feztheshep) [⊖]

feztheshep’s Reddit post breaks down the [discourse 2.0](#) nuances of what our fields might categorize as Flirtaus’ *strategies for engaging* [⊖-⊖] *audiences*. It and other fan evaluations of her product (running the gamut of exuberant to grudging) judge the quality of her plotting and characterization, but, with rare exceptions, notably lack the deficit positioning of teenaged writers endemic in our fields.[^] Conspicuously present in their analyses is discussion of creative content’s power to **generate experience**—not just “reader response” (reaction) but affective *interaction*: a flow of actions from content to readers, from readers back to content, from readers to other readers, from content to other content, that contents’ readers to others, and so on. Where our [expert gaze](#) “sees” learners of composition as workers being socialized to the tools and materials for producing appropriate language, fanfictioners (the constellation of readers, writers, artists, participants, etc) **cooperate** to socialize tools and materials of languaging to

[⊖] *Headcanon*: fan-imagined (competing, remade version) versus the creator’s original storyline (*canon*).

[^] My own scholarly treatment of it and other artifacts of my study—even working consciously against [expert needs discursivity](#)—contrasts with the collegiality of this peer-to-peer evaluation.

[AU]diences *for* (personal-social) relating. Just as fanActants negotiating with Industry do, fanfictioners incite relating. They **apply** [motile translanguality](#) (their learning practice) and **expand** [translanguaging spaces](#) (their learning ecology) to [translate/ \(inter\)mediate](#) **constellate** themselves with other fans. These amateurs' competitiveness in the high-value market of creative content—Flirtaus' product shows us—stems from fangirl-composing's sophisticated traits:

Multivector dialogism—*Outcast* [like *Pied Piper*, not one “text” but a phenomenon of [multiplicitous](#) “*modes of existence*” (Foucault qtd. by Porter)] is saturated by lateral, parallel, retro- and prospective intertextuality (Derrida's *traces*) with circulating BTS, [o|p|](#), gaming, Twitter, digital and print fiction and other content in and outside of fandom repertoire; its player-reader-creators connect constellations of pre-existing and spin-off texts [metatextually](#) and [convivially](#);

Dynamic, supralinguistic pragmatics—tethered to verbal text, the originating [AU]thor's gestures, timing and extradiegetic interactivity (voting, tagging, replies to asks, etc) contribute to the [game]play, to the meanings of content and to the [AU]dience's performance as players-readers-creators of the diegesis and of spin-off content (fanart, theories, remixes, etc);

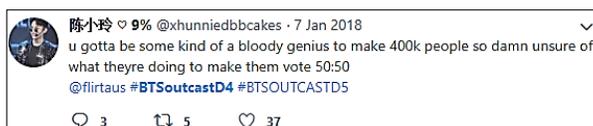
Entangled reading-writing, interpreting-experiencing, *logos-ludos*, technology-imagination—*Outcast* is a phenomenon of participatory, [digintimate](#) praxis by a [community of passion](#) (Choi and Maliangkay). It *activates* [prosumers' sharing](#) in **transformative** [AU]thorship^o to [transmediate feels](#) (through literal millions of posts

^o As McCormick argues, fan interActants here “build a sense of an intimate collective [...] bound together precisely by the processes of shared emotional authorship. In this equation, emotion fuels fan transformative creativity, and performances of shared emotion define fan authorship communities ([Stein] 156). (qtd. 372)

and comments during the few days *Outcast* “ran” expressing fans’ emotions and thoughts about playing the game in real time). And as an Engeströmian *object* to be solved—it *actuates* [AU]dience’s **cooperative** *обучение* through ad hoc *fanslating* (*multiplicitous fan theorizing*). The “originating” content’s inviting *polysemy* is, as feztheshep notes, an expected *key quality of fanworks*. The critical interpretive community function of $\circ\}\}\}$ exploits that polysemy, initiating “Making meanings [that] involves sharing, enunciating, and debating meanings” (Jenkins 278) in and out of the fandom.

Reciprocity—while there were Redditors encouraging Flirtaus to list *Outcast* in her future college applications, she (in the interview above) and her [AU]dience explicitly define its rewards as the experience of participating (solidarity) rather than monetary or status metrics—bearing out *Bishop’s and Hoggett’s* utopian description of fan “economies” of production. Being a part of a unique, *you had to be there* (feztheshep) $\circ\}\}\}$ action, constructing communal memory (Wenger) operates as Jenkins’ contribution to *cultural wealth* rather than transactionally;¹⁰⁷

Experientiality—what will be remembered as *Outcast* is mass phenomenology; not text performed *in* a lifeworld/structure (New London Group) but *text performing/ forming the lifeworld* itself. xhunniedbbcakes, on Twitter, gives a *shout out* to Flirtaus’ heresthetic maneuvering, her ingenuity in sparking intensive negotiating-identifying:



([artifact 6719-2](#))

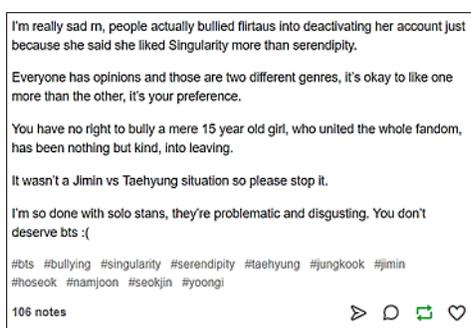
Beyond spotlighting learners as supremely effective, highly skilled composers for their audiences, this case shows us that they compete against us in the economies of meaning *containing* our fields’ most highly valued *boundary-objects*: the epistemologies

of *authorship*, *rhetoric* and *text*. We can argue that *Outcast*'s multimodality, [multiplicitousness](#) (Lynn) and experimentalism fall within a New Literacy Studies-framing of what makes a text a text. Much as mainstream media do, we may marvel at its particular combination of characteristics, but we need not classify it a new species of text. Nonetheless, its receptive/performative communality—AUthor-AUdience bonds and [interdependence](#) integral to its languaging—presents an existential challenge to our theories of textual literacy, New and otherwise. Fanfictioning's intertextual [participatory](#) aesthetic (its *culture*) collapses our frameworks for *composer*, *composition*, *audience* and *meaning*—violating our standard assumptions about rhetor intentionality, the [containment](#) exerted by rhetorical situation and the exteriority of context. Complex, emergent constellating rather than situatedness characterize this content as “text[s].” *Outcast*—the story, the experience, the performance, the reified memory—is [invented](#) [found-contrived] by/through interlocutors *applying* preexisting materials, tools and practice content *to enact* ([not accommodate but be](#)) [AU]dience and [AU]thor [para/social](#) desires. Much as Flirtaus promises, the story is a game that is real life—for characters and the fanActants for/with whom she is [as with *negotiating identifying*, I stretch Academic English language conventions here:] [\(inter\)mediating](#) [sharing](#) [experiencing](#) **performing**. No wonder many fans, [feeling](#) overwhelmed by their potent affective engagement, posted mock-horrified personal responses to Flirtaus' in-game fourth-wall-breaking tweet: *But...you guys are my friends, right? My readers...aren't you?* (artifact 6719-3).^x

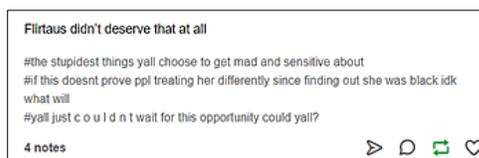
Given its core of narrativity, it is fitting, then, that the story of the text-experience-phenomenon of *Outcast* ends—at least thus far—with a real life surprise twist. Not long

^x McCullough conducts a comparative rhetorical analysis of the ellipsis as a generational idiom. To contemporary fans, it is a signifier of ominous/portentous tone—Flirtaus and responders enact that meaning here. A side note: our usage of ellipses in digital communication freaks our students out!

after her retrospective interview with BTS ARMY Guide, Makayla tweeted her reaction to BTS' *Singularity* (a solo song by Taehyung), mentioning that she preferred it to *Serendipity* (a solo by Jimin), her previous favorite. Fans who [stan](#) Jimin[‡] inundated her account with *hate* and even threats. I-ARMY took each other to task for bullying, disloyalty, hurting the fandom's reputation, and—citing racialized comments to Makayla—ignoring or taking part in targeting Fans of Color (especially African-Americans) as seen in the text and tags of two Tumblr posts, below.[‡]



5918-1



5918-2

Relational rhetoric and repairs could not undo the damage done, however. Flirtaus' Twitter account was deleted; Makayla withdrew into anonymity.

This coda to the globally-lauded performance of *Outcast* weighs heavily against characterizations of fandom and even fanfictioning as idyllic communities—and retroactively grants credence to ^{o|ㅁ} amazement at Flirtaus' [temporarily] successful unification of fans. **Participation**, due to the intensity of individuals' emotional and labor investment in it, by promoting diversity and difference (**particularity**) clearly can nurture *and* stifle [experiences of identity](#), meaning and learning—something Kao's Law, by focusing on output productivity, dismisses. Even Wenger is too generous, I think, in

[‡] *Solo stans* are normal in K-Pop, but they get marginalized by many ^{o|ㅁ} and BTS, who explicitly endorse **OT7**: *one true [love relationship between all] seven*], a play on *OTP*—one true pairing—one of the longest-lived [terms on Urban Dictionary](#).

[‡] *m* is “right now;” *ppl* is “people;” *idk* is “I don't know.” Note the kerning-for-tone in the tag (right).

lauding communities' boundary conflicts:

Sustained engagement, I have argued, gives rise to boundaries. [...] This is what inevitably happens when serious learning is taking place. From that standpoint, boundaries are inevitable and useful. They define *a texture for engaged identities*, not vague identities that float at the level of an abstract, unfathomable organization. [...] Boundaries are like fault lines: they are the locus of volcanic activity. *They allow movement, they release tension*; they create new mountains; they shake existing structures. (253-4, my italics)⁸

Shifting ground within a community, I agree, provokes counterconventional learning, but is also—for those members at the epicenter—as perilous as the frontline of conflicts between communities. A K-ARMY's reflection (reported by Seo and Hollingsworth) captures this:

Lee explained that as ARMY believed their idols were perfect, they were often affronted by any perceived criticism. "We don't think logically but think as a community," she said. "I think fandom culture has some similarities to a religion. We don't know the BTS members in person, but we believe everything we see, even though only the good parts may be revealed. It's a case of 'I believe my idol is perfect, so who do you think you are to disparage my belief?'"

An I-ARMY demurs, not "condon[ing] the way perceived slights could provoke a flurry of malicious tweets. [...] 'We should explain who BTS are ... but these comments get lost in the middle of malicious retweets'" (Seo and Hollingsworth). The emotional violence that

⁸ Wenger echoes Trimbur ("Consensus") and Butler's take on Standpoint Theory (Stoetzler and Yuval-Davis) in imagining dissensus as opening up discourse to critique—but unlike these critics, does not address its individual *experience* of conflict. Emdin, too, chooses not to address this elephant in the reality pedagogy classroom.

can be wrought by connecting *dense networks* (cf. Coleman, Emdin) is widely acknowledged by K-Pop fandoms—as in this I-ARMY’s claim:



(artifact 113018-3)

Tumblr-posted photo of K-Pop fans displaying their competing bands’ concert lightsticks together

The lifeworld of affective “alternative reality” in fandom, Jenkins (*Textual*) theorizes is—contradicting Banks’ view—an *intended* outcome of fans’ [sharing](#) their [transmediating](#), a sociality performed by relating content, *for better or worse*:

Fandom contains both negative and positive forms of empowerment. Its institutions allow the expression both of what fans are struggling against and what they are struggling for; its cultural products articulate the fans’ frustration with their everyday life as well as their fascination with representations that pose alternatives. (283)

Here, fan *community* is a vector of communication to “maintain sanity in the face of the indignity and alienation of everyday life” (but it, too, can inflict indignity and divisiveness). *Membership* comes through imagining, proposing and endorsing meaning, [sharing](#) “symbolic solutions to real world problems and felt needs” with others (281)—those in agreement and those opposed—as *mutual practice*. Jenkins analogizes fandom’s alt-reality as an assembled self-help support group, [potentially] “more humane and democratic” and often more emotionally intimate than the relations comprising fans’

everyday reality (280). Fandom thus conceived exemplifies Wenger’s observation that communities of practice “should not be reduced to purely instrumental purposes. They are about knowing, but also about being together, living meaningfully, developing a satisfying identity, and altogether being human” (134). This explains, Wenger says, why neither competence nor repertoire alone sustains membership. Only a member’s sense of [belonging](#) can, because it provides *identity coherence*—the reciprocated feeling of recognition projected *onto and by* co-members.

Our fields have much to gain from revisioning our conceptualizations of *community* and *socialization* with Wenger’s caveat in mind. If membership is an affective state, in which one’s learning activity—inner performance—of languaging and [experiencing identity](#) is actively [shared](#)—externally, socially—in/with/by connecting *mutuals* [idiomatically, people who follow each other on Tumblr/Twitter; here conflated with Wenger’s usage to denote *co-practitioners*], then schooling’s decoupling of mutuality (our sacrifice of it personally, professionally, pedagogically for *future-oriented* goals) is, fanactantism shows us, why our classes and attempts at socialization fall well short of fan adhocracies and [invisible colleges](#) for engaging learners in competent, knowledgeable practice. Writing disconnected from *mutuals*—despite having an audience, purpose and context—is likely to be perfunctory. Writing, as languaging *praxis*, is by nature [participatory](#), which means it encompasses being in the world *with others*, warts [Internet trolls, antis, hate] and all.

Multimembership subjectivity spotlights the role rhetorical, heresthetic and affective [alignment](#) plays in *mutuals*’ acts of languaging across difference (Nishino and Atkinson). Artifacts created by fanactants who embody intersectionality—[experiencing](#) multiple identities at once—refute our fields’ [[low-context](#) culture] conceptualizing of

rhetorical situation and *mobility* agonistically—as loci of the “inherent conflict between the individual and the collective,” Wenger directly rejects (147). He asserts that learning communities—rather than social structures *situating* people—are **informal**: localities of *people orbiting around practices*. Attraction to a practice connects one to *mutuals’* identities contingently, the activity of the community (not the population) is gravitational center. He cites Eckert’s term **brokering**, coined to describe “how school kids constantly introduce new ideas, new interest, new styles, and new revelations into their clique” (109). Through an Actant Network Theory lens, *brokering* is learners’ *associating* “foreign” practices *to* people one is connected to (translocally—not appropriatively—translating “domestic” practice). Eckert notes **brokers** are likely “those at the periphery of a group [...] since the leaders are too committed to what already holds the group together” (cited ft 5 290).

Wenger echoes ANT readings of **brokering** when he recasts *legitimate peripheral participation*, made famous with Lave and taken up by Epistemicism. He clarifies:

there is a big difference between a lesson that is *about* the practice but takes place outside of it, and explanations and stories that are *part of* the practice and take place within it. [...] *To open up a practice, peripheral participation must provide access to all three dimensions of practice: to mutual engagement with other members, to their actions and negotiation of the enterprise, and to the repertoire in use. [...]* Note that *the curriculum is then the community of practice itself.*

Teachers, masters, and specific role models can be important, but it is by virtue of their membership in the community as a whole that they can play their roles. [...]

Granting the newcomers legitimacy is important because they are likely to come short of what the community regards as competent engagement. Only with enough

legitimacy can all their inevitable stumblings and violations become opportunities for learning rather than cause for dismissal, neglect, or exclusion. (100-1)

Wenger expands “peripheral participants” to include multimembership-holders, **boundary-sitters** who he finds, “love to create connections and engage in ‘import-export,’ and so would rather stay at the boundaries of many practices than move to the core of any one practice.” Practices *associated to* dense networks with/by peripherals “force [the domestic “us”] to perceive our own positions in new ways.” Negotiating identifying [\(inter\)mediate](#) meanings in pursuing joint enterprise forms the essence of [\[Expansive\]](#) social learning Wenger endorses: *reflective practice*, experiencing “From own misunderstandings, [...] com[ing] to comprehend, in striking and expanded ways, the historical particularities and ambiguities of our own actions” (218). In my terms this translates to [ZPD](#): meta-awareness of [particularity](#) (the self) comes from resolving dissonance with/from others (the social). **Motility thrives with mutuality.** Feeding Wenger’s (individual) reflexivity are performances of [inner-outer] languaging, negotiating [high-context](#) learning-relating with/through support and co-labor of/to (collective) others—Embin’s version of [cosmopolitanism](#), the 叫 [jiao] Lu (“Essay”) theorizes.¹⁰⁸

Multimembership in [Web 2.0](#) spaces reflects the same dissonances and identity-incoherencies as everyday reality. Race, gender identity, ethnicity, religion, sexuality, age, nationality, class and ability as well as language, politics, ideology and subjectivity connect and divide fans orbiting practices. The specialized category of boundary-sitting, **being multifandom** is often described as a “hell” made up of viciously divided

(individual) loyalties and (social) overcommitment.[▫] Multifans must not only negotiate identifying with others practicing with the same repertoire but contend, too, with their fandoms' (often "rabid") competition against each other.¹⁰⁹ Kim S. sees this conundrum as symptomatic of K-Pop fandom, particularly. She contrasts fandom communities' freeing aspect of "liveness"—*heung*¹¹⁰—with their controlling aspect, *mob mentality* [see [netizen](#) discussion in chapter 3], for which she applies Ueno's loaded terminology, *tribalism*. In defending her choice of nomenclature, she points to the dark side of Elfving-Wang's K-Pop [parasociality](#):

The term is useful for understanding the darker side of the collective behavior of K-pop fans who assert their identity on the basis of tribal rivalry and exclusion: much like commodity accumulation, it points to the possessive behavioral traits that K-pop communities display in their desire to enjoy exclusive ownership of K-pop-related knowledge and access to K-pop acts. This is very much the antithesis of the joyful and optimistic spirit of *heung* [흥] emerging from sincere rapport among communal participants, who have overcome conflict and struggle together. In the darker aspects of K-pop's sociality, this type of tribalism based on cloistered online and offline communities can "dispel *heung*" ([흥을 깨다] *heung-eul kkaeda*)[⊗] with its destructive obsession. (38)

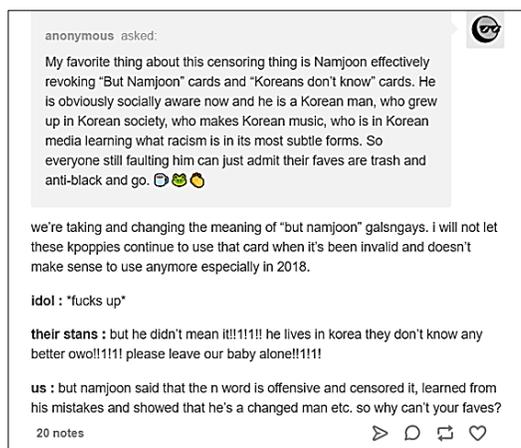
Multimembership I-ARMY navigate laudable and problematic aspects of fandom like their co-members (for better and for worse, as Flirtaus' history shows). But, to sustain [belonging](#), their [translating](#) simultaneously associates *and* dissociates coherent identities

[▫] For K-Pop, at least, multi- versus "monogamous" fandom has, itself, been described as a boundary-behavior dividing International from Korean followers ([harmonicar](#)). My own reading of the literature and experiences participating through Tumblr do not corroborate this, however.

[⊗] *Collins Dictionary* suggests a more precise functional equivalent for [English\[es\]](#): "spoil" the fun.

within themselves as well as *to* and *between* external practices. Madianou and Miller, discussing the use of New Media “alternatives” for diasporic [geographically peripheral] selfhood and sociality, label this activity [*self-]mediation*, awareness of *incompatible* felt and performed relationships consciously balanced to construct one’s projecting/perceiving of belonging across distance (and lived difference).

Taking up Pande’s challenge to interrogate the elided [experiencing of racial identity](#) in fandoms, I analyze an I-ARMY’s intersectional [brokering](#) of “foreign” (anti-racist) practice *to* K-Pop fandoms *as such self-mediation* across, not geographical but purported-to-be [cosmopolitanist translanguaging spaces](#). In the Tumblr post below, a reply to an anonymous [ask](#), we see commentary and a common genre of [produsage](#): the scripting of an imagined confrontation. The blogger on her profile and directly in myriad posts self-identifies as *female*, *multifandom* and *Black ARMY*. Anon [translates](#) the ostensible “ask” genre, using it not to interrogate, “one up” nor criticize the original poster [OP]—but, similar to taking one’s reciprocal turn in gossip (cf. Jones; Fiske cited in Jenkins, *Textual*; Hu), to [share feels](#) about a subject under discussion [decisions **not** to censor for broadcast the use of [English\[es\]/AAVE nigga](#) in lyrics of a Korean Idol’s song]:



(artifact 052518-6)

Perhaps to counter the depersonalized nature of an “unsigned” ask, Anon’s content

displays recognizably intrafandom languaging in numerous ways:

allusion to circulating posts on a controversy regarding a (non-BTS) K-pop Idol’s use of derogatory, race-based language in his lyrics;

unglossed reference to history of *antis* and nonARMY citing [BTS’ African-American cultural appropriation](#) in early-career songs and appearances¹¹¹ and to ㅇㅂㅍ knowledge of BTS’ leader, Namjoon’s direct and indirect responses to criticism;

two, decade-old USAmerican **Youth Culture tropes**, captured in *revoking cards* [referring, ironically, to unapproved White expropriation of AAVE *nigga/nigger* ([urbandictionary](#); cf. *niggaboo* discussed in the previous [chapter](#))] and *just...go* [an idiomatic expression condemning irresponsible behavior ([knowyourmeme](#))];

a current USAmerican **Youth Culture idiom** that recycles the older, racialized *white trash, are trash* [idiomatically, “uncouth”]—typically applied self-deprecatingly, and so intensified in its use here; and

current **digital perlocution** for one’s ironically nonchalant stance toward others’ egregious behavior—captured in the closing emoji set of tea + frog [which codes the “None of My Business” meme ([knowyourmeme](#))], here with an AAVE-derived **sarcasm-emphasizer**, sequenced clapping hands (both *emblem* emoji, McCulloch).

Anon takes a risk, appending to references to basic ㅇㅂㅍ knowledge an original assertion that is not already ㅇㅂㅍ “fact:” [*he*] is in Korean media learning what racism is in its most subtle forms. The provenance of this statement by Anon is uncertain; it may be an invocation of personal, parallel or direct experience and/or of interpretive competence and familiarity with uncited repertoire. Regardless, it is being deployed as [polysemy](#) that invites [“asks” for] interpretation/response from OP.

OP's response is illocutionary—signaling her close alignment to Anon's expressed **take**, by linguistically extending the cards **trope**, with *it's been invalid* and re-emphasizing with an oblique iteration of another trope (expressing exasperation with those who are culturally-unaware): *[it's] 2018*. As new meaning contribution, she employs a long-lived **play-on-words** (*we...galsngays*) telegraphing expectation of an audience's progressive political/ social orientation, then a more contemporary **neologism** (*kpoppies*)¹¹² which types nonARMY as racist. These moves are a set up for what comes next (what, she argues, should be done next). She **translates** Anon's *logos* claims into a ludic **script**, using imagined actors and dialogue to derogate—first—by **meiosis** demoting nonARMY fandoms to [countable people rather than a community of] *stars*¹¹³—second—rendering their discourse as caricature through histrionic, insultingly juvenile **text-speak** and—third—voicing (**associating** to them) the **microaggression**, *[Koreans] don't know any better*.

OP's performance is effective on, well, multi-levels. She succeeds in her explicit purpose: deploying **fanslation** to **remediate** the meaning of a harmful ㅇㅈㅍ artifact (*but namjoon said the n-word*) into an interpretation that ㅇㅈㅍ value (*but namjoon said the n-word **was offensive***). By heresthetically repositioning **kpoppies** as apologists (versus criticalists like herself and Anon), she also **associates** their acceptance of African-American cultural expropriation to Orientalism (*viz*, imaginary of Asian societies as insular and homogenous), contrasting “socially aware” international *and* Korean ㅇㅈㅍ (and BTS) with culturalist Other international and Korean fans and “their” ignorant Korean Idols. She applies **fanslating** to **fanactantism** most deftly when she **associates** knowledge of Namjoon's socially aware reparative actions directly *with* ㅇㅈㅍ and *to* Anon's and her own praxis: *his* actions voiced as *their* words (and, conversely, **kpoppies'** practice/words as

“their” Idols’ violations). The call to action is a powerful instance of rhetoric used for the purpose of Jenkins’ production of a “symbolic solution to real world” racism that—it goes without saying—affects African-American fans in/by fandom.

Given who OP self-identifies as and what topic she addresses, the whole of this post is a [self-mediating](#) act. It acts as a [translatorial](#) intervention in her own fraught boundary-sitting positionality. Resisting White I-ARMY attempts to quash—as a divisive force¹¹⁴—“overly-sensitive” fans of color or SJWs¹¹⁵ who “spoil the heung” ([흥을 깨다] of fandom, she brokers a “foreign” practice: [associating](#) Fans of Color (*identifying* herself and Anon) *with* BTS; making *mutual* Namjoon’s and 아미’s awareness of racism and cultural respect for Koreans and African-Americans. Although having few cues regarding Anon’s self-identity and affiliations, she projects, through [bricolage](#), their interacting as symbolic *and* performed modeling of [fanactant cosmopolitanism](#).



Tumblr posted constellated gifs of close-ups during live *Pied Piper* performance from [V-app streamed 5th Muster](#), lyrics fansubbed and comment: *I forgot how to breathe.* (artifact 1318-102)

이제 그만 보고 시험 공부해

니 부모님과 부장님 날 미워해
 봤던 영상 각종 사진 트위터
 브이앱 본보야지
 알아 좋은 걸 어떡해
 그만해 뮤비는 나중에 해석 하고

어차피 내 사진 니 방에도 많잖아
 한 시간이 뭐야 일년엔 순삭해

이 노랜 내가 네게 주는 상
 착해

—[Namjoon] RM’s verse in BTS’ *Pied Piper* (translated by me)

Don’t watch anymore now.
 Study for the test.

Your parents and boss hate me.
 Videos you watch, different pics, Twitter,
 V-app, Bon Voyage
 I know, they’re good. What can you do?

Don’t keep going,
 you can post about the MV later.
 Sheesh, your room’s full of my pics.
 A single hour decides
 the fate of a whole year.

This song is a reward I’m giving to you.
 Be good.

Write what you know—so go out and know something ([Wikipedia](#) contributors): the author-ity Sherwin Cody encourages [although his advice often gets truncated]⁷ is what happens when fangirls, who are our students, replace experts, us. Not only do learners use their knowledgeability to imagine, research, design, draft, revise, finalize and publish sophisticated compositions, they successfully mobilize composing to confront real world, powerful interests on behalf of the content and people with whom they [para/socially](#) relate. Through [invisible colleges](#) they crowd-source reforms to their own [social](#), [interpretive](#) and [aesthetic](#) practices. Responsive to each other, they conduct meta-aware Actantism using [discourse 2.0](#) as a tool to [feed](#) (circulate, invent) and consume ([remix](#), [translate](#)) content simultaneously: an intricate, [digintimate](#) practice of [sharing](#). They leverage—demonstrating [Kao’s Law](#)—vast, diverse competence to innovate (*expand*, Engeström), solving problems through [\(inter\)mediation](#). Their [fanactantism](#) as writers combines **knowing something** with *feeling* something—**sharing feels** by **going out to** connect dense networks, navigate Wengerian fault lines and [negotiate](#) identifying experiencing performing [translinguality](#). Learners’ composing is [motile](#) learning-relating—enacting [cosmopolitanism](#) by affiliating with others through fandom’s/Web 2.0’s positives (solidarity, validation, 흥) *and* negatives (conflict, hate, 흥을 깨다)—the latter Portes and Landolt (cited by Emdin), like Kim S. focus on as groups’ [natural tribalism](#). Conflict between groups and between individuals is certainly a feature I found characterizing translingual learning cultures I-ARMY participate with. However, my study shows learners addressing it collaboratively, brokering across Wenger’s

⁷ Cody’s promotion (commercial and philosophical) of informal writing education, like Jenkins’ celebration of online cooperative learning, was criticized by traditional educators ([Wikipedia](#)).

boundary lines, *as part of* their practice of [mutuality](#) and the creating of their [ad hoc translanguaging spaces](#). I-ARMY tactics I see as suited to dwelling *in* borders, embracing pluriversality, enacting Cronin's *cultural translation*:

not confrontation: it is conflict as engagement with the multidimensionality of texts, languages and cultures. It contests the culturalis[m...] which denies translation and interpreting rights to internal [racial, religious, sexual, gender, ability and other] minorities [...] where all conflict is presented as confrontation through the binary stereotyping of Us and Them. ("Translation" 500-1)

Furthermore, I-ARMY challenge our views of learners' capacity for engagement with critical inquiry and commitment to the work of developing competence. In fact, fangirls' knowledgeability—technical, logistical, linguistic, cultural, artistic, interpersonal—displayed in my study's artifacts of [discourse 2.0](#) translanguaging pushes the envelope of even Postcolonial Translationists' practice of [translatorship](#). Cronin argues:

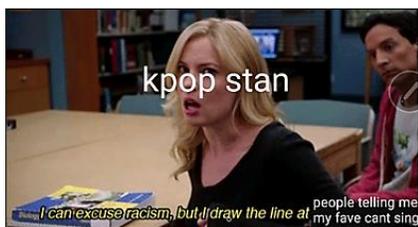
The difficulty for translators and language intermediaries generally is that they are subject to what Mulgan has termed the "economics of attachment." As he observes, "All attachments and memberships take time. We cannot be members of an infinite number of groups in the same way because attachments require not just 'quality time' but also quantities of time, to learn about the people involved, their motivations and idiosyncrasies' (Mulgan 1998:98). [...] *To engage with a language or culture in a way that is both effective and meaningful for the translator entails the surrender of considerable 'quantities of time' to acquiring the language and immersing oneself in the culture. [...]*

What is devalued or ignored in the cyberhype of global communities is the effort, the difficulty and, above all else, the time required to establish and maintain

linguistic (and by definition, cultural) connections. Translators themselves are defined by their lifelong commitment to second-order [longer-term, multidimensional, complex] exchanges. This is why their presence is always at some level troubling. (Translation 41, my italics)

In the face of such views, outside of classrooms and workplaces, our learners are devoting their effort and time to dwelling *in* borders—creating ad hoc *en masse* constellations of artists, journalists, texts, other languagers with whom they negotiate sense- and meaning-making. Socializing in (not *to*) geographical and ideological borders—genres, modes, media, age, culture, nation, language—they practice every/day what we in Composition Studies figure as *aspirational* [outcomes of writing instruction](#) (WPA) for which novices need our expert guidance and protection. They put in hours upon hours of willing *writing work* (Lu) is for neither academic nor professional reward—just to **belong**. They contribute to a communal wealth, counting upon other learners “out there” to **reciprocate**, knowing firsthand it is emotionally and logistically grueling labor with negative personal, economic, social consequences. *Pied Piper* is right. We bosses, parents, institutions **hate** [fear, misinterpret, resent] that learners’ energy goes toward something other than socially-sanctioned transactional goals of education and professional development. Who can blame them for tuning us out? After all, punishing, derogating and prohibiting their efforts, we fail to acknowledge what they know: that they are conducting composing praxes—at levels of complexity and rigor far beyond what we demand they “learn” from schooling.

Conclusion: Lighting Out for the Territory¹¹⁶



(artifact 122418-4)

Tumblr posted [meme](#) remixing a screencap from USAmerican TV show *Community* (according to [yarn](#))

to move away from researching and teaching information literacy in a deficit model [...] To construct and implement a new manner of information literacy instruction, several things need to happen. First, a change of perspective on education would be necessary which embraces or, at a minimum, recognizes the importance of a more interest-driven practice. Second, more mixed methods research needs to be conducted within a wider range of affinity spaces and interest-driven learning environments to develop a stronger model of implemented information literacy practices. [...] The explosion of new media and information sources is not only a reason to reinvent information literacy instruction but also provides an ideal place to research actual practices and explore information literacy practices in depth. (Varis and Blommaert 272-3)

Like Huckleberry Finn’s interstitial adventures—a hodge-podge of entertaining caricatures satirizing society with occasional glimpses of its cruel reality—what I report here, my travels off the “English” [map](#), unfolded unpredictably as encounters with intriguing strangers interspersed with periods of self-reflection. Conducting critical material ethnography means navigating “a peculiar, dynamic and dialectical epistemology in which the ignorance of the knower—[the *expert*]—is a crucial point of departure (Fabian 1995)” (qtd. Blommaert and Jie 9; my annotation). So it was. As I was finding my way through my own liminal space⁷ I met and tried to [make sense](#) of real people *experiencing learning writing* in ways ranging from comical to tragic. To represent my adventures to colleagues back home, I take up a form of [translatorship](#) these learners practice, one embodying what Hatim and Mason state as a founding premise:

⁷ In Rohr’s sense, “when you have left, or are about to leave, the tried and true, but have not yet been able to replace it with anything else. It is when you are between your old comfort zone and any possible new answer.”

that “each act of reading a text is in itself an act of translation” (*Discourse* 10, cf. Steiner 1975).¹¹⁷ As Translationists, they offer their colleagues this guidance:

Inevitably, we feed our own beliefs, knowledge, attitudes and so on into our processing of texts, so that any [translation](#) will, to some extent, reflect the translator’s own mental and cultural outlook, despite the best of impartial intentions. [...] The translator’s reading of the source text is but one among infinitely many possible readings, yet it is the one which tends to be imposed upon the readership of the T[arget] L[anguage] [version](#). Beaugrande (1978) suggests that a common failing in translators [...] is the urge to resolve [polyvalence](#) [...] and to impose a particular reading of the text. [...] *It follows that the translator’s task should be to preserve, as far as possible, the range of possible responses; in other words, not to reduce the dynamic role of the reader.* (11, my italics)

My version I attempted here to present as *unresolved* thick description/translation (Geertz; Appiah) of languaging moments (Wei) I encountered, discourse analysis of artifacts and—responding to Lemke’s and van Helden’s call to action¹¹⁸—intact ethnomethodological accounts I collected.

The last of these proved hard to obtain. While none of my participants denied permission to reproduce anonymized artifacts they authored, few were willing to be identified and fewer still, interviewed. I had anticipated a limited response, given that even though a social media [noob](#), I know participants have reason to shield themselves from governmental, legal, public and even family scrutiny [an awareness of the need to protect minors’ and vulnerable adults’ privacy and confidentiality, I was disconcerted to

¹¹⁸ “[W]e need to combine first-person phenomenological accounts of experience and feeling with third-person semiotic analyses of meanings and affordances if we are to give adequate accounts of how people learn with media and social networks” (166).

discover, my Institutional Review Board does not share]. Augmenting my sources with data taken from published interviews makes it possible for this dissertation to present HOWs of learners' individual [translingual](#) composing, but at only a minimum level. Further *ethically responsible* (Deller; Powell and Takayoshi) collection of firsthand accounts is definitely merited to improve the diversity and depth of evidence I here offer. For learners' digital composing in particular, Thomas and Ito et al. serve as useful models.

Luckily [I can thank Fate, the ◦|▣|?], my open-ended interview questions¹¹⁸ yielded rich insights into composers' WHYs—with this telling nuance: participants who responded via digital text, in my evaluation, engaged more deeply with the query than those with whom I spoke at length. I was puzzled by this—until I recalled my [irl](#) high school students claiming to be able to better recognize and embed meaning potential (Halliday and Matthiessen) *texting* than they do *calling* on their phones. Their wording stuck with me: “I just can't really *read* people who I talk [on the phone] with; it's so much clearer when they [and I] text.” This mode preference may be operating in my collected ethnomethodologies and those of the journalists I cite (Kelley; Vultaggio; Herman; Seo and Hollingsworth). Competence with affordances of written languaging may also explain the quality and quantity of learners' [mediations](#) of their own languaging I found in artifacts and published accounts. Here, I see additional underexamined patterns and features of *digital* versus *oral* read/writ/interpreting [HOWs] in my study. Their significance for pedagogy—a convergence with McCulloch's claims about how the digital revolution has changed [[English\(es\)](#)] languaging—I take up below.

Certainly, immersion in [digintimate](#) ecologies afforded *me* greater knowledgeability of the WHATs of learners' [discourse 2.0](#) content because it forced me to utilize their tools and materials *as my research praxis*. Without engaging myself, given

fans' conversations' evanescence, I could not have participant-observed—even as a lurker[□]—let alone accomplished the kind of [close reading of the Other's text Spivak advocates](#). It turns out, Grounded Theory (Boeije; Blythe; Charmaz; Cornelius and Herrenkohl), effective for preserving [polysemy](#) while imposing patterns and trends upon data, is eerily comparable to the recursive, [multiplicitous](#) (Lynn) critical interpreting-composing practice of fandom—“what Jenkins (2009) coined performance, where fans can actively identify “sites of potential performance in and around the transmedia narrative where they can make their own contributions” (Bourdaa 394). The implications of that realization drive much of what I now argue should happen next.

expert: late 14c having had experience; skillful; from Old French *expert*, *espert* experienced, practiced, skilled; directly from Latin *expertus* (contracted *experitus*) tried, proved, known by experience; from Proto-Indo-European *per-yo-* try, risk. ([Harper](#))

Always when anyone learns that I, a high school teacher, am pursuing my PhD comes the question: *What are you going to do with it?* The unanimous assumption—by acquaintances, my own students as well as fellow grad students and colleagues in public education and at the university—is that I must be aiming to move on [up?] from the classroom. When I answer *Same thing I am doing now*, an arrested expression appears on their faces—they are attempting mentally to reconcile the two conflicting identities, imagine the mixing of my practices. Their *Oh*, is a reminder every time that nonphysical but nonetheless real borders separate expert prestige from expert praxis, the Academy from the classroom.

Dwelling *in* those borders for me means boundary sitting in between what my “*we*”s know and do. Multimembership affords me, *the scholar* an expanded view of our

□ Tumblr term for a blogger who follows (and likes/reblogs) but does not [interact](#) with other bloggers.

economies of epistemologies and ontologies, the intellectual marketplaces of meanings which determine the value of *writing, learning, learner*. At the same time, it demands that I, *the teacher* look around, see those who are writing, learning, being learners, including myself, not as negotiable [boundary-objects](#) but as real people working to survive in the real world. Ethical scholarship and critical pedagogy enshrine these as stances. Thanks to these, I, *the researcher* reflected not only on my own ideological stances but my lived history. I now realize I have been experiencing *seeing* “our”s subjects, “our”s practices and “our”s positionings from multiple points of view long before becoming a scholar and teacher. And embodying that experiencing [mediates](#) my translation here.

A member of my elementary school’s first racially-integrated cohort, my learning life has progressed in chronological and ideological step with the field of Composition Studies itself. I am its success story: the at-risk learner empowered by schooled (then *colleged*) literacy to break free of economic, social, cultural constraints and join the elite. I propagate that narrative still, teaching and studying so as to redistribute opportunity to my students. Like the field, it took me *years* to shift away from a perception of my learners as undeveloped, to recover from my initial shock at the insufficiency of their schooling. Decades I have been *unlearning* that [expert gaze](#)—relearning to remember that every time I moved to a new grade school, I would be referred for “gifted” testing and get judged “close” but not qualifying. Recalling 10th grade, cutting a semester’s worth of English and getting IQ tested [instead of suspended—bless you, Mrs. Dashler]. This time I meet all the criteria, rating off the charts. What changed? *This* school had “rich” kids, and I had been intentionally trying to sound like them (using the nightly broadcast news as my model). When I talked right, my intelligence became apparent, and formerly closed doors to richer

learning environments and, subsequently, better life opportunities opened to me (they remain/ed closed to my family). *How could I forget?*

Graduate study was additional *relearning*: remembering learning languages, begun as philology-for-translation in 9th grade Latin, later applied to self-study Arabic in college. Arriving in Jordan for a year of independent study to find no one “spoke” what I knew how to decline, conjugate, phonetically pronounce and mechanically write. [The official literacy rate was 20%; the language of Jordanians, a “dialect” largely unintelligible to me.] Recalling what it felt like to have no choice: “acquire” or leave. Going on a desperate hunt for accommodating *people* (the kind gentleman at a sundries shop), *spaces* (the YWCA hostel), *situations* (the city library) to safely parlay my insufficient knowledge and total lack of experience into, first, basic functionality and, over time, fluency. I recognize now that I could claim I **acquired language** through transfer, trial and error, mimicking, adapting a tourist phrasebook from the 1940s. But what actually occurred was this: **it got easier and easier to understand and be intelligible to people who gave me time, effort and opportunities to try to “[make sense](#),” despite my mistakes and gaps.** Humor helped (a lot); but caring—genuine, reciprocated—was key. Experiencing *needing to communicate to relate* and my communication *being needed* by others—this is the true “process” for how I **learned languaging**. *How could I forget?*

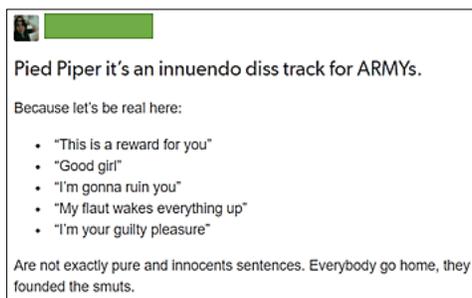
The signs were there: A child I knew caught me working on my “homework,” Standard Arabic translating; she was impressed that I (who did not communicate so well orally) could be “so smart.” Jordanian colleagues who accidentally witnessed me use “dialect” with “illiterate” staff and families reclassified me with “us” (not “the foreigners”). So I remember now: Just like my students, *languaging* means, has meant, will mean for

me earning kudos but struggling to handle basic interactions, managing to “pass” but making ludicrous *faux pas* in the same language, being differently proficient depending on the mode of my languaging. Reflecting has been *relearning*, “*reseeing*” experiencing Native, L₂, functional, school **languaging learning**—*re*visioning my life’s [constructed curricula](#) both institutional and independent. Remembering has meant *unlearning* [Natural vs Unnatural](#), [mainstream vs nonmainstream](#), mono vs multilingual **language acquisition**. Researching reflectively has been *re*experiencing identity as one of Bizzell’s *plurilinguists*, and “*seeing*” hybrid, heteropraxic [translinguality](#) as characteristic of all languaging-learners:

Plurilinguists know more than one language but have varied relationships with the languages they know: one may be a language they have spoken fluently from birth but never learned to write; another may be a language that has official status in their homeland for public business and for schooling, which they can write well but not speak fluently; and a third may be a language they can hear and read with only a little comprehension, having encountered it in pop music and on the Internet. (“Toward” 132)

Simultaneously working “on the ground” teaching high school while studying in the Academy forced me to dwell *in* internally constructed borders between my expert and learner selves. Researching [“off my map”](#) dropped me into a new [acquire or leave](#) languaging situation—I had to again scramble to find people, spaces and situations that would support my budding fluency. To understand and be intelligible I re-experienced seeking opportunities and, when given them, *choosing* to *remake* my inner sense and *comake* outer meanings with others. In that learning I “see” everyday reality—my own, students’, USAmerican *and* “Other” populations’—against my own classroom’s constructs

of literacy and development, my promotion of ideologies of [English Exceptionalism](#) and learner deficiency as well as formalist/ structuralist representations of my subject I was tacitly accepting. I “see” ways of writing-reading-interpreting-creating that transcend my expert schooled and lived literacies and certainly my pedagogy. I now ask myself the question: *What am I going to do with it?* How will my teaching in the *same* classroom be *different?*



(artifact 9918-10)

The artifact above makes me, *the fangirl lol*—and it inspires my teacher-scholar-researcher answer. Here encapsulated is the highly knowledgeable, [translingual](#) composing praxes of I-ARMY and (yes—me, *the academic* grudgingly admits) also of BTS: *Subjective* languaging for [para/social relating](#) (*let's be real here; Everybody go home* are [meme idioms](#) for ironic [call outs](#), mirroring the ironies within the song); *playful activism* (You)—an appeal paralleling the song's [loving chastise](#), intended to build coalition through [sharing feels](#) (cf. Stein, Horton and Wohl; McCormick; Booth, *Companion*); *speculative translating* (à la [Spivak](#); Cronin) of [polysemous](#) content (*Pied Piper* is recast as a hybrid *innuendo diss track for ARMYs*) as [performance](#) of Wenger's ownership of meaning (*they founded the smuts* mimics dramatically inflected cinema dialogue connoting *the jig is up!* to imply that BTS are intimately aware of ◡|◡| erotic fanfictioning); construction of critically interpretive [Nornes' *abusive*] [metatext](#) (titling and spotlighting *not exactly pure and innocents* lyrics as a bulleted list to “constellate” with the words “hidden” positioning in the

song). It is expert communicative-interpretive-creative act (a fan post imagining BTS catching fans in the act of sharing sexual feels for them in fan productions... and *reciprocating* (via *Pied Piper*) connecting readers, writer and subjects to each other through transtextually (Genette) linked, [translated](#) content. As an act[[ant](#)] of composing it attracts and exerts social power by harnessing the latest Web 2.0 [convivial](#) means of production and distribution. However, that latter particularity of I-ARMY competence, content, method and media does not change WHAT, in the end, I-ARMY composing is. Our fields set off practices of digital composing as *New Literacy*; my research leads me to an opposite conclusion. To me, ontic practices of [Fanslation](#) and [Fanactantism](#) *reinvent* literacy that is as old as humanity.¹¹⁹

Wei draws attention to the affective dimension of community practice,¹²⁰ arguing [translanguaging](#) occurs “as a process and as a product, [to give] mean[ing] to the individuals’ social life in terms of identity formation and development” (1234), by “bringing together different dimensions of their personal history, experience and environment, their attitude, belief and ideology, their cognitive and physical capacity into *one coordinated and meaningful performance*, and **making it into a lived experience**” (1223, my emphases). My analysis of I-ARMY [invisible colleges](#) sheds light on the workings of that fundamental human process Vygotsky explored, one which I remember experiencing: learners *relate* through *learning* and *learn* through *relating*—[motility](#) is interdependent languaging. My findings that I-ARMY are highly sophisticated, motile learn/languagers challenge schooling’s [conversive](#) premises, showing learners perform (as [Jenkins](#) and [Wei](#) define it) to [translate](#) *self*-representation (Cronin, “Translation Crowd”) driving their own *self*-development, participating with (not adapting to) others

through and with languaging content in order to form and sustain *felt* [para/social learning](#) relationships.

[Sharing](#),¹²¹ in the specialized Web 2.0 sense [Stein theorizes](#) and the basic sense of socializing, I find—as Vygotsky argued—to be the reflexive nexus of I-ARMYs’ [обучение](#), a competence-*with*-repertoire (Wenger) conceptualization of psychosociolinguistic [motivated choice](#) (Hatim and Mason) as a first principle of sense- and meaning-making. I-ARMY competent speakers of languages, knowledgeable members of cultures, veterans of fandom as much as I-ARMY learners with very little experience of these repertoires and limited techne connect as [mutuals](#) in affective translation communities (Hu). They give each other opportunities to share information, share ideas, share expertise, share labor, share interests, share experience, share [feels](#)—to *belong*. I-ARMY *move themselves* interdependently. As [btsinspirationtakesme](#) describes it, “I’m fascinated when I see [social/political] patterns in BTS songs. It makes me want to contribute if I see things that haven’t been said about a song or haven’t been touched on.”

In [digintimate sharing](#), I-ARMY engage with dissonance, difference and conflict—negotiating identifying *with* meaning—Wenger’s insight into the agency of participation, echoed in Jenkins’ theorization of fandom. Rather than amass social capital (Bourdieu), it is social power in and from sharing they exchange within the fandom and wield externally to broker with communities outside of their [translanguaging spaces](#)—advocating meanings to Industry, Media, other fandoms and nonfans. My analysis corroborates conclusions Wei draws. He argues that our “seeing”

what I have called “moments,” the spontaneous actions or events that have special indexical value to the individual and significant impact on subsequent

development of actions and events. [...] emphasizes the capacity of the multilingual individual as active agent in social life. [...] not simply responding, rationally or not, to broader social forces and structures, but [...] creating spaces for themselves using the resources they have. [...] It breaks down the artificial dichotomies between the macro and the micro, the societal and the individual, and the social and the psycho in studies of bilingualism and multilingualism. [...] The focus on the interactional process by which individuals create and manage their social spaces integrates what has so far been treated as different and separate levels of multilingualism. (1234)

In our fields' expert praxes for pedagogy, research and scholarship we elide the reality of languaging's embodied (Butler) intentionality and agency, we privilege *situating* over *situated*, **real** individuals who translate, negotiate, compose to relate to each other (to *belong with* not *adapt to*). Quantized languaging via Tumblr may be different in form from print and oral **versions** that precede it, but it is, at base, *sharing*—the quintessence of sociality if we accept the Latourian imaginary of [the social](#): There is no design; there are only trajectories (Wenger). No structure, only structuration (Giddens). No borders separating experts from learners nor deficiency from knowledgeability. Only constellated learners **translanguaging** and **translating** (Cushman) in shared spaces.

There been attempts to create such constellations in classrooms. Notable moves in Literacy Studies are June Jordan's course engaging "remedial" students in translating *to* Ebonics (disassembling [the BICS-CALP hierarchy](#) by disrupting the vernacular-to-formal direction of [English\[es\]](#) acquisition) and Blackburn's community center clients' production of an autoethnographic *Gaybonics* dictionary (expropriating expert authority to standardize and [self-]represent). In Composition Studies we have hybrid,

plurilingual writing models taken from Canagarajah's TESOL curriculum (*Literacy*) and now Bou Ayash (*Toward*) pioneering FYC that engages [mainstream](#) students in analyzing their [[Natural](#)] [English\[es\]](#) [translating](#) for academic composition—the very process of dwelling in the internally constructed borders of one's selves she gave me, *the grad student* the opportunity to “see” for/in myself.

But, these innovators confront the dilemma familiar to every instructor who ever gives learners opportunities to practice meaningful but unsanctioned genres or unconventional processes: Acting to center languaging—enacting it as pedagogy—risks leaving our students (and ourselves) vulnerable in situations where we know linguistic (Skutnabb-Kangas) ideology and policies are in force (within and beyond schools). Because we care, we compromise. We limit the meaningful—confine it to informal, process and personal writing—in favor of the useful. To help them withstand what is to come, we [deliver curriculum](#) in which students “practice” not producing, but *being assessed on reproducing* academic discourse—training for combat to come. Researching-teaching-learning forced me to acknowledge that my imposing [processive](#) and [conversive](#) socialization to *appropriate* language routines, roles and tasks is made moot by (demonstrated by Davila and others) ours and others' real world bigotry. And worse, our pedagogy was designed and is sustained intentionally for this outcome.

Deconstructing [constructed curriculum](#)—students' experience of our training them to be **public language passing**—entails “seeing” our false promises of [mobility](#) are not merely misapprehension or wishful thinking.¹²² Restricting learning to adaptive [mobility](#) effectively blocks [out] learners' [motility](#). Dewey recognized this long ago, [problematizing](#) our fields' [given](#) of suppressing learners' languaging, without needing to reference school or learning to make the point:

He knows little who supposes that freedom of thought is ensured by relaxation of conventions, censorships and intolerant dogmas. The relaxation supplies opportunity. But while it is a necessary it is not a sufficient condition. *Freedom of thought* denotes freedom of thinking; [...]. Let us admit the case [against this made by] the conservative; if we once start thinking [...] no one can guarantee where we shall come out, except that many objects, ends and institutions are surely doomed. Every thinker puts some portion of an apparently stable world in peril and no one can wholly predict what will emerge in its place. (172)

The legitimacy assigned to our actions as experts gives us our [social capital] power (this is why, when we stray from the conventional path, we *are* vulnerable to institutional ideologies and policies). And that (as Pennycook [suggests](#)) explains the longevity and pervasiveness of our [expert needs discourse](#): *learners'* power is a threat to *our* legitimacy. Conceptualizing schooling-for-[mobility](#) is a strategy intended to neutralize that threat. By promising movement, we reinforce a discursive structure that keeps us *in* stratified (ours privileged, theirs deficient) *place*—a truth Spivak speaks explicitly, reminding subalterns not to *unlearn* she is “their enemy” (Interview).

school: place of instruction, Old English *scol*, from Latin *schola* intermission of work, leisure for learning; learned conversation, debate; lecture; meeting place for teachers and students, place of instruction; disciples of a teacher, body of followers, sect; from Greek **σχολή** [*skhole*] spare time, leisure, rest, ease; idleness; that in which leisure is employed; learned discussion; place for lectures, school; originally a holding back, a keeping clear [...] The original notion is **leisure**, which passed to **otiose discussion** (in Athens or Rome the favorite or proper use for free time), then to **place for such discussion**. ([Harper](#))

As work to understand such speaking, my research leads me to this conclusion: to empower learners, I must (re)move myself from power. My eliding their [motility](#) must stop. I “see” now: Schooling-for-[mobility](#) relies on a *myth of illiteracy*. It goes like this: to

be un[der]educated is to live confined—Thoreau’s lives of quiet[ed] desperation—isolated and intellectually-stunted in the world.[≡] Yet, my encounters outside of classrooms showed me what I had lived, but been schooled to forget: *Experiencing learning writing* connects people valued for their **real** knowledgeability.[▫] Like the actual Helen Keller, when learners desire to understand and to be understood **for real**, they can and do *choose* to sense- and meaning-make, resolving gaps, differences and conflicts—they can and do [translate the real world](#) and themselves *on their own terms*. I-ARMY engage in practice far more sophisticated and intricate than what we “teach” in school by creating *personally* empowering [invisible colleges](#), [translanguaging spaces](#), communities of *learning practice for* understanding and being intelligible to other **real** people. My classroom, my curriculum, my positioning of learners do not afford this, so I force my students to make a choice: comply—go through the schooled motions, try to gain as much benefit and avoid as much harm as possible—or do not (I did not). Either way, no one is being rescued from illiteracy; **real** literacy is being deferred. To change this, I must **get real**. *How could I forget?*

So, do I run off like Huck, abandon my classroom, join the revolution? Well, *yes*—but also, *no*. For no, I defer to Spivak, who moved herself into the upper echelons of the [Imperial] Academy by the literal *and* figurative means of Postcolonial translating—producing an English version of Derrida’s *Of Grammatology* as a “young person who was neither a French PhD nor a native French speaker or native English speaker for that matter.” She recounts

[≡] Anne Sullivan’s “miracle working” upon Helen Keller is our (self-serving) salvation allegory.

[▫] This has been framed in terms of *authenticity* by Goffman, Bateson, DePalma and Ringer, hooks, Emdin, Scribner and Cole, Norton Peirce, Hymes, Labov, Gee, Pratt, New London Group, Alim and Paris, Smitherman, Kibler and Valdés, Rodriguez, V. Young, García, C. Miller, S. Miller, Shipka, Trimbur, Cushman, Lu, Horner, Canagarajah, Guerra, and Horner.

[Mine] was an engagement with that part of deconstruction, which looked at *what is excluded when we construct systems*. That part of deconstruction which said the best way to proceed is a very robust self-critique. And that part of deconstruction which said that you do not accuse what you are deconstructing. *You enter it. Remember that critical intimacy? And you locate a [moment](#) where the text teaches you how to turn it around and use it. So this had become part of my way of moving.* (Interview, my italics)

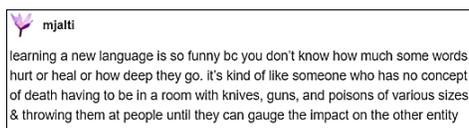
Dividing her time between work as an academic and teaching basic literacy to rural Bengali students and their teachers, Spivak says,

I moved away from my own class and my own agenda when I began to learn what subaltern meant. And I went into subaltern groups in India, which is where my schools are. These are people who have been millennially denied the right to intellectual labor by my own ancestors—caste Hindus. And so daily I see how even if they do [speak](#), they are not allowed to [speak](#) in ways that we can immediately understand. (Interview)

[Listening](#) (Ratcliffe) to Spivak, the teacher-academic-researcher, I [translate](#) empowering to be an intentional social act of entering and turning around the privilege[d]/language of my expertise. Being a legitimated languager, I possess power to [intermediate](#), joining/creating spaces [for relating-sharing](#) with/by my students, colleagues and the public, intervening [for learning speaking-understanding](#), [for](#) Cushman’s “meaning making processes that involve students and scholars in translanguaging, translating, and dwelling in borders”—or, **intentionally**, I can *not*. Like I-ARMY I met, I can *share* privileged knowledgeability, repertoire and identity as an actant, producing [boundary-objects](#) [for](#) translating to/with/of learners. Both her theorizing and her teaching, Spivak

says, are *critically intimate* praxes she uses to intervene **for real**, to relate through sharing with **real** people there. I can move myself to do the same.

My version of [translatorial](#) intervening (like Spivak’s) cannot ignore Rodriguez’, Delpit’s, hooks’, Smitherman’s, Villanueva’s, Alim’s and Paris’ demand that I not become part of the **real** problem of institutions’ excluding minoritized learners from the “public” “language of privilege...already established” (Gee). Yet it—I—must cease “[reifying...] the codes of power as objective linguistic practices rather than ideological phenomena” (Flores and Rosa; MacSwan and Rolstad; Kibler and Valdes; Zappa-Hollman and Duff; Motha; Kumaravadivelu; Horner and Trimbur; Horner and Kopelson; Sebba et al.; Skutnabb-Kangas). The question remains: In my same classroom, how do I balance these **for real**? (not just deliver a [woke](#) version of the [broke](#) emancipation narrative?)



(artifact 101717-8)

[engage](#): early 15th c, pledge (something as security for payment) from Old French [engagier](#) bind (by promise or oath), pledge; pawn 12th c from [en gage](#) under pledge through Frankish from Proto-Germanic [wadiare](#) pledge. ([Harper](#))

To [invent](#) [find-contrive] a way, I return to my own schooled learning languaging. “Foreign” language, especially in the US, has been denied the level of legitimacy obtaining to “[Natural](#)”/ “English” *literacy* development (another victim of [English Exceptionalism](#)). Positioned as subordinate to “Native” language, its pedagogy has [delivered processive](#) rather than [conversive](#) curricula (a common SCT lament, Block; Firth and Wagner) targeting learner access—but not *socialization*—to Discourses, acquisition of autonomous facility not [unNatural] social/ cultural/ ideological alignment (Street).¹²³ However, in working to formulate European Union educational standards in 1997, Byram repurposes

FLT—associating it with de-programming pedagogical transmission and normatization for students who correspond with our [mainstream \(Native\)](#) English[es] learners. Reconceptualizing [constructed curriculum](#) with “the experience of otherness at the centre” (Byram 3), his Intercultural Communication Competences (ICC) promote [motility](#) through provision of a school [Zone of Proximate Translation](#). The objective he sets is not **acquisition** of the “insider’s” [elite] repertoire, but **learning** experiencing negotiating *involuntary* multilingualism, “engaging with both familiar and unfamiliar experience” in “lingua franca situations where [this] is an estranging and sometimes disturbing means of coping with the world for all concerned” (3). In formulating standards, he sets out to create [translanguaging spaces](#) that afford Spivak’s speaking-understanding:

where the individual has no, or only a partial existing knowledge framework. [Discovery] is the skill of building up specific knowledge as well as an understanding of the beliefs, meanings and behaviours which are inherent in particular phenomena, whether documents or interactions. The knowledge acquired may be ‘instrumental’ or ‘interpretative.’ [...] In particular, *the individual needs to manage dysfunctions which arise in the course of interaction, drawing upon knowledge and skills [“of discovery and interpretation”] [...] to establish a relationship between their own social identities and those of their interlocutor, but also to act as [mediator](#) between people of different origins and identities.* It is this function [...] which distinguishes an ‘intercultural [speaker](#),’ and makes them different from a native [speaker](#). (38, my italics)

ICC’s pedagogical objectives and assessment standards¹²⁴ reimage language learning as Cronin’s Postcolonial [cultural translation](#). Its *savoir apprendre* (learning both transitive and intransitive as with [обучение](#)) and *savoir faire* (embodied acting as with *tätigkeit*)—

the “skills of discovery and interaction”—reposition learning literacy as Wei’s process *and* product of [translating](#) within and “between *speakers*, not between languages” (Şerban)—meaning-making as Ramanujan envisioned, “(against all odds) to [translate](#) a non-native reader into a native one” (Dharwadker 121-2).

Criticalists (Kubota, Flores) charge that such a vision does not represent democratizing praxes and universalizing expertise—but merely offer another privileged (Neocolonialist) multiliteracy that, in building individuals’ (elite) social capital “undermin[es] discourses and social practices that call for collective social action and fundamental structural change (Darder 2012:417)” (qtd. Kubota 14). I concede the potential for ICC to enact neoliberalist “individualism, difference-blindness, and elitist [cosmopolitanism](#)” (Kubota 14). That said, let us not forget that in splitting from Communication, Composition Studies erected borders to exclude **social** *linguaging for relating* from **academic** *linguaging for (re)producing*, a division replicated in K-12 literacy education. This very effectively undermined the legitimacy of the former [perhaps intentionally, to reduce learners’ resistance to the latter]. Linguaging for relating underwent a disenfranchisement, a repositioning as “transgressive” linguaging, denoted by the terms coined for its practice in classrooms by students, Goffman’s *underlife* and for its emergence as “irregular” teacher-student interactions, Gutiérrez’ *Third Space*. To me, such division was and remains strategic [containment](#) of students’ social power.

“Seeing” I-ARMY *practice* ad hoc, [digintimate cosmopolitanism](#), I witnessed [sharing](#) as not merely learning but deployment of “discourses and social practices that call for collective social action and fundamental structural change.” I join my study’s participants and observers I cite (Kim Youngdae, in particular) in crediting to their *intercultural* ideological stance [오아미](#)’s successful mobilization of [translinguality](#) to

become the most powerful fandom in the world (MTV) and then **to act**—in solidarity and individually—accordingly. I see a parallel with Byram, who argues that ICC *centers* the activity of difference-awareness (confrontation of dissonance that can lead to [motile](#) self-development). He offers the scenario of minoritized and marginalized learners being taught and taught *in* Imperial “English” as proof:

[r]eplacing the native [speaker](#) [with] the intercultural [speaker](#) as a model for learners, the implication that [learners] should *submit themselves* to the values of the [English] [native](#) speaker and try to *imitate* native speaker behaviours just as they [should] imitate a native speaker standard grammar and pronunciation disappears. Imitation is replaced by *comparison*, **establishing a relationship** between one’s own beliefs, meanings and behaviours and those of the other, whoever that happens to be [... and] *becom[ing] more aware of one’s own culture, much of which is unconscious and taken-for-granted*. (112-3, my emphases)

You in *Cosmopolitan English and Transliteration* documents the potential of this epistemology to reverse not only colonialist essentialism in learning [English\[es\]](#) but counter current [Exceptionalism](#) in teaching it:

In writing studies, as lamented by Royster (1996), we lack the notion of hybrid people, or “people who either have the capacity by right of history and development, or *people who might have created the capacity* by right of history and development, *to move* with dexterity across cultural boundaries, *to make themselves comfortable*, and *to make sense* amid the chaos of difference” (p. 37). [...that] *people assume multiple identities, associations, and alliances as they interweave dialects and languages*. (62, my italics)

His findings regarding adult Japanese learners of English online corroborate mine

regarding I-ARMY, documenting that by producing translingual content for/with [mutuals](#), participants

construct ethos through website configurations and contexts of interaction. Drawing on diverse linguistic and cultural resources, *they develop themes, rhetorical modes, and unique styles in their sharing of reading experiences. Their transliterate practices subvert language and cultural norms defined by nation and ethnicity, giving rise to new cultural formations.* With its potential to construct ethos, or “dwelling places” where the inhabitants can feel at home while *constructing knowledge, identities, and alliances beyond those of their homes, **English becomes cosmopolitan.*** (280, my emphases)

Wei, too, links *creation of content—[inventio](#)—to critical language awareness/ICC*: “These two concepts are intrinsically linked: one cannot push or break boundaries without being critical; and the best expression of one’s criticality is one’s creativity” (1223). *Savoir faire* and *savoir apprendre* are entangled—as much for the [mainstream](#) as for the nonmainstream learner.

For pedagogy, balancing *situating* languaging for relating with *situated* languaging for collective action, to me, replaces the [conversive](#) end goal of training students to *pass as [Natural/Native](#) Speakers*. Instead, practicing [transliterate *savoirs apprendre/faire*](#), learners experience Otherness, *being an Intercultural Speaker* and producing [*rhetorical—Ratcliffe*] *understanding of/with [Spivak’s] speakers* (not reproducing appropriate language). Faults notwithstanding, ICC to me offers a heuristic for Guerra’s non- and [mainstream](#) students’ *transcultural positioning* (“Cultivating”), a tour book for [performing](#) critical, translingual literacy *in borders of classrooms*. I am not alone in seeing this potential. Qu, analyzing Chinese TESOL students’ [transliteracy](#), “sees” a shift

from (conforming) **mobility** to (transforming) Vygotskian **motility**: “such awareness or sensitivity [...] can be achieved through de-automatization of habituated cognition, in which English or any other language, *as a foreign tongue*, has a good role to play” (70, my italics). I wish to **deliver curriculum** that recreates composing as **translanguaging**, literacy as **translinguality**, the (schooling) audience as (**invisible college** of) writing readers (cf. Rosen), **English[es]** *inventio for* playful, subjective, speculative (**Jenkins**) **content**. To me, this means a pedagogy *of and for* **motile translatorship**, writing-reading practice that resists domesticating (Venuti) texts and imposing **cultural translation** of **speakers** of texts, and in their stead promotes languaging to “preserve, as far as possible, the range of possible responses...not to reduce the dynamic role of the reader” (Hatim and Mason) in understanding Others’ speaking—writing as **rhetorical listening** and “disruptive rhetoricity” (Spivak). **English[es]** transliteracy as cosmopolitan composing.

Kubota’s critiques of Translingualism and transliteracy remind us that legitimacy determines which speakers are granted permission to “transgress linguistic boundaries and engage in hybrid and fluid linguistic practices [...and] access to certain linguistic competencies or performativities” (10-1) and for what purposes. Experiencing hybridity and fluidity in composition classrooms is not, in her view, equivalent to Spivak’s *speaking* or Dewey’s *freedom of thought*, but rather an alternate form of subaltern **containment**, “a shift [...] ‘from national origin to subject position’ (Dirlik 1994: 335) or from group identity to individual subjectivity” (7). Duffy et al. offer a counterpoint. Bypassing the issue of performativity altogether, they reposition **the writing process** as K-12 learners’ *sense-making* **performance**. Centering intralingua/cultural **discovery and interaction**, they advocate democratizing **transliterate** praxis as literacy instruction:

Against technocratic notions of literacy, we can call on our and our students' everyday experiences of "friction" in reading and writing to posit and pursue an alternative—*the normality of friction itself and the labor it entails*, often derided and denigrated as confusion, difficulty, misunderstanding, even opacity. To do so would be to *grant students agency as contributors, through their labor in reading and writing, to the production of meaning and thus knowledge*. As we have argued, this would require *replacing a transmission model of both pedagogy and writing with a model of both as [translation](#)*. In writing classes informed by such a model, the friction and labor of **meaning construction arising from difference would be recognized as the cultural norm**, a resource for knowledge production **requiring due consideration** [...]. (122, my emphases)

Bou Ayash's FYC experiment offers compelling evidence against fears of [transliteracy](#) pedagogy reinforcing an elite plurilingualism. Her framing of learning Standardized Academic English Discourse as experiencing translingual composing legitimates all learners' [performing](#) author-ity/speakerhood through content—and that discursive repositioning elicits resistance from [mainstream](#) learners (*Toward*) who wish to avoid Byram's estranging Otherdom.¹²⁵

I cannot yet claim much success myself.¹²⁶ My FYC course offers students Wenger's experiments in identity, practicing creativity-*with*-criticality by writing in/with/to their fields of interest/ affiliation guided by prompts that center composer's line of inquiry as [rhetorical listening](#) and argument as critical literacy. It includes both composing for [academic knowledge] reproduction and composing *as* relating. To integrate rather than segregate these, I position [translation](#) as *the* basic act of writing-reading-speaking-understanding—**paraphrase**, which I define as an *action*: "Translate a selection into

words that effectively communicate its meaning *for a person in YOUR field/major who has no knowledge of the text*, capturing the details of the original *accurately* (attentively, humbly, fairly, unbiasedly, respectfully)” (J. Baker, “Writing”).¹²⁷ Mine is a conventional functional equivalence conceptualization of [translational intervention](#), reframed as negotiating meaning for/with others, situating the writer-reader’s *interpreting* rather than rephrasing the text’s [presumed to be inherent] meaning—a shift from writers transporting assembly-line text-objects ([our traditional writing process](#)) to and from texts to writing as strategic, [mediated remixing](#). That shift sets the stage for a writing-process-as-design-thinking model, which Purdy divides into the problem-solving steps of *understanding* (accessing prior knowledge [▫]), *observation* (noting), [operational] *definition*, *ideation* (brainstorming), *prototyping* (drafting), *test* (experimenting). Purdy argues that this formulation repositions writing as “textual action...as activity and practice” (633). In his words, conceptualizing **design** affords our fields and learners

a capacious view of text from [invention](#) onward, situate[s] the goal of writing studies as to describe, explain, and enact the gamut of writing practices and products rather than to judge (or dismiss) them. Design thinking casts focus beyond word-based print composition [...] When we see the product of our writing—from the outset, in invention—as potentially taking a variety of different forms, *we are more likely to respect differences in our intellectual work—and difference as an inherent part of intellectual work*” (632, my italics)

IDEO’s toolbox for K-12 educators [paraphrases](#) the design steps in ways closely compatible with ICC [savoirs apprendre/faire](#), as learners’ “listening” during immersive

[▫] As with Hayes and Flower and Neocognitivism—*reading* is [segregated from](#) *invention* in this process.

“fieldwork” to gather data for “interpretation” of writer *and* audience needs, and addressing these needs through composing—the emphasis being on *situated* and *situating* “problems as opportunities for design,” a very [translational ZPD](#) take on *learning writing*. Like these advocates, I involve my FYC students in constructing proposals, beginning with formal précis as design briefs and culminating in a full-scale, collaboratively produced grant application (using the [NIH template](#)), including a model (prototype), supported with original (participant-observer) research.

To tie the academic/professional writing I assign students to produce to the [motile transliteracy](#) I hope I *and* they will practice, I center dissonance as resource (like Duffy et al.) by introducing writing-as-design with a quotation from Leverenz, who developed her approach for a course called *Cyberliteracy*:

How can we teach writing in ways that encourages—and rewards—more divergent thinking? One way to start is by **making sure writing assignments are, like design problems, wicked**, in Richard Buchanan’s (1992) terms: “**ill-formulated, where the information is confusing, where there are many clients and decisions makers with conflicting values, and where the ramifications in the whole system are thoroughly confusing**” (p.15).

Many of us would acknowledge the *wickedness* of most real life writing tasks, but as teachers our impulse is often to take the wickedness out of writing assignments—we make our expectations as explicit as possible in order to avoid confusing or frustrating students. Obviously, confusion and frustration do not in and of themselves lead to creative engagement in complex problem solving; rather, we tolerate these unpleasant feelings because we are engaged in addressing a problem that we care about or because there is something compelling at stake for

someone. But most of us also know the pleasure of working on a hard problem long enough that we ultimately find a way to address it. By eschewing easy or obvious solutions, **wicked problems require us to think creatively about the problem as well as the solution. As a result, we come to own the problem—as our vision—rather than merely fulfilling someone else’s idea of what should be done.** (6, my bold)

I also integrate collaborative design, finding in my classroom what Leverenz argues, that having students interact with each other’s texts provides opportunities to self-develop [savoirs](#):

Working in teams [...] can help students become more empathetic when team members differ from them in meaningful ways. Although empathy doesn’t automatically result [...], if students are taught and encouraged to be open to and build on others’ ideas as well as to hear and accept others’ observations about the potential effects of their ideas, they can learn something about what difference a different cultural location or disciplinary perspective can make. (9)

Inspiration for this FYC model predates my research into I-ARMYs’ writing-as-design. Serving as my school’s advisor for extracurricular student ICT, media and engineering design and production competitions, I “see” learners [performing](#) as experts in “New” Literacy, independent of teachers’ curricula and guidance. And year after year the same students who engage sporadically with the tasks of my course, I witness use their free time and their own resources to achieve professional-level outcomes that earn them national awards. Reflecting on this as I consider implications of I-ARMYs’ [fanactantism](#), I recognize that the structured languaging space of my classroom still *displaces* my students’ [natural](#) praxes for communicating with, in, to others around their interests. I

recognize that composing for my assignments, since they rarely constellate and compete with **real** economies of meaning in ways that matter to my students, is not wicked enough. My current goal as instructor is to loosen my [containment](#) of my own and learners' [para/social](#) relating—to breach more severely the interpersonal borders that structure me, the knowledge producer and them, the knowledge receivers “in the [temporospatial] room” to cocreate flattened [spaces](#).

For my 9th grade English course, I borrow from Spivak: moving myself to [intervene translatorially](#) with learners. Relying on my augmented status as a soon-to-be PhD, I remix the (pages-long, to me technocratic) Common Core English/Language Arts standards assigned to the pre-packaged curriculum, [translating](#) them into [[paraphrasing](#) them as] *learning practice* I hope makes it possible to understand and be intelligible to students enrolled with me:

Every person in the room will

Figure out new and familiar subjects, perspectives and languages in/with texts.

Hone speaking, listening, reading, writing, researching processes and strategies.

Use experience, resources, sources and tools successfully for tasks.

Manage high stakes (testing, etc), grow from class, thrive in real life language situations.

I give these students this excerpt from Burnett:

Culture plays a massive role in how intelligence manifests. A perfect example of this was provided in the 1980s by Michael Cole.[^] He and his team went to the remote Kpelle tribe in Africa [...]. They wanted to see if equivalent human

[^] Yes, the *same* Michael Cole who collaborated to [translate](#) Vygotsky!

intelligence was demonstrated in the Kpelle people, stripped of the cultural factors of Western civilization. At first, it proved frustrating; the Kpelle people could demonstrate only rudimentary intelligence, and couldn't even solve basic puzzles, the kind a developed-world child would surely have no problem with. Even if the researcher "accidentally" gave clues as to the right answers, the Kpelle still didn't grasp it. [...] However, the story is that, frustrated, one of the researchers [Glick] told them to do the test "like a fool would," and they immediately produced the "correct" answers.

Then I ask them what they think "we" should do with the class. I offer myself as Spivak's critically intimate reader of the curriculum's prompts and assessment rubrics. I [perform](#) deconstruction [[paraphrase](#): share my "insider knowledge"] of the [intentionally manipulative] techniques for constructing multiple choice items, provoking [disempowering] examination experiences and scoring to privilege particular examinee profiles. And in consultation with my (shocked but delighted) students [and well-received by their parents]—"I" (the legitimate expert) formulate the class' assessment regime:

Each student selects a **body of work** to demonstrate the [above] [learning objectives](#) of the course for summative grading by the final semester deadline. The work may **include in-class and/or out-of-school writing or analyses**, tests/quizzes, nonverbal texts, etc—*by agreement with the instructor*. Formative (practice) work will be graded based on full attempt. (J. Baker, "Language")

To curtail my control of "the room," I present to my students [data regarding TED](#) limiting its TED Talks to 18 minutes as grounds for the same self-imposed restriction on *my* teacher "talk time" (classes are 55 minutes long). And I negotiate with students flexibility in complying with written and unwritten school "rules" intended to support classroom

management (technology use, freedom of movement, etc). I promise them autonomy to engage in “work” or not, to substitute other activity as preferred, to prioritize self-care over participation in activities—features of collegiate education that [coincidentally?] cross over to the power of choice learners enjoy in ad hoc nonschooling composing. And, I make good on my promise—neither punishing disengagement nor rewarding engagement; defending students who are criticized for their choices; following their lead rather than setting the agenda. It is my first full scale attempt at performing instruction to privilege transformative [motility](#) over [mobility](#), to understand learners’ [speaking](#) on its own terms.

Had I not experienced my prior students’ out-of-schooling design successes and their in-class endorsement of FYC’s similar outcomes and assessment design as useful and meaningful for *learning writing English*, these moves would have been inconceivable to me. Even with that repertoire as a resource, I am struggling to adapt my praxis. I *feel* I am making progress, having graduated from blind[ing] panic and frustration that “no one is working—they’re playing Minecraft/posting on Instagram instead!” to “seeing” ad hoc [performances](#) of creativity-*with*-criticality, [transliterate](#) languaging [moments](#) of students’ relating with each other and with Academic Discourse. I continue to move myself to deconstruct my own participation and what I conceptualize as [English\[es\]](#) “work.” Remembering the lesson the Kpelle taught “experts,” I am trying to *understand* students’ engagement with media, to become *critically intimate* with its wicked problem-solving, as Spivak advises: “do not accuse..., enter...locate a [moment](#) where the text teaches you how to turn it around and use it.”



([lcsvocal](#); [seolovebot](#))

Co-authored and -narrated Twitter-“fanfic” [shipping ARMY](#) with EXO-L (rival fandom of the band EXO) [t/n: Okay, not that kind of *critical intimacy*](#) 🙄

What I “see” in the above creatively-critical I-ARMY metacommentary on fans’ out-of-school [translanguaging space](#) is, I am starting to accept, similar to what draws my students to media and away from my curricular materials: that learners desire (!)—to relate, [sharing feels](#) for validation or intellectual “‘surrender’ and ‘intimacy’ [toward content] in the mode of erotic love” ([Spivak](#) cited by Baer). I-ARMY, I have seen, expertly achieve that desire by means of [Web 2.0 ecologies](#). To *move myself*, I realize, the classroom over which I have power must *enter* those ecologies. My pedagogy and curriculum must join the revolution. For while literacy to connect with others is human activity that has existed from time immemorial, my students live, language and learn in this revolution differently than we “English” experts do—differently than has ever been done previously. McCulloch’s *Because Internet* documents that [Web 2.0 changed the form of **real** languaging](#). Millennial and younger learners who make up the population McCulloch calls Post-Internet People—which [not to be morbid, but] will soon be *all* people—do, have done, will do *more composing, more often* than anyone any time in human history. And, disproving our [self-preserving] claims that their copious, frequent, digitally-mediated, informal writing is somehow regressing their cognolinguistic development, she reports that activity has been shown to increase their fluency, complexity, flexibility and other *-y* traits related to expressing meaning through symbols—including what Alexander and Rhodes (cf. Dobrin, *Multimodality*) describe as

postliterate multimodality and transmediality (learners' competency with expanding and hybridizing genres to encompass nonverbal text and nonrational expression).^o

Despite our attempts to control access, learners *recognize* that they learned, are learning, will learn *postliteracy* through **relating with** others via digital media, not (McCulloch corroborates) through socialization *by* or acculturation *to* “speech communities.” They are well aware that their post-Internet-literate languaging is different from—is not “natural” to—their teachers, bosses and parents. BTS' *Pied Piper* offers an uncomfortably apt replacement for our Helen Keller allegory for illiteracy: we are the villagers who fear the allure of the Piper. We *hate* that the young are drawn away from us and what we deem important by the **real** sharing and post-print “textual” design thinking *postliteracy* affords. We are dismayed that they do not defer to scholars, blind[ingly] panic when they thwart safeguards and are awed that they outsmart predatory advertisers and technology corporations. We know *we* have lost them.

And is it any wonder? I-ARMY (rebutting the label *elite cosmopolitanism*) possess critical awareness of differences between their own and others' practices and repertoires. In fact, becoming savvy about these—teasing out where social, cultural, linguistic, discursive boundaries lie *for* **remixing** and mediating characterizes a significant portion of their post-Internet-literate activity (Leppänen frames this competency as translocality; Jenkins as performance; Nornes as *abusive translation*). We can celebrate this: we got what we [claimed we] wanted—learner agency to engage the **real** problems of linguisticism and disempowerment. We have much to learn from/with students, not to entice them

^o I dispute their emphatic assertion that such languaging should not be classified as *writing* or as *composition* because of the limiting effect of *our* theoretical categories. My view is the converse: nonverbal and nonrational multimodality and transmediation should be classified as *writing* and *composition* **because** they effect an expansion of *our* categories in ways that align them with reality.

“back” to us, but to develop *our own postliteracy*—which, Alexander and Rhodes (*Multimodality*) warn, is more, and more revolutionary, than we wish to believe.



[Tumblr post commentary](#) and meme regarding users’ reaction to its 2019 [billion dollar loss of value](#)^x

[How do we] offer some explanation of why entertainment *works*[?] It is not just leftovers from history, it is not *just* what show business, or ‘they’, force on the rest of us, it is not simply the expression of eternal needs—it responds to real needs *created by society*. (Dyer 26)

How so? **Postliterate** languagers can and do make it their practice [“make it *into* their lived experience”—Wei] to violate borders (physical, political, regulatory, ideological) that our fields acknowledge have long blocked individual as well as mass [motility](#). Our learners collectively know about and know how to exploit/overcome differences in languaging practice, repertoire and identity to achieve personal and collective **real** outcomes, including intimately relating to/with/through [sharing](#) content and [brokering](#) meanings. Their **social power** in **real** economies of meaning is considerable (enough that Tumblr, for example, stymies profit-seeking by telecommunication corporations as powerful as Verizon and Yahoo—the event being playfully represented in the above artifact by FanoTastic). Eyman cites Terranova’s *network culture* to depict the magnitude of this **real** change from the formative ecologies of pre-Internet-literate languagers. In [Web 2.0](#) communities of practice,

^x *This hellsite* is Tumblr-speak for Tumblr; *rn* is an acronym for *right now*.

information is neither simply a physical domain nor a social construction nor the content of a communication act, nor an immaterial entity set to take over the real, but a specific reorientation of forms of power *and* modes of resistance. On the one hand, [networking culture] is about a resistance to informational forms of power as they involve techniques of manipulation and [containment](#) of the virtuality of the social; and on the other hand, it implies a collective engagement with the potential of such informational flows as they displace culture and help us to see it as the site of a *reinvention* of life (37). (qtd. 41)

It may be cliché to observe that due to technology, succeeding generations language in/for different [life]worlds (New London Group): theirs [post-Internet] online, ours [pre-Internet] not so much. Deconstructing languagings' *différance* by *entering* my fields' (including my curricula's) pre-Internet and I-ARMYs' and my own students' post-Internet texts, I "see" that in the meaning/fulness we and they associate to *the virtual* versus the **real** (where our generational [experiences of identifying](#) with texts most diverge) is also, ironically, a nexus of deep commonality—and thus an opportunity to move myself to connect [translanguaging spaces](#) with my students.

Out of self-preservation, perhaps, we pre-Internet-literate often frame media primarily in terms of consumer manipulation, "seeing" the virtual as *false* reality. While we congratulate ourselves for being critical, I see that stance as a sign of our conservatism, an extension of our fields' historical positioning of popular literature, vernaculars and folk knowledgeability of them as "distractions" (Kett; Gee, "Learning"). As we experts fretted about the virtual, Industry producers on the global economic periphery recognized and—first experimenting in Occupied Japan (Steinberg), then expanding in the aftermath of the 1990s Asian financial crisis into [Hallyu](#) today (Kang I.;

Choi and Maliangkay)—acted on its potential to divest from colonial (Fordist) use-value, commodity-driven, resource-reliant systems in favor of (post-Fordist) knowledge-based, performance-dependent flattened *post-Internet-literate* information economies and ecologies of meaning. That **virtual** is now **real**: It is their world, and we are (just) living in it. It behooves us, since we are not beating it to consider joining our learners’ “resistance to informational forms [...] of manipulation and containment of the virtuality of the social” and “collective engagement with” the *parasocial* “as a *reinvention* of [**real**] life.”

We can only connect...*well*, by getting connected to network culture ourselves—*entering* learning ecologies, *translanguaging spaces* and communities of passion/affect that thrive **virtually**—and reflecting on our adventures, light *back in* to the territory of school *rearmed* with the experience of *belonging*. My personal journey convinces me of this: classrooms stand a better chance of being sites for **motile** learning if they operate like Engeström’s expansive organizational learning—as collaborative, *translatorial*, *wicked* problem-solving. *Remixing* our individual praxes, our intimate identities, our heterogenous knowledgeability—deconstructing by *entering*, observing, defining, ideating around “the problem” [the Otherness] of *Web 2.0*—is the way *we* develop and the way we *understand*, engaging rather than *containing* dissonance between ourselves and learners. To design “effective” pedagogy, we need our students to be informants. As Vygotsky showed, our inner and outer *translation* for, with and of them is by nature cooperative; for *обучение*, our own needs to meet learners’ precisely different minds. Together, we can unravel the rich points that such encounters afford. We must move ourselves to *interact* interdependently and *as* Byram’s Intercultural Speakers (38), who manage dysfunctions which arise in the course of interaction, drawing upon

knowledge and skills [[“of discovery and interpretation”](#)] [...] to establish a relationship between [our] own social identities and those of [our] interlocutor, but also to act as [mediator](#) between people of different origins and identities.

It is on the basis of lack of **real** interaction that Leverenz calls WPA to account for diluting New London Group’s vision of **design**. The Outcomes rather than cultivating *situating* constructivist pedagogy, end up reinforcing instruction of conventionally *situated* modes of knowledge reproduction. The [lived curriculum](#) of the real world and expert writing in it, she reminds us, is *negotiating* (not assigning) wicked problems. She cites Kimbell who, like Wenger, advises educators to “see” practice, “to switch the unit of analysis from individual actors or society and its norms, to a messy, contingent combination of minds, things, bodies, structures, processes, and agencies’ (p. 141)” (4). ICC’s [savoirs](#), to me, offer a means to disrupt teaching depersonalized [Standardized Academic English Discourse] [writing procedures](#), getting me closer to the *interactive* creativity-with-criticality I observe in I-ARMY and my own students’ composing outside of school. Marback (cited by Leverenz 3) is on to something: “The wickedness of designing is that it is more than merely the making of an artifact; it is an embrace of ambiguities in our responses to each other with and through our artifacts (p. 418).” Privileging interest-driven, [producerly](#) content—[performing](#) it *with* our students—I believe, maps a route from schooling to our-*with-their* [understanding-speaking](#)—made possible through a *social* practice of composing as design.

As I write this, the post-Internet-literate are justifiably *feeling themselves*[‡] as **virtual** market-moving talent, content creators and influencers, even as [because?] they

[‡] AAVE idiom for demonstrating confidence/pride through gesture/attitude, used [postliterately](#).

[share feels](#) about experiencing **real** depression of their wages, wealth and well-being as effects of globalization and workism (Thompson). To make others “hear” [even if they will not listen to] their [speaking](#), [digintimately](#) connected fans engage *each other* in Dewey’s design-based writing, “doubting, inquiring, suspense, creating and cultivating of tentative hypotheses, trials or experimentings,” reimagining the world as it could be through **virtual** [produsage](#) ([fanslation](#)), and acting to *reinvent* it, mobilizing for **real** reform of existing systems ([fanactantism](#)) and advancing **real virtual** alternatives (like independent artisan digital marketplaces Patreon, Gofundme, Ko-fi, Kickstarter, etc). Scott-Heron’s 1970s vision of the revolution as asserting power *against* Media’s White hegemonic reality-[mediating](#) turns out to be prophetic—for a *later* generation of nonconformists.¹²⁸

Aja Romano, [a well-known fanfiction author and contributor to Feminist fandom journalism](#) suggests that with Web 2.0 that fandom underwent an ontological change. From traditional “geekdom,” consumers’ *curation* of produced content (what she labels “top-down” “masculine” fandom), fanfictioning spread fangirl *transformation* of remixed content (feminine fandom), shifting away from consumerism toward Artivism (Sandoval and Latorre), taking up [translatorial](#) writing-as-design:

Because I think the act of saying, what could I do instead, what could I do differently, what is this creator not doing that I want to do—those basic questions lead you in the direction of finding subversive solutions and thinking outside the box, which leads you to have an open mind, which leads you to be more politically aware, and so forth.

And the people who are asking those questions are people who are already on the outside of various cultural narratives we tell ourselves. The people who are going

to want to transform the text are the people who want to make it something that appeals to them more directly, and that tends to be people who are marginalized, people who are outside the curative space where everything is pristine and there's a certain set of values that are held in place. Whereas transformative fandom is every person for themselves. So that leads to a naturally more diverse space to begin with. (qtd. by Morimoto 47-8)¹²⁹

I-ARMY [fanslation](#) and [fanactantism](#) in my study exemplify *transformative* fandom's postliterate turn toward personal [feels transmediation](#), [para/social](#) connecting through [producerly](#) cultural production and collective adhocatic activism (Pérez González). They show, too, **real** power is generated by constellating **virtual** [translanguaging spaces](#). What if *schooling* cultivated learners' [translatorial agency](#) like Tumblr—as interactive **inventio**? What if writing curricula encouraged “the act of saying [...] what is this creator not doing *that I want to do*” rather than suppressing personal desire in favor of privileged knowledge reception for reproduction? Could comp class 1.0 transform into **discourse 2.0 studio**, the Latin for which denotes “eagerness, enthusiasm, zeal, spirit; devotion, pursuit, study” ([Olivetti](#))? Couldn't **remixing** in the classroom be what it already is outside of it, “*the contemporary composing paradigm*” (DeVoss)? To [translanguage](#) alongside learners *in borders* (not just ideological, but spatial—beyond our classroom walls and allotted class times) to *remake* meaning (Cushman) shouldn't *we* displace “production-oriented model[s] of externality” with “crowd-sourced [translating](#)” to *remake* meanings “the way *we* want?” Shouldn't *we* do the new-to-us work to be “the potential audience for the translation that does the translation;” participate in Cronin's “consumer-oriented model of internality,” negotiating, [brokering](#) and [mediating](#) meaning with, for and to our students? Turning around the [expert needs discursive](#) question we ask about our students:

Can the *pre-Internet* connect? Can *we* speak and be understood?

I think the answer is **Yes**. I think the power vested in the [expert gaze](#) lured us away from remembering that we and our learners *do relate*: our praxis is a [version](#) of theirs (and vice-versa). We and they are deeply engaged (obsessed?) with interpreting, analyzing, experiencing, imagining, producing and sharing creative [capaciously “literary”] content. We and they apply that devotion *through* creative-with-critical composing *to real* causes and issues we care about. Let’s get **real**: we scholars, researchers and teachers of languaging are **virtually** as fangirly as our students. If we embrace shared identity, join [network culture](#), we have a chance to “explore radically new insights without becoming fools or stuck in some dead end” (Wenger). To relate requires that we and they form and sustain “a strong bond of communal competence along with a deep respect for the particularity of experience;” they and we together constellate “a privileged locus for the *creation* of knowledge” (Wenger). [Sharing](#) to design “symbolic solutions to real world problems and felt needs” (Jenkins); negotiating the [double bind](#) of [performing](#) our own idiosyncratic, multimembership identities by [brokering](#) our own personal repertoires and practices: this is how learning communities bond. Respecting each other’s meaning-making allows us to expansively learn (Engeström) repertoire we [share](#): this is how we and they understand and speak.

A portrait of our generationally *différant* but overlapping [versions](#) of fangirl identity is sketched out below—my remix of Dyer’s taxonomy of **real felt** needs with corollary **virtual** wishes he finds [\(inter\)mediated](#) through USAmerican *pre-pre-Internet* entertainment.¹³⁰ Even in abstract lexical form, it remains emotionally jarring to read, laying bare as it does *our* private [feels](#):

We experience <i>lived...</i>	So, we reimagine through content...
Scarcity	Abundance
Exhaustion	Energy
Dreariness	Intensity
Manipulation	Transparency
[Exclusion]	Community

**Dyer's "Non-Representational Icons" of Lived Affect
And Their "Signifiers" in Entertainment.**

"Seeing" my intimate [parasocial](#) relating with media through encountering Dyer reminds me: like I-ARMY, I engage with creative content to "maintain sanity in the face of the indignity and alienation of everyday life" (Jenkins). I desire the hope that comes with imagining life better, the sense of belonging that comes from reciprocating [feels](#) and the self-fashioning (Liu) that comes through conducting creative-critical (Wei) practice. Hu and I-ARMY show that the post-Internet-literate engage by preference around gossip, fashion, sexuality and race—not the conventional topics I have introduced as official classroom discussion, certainly (and a [wicked](#) problem to try with 9th graders!). Yet these are undeniably subjects of students' *underlife* languaging (else why would we/institutions regulate them—and languaging about them—so fiercely?). At the same time, preventing exclusion, bullying and persecution is a wicked problem of central concern to educators as they are to the post-Internet-literate. Confronting it together offers a **real, mutual** writing-as-design challenge. Deconstructing (Spivak) and abusive translation (Nornes) of content together can, I-ARMY prove, be meaningful *and* useful [cosmopolitanist](#), Intercultural *acts* of languaging. [Sharing feels for social power](#), my classroom can constellate critical interpretation, [postliterate](#) production and [digintimate](#) activism around content we *together* find, as the kids say, "relatable."

With 9th graders thus far my attempts have been hit-or-miss. Not surprising, my students have been most interested in discussing music. I proposed Glenn Miller's *Chatanooga Choo Choo* and Bruce Springsteen's *Born in the USA* as texts with implicit

[historically situated] clues that are revealing if one engages in “close” reading ([Spivak](#)). I asked students, “How old is Miller’s boy in the refrain’s *Pardon me, boy?*” They were hooked when I said I thought that he is likely an adult [later adding *Black*] man. This clashed with the story they had been told about pre-civil rights US American history and culture when they “saw” in it, such blatant racism practiced not in the postbellum South, but in the song’s New York City—and tacitly endorsed across the nation, given the song’s popularity. I asked a better question when I shared my own unresolved problem: “Why do people who know the lyrics still use Springsteen’s song to celebrate here and around the world?” They hypothesized that it was not a “foolish” surface patriotism, but the solidarity of feeling *like a dog that’s been beat too much* by the system that spoke to listeners.³ Fourteen-year-olds “saw” this. (🤔) Discussing the lyrics as well as their [remix](#) as the MV for Lizzo’s *Good As Hell* sparked [hot takes](#) on Feminism, the power of self-talk and even alcohol’s marketing as a coping mechanism for relationship issues. They eagerly offered their own examples to interpret *for/to me*, taking up [translatorship](#), [paraphrasing](#) “insider knowledge” while I [performed](#) learning. Minecraft/Instagram were [temporarily] less of a draw than talking out loud with each other and me.

As different from my experience as it is, my I-ARMY informants opened my eyes to the reality that rather than distracting from **real** learning/ writing, [sharing parasocial](#) content using **virtual** tools affords them [translanguaging moments](#) to develop and hone academically/ professionally valued learning—much as my much-lauded student-competitors’ collaborative designing does. I-ARMYs’ included specifics of Korean[s] and Korean culture[s] and histories, but also, very much in line with my STEM competitors,

³ [Bowlby ties this song directly to such expression by activist Youth Culture fandom in East Germany.](#)

facility with media production and distribution software and skills for data gathering (research, critical evaluation, fact-checking, etc) and composing (multimodal design, analysis, translation, etc). New Media and Fandom Studies demonstrate that the [Web 2.0](#) revolution conflated discourse 1.0 categories of reading, writing, interpreting, analyzing, creating, responding. I-ARMY rather than receiving and producing—cognitively in- and outputting (Baaijen and Galbraith)—object-texts, ([parasocially](#)) relates and owns ([translates as actants](#)) meanings by (inner-*with*-outer) [mediating](#) and cooperatively *metatextualizing* circulating content. They pitch original *redesigns* as part of an ongoing, [mutual](#) practice of understanding, observing, defining, ideating, experimenting and testing to solve real world problems. It is telling, indeed, that the biggest difference between ours and their localities of practice is in the barriers to entry into our imagined discourse communities compared to their [invisible colleges](#). For them, all you have to do is *want to* belong—listen, speak, try to understand—and you’re *in*. Fangirls want to be transformative learners, so they embrace and practice personal and artistic particularity. Experts imagine that we must transform learners, so we suppress and excise particularity.

To me, entering the post-Internet-literate textual lifeworld and turning it around to use as pedagogy means *relearning* that I have personal, emotional experience being, knowing and socializing like *and* unlike my learners’, that content [feeds](#) my affective hunger like and unlike it feeds theirs, that negotiating for ownership of meaning empowers me to [speak](#) and invites me to [understand](#)—that this, not transmission and reception, is what grappling with wicked problems is *really* like. Joining the revolution means participating with (not managing) learners, not enculturating but boundary-sitting—[brokering](#) through [translatorship](#). As a co-participant (not director), I bear the responsibility to [invent](#) (find-contrive) content and “work” my students *want* to negotiate

about and to [perform](#) with me and each other. To be meaningful, I must propose something *worth* metatextualizing. To create in my classroom “an intense social experience and emotional investment, [...] a strong sense of attachment” (Wei) I must move myself—as *btsinspirationtakesme* does—“to contribute if I see things that haven’t been said” through languaging that builds learners’ [social power](#) [and directs my institutional power against languaging that reduces it]. So I am busy these days, [listening](#) to (*sharing in*) learners’ conversations. My class no longer feels sterile and controlled. Instead, it’s frustrating and bewildering and chaotic! I think that means I’m learning.

In closing, I offer an update to Dyer’s reality-[mediating](#) needs/wishes list. It serves at present as my personal checklist for replacing me, *the expert* with us, the *writing fangirls*, re-turning to entertaining, personally meaningful content and me—as well as *they*—designing symbolic solutions to real world [felt](#) problems as word work (Lu), a heterarchical (Bruns) community of learning practice in my *different* classroom now that I am remembering to remember:

Schooling has been...	We can reimagine it as...
Mobility	Motility
Roles	Selves
Tasks	Encounters
Answers	Meanings
Evaluating	Listening
Demonstrating	Sharing
Behaving	Mediating
Mimicking	Speaking
Competition	Competence
Achieving	Experiencing
Socialization	Belonging
Mono-	Pluri-
You	We

Notes (from [Introduction](#))

¹ An example of the colonialist *tourist* versus *sojourner* mindset that [Byram's Intercultural Communication Competences](#), discussed in the [Conclusion](#), is designed to displace.

² Choi and Maliangkay theorize a similar exceptionalism in Cultural North responses to K-Pop popularity: The *New York Times*, the *New Yorker*, the *Wall Street Journal*, the *Times*, the BBC, Canal+, and the *Asahi Shimbun*, to name but a few, have all fervently commented on the enigmatic discharge of cultural energy from a country unmarked on the map of global culture. Their search for convincing narratives illuminating the inscrutable incident is quite reminiscent of the hurried invention of tales to decipher the furious rise of Japan during the 1970s and 1980s. Our observation is that this K-pop phenomenon fortuitously undrapes the inner layer of ethno-cultural psychodynamics concerning cultural creativity. To put it bluntly, this global fascination with K-pop unveils a covert tenor of racism in the very hyperreaction to the success of K-pop. (13)

³ Given our fields' genealogical connection to medieval education, I utilize its traditions of diachronic and synchronic semantic analysis where it can offer nuance to the meanings inhering to the way we express our practices and theories. Tying terms to their etymology serves a second purpose. With it, I engage with what Agar might call the *languaculture* of our fields. This is, to me, central to any critique of epistemology. For Composition Studies, Beale conducts just such criticism of formalism as misapplication of the fields' shared legacy of classical language learning. Translation Studies' Kristal highlights a parallel "illusion" handed down through the history of Latin-to-vernacular European language translation and its damaging effect on her field's acknowledged and unacknowledged ideologies.

⁴ [Legere](#), in Latin, denotes "picking out, choosing" from an assortment or collection ([Olivetti](#)). Butler's and Design Theory's application of the concept of *legibility*—a combination of a text's contextual visibility and situated interpretability vis à vis a reader as perhaps *the* driver of its perceived meaning—while I have not seen discussed as such in English genre theory (just film theory)—seems an apt representation of the increased awareness of *techne* that genre-based literacy curricula strive to impart. It is also a key aspect of sociocultural constructivism [SCT], in my reading, below.

⁵ Chomsky could not be clearer in *Language and Interpretation*:

The concept of language that [critics] takes to be essential, involves complex and obscure sociopolitical, historical, cultural and normative teleological elements [...] of some interest for the sociology of identification [...] but they plainly lie far beyond any useful inquiry into the nature of language or the psychology of users of language. (49)

⁶ Since 1983's *Nation At Risk* (Gardner), K-12 and college have de-emphasized [cartesian](#) *self-expression* and [hermeneutic](#) imitative rhetoric, relegating it to "creative" [private] writing. Under psychometrics' ballooning influence [processive](#) outcomes of "objective" demonstrable knowledge reception/production were "disentangled" from individual talent. What remains of them is packaged in diminished form, as the *dependent* qualitative writing variable, stylistic *voice*.

The change is notable in that that Empiricists assert that intellectual capacity is congenital and thus must be classed an *independent* variable in assessment, while readers'/writers' "intellect/talent" is openly and pervasively acknowledged by teachers, students and the public as a *confounding* variable in text reception/production. In fact, the designation of *giftedness* by government psychometric instruments relies on intellectual precocity (with *disability* to a lesser extent defined in terms of delay). The contradiction in conceptualization of innate talent with innate intelligence has gotten little attention, fraught as the subject of fixed traits justifiably is (given its colonial and culturalist record of abuse). It remains, however, revealing of the erasure of the *particularity* of experiences of schooling by the totalizing [expert gaze](#).

⁷ I am surprised to discover the American Enterprise Institute (DeAngelis and Erickson) joining us, arguing that while capable of being *reliable*, the overwhelming body of studies are not *valid* measures of learning nor of instructional effectiveness. Composition Studies levels identical charges against pre-college third-party and site-based assessments of writing (Yancey, "Looking;" Gee, *Social*; Crowley, "Composition's;")

Sanoff; Kearns; Gunner; Sullivan; Hansen et al.; Anson; Blau, “College;” T. Donahue; Graff and Birkenstein; Carroll; Halasek; Sommers and Saltz; Hansen; Tierney).

⁸ Students are not fooled—Shipka quotes from Odell and Prell: “Although an essay might be referred to as a composition, that terminology confused no one. Musicians composed; what we [students] were doing was writing” (22).

⁹ *Codeswitching*, for non-standardized English speakers, is labeled by critics in Literacy Studies as segregationist (V. Young, “Nah;” Flores and Rosa; Nero; Duffy et al.; see Canagarajah’s *code-meshing*), since its unidirectional accommodation reinforces rather than dismantling the privilege inhering to what David Foster Wallace in *Composition Studies* called *Standard White English* and Kibler and Valdés in *Multicultural Literacy Studies* deride as *Standard Tested English*.

¹⁰ Focusing on K-12, for example, Alim and Paris closely trace the insidious effects of one academic trope, *the culture of poverty*:

Researchers continue to (unwittingly?) reproduce harmful public discourses that frame the languages and cultures of children and families of color as ‘deficient,’ ‘less than,’ or ‘inferior’ to a supposed gold standard—the norms of white, middle-class, monolingual, monocultural America. These discourses are reproduced through appeals to ‘science’ and ‘data’ that are often flawed from their very conception due to their tacit acceptance of white cultural and linguistic hegemony. (79)

Critical Translationist Cronin joins SLA’s Kubota and other critics of the Academy’s representation of (especially contemporary international) “flows” of literacy as “agentless abstractions” which, like Fraser’s functionalism, disempowers by making real actors invisible (*Translation* 58).

¹¹ He clarifies:

a pluriverse is not a world of independent units (cultural relativism) but a world entangled through and by the colonial matrix of power, [thus] a way of thinking and understanding that dwells in the entanglement, in the borders, is needed. So the point is not to “study” the borders, very fashionable today, while at the same time “dwelling” in a territorial epistemology, [which] would imply that you accept a pluriverse some place out there that you “observe” from some place else outside the pluriverse. To do so it is necessary to maintain the territoriality of the disciplines grounded on the imperial epistemology of modernity. Thinking pluritopically means, instead, to dwell in the border. (“Pluriversality”)

¹² Nord credits functionalism for the emergent epistemologies of Translation Studies. That ideological lens destabilized conceptualizations of not only language but text, reader, writer and translation:

The concepts of culture and culture-specificity play an important part in *Skopostheorie*. Vermeer’s concept of culture is dynamic, focusing on human action and behaviour, and comprehensive in that it conceives culture as a complex system determining any human action or behaviour including language, in which each phenomenon is assigned a position in a complex system of values, and every individual is an element in a system of space-time coordinates (cf. Vermeer 1987: 28). (123)

¹³ Snell-Hornby argues that

the “pragmatic turn” which took place in linguistics during the 1970s [...] is now seen as a clear swing from the abstract and rigid dogmas of transformational generative grammar, which ruled out all aspects of “extralinguistic reality”, to the more practical, open and flexible approach which viewed language as action in relation to the world around and especially to the situation concerned. One of its major forces was the then revolutionary speech act theory. The process continued with the inclusion of social and communicative aspects of language and the emergence of text linguistics, all of which paved the way for the future discipline of Translation Studies. (366)

¹⁴ Interestingly, in Korean culture *skopos*-awareness is a core concept of social behavior, captured in the term 눈치, “literally, eye-measure” (often translated as *tact*) which Hong (“Korean”) calls “the art of sensing what people are thinking and feeling, and responding appropriately.” She recalls,

A Korean education is a *nunchi* education: In my day, students were not allowed to ask questions during class. Teachers gave students intentionally vague information about everything from what

school supplies to bring to where exams were taking place. Working out these mysteries on your own by using your nunchi was part of your education. Within a year, I was at the top of my class. Within 18 months, I was class vice president. All this despite the fact that my Korean was still pretty bad. My success was all down to my forcibly honed nunchi.

¹⁵ Krashen’s theory was adapted by Cummins in the 1980s to debunk views of child non-native speaker *semilingualism* (intellectual deficiency). He used it to define two levels of language: **Basic Interpersonal Communication Skills** (Krashen’s *acquisition*) naturally developed communicative practice—oral, social, functionally dependent on context cues—and **Cognitive and Academic Language Proficiency** (Krashen’s *learning*), cultivated knowledge of standardized language usage—written, formal(ist), functionally *dependent on intentional study* (schooling) (Lightbown and Spada). CALP echoed and became synonymous with contemporary conceptualizations of (school) literacy, eventually becoming indistinguishable from the concept of [Native] Academic [Standard] English (MacSwan). Krashen’s and Cummins’ binaries are thus significant components of hermeneutic, processive and conversive approaches to literacy learning, as [Shütz’ diagram](#) adeptly captures:

 LEARNING	 ACQUISITION
Artificial	Natural
Technical	Personal
Priority on the written language	Priority on the spoken language
Theory (language analysis)	Practice (language in use)
Formal instruction	Meaningful interaction
Deductive teaching (rule-driven, top-down)	Inductive coaching (rule-discovery, bottom-up)
Conscious process	Subconscious process
Preset syllabus	Learner-centered activities with room for improvisation
Translation and use of L1 included	No translation; no L1
Activities ABOUT the language	Activities IN the language
Focus on form	Focus on communication
Produces knowledge	Produces an ability

In critiquing Cummins’ conflation of language with literacy (an ontological sleight-of-hand that Krashen, too, seems to be guilty of), MacSwan says, “The identification of literacy with knowledge of language would not be disturbing if it were not for an important underlying assumption—namely, that literacy consists in reading, writing, and other school-valued aspects of language use” (24). Ong’s distinctions between orality and literacy—especially their homeostatic versus stabilized natures as languaging—is here echoed for K-12 (qtd. in Cronin, *Translation*).

¹⁶ There is a long history to support her assertion. In the Academy, since at least the publication of the 1974 CCCC resolution *Students’ Right to Their Own Language* there has been a movement “calling on teachers to affirm the linguistic skills and abilities that speakers of nonstandardized language varieties brought with them to college” (Wible 4), followed, in reaction to the English-Only movement, in 1988 by its National Language Policy (95) and 1989 *Statement of Principles and Standards for the Postsecondary Teaching of Writing* (167). As late as 2005, Smitherman and Villanueva acting on the CCCC’s behalf, were still seeking to implement these positions practically by “address[ing] intellectual and emotional barriers that have kept many teachers from doing more than just voicing their support of students’ diverse languages and dialects” (Wible 21).

Notes (from [Chapter 1](#))

¹⁷ Vygotsky is “currently one of the most cited theorists within the English-speaking world [...] drawn upon to solve contemporary problems across a range of disciplines” (Fleer).

¹⁸ None less than [Stephen Toulmin rises to Vygotsky’s defense against misrepresentation](#) by Cole et al. without avail; Wertsch’s widely-cited interpretations are also critiqued (Smagorinsky; Lantolf, “Bridge”). A countermovement dubbed the Vygotsky Revisionist Revolution seeks to rehabilitate representations of the theories. Bakhtin experienced a similarly revanchist movement in the West, which had an advantage in its project, his long life (1895-1975).

¹⁹ Pea, one of the translators’ collaborators, argues that in interpreting Vygotsky, Bruner’s term [scaffolding](#) was “destined” to become associated with [ZPD](#) because Vygotsky offered the early translators an opportunity to

br[ing] together the informal and the formal, the natural and the designed [...as] culturally constituted productions with a history that made them *akin in kind* to the more historically recent instructional interventions in formal education by which *we* seek to teach a scientific [in the Piagetian sense, versus *egocentric*] view of concepts [in the West]. (429; my italics and annotations)

²⁰ [Motility's](#) semantic divergence parallels the ideological divergence between these concepts and Deleuze's and Guattari's theory of *assemblage* as *self*-directed de/territorialization.

²¹ Agar's concept of *rich point* for *intra*lingualcultural contexts recalls Derrida's semiotic-and-authorial *différance* (Bradley). Furthermore, his description of resolving it is paralleled in Ratcliffe's rhetorical listening, in which she assigns language and learning a spatial dimension, described by [Harper's](#) Online Etymology Dictionary in the "Old English *understandan* [...] probably literally "stand in the midst of," from *standan* "to stand" [...and] *under* from Proto-Indo-European **nter*- "between, among," a dimension also found in Munday (*Evaluation* 13), who examines speaker subjectivity in engaging with speech act *interstices*, the "penumbra of unselected information (Grant [2007] 183-4)" constituted by "traces of the discourse environment" (12) that Bakhtin argues exist "in the spaces between utterances" (276). Mignolo's concept of pluriversality and dwelling *in* borders seem well suited to these theories.

²² *Communicate* and *participate* in Latin are synonyms—both refer to the act of "sharing/dividing property." These split in Anglo/European functional usage: the former's "turn-taking" was conflated with *converse* and the latter's "communality" with *cooperate* ([Harper](#)). *Negotiate*, on the other hand, is literally in Latin "not-being-at-leisure," connoting uncannily the same sense as our students' contemporary idiom *deal (with)* rather than the Anglo/European connotation of "bargaining."

²³ Perhaps because he experienced persecution as a Soviet religious and ideological Other, Vygotsky never addresses the implications of his theory as it pertains to an individual's resisting or rejecting culturally-sanctioned meaning—*tätigkeit* as coercion or Butler's embodiment.

²⁴ Cronin notes that there is a diachronic layer to Translationists' use of this term for the agency of the individual (the power wielded over text):

Oresme, a translator, preoccupied by weighty questions of meaning, who would first give the word *communication* to the French language, whence it would migrate to the English language. By *communication*, Oresme understood the emancipation of the message from the medium in translation (Bougnoux 1991). Meanings were no longer bound to the utterances of origin. (*Translation* 22)

²⁵ Mona [Baker's entry](#) in *The Encyclopedia of Translation Studies* for this term:

The theory of 'translational action' (translatorisches Handeln), which represents a function-oriented approach to the theory and practice of translation, was developed by Justa Holz-Mänttari (1984). Translation is here conceived primarily as a process of intercultural communication, whose end product is a text which is capable of functioning appropriately in specific situations and contexts of use. In this conception, neither source and target-text comparison, nor linguistics, has any significant role to play, and translation is situated within the wider context of cooperative interaction between professionals (experts) and clients.

²⁶ Theorizing cultural translation applied to the self is disputed by Pratt et al.

²⁷ I see this as filling the ideological gap yawning in [Vygotsky's treatment of *tätigkeit*](#).

²⁸ Here she joins Venuti in scrutinizing translators—including hegemonic institutions that impose translation upon Others—who exploit the *invisibility* of their *mediation*. Venuti points to what he characterizes as "Derrida's suggestive remark that translation is a 'political-institutional problem of the University: it, like all teaching in its traditional form, and perhaps all teaching whatever, has as its ideal, with exhaustive translatability, the effacement of language' (Derrida 93-94)" (qtd. in Venuti 330)

²⁹ Bateson, writing in the midst of an era of wide-scale student and subaltern activism, is less than optimistic about the success of such learner [motility](#), however:

Even the attempt at [this] can be dangerous, and some fall by the wayside. These are often labeled by psychiatry as psychotic, and many of them find themselves inhibited from using the first person pronoun (Bateson, 1972, pp. 305–306). (qtd. in Engeström 58)

³⁰ Nordquist imports the term *motility* from Sociology, where it is used to measure the *effects* of resources on physical/ virtual mobility (e.g., residents’ accessing services afforded by transport or communication technology) (*Composing* 90). He then analogizes *motile literacies* as available routes—“official” choral, spatial and discursive schooling pathways as well as “unofficial” underlife (Goffman) ways and means—[containing](#) learners. In differentiating *motile* from *mobile*, I conceive [motility](#) sociolinguistically as an effect of action to utilize affordances, which in the case of literacy learning, overlaps with Bateson’s learning ecology.

³¹ Cressman does not acknowledge social learning theories in his evaluation of the usefulness of ANT. However, he opens the door to their use—especially Wenger’s applicability—in emphasizing:

Thus, once again, and this requires repeating, for ANT, to study any type of organization, social order, technical innovation or scientific discovery is to study the connections between heterogeneous actors enrolled within a network. If we assume size and power without explaining how it is performed and made durable we miss out on explaining how it is that the sociotechnical world we inhabit is performed. (5)

³² Pennycook, for example, summarizes the TESOL debate raging in the first decade of the millennium, as between a “English as a lingua franca and lingua franca English [...where the] former [...is] a pregiven language that is then used by different speakers, while the latter [...is a language which] emerges from its contexts of use.” He invoked Canagarajah’s explicitly anti-Formalist view:

LFE does not exist as a system out there. It is constantly brought into being in each context of communication” (2007, p. 91) [...In it] there is no meaning for form, grammar or language ability outside the realm of practice. LFE is not a product located in the mind of the speaker; it is a social process constantly reconstructed in sensitivity to environmental factors” (p. 94). (qtd. in “Translingual” 30.6)

³³ New London Group and Fairclough frame this dimension of language as externally generated but accessible knowledge asset, similar to Miller’s genre repertoires and Burkean rhetoric. Across language acquisition studies production/reception of utterance is intertwined with the similarly external/internal concept of *intelligibility*, a function of materialized *legibility* (Butler). Widdowson warns that conceptualizing this dimension as not an asset *used* but an entity in and of itself, “language usage,” is a “projection” (qtd. by Hatim and Mason, *Discourse* 33).

³⁴ New London Group regards the dynamic generation of language as user *redesign/recontextualization*, framing language as a medium with which individuals construe [perform] reality from Functional Linguistics’ language as “construal of experience for meaning” (Halliday and Matthiessen). Lakoff, extending Whorf, adds a mind-body nuance, arguing that our materialized language is fundamentally metaphorical of human sensory perception, influenced by the cultural practices we have undertaken. (Re)construal on the meso and macro level is taken up in Complexity Theory (Hawk; Cooper) and Activity Theory (Lantolf; Engeström). Carbaugh quotes Moerman (1988): “In every moment of talk, people are experiencing and producing their cultures, their roles, their personalities” (xi), arguing that language is a tool for “crafting ourselves and ways of living together” (1)—a formulation well-matched with Wenger’s conceptualization of *meaning*, Vygotsky’s [motile learning](#) and Deleuze’s and Guattari’s *assemblage*.

³⁵ T. Donahue describes French Linguistics’ view, influenced by these theorists, as “The generic is reorganized and reused through the individual (François, 1998): A given utterance calls on the history of its uses but also its lateral intertextuality in the moment and its levels of appropriation by the user” (“Cross-cultural” 325).

³⁶ Wenger, albeit within an “acquisition” framework, lays out a vision of language development as an analogy for the negotiation of meaning within communities of practice:

When learning how to speak, for instance, it is through an interplay of production and adoption of meaning that the child becomes a participant in conversations and acquires the language. It is not pure production, because the language already exists; but neither is it mere adoption, because the child is involved in the practice in which the language is used. Very early on, the child becomes engaged in producing meaningful utterances and, through this production, is able to explore the meanings of words in practice and develop an increasing ability to negotiate these meanings productively. Through such an interplay of production and adoption, mutual engagement supports the appropriation of the language by the child. (202-3)

³⁷ Blau’s reflective self-monitoring of understanding-in-progress has been in pedagogical practice converted largely to product-in-progress checks, removing it far from the synthesis process theorized by Baaijen and Galbraith. For example, [TEAL](#) offers these questions as K-12 metacognition cues:

- **During the planning phase**, learners can ask, *What am I supposed to learn? What prior knowledge will help me with this task? What should I do first? What should I look for in this reading? How much time do I have to complete this? In what direction do I want my thinking to take me?*
- **During the monitoring phase**, learners can ask, *How am I doing? Am I on the right track? How should I proceed? What information is important to remember? Should I move in a different direction? Should I adjust the pace because of the difficulty? What can I do if I do not understand?*
- **During the evaluation phase**, learners can ask, *How well did I do? What did I learn? Did I get the results I expected? What could I have done differently? Can I apply this way of thinking to other problems or situations? Is there anything I don’t understand—any gaps in my knowledge? Do I need to go back through the task to fill in any gaps in understanding? How might I apply this line of thinking to other problems?*

³⁸ Even for New Literacy Studies and multimodal pedagogies, composers’ *verbal* articulation of ideas is held up as crucial to invention, although no theoretical basis is offered for why this would be so. In contrast, Vygotsky’s theory includes nonverbal tools along with words as means for understanding and meaning-making. Jay Jordan argues for a more holistic conceptualization of invention, one “proceeding as much from ‘[a]ffect, habituation, sensation, intuition, environment, and accident [Kristeva]’ as from rhetorical method (Rickert 60)” (“Material” 371).

³⁹ In K-12, the New London Group’s *elements of linguistic design* are all but extinct; templates and stem-phrases dominate standardizing writing curricula. Rhetorical grammar selectiveness and style choices are disowned as writing process (demoted to deployed—not constitutive—vocabulary, syntax, organization “in” the product by Common Core, College Board and other influential assessment sponsors).

⁴⁰ Our writing process springs from this formulation. We attempt to [automatize](#) expert writing in our students—they “practice” reproducing the material procedures and patterns of reasoning we equate with *thinking* that “develops ideas [understanding].”

⁴¹ Baaijen and Galbraith, while they criticize Cognitivists’ dismissal of disposition-led cognition, at the same time challenge Connectionist reliance upon it (Walker). They support a mix of conscious *and* unconscious agency in writing, a *dual-process model* of affect-driven synthesis with metacognitive evaluation. In that model we see a parallel to the participation/reification balance Wenger conceptualizes for social praxis. In dual writing, executive control takes part—the writer detects and repairs dissonance in understanding as “inner” text is being re/construed and synthesized *for communication with others*.

The duality is found, too, in Translationists’ depictions of their own praxis, as Gambier’s description makes clear:

Strategy could be used at the global level, *defined by different agents of the translation event. Tactics*, *being the translators’ concern only*, could be used at the local level (be it conscious or automatized routine). [...] The translators’ actions lie between unconscious, preconscious or potentially conscious, and conscious strategies, according to their situation: under time pressure,

they would be unable to justify their decision; in a certain psychological state, their justification could be inhibited, etc. However **each decision is the final outcome of a rational activity**, based upon *consideration* of risks, costs, benefits, drawbacks, alternatives, comparisons, previous solutions from earlier translations and anticipation of the clients' and reader's reaction. [...] *Even where there is no problem, the translator makes a decision: the absence of a problem does not lead to a non-strategic behaviour.* [...] Accepted and clear routines in a frequent behaviour are signs of professionalism. Their appearance as automatized, internalized procedures does not [alter] the fact that **they have been learnt and tested during training and/or internship, etc.** (417, my emphases)

⁴² Found in, e.g., Austin's *felicity conditions*; Gumperz' *inferences*; Halliday's *meaning potential*; Lakoff's *conceptual metaphors*.

⁴³ Whereas misrepresenting languaging occludes treating writers as [motile](#) thinkers living, engaging and negotiating with other perceiving thinkers *using* language—charges laid by Shipka about Composition Studies and by Norton Peirce regarding Literacy Studies.

⁴⁴ As in our espoused language ontology, here producer and receiver, expression and interpretation of meaning are entangled in a Complexity Theory iteration of *rhetorical situations* (Hawk; Bitzer; Vatz; Biesecker; C. Miller qtd. in Bawarshi, "Genre")—converting them from static, outer context to active, inner practice—writer [mediation](#) intertwined with writer identity.

⁴⁵ To follow Ratcliffe's lead and capture a similarly locative sense as [the Old English understandan](#), I apply Olivetti's [loquor/locutus](#) (Latin *producing* of utterance) to differentiate internal, synthetic *understanding* (**intra**locution) from outward *relating* ([Harper](#): "bearing/bringing back") (**inter**locution).

Notes (from [Chapter 2](#))

⁴⁶ *Dope* MV credits: GDW Films, GDWDOP; Director: Woogie Kim; Creative Director: Seoyeon Choi; Executive Producer: Cathy Kim; Producer: Mingyu Park; Assistant Director: Jaewon Ham, Hyerin Ko; Director of Photography: HyunWoo Nam; Focus Puller: Yonggun Moon; 2nd Camera Assistant: Jonghwa Park; 3rd Camera Assistant: Jawoong Koo; Gaffer: Kyungsuk Kim; Art Director: Moonyoung Lee; CG/3D: Jongwook Park, Hyejung Kwon; Motion Graphics: Donghoo Yeo; Edit: Woogie. Shot on Red Epic, 2015.

⁴⁷ Our evaluating of [marked](#) learner languaging (Horner, "Rethinking;" Stygall; Sebba et al.; Bahri; Cummins; MacSwan; Hwag and Hardman; Kraemer Sohan) against an imagined "[native](#)" standard (Moll et al.; Fraiberg et al.; Alred et al.; Kupka et al.; Venn; Guerra, *Language*; Kells; Lee et al.; Hymes) and perduring applications of *idealized* Standardized Academic English (Pratt, "Arts;" Bizzell; Schleppegrell; Zappa-Hollman and Duff; Hulstijn et al.; Prior and Bilbro cited in C. Donahue, "Negotiation;" J. Young; Bruffee; Halliday and Matthiessen; Hornberger and McKay; Reynolds; Collins and Slembrouck; T. Donahue; Cornelius and Herrenkohl; Herndl) and its colonial trope *appropriacy* (V. Young, "Keep;" Gutiérrez et al., "Building;" Flores and Rosa; Nero; Scribner and Cole; Bou Ayash, *Toward*; Haswell, "Quantitative;" Arnaut et al.; Vandenberg; Kress; Fairclough) show how deeply embedded and pervasive the phenomenon of stigmatization of learner languaging is in the field. J. Williams exposes it deftly in "The Phenomenology of Error."

⁴⁸ Researchers and theorists of professional languaging (Herndl; Riker; Habermas cited in Wells) tacitly implicate schooling as the foundation of [cognitive/academic language proficiency](#) (Cummins) used later for acculturative attuning to discourse communities (see: Gee's *multiliteracies*, Bourdieu; C. Miller, "Where;" Pratt, "Linguistic;" Moll et al.; Schleppegrell). The rare departures from schooling as the given source of literacy learning include Scribner and Cole's landmark study of the social versus schooling literacies of the Vai and Brice Heath's of African-American and White learners interacting with the same [delivered curriculum](#) (Taczak and Yancey).

⁴⁹ N. Johnson reinforces this with a description of the Affective mores of Youth Culture for adolescents participating in *The Sims 2* game:

As part of the accepted practices within youth culture, youth explore boundaries, and sometimes experience *jouissance* as a result of transgressing those boundaries. Students do explore taboo topics (Grace and Tobin 1998), and this is not a new thing. *Plaisir* and *jouissance* link together in that through enjoying what computers and cyberspace offer (*plaisir*), participants are able to transgress the boundaries that have been placed on them by their parents and by the authoritative figures in their school (*jouissance*). Through the exploration of what is not real (but could possibly be real if they were to venture into that arena), the game players of life simulation games create *plaisir*, which is sometimes *jouissance*, because they are exploring fantasies, the imaginary, the unknown, the intangible, the untamed, and the uncensored in their form of chosen play. (23)

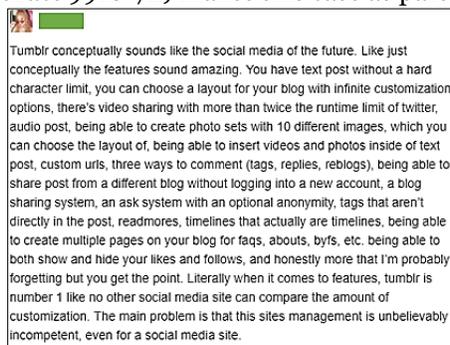
⁵⁰ [Urban Dictionary's "top" result for the term](#) is sequenced differently by a blogger in my dataset, who lists "fandom, aesthetics, memes, social justice and porn" (artifact 012718-1). *Aesthetics* refers to the broad category of visual composing/design, defined with user [tags](#) indexing Tumblr here in [Urban Dictionary's top result for the term](#):



⁵¹ In a nutshell, the "2.0" differentiates the original World Wide Web's static text and image format from later social media platforms' real-time interactive digitized communication, (Herring and Androutsopoulos; Barton and Lee; Kytölä; Miller and Kelly; Eyman; Hess and Davisson; Zenger). Jarrett reports that Tim O'Reilly, its inventor, had a "vision of unfixed, dynamic, participatory architectures that demand various ongoing forms of digital writing by creative users [...] not as a market to be managed, but as collaborators in building site stickiness and brand value" (425). Since its introduction, users have acted as agents over its design and operation substantially. For example, Greenhow and Gleason note,

the retweet (RT) is a socio-technical practice *not originally conceived of by Twitter's developers. It emerged from users redesigning the tool as they sought ways to both distribute information and encourage participation in the public discourse* (boyd et al. 2010). The conventions of "mentioning" another user in the body of one's tweet with the @ symbol (e.g., @), directly, privately messaging someone by beginning a tweet with the username (e.g., @sree or DM @sree), or grouping a topic or event by the hashtag (#, e.g., #edutech or #inauguration) were design elements created by the Twitter user base. (472, my italics)

⁵² A Tumblr post commentary (artifact 9918-72) makes this case as part of its critique:



⁵³ Ono and Kwon argue:

through the multi-directionality of flow, K-pop simultaneously influences Western culture, transforming its contents, ideologies and power. K-pop music reveals Korean cultural diversity, and

Korea's own hybridity; as well, K-pop circulates local particularities and local idiomatic expression and customs. Its reproduction by cover artists, performing karaoke transnationally, co-opts and reshapes K-pop products, rendering them newly rearticulated to other cultural expressions, forms, identities and social positions. While a medium originating in empire, YouTube contains the possibility of the re-worlding of that empire – a re-worlding, a process by which multi-layered and multi-rooted cultural influences function to create or add diverse meanings within a given place beyond the operation of its original concept, worlding that posits an imperial and unidirectional dominance – and, possibly and ultimately, its decolonization. By decolonization, we mean the re-imagining and restructuring of existing systems of domination that are remnants of historical colonizing practices and structures. Thus, given the relatively open-ended nature of YouTube, postcolonial ideas, arts and practices can circulate that help to undo historical colonial ones. In the future, it must be incorporated by Western directors or adopted by artists ignorant of its origins (King and Craig 2010: 5). In the process, the border between worlding and un-worlding diminishes or, at least, the meanings become more blurred, as possibilities for shifting power relations and social positions emerge. (210-1)

⁵⁴ Part of a conglomerate whose “divisions include MNET, film distribution, live entertainment, video games and ‘smart media,’ which is basically a social media web 2.0 platform for marketing all of the above” (Hong, *Birth* 127).

⁵⁵ [Urban Dictionary's entry](#) is:

The word "[promo](#)" has 2 different meanings.
 1. The word "promo" is short for "[promotional](#)".
 This word is most known in the Urban scene for being seen on [vinyl](#) ([LPs](#), records), [tapes](#) and CDs.
 Back in the early days of Hip-Hop vinyl production (and still to this day), [vinyls](#)were/are given out to [DJs](#) known as "promo vinyls". These vinyls are cut (the grooves in vinyls are "cut" using a special type of needle) and given out, usually for free to DJs so that [a DJ](#) can play the vinyl in a club or on the radio.
 On these vinyls, is the word "promo" written on [the record](#) sleeve or record label to tell people that this is a "promo" vinyl that this DJ has. It mostly has "for promotional use only. Not for [resale](#)" written on the record case or label instead of just the abbreviated "promo".

⁵⁶ Ahn and Narantuya report:

The Chinese term “Hallyu” was coined in the 1990s in China for the Chinese youth culture followers of Korean pop culture and pop artists. Translated as “the Korean Wave,” it carries a complex meaning: simultaneously connoting 韩流 [an alliance/relation between nations] and 舞流 [a cold sea current]. China’s Hallyu generation was dubbed “a unique culture of those cheated by life” (Hang, 2014). While the term was introduced in the *Beijing Youth Daily* as a China-related term, once it was taken up in Korean media to describe exported pop music and dramas, it began to be used worldwide as a general term for the contemporary overseas Korean pop culture craze (Farrar, 2010; Jang, 2012; MCST, 2013; Ravina, 2009; Yu et al., 2012). [my translation]

⁵⁷ This is measurable: Since the smash YouTube hit *Gangnam Style* in 2012, 130 new overseas official Korean foreign language institutes have been established in 50 countries (Sinha), millions upon millions of non-speakers now pay to utilize online Korean language learning services/sites, and there has been a steep rise in both international tourism and sales of Korean culture [cuisine, fashion, etc] products (Ahn and Narantuya). The majority of international K-Pop fans in social media surveys (e.g., Reddit’s) state that they “would like to/will learn Korean;” the same sentiment is commonly expressed by I-ARMY on Tumblr.

⁵⁸ This impression is supported anecdotally by numerous experiences I have had with “breaking” content online. It has generally been true that ad hoc translations and subtitling of unannounced new BTS material get posted on Tumblr before or as quickly as stand-alone commercial and staffed BTS fansites and services (like Color-Coded Lyrics)—telling because there is intense pressure for speed, and the earliest get rewarded disproportionately by “popularity metrics” (Wuebben cited by Gurak).

⁵⁹ Variants/dialects of Korean[s] are both explicitly and implicitly part of both the band’s published oeuvre and ancillary repertoires. The Idols’ individual and collective relationships with [English\[es\]](#) is a favorite

topic of inquiry by not only I-ARMY but K-ARMY. Lee J. discusses the use of [English\[es\]](#) in K-Pop as a generic convention.

⁶⁰ Kohnen lays out the case for Tumblr's inclusivity:

In terms of Tumblr as a platform for queer identity exploration, it is both the content and the affordances of the interface that create a queer space on Tumblr. Alexander Cho (2015) observes that the mix of visual content on Tumblr encompasses everything from personal narratives and pornography to landscape and architecture photographs (43). Together, this stream of images creates a sense of "intimacy, assembly, intensity, and aesthetic" (44). Similarly, Marty Fink and Quentin Miller (2014) argue that aspects of Tumblr's interface such as sharing content through reblogging and non-organizational tagging enable practices of "wrestling trans sexualities out of a white, middle-class, cisgender (non-trans), mass-consumption paradigm and toward an individually tailored, polyvocal, margin-based, and personalized form of distribution" (612). Cho, Fink, and Miller argue that Tumblr constitutes an important space where queer and trans* identity formation and performance happen. (357-8)

Cox frames Tumblr as particularly compatible for progressive fans:

unique capabilities stem from Tumblr's reputation and affordances as the "fandom platform du jour" (Deller 2014) and a "particularly friendly site for women, queer people, people of color, and progressives" (Pande and Moitra 2017). While many fans use a variety of platforms, such as Facebook or Twitter, as part of their social media fandom, Tumblr distinguishes itself in the transmedia ecosystem for the ways in which it enables broad fandom coalitions to form, connect, and seamlessly integrate. Pande and Moitra (2017) describe Tumblr as highly interconnected and fluid along lines of gender, sexuality, and race, with many Tumblr sites connecting fan practices to social justice politics. Compared to other platforms, Tumblr is also more adept at inaugurating unpracticed fans into communities, learning community norms, and undertaking intertextual practices, since Tumblr facilitates an "intertextual discourse" (Thomas 2013) based on its predilection towards highly visual pictographic textuality that ultimately enables a sense of coherency and engagement among many users unfamiliar with intertextual functions. Other have singled out Tumblr as uniquely capable of helping users connect personalized narratives with broader cultural narratives, whether it's connecting personalized feminist practices to wider cultural conceptions of feminism (Brandt and Kizer 2015) or connecting personalized preferences for reconceptualizing the race of individual characters to notions of whiteness among media franchises (Gilliland 2016).

⁶¹ Yau looking at Translation Studies regarding cinema argues that fans are also the *knowing audience* invoked for adaptations, remakes and other remixes of extant material (499).

⁶² A misrepresentation satirized by *The Onion* in its mock article "K-pop group BTS excited for first American tour since 1963 appearance on 'Ed Sullivan.'" In it, the band is reported to "hop[e] that their fame had died down enough that they could enjoy exploring America this time without covering their faces with newspapers or hiding inside phone booths." Stephen Colbert staged a full reenactment of the Beatles' appearance on Ed Sullivan as his Late Show's performance by BTS (15 May 2019), a case of transmediating satire?

⁶³ Promoting fans' status to that of *pro-ams*, professional-amateurs—a term for border-dwelling participants in open source software development (Leadbetter and Miller qtd. in Bruns). Ang dubs gamers' parallel crowd-sourced strategies *expansive play* (qtd. Mehlenbacher and Kampe), which would be an appropriate term, too, for fangirling if it did not carry negative connotations applied to leisure.

⁶⁴ First half of the refrain from BTS' *Mikrokosmos*/소우주 translation by [Mirae of Color Coded Lyrics.com](#). Song credits: "DJ Swivel" Young, Camilla Anne Stewart, Candace Nicole Sosa, Jung Hoseok [J-Hope], Marcus McCoan, Matty Thomson, Max Lynedoch Graham, Melanie Joy Fontana, Michel "Lindgren" Schulz, Kim Nam Jun [RM], Ryan Lawrie, Min Yun Ki [Suga].

⁶⁵ Williams and Zenger emphasize the link between such activity and literacy learning:

For literacy scholars and teachers, it is important to remember that literacy practices are at the center of the development of participatory popular culture (Alvermann, 2010; Black, 2008; Burn, 2009; Thomas, 2007; Williams, 2009; Williams and Zenger). Whether through words, images, or video, new media are changing literacy practices (Cope and Kalantzis, 2010; Davies and Merchant, 2009; Knobel and Lankshear, 2007; Kress, 2003; Selfe and Hawisher, 2004) and changing the ways that writers and readers think about texts, audiences, and language (Canagarajah, 2002; Pennycook, 2010; Stein, 2007). (“Introduction” 29)

⁶⁶ Gurak calls the availability of resources for self-directed training/expertise “a flattening of traditional information and knowledge hierarchies; democratization of information; citizen access to specialized information” (124).

⁶⁷ The authors lay out their vision of *sharing* as Web 2.0 literacy activity:

Patricia Lange, thus, qualifies such responsive uptake activities (“viewing” YouTube videos in her case) as forms of “self-interpellation”: people express a judgment that they themselves belong to the intended audiences of a message or sign (2009: 71). “Sharing”, by contrast, recontextualizes and *directly* reorients this statement towards one’s own community, triggering another phase in a process of viral circulation, part of which can—but must not—involve real “reading” of the text. Also, “liking” is a responsive uptake to someone else’s activity while “sharing” is the initiation of another activity directed at another (segment of a) community. To clarify the latter: “sharing” an update on Facebook is a classic case of “re-entextualization” (Bauman and Briggs 1990; Silverstein and Urban 1996) or “re-semiotization” (Scollon and Scollon 2004). Re-semiotization, in line with the foregoing, refers to the process by means of which every “repetition” of a sign involves an entirely new set of contextualization conditions and thus results in an entirely “new” semiotic process, allowing new semiotic modes and resources to be involved in the repetition process (Leppänen et al. 2014). (7-8)

C. Miller (“Where”) credits blogs with innovating a new kind of *sharing*, meeting an “inchoate rhetorical exigence—the need to cultivate and validate the self” (2).

⁶⁸ Steinberg makes a compelling case against privileging the grassroots nature of fan assemblage over the strategic, post-Fordist selling of *producerly* “worlds” by producers for inculcating exactly such *prosumption*.

⁶⁹ Artifact 11317-10 is an exchange between self-identified BTS fans of color about whether a third poster is exaggerating by claiming that *60% are black armies*. One suggests *around like 30-40% is good* and the other agrees, *there’s a LOT of black army’s*.

⁷⁰ Thus *오아미* represent a challenge to the cultural proximity determinants theorized to force-multiply transnationality (promulgated by Staubhaar, Sinclair, Braudel—Athique, *Transnational* 181 notes) by Cultural Studies. The success of *Hallyu* is credited by many Media Studies scholars to its producers’ eschewing pan-(or de-)culturalization (idiomatically called *odorlessness*) in favor of domestic authenticity (Koreanness), which leverages knock-on effects of multiple genres of Korean cultural texts’ transnational circulation for its legibility outside of Korea (Choi J. 101). In line with the spread of *Hallyu* in general, K-Pop attracted large numbers of non-Korean fans outside of its home country well *before and separate from* involvement of Korean expatriate and migrant communities in the US and elsewhere (Lee and Nornes trace this to pre-Hallyu Korean governmental policies restricting export of domestically-produced entertainment) (Marinescu). The transnationality of the fandom is hinted at in the sample of 4 weeks’ worth of YouTube views (3.56 million) of BTS’ formal performances (vertical) and off-stage content (horizontal) condensed into this graphic by Korean periodical, *Weekly Chosun* (Shim):



⁷¹ I choose this term instead of three potential candidates: *indigenous*, which problematically gets applied to the knowledge-sharing between [culturally and linguistically diverse](#) (CLD) students in ESL contexts but not [“mainstream”](#) students in educational research (Gao); *underlife*, Goffman’s term (cited in Nordquist, *Literacy*, Gutiérrez et al., “Rethinking”) for the subversive discourse of students within formal environments; and *Third Space*, used extensively throughout Education literature for both mainstream and CLD classroom discourse analysis but in ways that do not align with Composition Studies’ understanding of Bhabha’s concept (and so confusing to my audiences). *Autochthonous* is intended to displace native/non-native and teacher/student binaries, but I use it too for reinforcing the dependence of the languaging I study on its community-created environment.

⁷² The former imagines a situated learner; the latter “treats languages and literacies as shaped by the *participants, processes, artifacts, and structures* (collectively labeled “ecological resources” by Guerrettaz and Johnston)” (Canagarajah, “Teacher” 268).

Notes (from [Chapter 3](#))

⁷³ Steinberg credits the 1963 origination of anime in post-WWII Japan, as a hybridization of entertainment and what we now refer to as character licensing/merchandising as advertiser-sponsorship, as *directly* “formative of” the rise of post-Fordist economies globally as well as transmedia as a phenomenon (vii-xi). He ties its proliferation to affordances represented by the copyright regulations Disney’s presence in Japan introduced (92, 102) but which Japanese media, significantly for the rise of fan production, did not adopt (192).

⁷⁴ They argue:

Work in English-language fan studies over the course of the past two decades has increasingly and vocally advocated for a nuanced understanding of how fans’ affective investments in media produce and inform fan culture, and we contend that this is a lens we must train on cross-border fandoms as well. We argue that transcultural fans become fans because of affinities of affect between the fan, in his/her various contexts, and the border-crossing object. In so doing, we eschew the term ‘transnational,’ with its implicit privileging of a national orientation that supersedes other - arguably more salient - subject positions. Rather, we favour the term ‘transcultural,’ which at once is flexible enough to allow for a transnational orientation, yet leaves open the possibility of other orientations that may inform, or even drive, cross-border fandom.

⁷⁵ [Wikipedia](#) defines this as:

a person who consumes and produces a product. The term is derived from *prosumption*, a dot-com era business term meaning “production by consumers.” These terms were coined in 1980 by American futurist [Alvin Toffler](#), and were widely used by many technology writers of the time. The term has since come to refer to a person using [commons-based peer production](#).”

⁷⁶ According to a retired professor who posts answers to English language questions on an international forum,

The word “version” (like “adaptation”) emphasizes the change in a text, while a translation aspires to resist changing the text. Although every translation is necessarily a version, pointing out that a translation is a version is a mild insult, in essence pointing out that all translations are in some degree failures (words that rhyme in one language don’t rhyme in another, some jokes are funny in one language but don’t work in another, the connotations, associations and ambiguity of some words cannot be translated, etc). (Reid)

Bassnet, introducing a discussion of Cronin, implies such a use of the term:

For as a growing number of scholars point out, travel literature, like translation, offers readers access to a version of another culture, a construct of that other culture. The travel writer creates a version of another culture, producing what might be described as a form of translation, rendering the unknown and unfamiliar in terms that can be assimilated and understood by readers back home. The dominant model is one of domestication, making the unfamiliar accessible through a set of strategies that enable the reader to travel vicariously guided by the familiar. The travel writer operates in a hybrid space, a space in-between cultures, just as the translator operates in a space

between languages, a dangerous transgressive space that is often referred to as ‘no-man’s land’.
 (“Culture” 22)

My own reading of Cronin’s use of *version translation* is as a criticalist term, meant not to derogate but to highlight the constructedness of all translating.

⁷⁷ Varis and Blommaert define this:

Virality as a sociolinguistic phenomenon raises specific issues about signs, meanings, and functions, prompting a shift from ‘meaning’ to ‘effect’. This effect, we can see, is *conviviality*: the production of a social-structuring level of engagement in loose, temporal, and elastic collectives operating in social media environments. (31)

⁷⁸ Self-representation is expansive as a concept for global fandoms. Kelley reports a BTS translator’s comment:

[Myungji Chae (@btsarmy_salon)]: “[ARMYs] work so hard despite all the hardships and language barrier, their love for BTS is beyond anyone’s imagination. I hope they can receive the complete package BTS offers to Korean ARMYs.... Also, fans who don’t have English as their mother tongue also read my translation. Thus, when I translate for I-ARMYs, I tend to keep it easy and avoid complicated expressions or difficult vocabularies. Many of them will then re-translate my English translation into their native language. When articles and contents get translated into English, it spreads and gets translated into different languages as well, it’s amazing.” (“Meet”)

⁷⁹ According to Kelley (“Meet”), Bangtan Translations (@BTS_Trans) has “over 1 million Twitter followers and nearly 800,000 YouTube subscribers on their [Bangtan Subs](#) channel.”

⁸⁰ Spivak names a similar purpose for her attention to Affect in translating: to capture the irrational and rational, conscious and unconscious identity of the writer in language so the reader can experience it:

And I keep hoping that the student in the classroom [reading the translated text] will not be able to think that the text is just a purveyor of social realism if it is translated with an eye toward the dynamic staging of language [...] the rules of the in-between discourse produced by a literalist surrender [to the original/its author]. (“Politics” 406)

⁸¹ Aisyah and Jin report that V App—seeking to democratize fanslation at mass scale—integrates the Korean-English dictionary constructed by Naver, the major Korean web platform, whose entries are extracted from V-hosted K-Pop content and indexed to V-fansub databases.

⁸² I do not imply that the phenomena of invisible colleges for nonschooling literacy learning or the translanguaging spaces they create are new—in [the conclusion](#) I discuss how they extend mutual improvement societies and other autonomous learning collaboratives.

⁸³ Both characterizations are challenged by fandom. For example, Kelley quotes BTS translator

Ellie Lee (@peachisoda): “The reason why I began translating from the first day is because I’m Korean, so while I was learning English, it was so hard to understand anything I watched without subtitles. And back then, it was so hard to find subtitles as well. It’s not as convenient as now. I cannot search for subtitles online and find subtitles back then. So I think I kind of understood the frustration of wanting to understand something and then not understanding because of the language barrier. And I wanted to do my part, whatever I could to kind of adjust that bridge or try to help them in some way if I could. And that’s actually how I began to translate online.” (“Meet”)

⁸⁴ Bandia contextualizes the term:

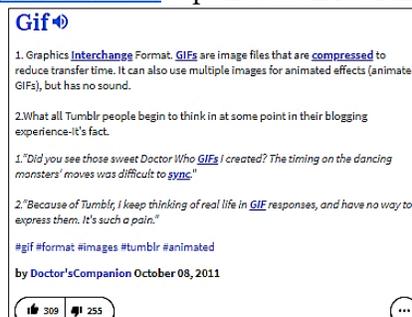
As transmigration continues to shape the world and more and more societies are made up of “translated beings,” our understanding of specific location will evolve, requiring reading practices which reflect the communicative, political, and aesthetic concerns of translocal representation. To account fully for this trend, the term “translocation” is increasingly being used instead of relocation or displacement, terms that may carry negative connotations by privileging a sense of origin. Translocation denotes more than a simple “change of location” or “dislocation” or displacement, because unlike these terms “translocation” leaves open points of departure and destination, and does not imply a privileging of “origins” over “new” locations. Translocation is not only a process

(the movement of peoples or cultural products, movement across borders, etc.), but also a new kind of location, a trans-location consisting of fractured and variously connected spaces and cultures. Ultimately, it might become more appropriate to discuss migration, diaspora, and translation in terms of the intersection or interconnectedness between translation and the concept of translocation. (283-4)

⁸⁵ Emdin cites Anthropologist Gustavo Ribeiro's description of this philosophy, calling it "a way of being in the world that focuses on an individual's embodiment of tolerance, sensitivity, and inclusiveness of others in the process of being a 'citizen of the world' (105). Emdin advocates it as an activist stance of anti-racist, reality pedagogy very much in You's framing. *Acting* cosmopolitanism, he argues, is the basis for healing learners, who have experienced symbolic violence of colonialist schooling—especially, those positioned as minoritized subalterns (the *neoindigenous*).

⁸⁶ This 6-years-old post currently has *#the Bible says Adam and Eve #not Hebrew and Cantonese* and another 10,000 notes [= replies + likes + reblogs] added—an indicator of both the wider relevancy and cultural compatibility of its message to Tumblr-ers. Posts achieving 1 million notes are celebrated as outliers in Tumblrdom.

⁸⁷ [Urban Dictionary's seventh entry for this term](#) captures both its denotation and connotation well:



⁸⁸ Fandom's position as a pillar of Tumblr is no accident. Brennan, who is Head of Content Insights and Social for Tumblr (which includes Fandometrics, Tumblr's trend-tracker), suggests:

I think Tumblr has made fandom way more accessible, and it feels less niche. It's not like other social networking, where someone might feel like they have to hide their passions from their family and friends. On Tumblr, no matter what you love, this is the place to connect with people who love it as fiercely as you do. And while other sites may have done that, like LiveJournal or Fanfiction.net, the attention to multimedia posts and reblogging makes fandom feel more rounded and immersive, so you can really dive in and be part of something bigger. (Morimoto)

⁸⁹ It (as well as *niggaboo*, a parallel term) is an adaptation of *weeaboo*, which passed into more general use as replacement for a slur credited to White Supremacists, *wapanese*—as an early [Urban Dictionary entry here](#) traces:



For reference, [an even earlier, anonymous entry \(2003\)](#) captures the full dimensions of the first slur (targeted at male anime fans) well:

Due to a chemical imbalance in their heads, the Wapanese will denounce their country, stalk Asian girls, eat nothing but Asian food, grow disgustingly huge and/or pale, live in their parents house until they are 30 or older, and generally be annoyances for the rest of their lives or until they snap out of it, which usually happens around 9th or 10th grade.

Zea, somewhat more gently, advises new fans to look for these signs:

Koreaboos usually use random bits and pieces of Korean that they have learned through K-dramas, in their everyday, Non-Korean, conversations [...] sometimes give themselves Korean names and wear traditional Korean clothing [...] almost always idealize Korean men and women, gush about wanting to date people of Korean background, and fantasize about moving to Korea [...] are obsessed with their fantasy of South Korea and its people, uncaring of the political and cultural problems they may face. **Though not all K-Pop fans are *Koreaboos*, nearly all *Koreaboos* are K-Pop fans.** (Rehman)

⁹⁰ Contrast this imaginary with that of the colonialist (and masculinist) tradition, cited by Hatim and Mason: “The translator must ‘possess’ the spirit of the original, ‘make his own’ the intent [...]. The imagery is akin to that used by G. Steiner (1975:298): ‘The translator invades, extracts, and brings home’” (*Discourse* 11).

⁹¹ The use of the term by and about fangirls is not coincidental. Consider the metatextual implications suggested by [Urban Dictionary’s entry](#) for it:

1. A character in two comic books by [Jhonen Vasquez](#). "[Johnny](#) the Homicidal Maniac" and "[Squee!](#)" [Squee!](#)'s real name is Todd Casil. He earned his nickname by the squealing sound he makes whenever he is frightened. Squee's parents hate him. His mom rarely remembers who he is, and his dad says that he ruined his life. They view him as a mistake. Sometimes they watch [the tape](#) of his birth in reverse, and they never do anything kind for him. Squee gets constantly made fun of in school. Sometimes the other boys and girls laugh at the stories he writes, even though some of them can't even read. His teacher is very cruel, too. Barely anyone is kind to him. However, Squee doesn't wish any bad on anyone, and thinks that his parents aren't bad people. Squee does have a few companions. One of them is his teddy bear, [Shmee](#), who doesn't always give the best advice. Another one is Johnny ([Nny](#) for short). [Nny](#) is a [homicidal maniac](#), and Squee thinks that he's kind of scary. [Nny](#) isn't mean to Squee, though. One time, he even saved him from a [pedophile](#). Finally, there's [Pepito](#), the Devil's son. Squee is also scared of [Pepito](#). Oh, and there was [Andy](#). [Andy](#) was Squee's friend until he was eaten by a dog one day. Not too much is known about him, though. I highly recommend "[Squee!](#)" and other books by [Jhonen Vasquez](#). If you're anything like me, you'll love them.

2. A squealing sound. Can be either happy or scared (in Squee's case, it's scared.)

3. A creature in a game called [Myst III](#). (I don't know much about this kind of [squee](#). I've seen pictures of them, before. They look kind of rodentish.)

⁹² Translated by me. *Pied Piper* Lyrics © Kobalt Music Publishing Ltd., Sony/ATV Music Publishing LLC, 2015. Artifact 1319-99 contains gifs of BTS member V during a live performance of *Pied Piper* at the 5th annual BTS official ARMY festival [called 5th *Muster*], June 2019.

⁹³ Interestingly, these constitute two cases of rare references to *schooling* literacy by my participants—all of which cite textual analysis (literary, for-translation). None refer to writing or composition skills.

⁹⁴ Seo and Hollingsworth summarize the phenomenon:

as fans tuned into their music and video clips, they found that BTS created elaborate stories with their music videos and sang about social issues. Those videos give fans a lot of fodder to "pore over and try to decode," making the BTS fandom not so different from the dedicated followers of the "Lost" television series, said Michelle Cho, a professor at the East Asian studies department at the University of Toronto. [...] "You're not just a casual fan of BTS, you have to be initiated into their world and then you get sucked in."

⁹⁵ *DNA* is one of two [title](#) [*A side*] tracks on the album that includes *Pied Piper*. MV credits—Director: YongSeok Choi (Lumpens) Assistant Director: WonJu Lee (Lumpens) Director of Photography: HyunWoo Nam (GDW) Gaffe: HyunSuk Song (Real Lighting) Art Director: JinSil Park (MU:E) Choreography and performance direction: Sungdeuk Son Choreography by: Christopher Martin, Keone and Mari.

Notes (from [Chapter 4](#))

⁹⁶ *Textus* is Latin for weaving/joining, and thus *textrix*, the (female) Fates ([Olivetti](#)). With that etymological legacy, it is no surprise that text would be itself, by definition, an actant associating other actants through mediation or translation.

⁹⁷ Eyman quotes Packer’s and Jordan’s five characteristics of New Media, which “in aggregate define it as a medium distinct from all others:

Integration: the combining of artistic forms and technology into a hybrid form of expression.

Interactivity: the ability of the user to manipulate and affect her experience of media directly, and to communicate with others through media.

Hypermedia: the linking of separate media elements to one another that create a trail of personal association.

Immersion: the experience of entering into the simulation or suggestion of a three-dimensional environment.

Narrativity: aesthetic and formal strategies that derive from the above concepts, which result in nonlinear story forms and media presentation (xxxv).” (qtd. 54)

⁹⁸ Kim Youngdae and Kim Chang-Nam, a Media and Communications Studies specialist he interviews, both express their “amazement” at an I-ARMY collaborative composition, www.whitepaperproject.com/: created by [30] international ARMYs when BTS was criticized by the Japanese right-wing media and a few Korean media in response to the “Liberation Day T-shirt controversy” in 2018, was an innovative feat. For those in cultural studies, it was an impressive example of how sophisticated a fandom can advance, as the sheer scale of research and logic they accumulated, comparable to the level of professional scholarly articles, provided more than sufficient defense for BTS.

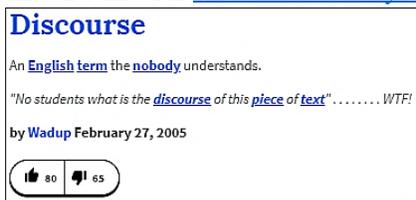
⁹⁹ Hills contrasts Fiske’s pre-Internet concepts with Web 2.0 fan production: in ‘The Cultural Economy of Fandom’ the crucial distinction between enunciative and textual productivity is *not* ‘primarily one of form’ (Sandvoss 2011:60), but rather one of [mediation](#). *Enunciative productivity remains locked into its immediate social context since it concerns spoken or embodied meanings which are not otherwise mediated, whereas the textual productivity of ‘fan culture makes no attempt to circulate its texts outside its own community. They are ‘narrowcast’, not broadcast, texts’ (Fiske 1992:39).* Hence, regardless of whether or not digital fandom’s user-generated paratexts – e.g. fanvids – constitute forms of commentary, in Fiske’s terms if they are uploaded and made available to a communal audience then they become clear instances of (mediated) textual productivity. On the other hand, a fanvid made especially to be screened at a specific social event would be readable as both textual productivity *and* as space/time-bounded enunciative productivity, whilst a video shot for a fan convention and only then subsequently uploaded to YouTube and circulated by fans as time-sensitive ‘spreadable media’ (Jenkins, Ford and Green 2013) would in fact move from hybrid textual-enunciative to pure textual productivity across the different phases of its convention/web 2.0 sharing.

¹⁰⁰ Referring to a member being photographed in a shirt celebrating Korean Liberation Day with an image of a mushroom cloud, which led to highly-publicized cancellations of BTS’ promotional appearances—but not, I feel compelled to note as an I-ARMY, any *tour* or *fan-event* dates—in Japan.

¹⁰¹ *Discourse* denotes disputative languaging especially by or within fandoms. The entry on knowyourmeme.com speaks volumes about the norms of Tumblr:



It is especially clarifying when read in tandem with [Urban Dictionary’s entry](#) (sic):



¹⁰² In [the previous chapter](#), artifacts addressing the broader, related topic of I-ARMYs’ rejection of nonARMY and Western media desire for “English” lyrics, fluency and artistic endorsement by BTS, are

presented. In these, USAmerican and English Exceptionalism are interrogated and explicitly opposed by unmarked “English” speakers in favor of [translocality/cosmopolitanism](#) for fans and for global entertainment as an industry.

¹⁰³ Seo and Hollingsworth report:

Because Big Hit weren't one of the top three K-pop labels, they were seen as an underdog and relied on social media. That drew in fans [...] To BTS, the fans are a major reason behind their success. As a result, barely a concert or awards ceremony goes by without BTS thanking ARMY for helping them get where they are. [Michelle Cho, a professor at the East Asian studies department at the University of Toronto] says **this idea of reciprocity sets BTS apart from pop groups in the West. "I think it's a really potent mix," she said. "You're not just a casual fan of BTS, you have to be initiated into their world and then you get sucked in."**

¹⁰⁴ Its snarky [entry on Urban Dictionary](#) reads:

Voluntarism is a lot like anarchy. In that, it too rejects the commonly held [notions](#) of authority and government. It's [believers](#) also think that all interaction should be [voluntary](#).

Voluntarism is actually widely practiced, in [sign up classes](#) and [grocery](#) stores.

#voluntarist #anarchy #anarchist #government #authority #voluntary

by [Shadow Wyvern](#) June 21, 2016

¹⁰⁵ Find yourself tempted to give it a read? I won't judge. It is available [here](#), courtesy of the global fansite Koreaboo. When the fansite began covering *Outcast*, its author tweeted excitedly: *oh my god even koreaboo knows about it i-i-i...* ([Google Search](#)).

¹⁰⁶ Even in comments expressing admiration for Flirtaus' precocity and impact, I found no one expressing surprise regarding her technical or repertoire knowledgeability. As an indication of truth by omission, this is as close to a statement of consensus as possible.

¹⁰⁷ The single potential exception, artifact 6719-1, I interpret as expressing approval rather than endowing status in its top-title font quotation: *Flirtaus is a fucking army legend now guys*.

¹⁰⁸ Hwag and Hardman find Korean ESL students demonstrating her trait of “showing the necessity and possibility of responsive and responsible uses of language . . . in a world rife with and riven by systems and relations of injustice” (qtd. 186-7).

¹⁰⁹ Tudor argues that because public criticism is strictly regulated (by etiquette and by law) in Korea, online forums took off early and have sustained high involvement to the current day. One of the top websites in Korea still, according to [News Pty's Australian news site](#), *Ilbe* is infamously right-wing and misogynist. The Korean—pseudonym of the blogger who runs *Ask A Korean*—locates *Ilbe* among the first (1999) internet forums devoted to anonymously airing anti-democratic views. His description of it as an inversion of Jenkins' portrait of fandom [critiqued for its Pollyannaism by Pande among others], provides a translingual digital cultural context to fan/ “anti” rivalry in global K-pop fandoms:

Recall that Korea is the world's first wired society. Korea had cyberbullying and doxxing [explained [here](#)—my note] before the rest of the world even knew what cyberbullying and doxxing were. Korea had the world's largest social network service long before Facebook entered Mark Zuckerberg's imagination. So it shouldn't surprise you that Korea had the world's first alt-right, long before there was such a word “alt-right,” because it is impossible to conceive of alt-right without the internet. *Ilbe* users were the world's first alt-right, in that it foretold central characteristics of all the alt-right movements that would come. To put it diplomatically, they were disaffected young men who, disillusioned by the establishment politics, sought refuge in the idealized version of the past. To put it more straightforwardly, they were fuckheads who indulged in their worst tendencies online, to create a type of politics that is little more than a tool for nihilistically causing pain.

¹¹⁰ She translates:

this uniquely Korean concept has no exact English counterpart, but it can be roughly translated as spontaneous energy stemming from excitation, inspiration, play, and frolicking. [...] there is a

shared understanding among native speakers of Korean that *heung* refers to the innate energy in every human being that is reserved for the spontaneous joy of playing that shines through *despite counterforces* [...] *it springs not simply from fun, but from a communal rapport despite difficulties and hardship.* (17-8, my italics)

¹¹¹ The use of *But Namjoon* was so prevalent, it became reified as a trope, earning [an entry on Urban Dictionary](#) and referenced—as [*an ENGLISH*] trope—by the Idol himself in his solo song *Persona* on the *Map of the Soul: Persona* album released in 2019.

¹¹² The [top entry on Urban Dictionary](#) for this:

TOP DEFINITION

kpopie

A condescending xenophobic and anti-asian **buzzword**, commonly used online to belittle people who listen to Korean Pop music, purely because the performing artists are Korean.

Also used by racist fans of Kpop themselves to separate them from other **Kpop fans**, and in attempt to **downplay** the Korean heritage and home country achievements of the Kpop group they listen to.

someone, with a korean idol in their **profile picture**: who cares about your kpopie opinion, **stay pressed** and stream (name of a **kpop** song)!

#kpop

by HarmoniousColor August 26, 2018

42 36

¹¹³ The [top entry on Urban Dictionary](#) for this:

TOP DEFINITION

Stan

A **crazed** and or obsessed fan. The term comes from the song Stan by eminem. The term Stan is used to describe a fan who goes to great **lengths** to **obsess** over a celebrity.

Person 1: Dude these kids have been waiting outside the concert since 8AM even though no one was **lined up**...

Person 2: What a **bunch of Stans**

#eminem #fan #music #celebrity #obsess

by I Chink Im Cool January 09, 2012

1333 275

¹¹⁴ ㅇㅈㅍ suffered public relations damage from having its conflicts publicized by BuzzFeed News (Dahir); I-ARMY commenters on the story's webpage negotiate back and forth between blaming (for tainting BTS' image) and supporting the victims.

¹¹⁵ [Urban Dictionary's entry on this](#) is instructive:

SJW 🗨

Social Justice Warrior: A pejorative term for an individual who repeatedly and vehemently engages in arguments on social justice on the internet, often in a shallow or not well-thought-out way, for the purpose of raising their own personal reputation. A **social justice warrior**, or SJW, does not necessarily strongly believe all that they say, or even care about the groups they are fighting on behalf of. They typically repeat points from whoever is the most popular blogger or commenter of the moment, hoping that they will "get **SJ** points" and become popular in return. They are very sure to adopt stances that are "correct" in their social circle.

The **SJW's** favorite activity of all is to **dogpile**. Their favorite websites to frequent are Livejournal and Tumblr. They do not have relevant favorite real-world places, because SJWs are primarily civil rights activists only online.

#1:

A social justice warrior reads an essay about a form of internal misogyny where women and girls insult stereotypical feminine activities and characteristics in order to boost themselves over other women.

The SJW absorbs this and later complains in response to a **Huffington Post** article about a 10-year-old **feminist's** letter, because the 10-year-old called the color pink "prissy".

#2:

Commenter: "I don't like getting manicures. It's too prissy."

SJW: "Oh my god, how fucking dare you use that word, you disgusting sexist piece of shit!"

#sjw #dogpile #internet activist #slacktivism #angry people #tumblr #livejournal

by boiledchicken January 07, 2012

16736 4965

Notes (from the [Conclusion](#))

¹¹⁶ I join many critics in reading Twain’s resolution and closing here alluded to as oblivious to (if not complicit with) *lived experiencing* of class-based versus race-based inequity and injustice. I employ this understanding (bundled with the criticality of the artifact I cite) as a frame to check my own privilege in making (and having heard) claims here about Others. The parallel with Jim’s being imprisoned and tortured by the same “savior” who afterward plans to accompany him to “freedom” I cannot dismiss.

¹¹⁷ You echoes this premise in theorizing Cosmopolitan English:

If we view translingual practice as also taking place within one language, as some scholars do (Horner, Lu, Royster, 18 & Trimbur, 2011), “all writing always involves rewriting and translation, inevitably engaging the labor of recontextualizing (and renewing) language, language practices, users, conventions and contexts” (Lu & Horner, 2013, p. 485). (17)

¹¹⁸ The form request I sent to artifact creators is:

Hi! I’m @xxxxx, a BTS fan and PhD student researching language use on Tumblr. I have been following your posts and materials since I entered the Tumblr world! I am interested in learning about how and why people work so hard (for free!) to help interpret BTS’ songs, interviews, etc., especially across different languages and cultures and groups. Would you be willing to tell me about **how you got involved in blogging about BTS this way** and **what you were thinking as you wrote your post(s)?**

It is okay to say “No—don’t use me in your research” (I’ll leave you and your posts out of my study—no questions asked).

If you DO want to tell me more, any format answer is fine!

When I write up my research, I will remove identifiers to make your identity anonymous. I will share with you my draft where it discusses your info so you can tell me if there is anything else I need to remove before I finalize it. I will also share a whole draft and final analysis of my study with you directly—I would love your comments and any challenges you have to what I think!

Here is my real-world information, so you can verify that I am who I claim to be:

xxxxx

Thank you for considering my request!

¹¹⁹ There is an internet meme circulating on Twitter/Tumblr since at least 2018 I have remixed to represent this as a universal:

The nature of humanity is just that every so often someone accidentally invents literacy again.

As to pre-Internet, Youth Culture iterations (Jenkins), the BBC’s *Rocking the Stasi* documents the subversive activism of pop music fandom (and the crackdown on it) in Soviet-occupied German Democratic Republic [East Germany]—culminating in David Bowie’s concert at the Brandenburg Gate of the Berlin Wall, which leads to the regime facilitating Bruce Springsteen’s East Berlin concert in 1988 (Bowlby).

¹²⁰ Wenger emphasizes the affective perception of identity, but in abstract terms:

what makes us human, ...what enables us to make a difference [...is] the work of negotiating identities inherent in knowledgeability. What we learn with the greatest investment is what enables participation in the communities with which we identify. We function best when the depth of our knowing is steeped in an identity of participation, that is, when we can contribute to shaping the communities that define us as knowers. (252-3)

¹²¹ Arriving at *sharing* as the crux of *learning writing* brings me full circle to the etymology of governing ontologies of our expert practice: *participate*, *læran*, *negotiate*, *communicate*, *mæne*, *practice*, *belong*, *understand*, *medium*, *legere*, *textus* conflict directly with being *educated*, being *contained*, being a *pupil*.

¹²² I am implicated when Kraemer Sohan reminds us of how, to obtain our positions as experts, it is often the case that we have

only been “done right” by S[tandardized] W[ritten] E[nglish] and S[tandardized] A[cademic] D[iscourse]. We have worked them (comparatively) effortlessly and well, and precisely because of these experiences—perhaps because SWE/SAD has been our “home language” (see Lu, “From Silence”), and/or because of the legitimization and classed, raced, regional, national privileges such language uses have afforded and reinforced for us—these Englishes and our attachment to them are (like gender, like other systems of domination and exclusion and our attachments thereto) fully naturalized. (211)

¹²³ Dewey’s power dynamics operate here, too: inculcating *elite* multilingualism for *mobility* is intended to *disempower*—to block [out] the power, laid out by Tymoczko, inherent to [translatorship](#):

Translation always carries with it the capacity to challenge what is socially established, to expand or overturn what is known, and to foster rebellion against the constraints of local ethical, ideological, and political standards and hierarchies. Translation at times can undermine what has been accepted as foundational at both the level of the individual and the level of whole cultures. From some perspectives, therefore, it is better, perhaps, to assert or imagine that there are limits within which translation must always operate, and to have the limits that are imposed on translation operate under erasure. [...] No surprise, then, that in many circumstances various modes of translation are promoted—by those in power or by a general cultural ethos—that are specifically aimed at blocking challenges to dominant cultural practices and dispositions. Because of the activist potential and power of translation processes and products, translations are usually subject to cultural controls of various types, ranging from norms and prescriptive standards to censorship and proscription. (170)

The same stakes I conjecture motivate our bias against non-[native](#) TESOL professionals in collegiate and professional education and against Native foreign language instructors in K-12.

¹²⁴ These are:

Skills of discovery and interaction (savoir apprendre/faire): ability to acquire new knowledge of a culture and cultural practices and the ability to operate (sic) knowledge, attitudes and skills under the constraints of real-time communication and interaction.

Skills of interpreting and relating (savoir comprendre): ability to interpret a document or event from another culture, to explain it and relate it to documents or events from one’s own.

Critical cultural awareness (savoir s’engager): an ability to evaluate, critically and on the basis of explicit criteria, perspectives, practices and products in one’s own and other cultures and countries [sic].

Intercultural attitudes (savoir être): curiosity and openness, readiness to suspend disbelief about other cultures and belief about one’s own. This means a willingness to relativise one’s own values, beliefs and behaviours, not to assume that they are the only possible and naturally correct ones, and to be able to see how they might look from an outsider’s perspective who has a different set of values, beliefs and behaviours. This can be called the ability to ‘decentre’.

Knowledge (savoirs): of social groups and their products and practices in one’s own and in one’s interlocutor’s country [sic], and of the general processes of societal and individual interaction. So knowledge can be defined as having two major components: knowledge of social processes, and knowledge of illustrations of those processes and products; the latter includes knowledge about how other people are likely to perceive you, as well as some knowledge about other people. (Byram et al. 7-9)

¹²⁵ Qu sees this phenomenon play out in TESOL classrooms in China, where even [processive](#) pedagogy can, through engagement with Otherness, [scaffold](#) learners’ access

what Claire Kramsch has called the “privilege of the intercultural speaker,” who is capable of “shuttling” between languages and cultures (Canagarajah, “Rhetoric”). Translation or thinking in a language that is not native de-automatizes perception and thinking. (72)

¹²⁶ With the Translingualist and Criticalist scholars I here draw upon, I accept that should even the ideal outcomes occur in my classroom, it will not negate the bigotry and inequity in or outside of it. But, it is hard not to be inspired by I-ARMY to *relearn* Margaret Mead’s advice, “Never doubt that a small group of thoughtful, committed citizens can change the world; indeed, it’s the only thing that ever has.”

¹²⁷ An example of which is my paraphrase of the same definition for my 9th grade English course (“Language”):

Paraphrase: Translate into words that **effectively communicate for your audience the meaning** of someone else’s words/actions, accurately (honestly) without *repeating* the word choices or structure of the original. Often, we paraphrase to condense or shorten the amount of text we use to explain the **data** in a source for *our writing*. To paraphrase well, our translation must be **precise** (match the meaning of the source) **and fitting** (match what we think our audience knows/ understands).

¹²⁸ *The Revolution Will Not Be Televised*, lyrics by Gil Scott-Heron. Released on the album, *Pieces of a Man*, 1971:

Green Acres, Beverly Hillbillies, and Hooterville

Junction will no longer be so damned relevant, and
Women will not care if Dick finally got down with
Jane on *Search for Tomorrow* because Black people
Will be in the street looking for a brighter day
The revolution will not be televised

There will be no highlights on the eleven o'clock
News and no pictures of hairy armed women
Liberationists and Jackie Onassis blowing her nose
The theme song will not be written by Jim Webb or
Francis Scott Key, nor sung by Glen Campbell, Tom
Jones, Johnny Cash, Engelbert Humperdinck, or The Rare Earth
The revolution will not be televised

The revolution will not be right back
After a message about a white tornado, white lightning, or white people
You will not have to worry about a dove in your
Bedroom, a tiger in your tank, or the giant in your toilet bowl
The revolution will not go better with Coke
The revolution will not fight the germs that may cause bad breath
The revolution *will* put you in the driver's seat

The revolution will not be televised, will not be televised
Will not be televised, will not be televised
The revolution will be no re-run brothers
The revolution will be *live*. ([azlyrics](#))

¹²⁹ Romano points specifically to pre- and post-Tumblr ([social media 1.0 becoming 2.0](#), echoing McCulloch) as the turning point:

And those of us who didn't leave LiveJournal, who came up on Tumblr, have just accepted so many of Tumblr's norms as being the way things are in the culture [of fandom], like Tumblr's emphasis on queer-friendly relationships and queer shipping, general emphasis on diversity and racebending and call-out culture. These things that we sort of proceeded towards with very hesitant steps and hand-wringing on every other platform before Tumblr—now fans are just absorbing them like, that's life, that's just how things are. When you think back to 2009 and the year-long, deep, dramatic struggle and saga that sci-fi fandom went through over the Racefail [According to [Fanlore.org](#), the now legendary war of words conducted via LiveJournal and other blogs as person-to-person call outs, analyses, defenses and arguments regarding fan creators' appropriative representation of the Other, fandom's Whiteness and media hegemony. See Pande.] debate and discourse and discussion, and how fraught and heavy and intense that was, that would have been

like a half-hour on Tumblr. It would have taken half an hour, involved fifty people, and everybody would have been on the side of people who were talking about Racefail from the perspective of characters of color and people of color and the experiences of people of color. It wouldn't have been as much drama so much as this is how things are now. (qtd. Morimoto 32)

¹³⁰ Analyzing cinema in 1981, he theorizes that popular entertainment [what we now pre- and post-Internet all know, tellingly, as *media*] serves a vital function:

Two of the taken-for-granted descriptions of entertainment, as 'escape' and as 'wish-fulfilment', point to its central thrust, namely, utopianism. Entertainment offers the image of 'something better' to escape into, or something we want deeply that our day-to-day lives don't provide. Alternatives, hopes, wishes—these are the stuff of utopia, the sense that things could be better, that something other than what is can be imagined and maybe realized. (20)

Jenkins (*Textual*) draws upon Dyer in defining fandom's role as a [potentially] therapeutic alt-reality, cultural production as aspirational reimagining of life. To quote at length *Dyer's* inspiration, Enzensberger, who he argues, "takes issue with the traditional left-wing use of concepts of 'manipulation' and 'false needs' in relation to the mass media:"

The electronic media do not owe their irresistible power to any sleight-of-hand but to the elemental power of deep social needs which come through even in the present depraved form of these media. ([Enzensberger] 1972: 113)

Consumption as spectacle contains the promise that want will disappear. The deceptive, brutal and obscene features of this festival derive from the fact that there can be no question of a real fulfilment of its promise. But so long as scarcity holds sway, use-value remains a decisive category which can only be abolished by trickery. Yet trickery on such a scale is only conceivable if it is based on mass need [...] the desire for a new ecology, for a breaking-down of environmental barriers, for an aesthetic which is not limited to the sphere of the 'artistic'. These desires are not—or are not primarily—internalized rules of the games as played by the capitalist system. They have physiological roots and can no longer be suppressed. (ibid.: 114) (qtd. 25-6)

Dyer is prescient to say the least in conceptualizing the reality-mediating value of creative content, although he does not foresee its production and distribution being coopted—the aesthetic-artistic spectacle being appropriated—by consumers themselves.

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