

EDITORS' NOTE

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“Language is not a boundary but a crossing.” This assertion, which is implicit in much contemporary translingual and postmonolingual scholarship, captures the intellectual spirit connecting the diverse undergraduate research showcased in this volume. The notion of a singular, stable, correct rhetoric continues to be unsettled by multilingual writers, multimodal composers, and rhetors whose bodies, identities, and cultural positions resist tidy categorization.

Taken together, the articles in this issue demonstrate that rhetoric is always already translingual. Shaped by movement across languages, modalities, institutions, genres, identities, and political conditions. Whether working in a Kazakhstani writing center, in the archives of a Texas marching band, in the interface of a video game, or in the pages of a teenage diary, these scholars show that rhetorical meaning emerges not from uniformity but from interaction, translation, negotiation, and attunement to difference.

Several authors in this volume turn our attention to the rhetorical ecologies of writing centers, asking how institutional discourse constructs student writers, tutors, and the very meaning of writing.

Raphael Jon Moreno’s audit of forty syllabi reveals that the writing center’s presence in curricular language is far from guaranteed. When instructors omit or oversimplify the center’s purpose, they participate in institutional rhetorics that shape students’ access to help, their understanding of writing support, and

even their sense of belonging. Moreno reminds us that a syllabus, often treated as mere administrative text, is in fact a rhetorical artifact with material consequences, one that can either open or foreclose linguistic and academic agency for diverse student populations.

Extending the focus on student experiences of writing instruction, **Nicole Kiama** investigates how students conceptualize the “first draft,” revealing a mismatch between scholarly models of recursive composing and the surveillance driven drafting practices many students endured in secondary school. When drafting becomes a monolingual, compliance oriented activity rather than an exploratory, meaning making one, the rhetorical possibilities of revision narrow. Kiama’s findings underscore the need to teach drafting as a cognitive and rhetorical process, not a static genre.

Marzhan Salmenbayeva, studying post session reports at a multilingual writing center in Kazakhstan, shows how institutional systems of writing support take shape in contexts where English is a foreign language. Their

analysis of nearly 200 reports demonstrates that multilingual students concerns cluster around organization, concision, brainstorming, and grammar, but that tutors often undervalue the reflective potential of the reports. Salmenbayeva reframes these documents as institutional big data snapshots of translingual writing needs and tutor perceptions, offering a methodological contribution that bridges writing center research with global and multilingual educational settings.

Similarly situated in Central Asia, **Luiza Aitkozha** explores how tutor questioning practices align with Bloom's Revised Taxonomy. Their findings that tutors often default to lower-order cognitive prompts and insufficient wait time highlight how the linguistic politics of time, comprehension, and cognitive demand shape multilingual students' rhetorical opportunities. Aitkozha calls for tutor education that intentionally fosters higher-order thinking, situating even small questions within broader translingual pedagogies.

Finally, **Karlygash Mukanova** examines how feedback practices affect writing apprehension in an English medium institution. Their participants' reflections show that supportive, rhetorically aware feedback can mitigate anxiety and foster growth mindsets. Mukanova thus extends writing center pedagogy toward affective and psychological dimensions, reminding us that translingual practice is not merely linguistic but embodied and emotional.

Where some articles explore institutions, others examine how rhetorical identity takes shape through mentorship, archives, and journaling. **Nickel Spartz's** autoethnographic

account of undergraduate research mentorship demonstrates the collective, relational nature of knowledge-making in Writing Studies. Their narrative foregrounds mentorship as a collaborative, networked rhetoric which enables emerging scholars to navigate complex methodologies and disciplinary expectations. In their telling, mentorship becomes a translingual practice not in the linguistic sense, but in its movement across roles, identities, and disciplinary languages.

Marisa Sandifer turns to Baylor University's Golden Wave Band archives to investigate women's rhetorical labor in the marching arts. Their work reveals how linguistic, visual, and institutional rhetorics historically distinguished women from their male counterparts, shaping body image, self-compassion, and susceptibility to appearance-based pressures. Sandifer's findings highlight how rhetoric circulates not only in texts but in embodied performances, uniforms, traditions, and gendered expectations, each of which are a kind of cultural language that must be read, interpreted, and critiqued.

Ella Yates brings us to the intimate rhetorical space of the diary, a genre often excluded from public rhetorical consideration. Through autoethnography and archival research, they demonstrate that diaries complicate conventional definitions of authorship. Rather than writing for an audience, diarists write into a private linguistic world governed by personal rhythms, feelings, and temporalities. Yates reframes diary writing as a legitimate rhetorical practice that shapes identity and authorship

outside institutional or publication driven frameworks.

Nicholas Daggs analyzes text boxes in computer role-playing games, arguing that these interfaces serve as rhetorically meaningful compositions in themselves. Text boxes combine language, design, and procedurality to construct narrative immersion. Daggs positions video games as multimodal rhetorical spaces, where users translate visual cues, textual prompts, and gameplay mechanics into coherent meaning.

Gwendolyn Crain examines Madeleine Albright's "pin diplomacy," tracing how visual artifacts operate as rhetorical responses within geopolitical crises. Their analysis of three key pins illustrates both the affordances and limitations of symbolic gesture: visual rhetoric can frame diplomatic stance, but it requires alignment with political action to achieve ethical force. Crain invites readers to consider how material symbols, bodies, and geopolitical contexts interact to produce rhetorical consequences.

Julianne Fullerton's study of the Children's Summer Institute adds yet another dimension by exploring enrichment based literacy programs as rhetorical environments. Their archival and qualitative research demonstrates that children's engagement with literature is shaped as much by communal, affective, and experiential modalities as by formal instruction. Fullerton situates literacy not merely as skill acquisition but as cultural participation. It is a translingual, intertextual process.

Atharva Abhyankar's rhetorical analysis of *Roper v. Simmons* (2005) uncovers how

judicial authority is shaped by implicit backings and moral positioning. Kennedy's appeal to evolving standards and international norms contrasts sharply with O'Connor's emphasis on restraint, revealing how judicial rhetoric constructs competing visions of legitimacy. Abhyankar's work demonstrates that legal discourse is not neutral but culturally and rhetorically situated, drawing on heterogeneous epistemologies that must be made visible.

Allison Rivard and **Cassandra Pay** extend this critique by examining the presence and absence of feminist rhetorics across disciplines. Their interviews reveal that although feminist rhetorical strategies circulate widely, they often remain unnamed, stripped of the feminist epistemologies that originally shaped them. Their work argues for restoring the names, histories, and intellectual lineages of marginalized rhetorical traditions so that they may flourish rather than fade into invisibility.

Ainel Saduova likewise centers marginalized epistemologies through their theorization of SMART questions which is a tutoring heuristic grounded in Gloria Anzaldúa's borderlands and mestiza consciousness. Their study demonstrates how multilingual students navigate tutors' questions through code-switching, agency, and identity negotiation. By reframing tutoring as a borderlands practice, Saduova positions rhetoric as a hybrid, translingual, and culturally dynamic encounter.

Across these articles, a shared insight emerges about how rhetoric lives in movement. It moves across languages, genres, technologies, cultures, bodies, disciplinary histories, and institutional structures. It appears in a

syllabus, a diary, a game interface, a judicial opinion, a marching band uniform, a tutoring question, an archival photograph, a post session report. It shifts depending on who uses it, who hears it, and what identities and languages they bring with them.

In this sense, each article in the volume does more than answer a research question, it performs a translingual rhetorical act. Together, they call Writing Studies to attend more carefully to the global plurality of writing and tutoring practices, the multimodal affordances of contemporary composing, the embodied and emotional dimensions of rhetorical identity, and the epistemological diversity that enriches our field when we name, honor, and sustain it.

If rhetoric once aspired to stability, coherence, and uniformity, this volume demonstrates the opposite: that rhetoric thrives in variation, improvisation, hybridity, and the creative crossings writers make when they refuse to be placed in a single linguistic, disciplinary, or cultural box.

These undergraduate scholars invite us to step into rhetorics that are border crossing,

multimodal, multilingual, and ethically attuned. Rhetorics that imagine new futures for writing and for the communities who practice it.

And it is a journey that we are incredibly excited to undertake for the next few years until it is our turn to pass the mantle. It is only appropriate, then, that we take a moment to thank the team that made the transition smooth and successful: Kim Fahle Peck, Emily Cope, and Gabriel Cutrufello. Their generous spirit and willingness to guide us through this transition has been invaluable and deeply appreciated by the whole UTRGV team. We'd also like to thank Dr. David Blakesly and Parlor Press for helping bring this to life through their editorial design services. Finally, we'd like to thank all the members of the faculty editorial board, as well as the student assistants, for their hard work and dedication.

We are excited to play a small role in the continued development of showcasing talented student voices in the field of undergraduate research. ¡Avancemos con la mente y el corazón abiertos!