Journal of Education, Language, and Ideology
volume 2 | issue 1 | 2024
pp. 133–157

Research Article

Giving Voice to Invisible Transnational Teachers: Using Self-Narrative Writing as Gendered Construction and Resistant Practices

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Received: April 1, 2024
Accepted: June 20, 2024
Published: October 14, 2024
doi: 10.5281/zenodo.13931964

A growing body of literature endeavors to explore the underlying link between transnational teachers and identity construction when teaching English to speakers of other languages (TESOL) that tends to center on the heteronormative discourses while further overlooking the existence of invisible transnational teacher (ITT) within the relationship between gender and language in the transnational world. Specifically, border-crossing urges an ITT, such as the author, to question the backdrop of heteronormative paradigms that identities are ever-evolving processes as linguistic and gendered diversity. Despite these odds, autoethnography can serve as a qualitative orientation, unsilencing invisibility through visibility (auto-self), voicelessness through perception (ethno-culture), and unawareness through expression (graphy-writing). Drawing on theories of translingual writing and transmodality, this study opens a space for emerging gendered constructions. Based on the results, the study suggests a shift from heteronormative paradigms to ITT as a site of struggle and calls for critical queer inquiry. I conclude with the potential critical queer pedagogical implications for ESL and EFL classrooms.

Keywords: autoethnography; heteronormative; invisible transnational teacher; translingual writing; transmodality

1. UNSILENCING THE INVISIBLE TRANSNATIONAL TEACHER VIA TRANSLINGUAL WRITING AND TRANSMODAL SPACES THROUGH AUTOETHNOGRAPHY

Extant literature has been preoccupied with transnational teacher identity and formation in the 21st century, while border crossing has prompted the invisible transnational teacher (ITT), such as the author, to overlook the gendered component of transnational identity construction. Herein, the concept of ITT could pursue the understanding and value of overshadowed communities (e.g., LGBTQ+ communities) while providing insight into how sexual diversity is the norm against the monosexual framework, in and out of the classroom. Subsequently, language diversity has been in the spotlight for transnational, applied linguistics, and Teaching English to Speakers of Other Languages (TESOL) scholars. However, given that the local and translocal, cultural and transcultural, and national and transnational spectra are laden with heterosexual paradigms, the author utilizes sexual diversity with a transnational

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orientation to problematize this scenario, by unsilencing the invisibility through visibility (auto-self), voicelessness through perception (ethno-culture), and unawareness through expression (graphy-writing). Invisible transnational teacher draws on autoethnography as a qualitative orientation, shedding light on the oppressed gendered and racialized identity in homosexual contexts, through translingual writing and transmodal spaces. This study illuminates the potential of underappreciated ITTs' social, cultural, and linguistic resources, urging TESOL-related educators to call for research and problematize heterosexual-oriented inquiry.

The purpose of this study is to disrupt the deep-seated heterosexual paradigms which are maintained by the ITT inside and outside the classroom—in this case, the author—through translingual writing (Ayash, 2019) or translanguaging (García & Kleifgen, 2020) and transmodal spaces (Hawkins, 2018) in the context of homosexual norms. It is crucial to define the term heterosexuality. According to Nelson (2006), heterosexual norms are seen as culturally valued and worth reproducing, to maintain social control as a desirable and natural individual all over the world. Despite the efforts of applied linguistics and transnational scholars, extant literature has focused on the heterogeneity of language and predetermined identity. In other words, monolingualism, frozen identity construction, and social power relations across the globe in translingual writing (Ayash, 2019) and literacy as a form of transnational identity construction (Omogun, 2018) centers around heterosexual discourses, at the expense of LGBTQ+ students (Moore, 2016) and the author's (ITT in this study) identity, causing deprivation and questioning of gender identities. Such a tendency erodes the existence of the gender binary template (Cameron, 2005) and exacerbates nonconforming gender, which is considered deviant and has not been addressed in the TESOL field (Moore, 2020). This may lead to gendered illiteracy, as the mainstream supposes. In this study, I argue that heterosexual persons or their hostile counterparts (homosexuals) have been divested of the opportunity to open up possibilities between the gendered differences and constraints on them, which should ideally be the norm.

The voices and experiences of LGBTQ+ teachers have been silenced (Trinh, 2022). As Kosciw et al. (2020) admonished, unsafety and foreseeable stakes have rhizomatic effects on educational success, sound mind, and drug prevention among LGBTQ+ populations. Language itself can be a catalyst, or as Park and Wee (2012) termed it, a "weapon," to grant all learners the chance to express their sexual and gendered identity with confidence, and detach from concerns of unsafety, at least in the classroom. The classroom is not so much a ground for gendered construction but a station for self-transformation and validation where LGBTQ+ learners might empower their linguistic resources and gendered identities (e.g., gender pronouns, see Knisely & Paiz, 2021) through translingual writing to challenge or even shift common-sense discourses of gender but also trigger the non-LGBTQ+ learners to be more empathetic, recognizable, and respectful. Namely, including LGBTQ+ perspectives in the classroom indicates a sense of fostering the discourses of differences, inviting a multitude of perceptions to think differently and promoting the tendency of sexuality and gendered identity from

the margin to the center (Tran-Thanh, 2020). Issues of sexuality and gendered identity are not exclusive to the queered classroom, which acts as a stepping-stone for cultivating the inclusion of sexual diversity. Paiz (2020) proposed a similar perspective on queering: the classroom serves as a site of [trans]lingual, [trans]cultural, and [trans]modal engagement to create options for selfhood leaking through the lens of daily sexual and gendered identity practices. Ehrlich (1997) maintained that gender is imbued with varying degrees of fluidity across spatiotemporal ecologies in the context of gender identities. This perspective resonates with the current study: ITTs' identities are constantly in flux through translingual writing and transmodal spaces. Consequently, using autoethnography, my resources can be understood as an incomplete, partial, emergent, and ongoing assemblage of my silenced body and invisible identity. Essentially, autoethnography allows the researcher (ITT) to revitalize silence and recapture the invisible voice by redressing the historical record (Ellis & Adams, 2014), thereby further destabilizing colonized power, heteronormative ideologies, and codes of what counts as knowledge. In addition, English language classrooms, for instance, remain heteronormative dominant (Evripidou, 2021), whereas Nelson (1993) and Kappra and Vandrick (2006) observed that one should assume the existence of LGBTQ+ students and [teachers] in the classroom. Based on the idea of gender diversity, I believe that all teachers are not, and should not be, encapsulated as heterosexual products. Abandoning such a mindset will allow the students to include, unsilence, and visibilize queer people. Simply put, hidden identities are ubiquitous in the classroom (Vandrick, 1997). However, a disposition toward muffling unwelcomed identities through discussions implies that students may fail to receive guidance, and the provision of resources for their needs and desires (Craig et al., 2018), depriving them of the opportunity to *see the world through disparate eyes*. Acknowledging this approach by default reinforces the heterosexual paradigms in the classroom and views the ITT as having an invalidated position. Heteronormativity reproduces existing inequalities and creates an illusion of sociocultural norms that limit the possibility differences and diversity to coexist. Nonetheless, pathologizing the current "homophobic language and behavior to be beyond the pale" (Moore, 2020) situates this study as a proactive and affirmative step toward making undervalued communities feel valued, validated, and voiced. Indeed, this perspective echoes the current work's decision to decenter from heterosexuality. As Tran-Thanh (2020) maintained, heteronormativity remains ingrained in any discipline, evidencing a tremendous impediment to students' as well as teachers' perception and participation in the language classroom. Being *cognizant* of a student's identities and situations in one's classroom acknowledges the existence of LGBTQ+ people and their issues, which counters teachers' mistreatment and ignorance. Additionally, in legitimizing the empowerment of ITTs as an embodiment of silenced words and worlds, it is essential to identify derogatory or unconsciously-prejudiced remarks in materials and discourses (Vandrick, 1997).

Similarly, the incomprehension of sexual diversity hinders the opportunity to reference gender identities as "social and cultural practices" (Blackburn & Buckley, 2005),

according to queer literature (Blackburn, 2002). Nelson (2006, 2010) observed that the TESOL field must recognize that sexual identities are entangled with the social actors' characteristics and worlds, in daily practices. To further complicate the current picture, an inviolable heterosexual phenomenon leads to a crescendo of homophobia, thus stimulating my concern about the loss of inclusivity and diversity in the classroom for all students and ITTs. The prevalence of a heteronormative discourse through linguistic practices contributes to demotivating and delegitimating language teachers and learners. In fact, Craig et al. (2018) highlighted that the prevalence of heteronormativity may cause life-risking situations (e.g., suicide, bullying, harassment, and drug abuse) inside and outside of the classroom. However, this study may also act as a healing and exploratory process for the development of ITTs. More broadly, school-based counseling professionals (e.g., social workers, school counselors, and school psychologists) bridge the gap for all students and teachers in the gray area, further breaking down the pervasiveness of heterosexual norms and seeking *basic safety* for them.

As we stride toward the era of mobility, globalization, and hypermodernity, Canagarajah (2006) stated that borders are becoming porous and more unpredictable. Motha's (2014) "reterritorialization" provides new insights into language and identity as shuttling between various boundaries, wherein identity interacts with new markers of cultures, meanings, and resources. However, gender is part and parcel of language learning and its processes. In contemporary studies, gendered elements remain on the periphery of the ITT research agenda. Against the backdrop of this context, it is vital to argue that, without gender elements in the linguistic process, there is no way to embody an authentic self, as language and gender are intertwined. This study addresses the deficiency of the aforementioned phenomena, by attempting to answer the following questions:

1) How does self-narrative writing disrupt heterosexual identity through the invisible transnational teacher?

2) How do queer spaces legitimize the invisible transnational teacher's identity at the intersection of linguistic, gendered, and racialized heterosexual contexts?

In the following section, I review the extant literature on translingual writing (Ayash, 2019), transmodalities (Hawkins, 2018), and transnational heteronormative contexts (e.g., Cameron, 2005; King, 2008) for ITT as the foundation of the TESOL field. Next, I describe the research's theoretical framework based on figure worlds (Urrieta, 2007), desire (Motha & Lin, 2014), and investment (Darvin & Norton, 2015). Then, I present the data collection process to exemplify autoethnography as a qualitative process to understand ITTs' identity, disrupt heterosexual parameters, and valorize ITTs' identity and resources in the classroom. Finally, I conclude the study with an account of the findings and discuss the implications of centralizing this undervalued population and propose the critical queer pedagogy for English as a second language (ESL) and English as a foreign language (EFL) classrooms.

2. POSITIONALITY

I was born and raised in Taiwan; my pronouns are he, his, and him, and I identify as gay. When I arrived in the United States in 2016, gendered identity was not the only impediment to my sociocultural exposure. Racial and linguistic elements were equally integral to my identity construction and recognition, thus placing the intersection of language, race, and gender at the core of my research agenda. Despite intentionally engaging with an underappreciated population (LGBTQ+ people), I unconsciously made mistakes, caused harm, and reproduced oppression. However, my academic positionality urged me to acknowledge my discursive identities and multiplicities, which criticize power structures and potentially deconstruct the hierarchies of power and social justice. Creese and Blackledge (2015) highlighted that all resources and power are never equally allocated to all speakers; I refer to this as "truncated translingualism." Even though I identify as an ITT in this study, the resources and power I possess may create incongruence with others who identify as ITT. The aforementioned process can be understood as "reflexive ethnography" (Madison, 2011). This constant loop assisted me in countering the limitations of my life experiences and epistemology, further galvanizing my reflexivity.

3. LITERATURE REVIEW

3.1 Emerging Gendered Construction Through Translingual Writing

A growing group of researchers is showing interest in exploring the manner in which transnational language learners interact with discursive *resources,* to form shifting history-in-person or transnational habitus (Lam & Warriner, 2012), along with social structures and power relations through writing (Ayash, 2019; García & Gaddes, 2012; Omogun, 2018). This tendency highlights works accumulated from the fields of TESOL, Second Language Acquisition (SLA), and so on, driving a new blueprint for the translanguaging framework (Creese & Blackledge, 2015; Cummins, 2021; Dovchin, 2020; Lee & Canagarajah, 2019). The transnational movement is partly propelled by globalization and partly by sexual migration, personal discrimination, and unequal treatment (Carrillo, 2004), which imparts a force to the transnational movement. In addition, situating translingual norms encourages ITTs to envision social, cultural, and linguistic resources as constantly shifting, and the formation of new identities in divergent settings (Dovchin, 2020) to enrich the emerging gendered construction. However, there is scant research on the propensity for dominant discourse through heteronormativity in translingual writing. Thus, heteronormativity has a *de facto* norm in differentiating power relations via gender binary templates (Nelson, 2006), further silencing invisible identities (e.g., ITTs). Recognizing that heteronormative discourses travel through linguistic, cultural, and social practices in the use of language (Dalley &

Campbell, 2006) is equally important for LGBTQ+ students and teachers to foster a sense of belonging and safety in the classroom. However, Kappra and Vandrick (2006) observed that a respondent, Sayo, highlighted the following challenge in their research on queer ESL students: "So I always made sentences in a heterosexual context … [or] I tried to avoid making those kind[s] of sentences" (p. 143). Similarly, another respondent, Kaori, was coerced into presenting a fake self and hiding their authentic self. Specifically, words like "disguising," "deceiving," and "unrecognizing" are used to express the constraints on the gendered possibility for self-identification and representation through heteronormative norms (Nelson, 2010) in translingual writing.

This example reminds me of the continual silence and invisible violence—or microaggressions—toward the development of inclusive LGBTQ+ communities for all language learners through translingual writing in English. It is imperative to note that gender does not serve as the characteristic of a person, but is a performance that is enacted and practiced in day-to-day living (Higgins, 2018), spanning time and space. This performance is always emergent in literacy practice (Bartlett, 2007; García & Kleifgen, 2020). From this perspective, Dovchin et al. (2016) noted that translingual English can be viewed as an interplay of modes of transmission of varying degrees, across linguistic codes, modes, genres, repertoires, and styles. This is consistent with the notion of translanguaging, celebrating the fluid use of multilingual linguistic resources and repertoires (García & Kleifgen, 2020). Subsequently, it can be said that the construction of gender identities is not fixed; it is dynamic and influenced by diverse resources and cultural artifacts (Bartlett, 2007), specifically through translingual writing. Moreover, the spread of repertoires of Englishes, mobility, and spatiotemporal terrains has clearly shifted away from the unified modes of communication, moving "beyond the homogenizing, centrifugal tendencies of a long-standing monolingualist ideology" (Ayash, 2019, p. 29) and toward trans/multimodal practices through advanced technology and globalization in the 21st century. However, extant research has paid little attention to the dimensions of gender, or the fact that gender is constructed through translingual writing; the current study addresses this issue.

3.2 Transmodal Expression of Transnational Gendered Identity Construction

Applied linguistics (Alim, 2016; Omogun, 2018), TESOL (Motha, 2014; Park, 2017), and other related fields have captured the growing momentum of racial identity construction and linguistic formation. However, the tendency to concentrate on racialized and linguistic issues of power has overlooked the transnational gendered identity construction, in the context of transmodality. Meanwhile, inclusivity, sexual diversity, and gendered identities (Nelson, 2006) have urged me to push the boundary between in/visibility and im/mobility across the world. As we move into a more hypermodern and reterritorialized society, we cannot conduct such examinations without accounting

for transnational, transcultural, and transsexual contexts. Notably, communicative repertoires are not merely a tool of communication, but social power relations and hidden identities that must be excavated. Transmodality (Hawkins, 2018) urges that the diversity of actors has been indexed in ever-expanding and new configurations of audiences, movements, and communicative engagements. According to Newfield (2014), transmodal expressions can be regarded as the interplay of other modes of transmission in daily social practices. For instance, communication is widely recognized to not be only about vocabulary and grammar, but also the integration of other features of language (e.g., stress, gesture, tone, and facial expression), which serve as weapons of everyday communication (Cope & Kalantzis, 2009; Park & Wee, 2012), cultivate transactional literacy (García & Gaddes, 2012), and embody social differences and cultural values (Blommaert, 2005), across diverse repertoires of contexts and communities within emergent transnational landscapes.

In the context of transmodal expression, the notion of transnational gendered identity seems far from salient. Understanding the complexity of transmodal expression and meaning-making through transnational gendered identity, or considering "the differential valuing and positioning of people and resources that comprise the interactions" (Hawkins, 2018, p. 64), amounts to complexifying the critical insight into the domain of transnationalism, poststructuralism, and globalism. More importantly, it complements this study on the identity of ITT, which disrupts monolithic, heteronormative, and static ideologies while reinforcing dynamic movements across the intersection of *gender, race, and language boundaries*. Building on this perspective, gender is not a fixed identity (Higgins, 2018), but the consequence of one's social and cultural community of practice, where the transnational gendered identity can be understood as an ongoing process of language and other transmodal characteristics (Hawkins, 2018; Newfield, 2014) navigating through local and translocal, and national and transnational ecologies.

3.3 Invisible Transnational Teachers' Identities in Heteronormative Contexts

Since a growing body of research in the literature on heteronormative contexts has oppressed many other marginalized communities (Vandrick, 1997), "hidden identities" have been silenced and stigmatized as taboos inside and outside of the classroom (Paiz, 2020). This is precisely why the ITT in this study decided to disrupt heteronormativity through an auto-ethnographic orientation. Cameron (2005) argued that the heterosexual market has penetrated daily social practice, rendering many oppressive identities and voices invisible (Nelson, 2010). This perspective aligns with Kubota (2003), whose gender binary template—either male and female or masculine and feminine—serves as the point of departure for this study. In this vein, gender differences have deprived the rights of invisible communities (LGBTQ+) and the ITT in this study,

barring them from the commotion of counterhegemonic acts. In heteronormative contexts, social power relations cast a shadow on ITTs, meaning that ITTs will never attain agency and power through such dominant discourses. Against the backdrop of heterosexual contexts, LGBTQ+ persons can be seen as belonging to a *microcultural context*, wherein power imbalances settle the way they are represented and expressed through the majority of macrocultures (Neuliep, 2009). Dominant cultures and their power have overshadowed the microcultural group's perceptions and experiences, placed group members in a subordinate position, compelled them to refer to dominant discourses and modes of articulation, and rendered them (ITTs) *powerless and muted*. However, borrowing a statement from Omogun and Skerrett (2021), "viewing [ITTs'] identity constructions through the concept of microcultures enables notice of how people understand and represent themselves in more complex and fluid ways" (p. 414). This helps make sense of the words and worlds, while simultaneously understanding the manner in which ITTs reconstruct identities, redraw boundaries, and animate emergent resources for meaning-making, in an ever-transforming process.

4. THEORETICAL FRAMEWORK

4.1 Figured Worlds

The framework of the Figured Worlds is reminiscent of Holland et al. (1998), highlighting a sociocultural insight into "a socially and culturally constructed realm of interpretation" (p. 52). Figured Worlds are manifested in daily social practices through activities, discourses, performances, and artifacts that act as mediums of co-construction, co-production, and co-transformation, within and across varying degrees of social differentials (Urrieta, 2007). This dovetails with the guiding research questions regarding how the ITT constructs his/her/their spatiotemporally Figured Worlds, while serving as "sites of possibilities" to unfold the difficulties and disrupt heterosexual identity. This legitimizes the Figured Worlds of the marginalized queer shuttling between the co-existence of identities in Taiwan and the United States and unsilencing the invisible. In this spirit, identity emerges from people, space, and time (Urrieta, 2007) as new sites of struggle and discovery, along with (re)negotiation, (re)construction, and (re)transformation. It is essential to mention that identity can be seen as constituting portable and transportable tools that shift depending on the context and situation (Zimmerman, 1998), thus indicating that immigrant students navigate various cultural contexts "for refiguring boundaries, entering new worlds, and building identities" (Omogun, 2018). However, as Holland et al. (1998) observed by default, Figured Worlds are about social rank and position, and further (dis)empowering and (im)mobilizing others (e.g., ITT in this study vis-a-vis heterosexuals) as failures. Yet, this study considers translingual writing and transmodal spaces as sites for developing the ITT's agency and resources, which facilitate the fashioning of the Figured Worlds of impossibility and invisibility to that of possibilities and visibility.

Holland et al. (1998) further developed this concept, stating that identity constantly evolves and embodies socio-historical features in different worlds (Urrieta, 2007). This adds nuance to the ITT's identity construction in the interplay between gender, race, and language. Lam and Warriner (2012) used the term "transnational habitus" to shed light on the ITT's identity and background and sublimate the Figured Worlds as trans-local, transnational, transcultural, and translingual spaces instead of national and localized contexts. Importantly, transnational awareness is not merely about border-crossing, but also about engaging and problematizing the ways in which globalization fosters the web of intersection of similarities, differences, and oppositions in the context of Figured Worlds. That is, Figured Worlds are practical tools (Urrieta, 2007) or a crafting space of self-authoring for LGBTQ+ learners (Kaiser, 2017) and ITTs' identity formation. This space can galvanize the orientation of autoethnography, which assists eternal seekers (e.g., ITTs). Alternatively, I could assume the role of what Ayash (2019) termed an "information broker": one who unfolds the complicated invisible—queer—discourses, continuing to re/de/construct epistemology and shuttling discursive lenses through underlying assumptions of "hegemonic whiteness" (Flores, 2016). In such a case, the aforementioned factors might elicit a dynamic intermeshed *desire* for day-to-day practices.

4.2 Desire

The flow of people, information, ideas, and discourses across borders has been complicating the current globalized phenomenon where the ever-expanding new ideas, questioning, and values in the world provide a window into how *desire* opens the possibility of "social imagery" (Motha & Lin, 2014) or "imagined communities" (Norton & Gao, 2008; Norton, 2001) in the ongoing process of learning how to become new kinds of people (Stornaiuolo et al., 2009). Living in multiple communities amounts to residing in a promising future and offers possibilities of liberating one's desires, expressing diverse identities, and carving multiple imaginations. It is essential to acknowledge that imagination is not visionary but produces new pictures of possibilities and a state-of-the-art understanding of one's Figured Worlds (Urrieta, 2007). This perspective suggests that a desired community creates various identity options (Norton & Gao, 2008) that go beyond the gender binary template (Cameron, 2005), and reinforces the heterosexual norms in the current study. Simultaneously, although border-crossing has contributed to the creation of more displacement of people across the boundary, behind the curtain of languages, resources, and desires, it has also amplified the need to understand how the ITT in this study sculpts multiple self-images and desires through the word of the *objet petit a* (Lacan, 1977, as cited in Motha & Lin, 2014). The objet petit a is interpreted as a missing or inadequate object, which instills desire within the subject. Specifically, the subject, as in this study, seems to be incomplete due to unattainable goals (e.g., heteronormative norms), pushing me to seek and untangle my desires through the imagined communities.

It is interesting to note that desire is constantly shifting in spatiotemporal ecology, similar to the identity afforded to the subject and object in asymmetrical power relations. Subsequently, intersectionality becomes a manifestation framework for the subject (Crenshaw, 1989), while the object serves as a by-product of differentiating inequalities. For instance, the lure of English accelerated the desire to strike back against oppressive discourses on power differentials (Park & Wee, 2012). However, as Park (2017) noted, English personifies a language of social power relations, toggle privilege, and marginalization through Kachru's concentric circles (1997); above all, these inequalities do not act independently of one another. It is crucial to recognize that English does not act as a gatekeeper but as a weapon (Park & Wee, 2012) to disempower LGBTQ+ members, facilitating a heteronormative orientation in TESOL (Nelson, 2006). TESOL denotes speakers of other languages from the inner center (e.g., the USA, UK, Australia, or Canada) as long-term (deficient) English language learners and connotes the strengthening of the ideology of (post)colonialism (Motha, 2014), hegemonic whiteness (Flores, 2016), and heteronormative discourses (Paiz, 2020). However, current studies on the spread and role of global Englishes in the TESOL field have not explored ITTs or related issues. Despite intensifying human interactions and (trans)multilingualism, these unprecedented challenges hinder the transnational flow of practice and research within heterosexual paradigms. Building on the concept of the desire to acquire English, American colonial rule epitomizes the gender binaries ingrained in the language (Tarrayo & Salonga, 2023), which turns our attention to the concept of investment.

4.3 Investment

Norton's (1995) perspective of investment illustrates the social dynamics across complex social identities. When language learners speak, they are bound to immerse themselves in a range of social contexts as social actors to determine and make sense of who they are. According to Norton (1995, 2014), "an investment in the target [English] language is also an investment in a learner's own social identity, an identity which is constantly changing across time and space" (p. 18). Imagined identity, constructed in imagined communities, further facilitates the entry into a state of flux (Norton & Toohey, 2011). This belief parallels the current study's concern regarding how the ITT invests his sociocultural understanding in imagined communities, spanning the spatiotemporal ecology to maintain his imagined (invisible and silenced) identities. This raises intriguing questions for students and teachers: How do imagined communities (im)mobilize desires and investment in imagined identities? In what ways do (invisible) transnational teachers and students (re)negotiate and (re)construct their newly available resources, in a new world that is consistent with a vision of future possibility? What might unsettle taken-for-granted assumptions and epistemological ideologies, by complexifying the underlying social power relations of investment?

Drawing on Bourdieu's forms of capital is equally vital to this notion of investment. Norton (1995) highlighted that investing in a target language and triggering symbolic and material resources disrupts one's process. Just as in the case of acquiring and accessing the power of language, the value of economic, social, cultural, and symbolic capital (Bourdieu, 2018) is bound to accumulate across time and space. However, when this notion is portrayed in the fictive garb of English, the interplay of race and gender comes to the fore, and the values of investment, in turn, inflect with each other. Expressed differently, investment serves as a site of contestation to fashion one's spatiotemporal identities, while fostering the cultivation of self-transformation to behave and enact one's agency (Sánchez-Martín, 2022). This idea is reverberated by Darvin and Norton (2015), who suggest that embodied identities (e.g., gender, race) can be seen as not only a point of reference to the method of identification and construction but also a way of navigation through the right to speak and enter. I assume that investment endows the learner with the right to speak or be silent, or more accurately, situate a multilayered "privilege and marginalization" (Park, 2017) to reframe frozen identity, create Figured Worlds, reveal desire, and alter the history of voidness. Through deliberate awareness and critical investment in how social differentials are embedded in the practice of one's trajectory, this oppressive discourse can be dismantled and reconfigured. The same holds for this study, in that the ITT faces a new consciousness, "La conciencia de la mestiza" (Anzaldúa, 1987, p. 77), to shout questions, challenge relativism, and empower future possibilities of oppressed identities.

5. METHODOLOGY

5.1 Autoethnography in My Space and Time

An apt statement from Gannon (2006) illuminates the autoethnographic orientation in this study:

> Autoethnography is part of a corrective movement against colonizing ethnographic practices that erased the subjectivity of the researcher while granting him or her absolute authority for representing "the other" of the research. In autoethnography, the subject and object of research collapse into the body/thoughts/feelings of the (auto)ethnographer located in his or her particular space and time. (p. 475)

Autoethnography allows the ITT to revitalize silence and recapture the invisible voice by correcting the historical record (Ellis & Adams, 2014), thereby further destabilizing colonized power, heteronormative discourses, and codes of what counts as knowledge. Autoethnography also invites ITT a glimpse into unearned identities, experiences, and sentiments while exploring the relationships within our social milieu and cultures (Adams et al., 2017; Ellis & Adams, 2014; Yazan, 2019). It is important to note that the autoethnographer (ITT) sets space and time to evolve through interaction and connectedness across the ITT's identity work to open up the self and others within a situation of cultural inquiry that serves as a liberatory orientation. Autoethnographic

orientation frees ITT from hiding an authentic self through the veneer of academic and theoretical confinements and uncovering the intimacy between my hidden identities and my personal narratives daily.

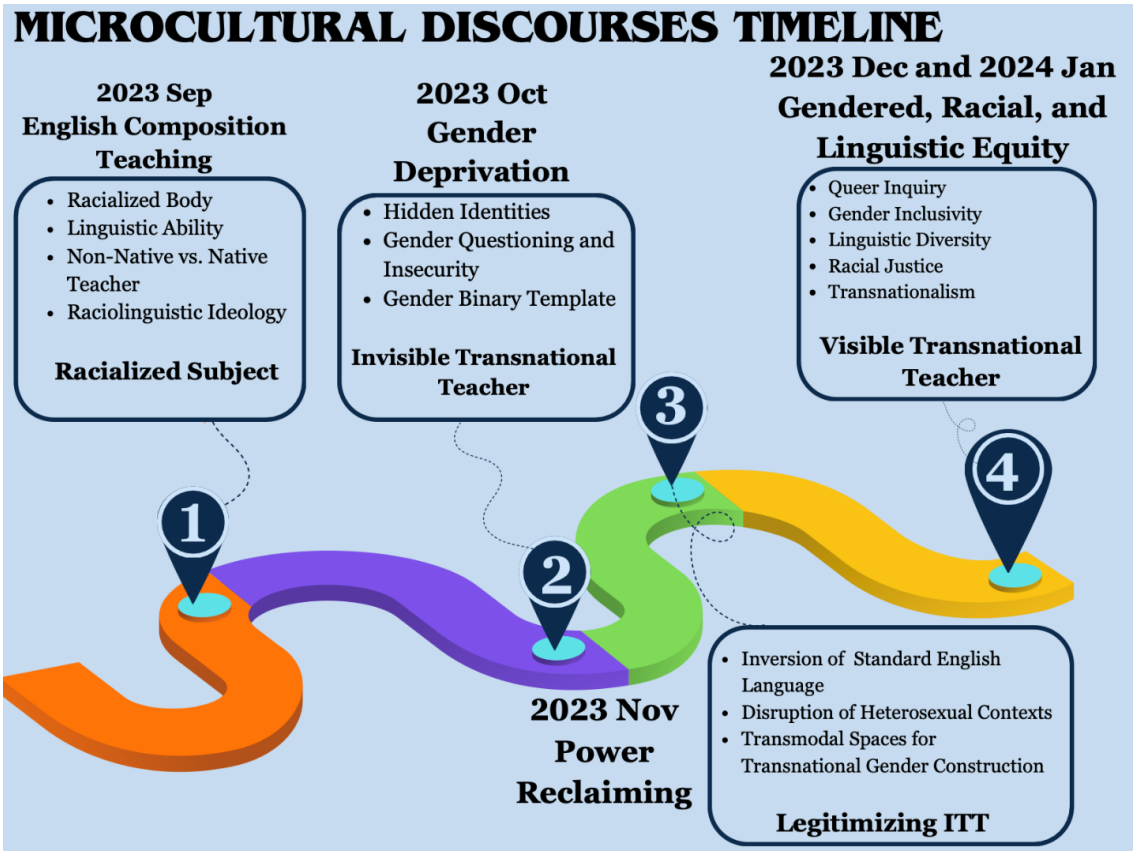
5.2 Journals' and Memories' Composition

Highlighting my social and cultural story, I started to collect a gendered journal (GJ), an accumulation of my counternarratives and negotiations of heterosexual paradigms daily, and a teaching journal (TJ), which contains self-reflection on my English composition teaching. Both journals were accrued from September 2023 to January 2024; the total entries are one hundred fifty. Additionally, I simultaneously recalled and wrote memories (Ellis & Adams, 2014) replete with sources of knowledge (Gannon, 2006) and gathered capstone portfolios from my undergraduate career. These served as a foundation for the data collection process, shifting the center from heterosexual voices that have manipulated and oppressed marginalized communities. Conventional narratives or established taken-for-granted stories primarily become spaces for multiple *silenced* stories to emerge, and thus *autoethnography* sets my self-narrativization as a site of struggle and discovery for cultural inquiry and social emancipation in the context of the intermingling of *gender, race, and language* throughout my spatial and temporal period from September 2023 to January 2024.

5.3 Data Analysis

During the data analysis, I draw on translingual writing (Ayash, 2019) and transmodalities (Hawkins, 2018; Li & Hawkins, 2021) to analyze my narrative writing while conforming to the procedures proposed by Creswell (2013) in the following steps: (a) organizing the data; (b) reading and memos; (c) describing and classifying data into codes and themes; (d) interpreting the data; (e) representing and visualizing the data as a timeline of microcultural discourses, from September 2023 through January 2024 (see Figure 1). I shuffled between the gendered and teaching journal entries, memos, memories, and portfolios and zoomed in and out from myself—a self that dances at the intersection of gender, race, and language to organize the above data. Next, I classified the data into codes while situating and coining microcultural discourses (e.g., racialized body, non-native speaker, and hidden identities) as sites of tension and potential between my oppressive identities within heteronormative contexts. As Canagarajah (2012) argues, this approach brings often muted, hidden, and underappreciated experiences and perspectives to the surface.

Figure 1. Microcultural discourses timeline



Concurrently, I shared my work with my transnational colleagues, friends, and other teachers and ITTs, while critically discussing this process (Yazan, 2019) to prevent self-absorption from doing autoethnography (Adams et al., 2017), thus the potential 18 codes emanating from this process. Subsequently, certain culminating themes came into existence through reinterpretation and renegotiation of our discussion through data analysis. Three themes evoke a strong sense of liberatory oppressive identities through the intersection of gender, race, and language against the backdrop of the heterosexual paradigms via translingual writing and transmodalities: a) gendered literacy practices through translingual writing, b) racialized and gendered identity construction via transmodalities, and c) transmodal expressions and translingual writing as resistant practices. This is integral for legitimizing and unsilencing the ITT's agency and power. In other words, the ITT has the potential to take cues from untold stories to achieve social change, gender equity, racial justice, and linguistic inclusivity as an outlet for the oppressed.

6. RESULTS AND DISCUSSION

6.1 Color of Heterosexual Literacy Practices

A discussion during a graduate seminar delved into the viral role of color in identifying one's gender identity, orientation, and expression in the heterosexual market. If a man wears a pink dress, gendered literacy leads to gendered deprivation (GJ October 31, 2023).

Color embellishes the foundation for defining one's gender in the context of a gender binary template. It is widely recognized that blue for boys and pink for girls set cultural beliefs by instilling everyday literacy practices toward the dichotomy between men and women in the marketplace (Bleicher, 2023) through sociocultural practices (e.g., family and schools). Indeed, my family taught me to behave in alignment with the concept of color: "masculine as black," "confident as red," and "bold as blue." It is important to note that gender is an examination of power relations entrenched in social identities (Shields, 2008) and cultural practices. Similarly, color can be understood as a social power relationship across the spatiotemporal ecology in gender practices. "Neon color would be referred to as irregular and unconventional; certain cultural norms, for instance, Taiwan, have constrained the degrees of acceptance" (GJ, October 31, 2023). This quote supports the kind of gendered conversation that still circulates and is prevalent in daily heterosexual norms (Higgins, 2018). This resonates with Cameron's (2005) argument regarding "reinforcing the systematic structure" of the color of heterosexual practices, while depriving gendered expression through a spectrum of color in *sexual diversity*. Consequently, on the one hand, my gendered identity has been cast as a heterosexual shadow in Taiwan, while on the other hand, the representation of color has been embedded in my life such that I could not authenticate myself in Figured Worlds (Holland et al., 1998; Urrieta, 2007). In my Figured Worlds, masculinities and femininities intertwine with varied forms, further inflecting one another in a transnational turn that detaches the established assumptions on normalizing discourses as dynamic (Ehrlich, 1997). Yet, internalized homophobia (Cummings, 2009) zooms in and out of my life to (re)negotiate in the heterosexual world. These findings suggest that color can constrain one's gendered identity, further reinforcing heterosexual literacy practices through one's cultural norms and religion. However, translingual writing is an emergent premise for constructing a gendered identity that animates a desire (Motha & Lin, 2014) and creates a sense of belonging (Molina, 2020) for the investment and cultivation of imagined [invisible] identities and communities (Norton & Toohey, 2011).

6.2 Translingual Writing as a Desired Space for Racialized and Gendered Identity Construction

In the first session of the English composition class at a four-year university, my students introduced themselves in small groups; only then did I realize they were "all

native speakers" in the United States. I approached one of the groups and introduced myself as Taiwanese. A response from one of the students was surprising: "From Taiwan!" However, after that exclamation, the conversation seemed to fade and gear toward another direction. Some might have wondered about my qualifications for this position or thought that a teacher of color with a heavy accent teaching English writing was ironic, or even made assumptions about a "foreigner," "non-native speaker," (NNS) and "English language learner." Although all these prejudices are just my personal reflections spanning *race, language, and invisible transnational identities*, I did not doubt this cognitive process in distinguishing between native and non-native speakers. Instead, I focused on what resources I could use to articulate meaning-making through my writing, history, and my own counter-narrative (TJ, 09/29/2023).

Being labeled as a NNS, of course, places emphasis on a *fixed identity* based on my appearance, complexion, and accent (Brutt-Griffler & Samimy, 2001). This exemplifies the above conversation with the statement "from Taiwan": the nativeness exerts power on me through my teaching native speakers in the classroom, while the problem which comes to the forefront is how being called an NNS is a symbol of discrimination (Holliday, 2009) and represents a raciolinguistic perspective (Rosa & Flores, 2017). A racialized subject (such as I) illegitimates any social and cultural practices that are perceived as inherently deficient vis-à-vis racially unmarked subjects. Simultaneously, my invisible gendered identity is interpellated in the context of the heterosexual market, which represses my subjectivity, authenticity, and belonging; otherwise, I am reduced to a "linguistic failure" (Moore, 2016) and subjected to othering because of how my intersectional minoritized identities are embedded in the social power relations. It is interesting to think of how ITTs, or more broadly, all teachers, use agency at the juncture of unequal power relations in a spatiotemporal ecology that resists the established assumptions and ideologies that we perhaps perpetuate or immobilize across time and space.

Desire (Motha & Lin, 2014), however, became a hallmark of the turning point in my life, especially when I strived to create a sense of belonging: where space could open up possibilities between differences and constraints to visibilize linguistic diversity (Canagarajah, 2006), the global gay community (Nelson, 2010), and racialized communities (Motha, 2014). The boundary between central and peripheral perspectives is the point of departure to understand the ideological concepts that are oppressed by racism, nativism, heterosexism, homophobia, and xenophobia across my life trajectory. It is very obvious that the mutual recognition of the above conversation with my student embodies an ideological structure that we might not notice in daily practice. This fabric of the ever-altering space we inhabit produces such transportable identities (Zimmerman, 1998). As I started to write and read myself into existence (Thomas & Stornaiuolo, 2016), I capitalized on the textual transformations that afford the writing as a spatiotemporal process, which gives a voice to the oppressed, offering them an entrance into "imagined identities and communities" (Norton & Toohey, 2011) and Figured Worlds. As Ayash (2019) noted, language creates complex social actions that

call for social construction and cultural production predicated upon ecological affordances, and the aforementioned struggles spurred my desire to proactively use language as translingual writing for the convergence of burgeoning resources and celebrating their invaluability (García & Kleifgen, 2020). The ever-evolving emergent resources that I carry, co-construct and co-negotiate with my social categories and the dynamic identities stitched into my body and space, to produce the advantages and disadvantages.

More importantly, the concept of the ITT breathes new life into my *gender, race, and language* through translingual writing, and converts space for the construction of racialized and gendered identity. In such a space, the racialized body is viewed as the surface of race in many accounts. The scenarios in Alim's (2016) study is akin to viewing myself as *a transracial subject*. Concurrently invisible transnational identities are not something acquired once and for all, but are ongoing constructions through different lenses from around the words and worlds that rearticulate a misrepresented history, "restorying" the dominant discourses of the imposed roles toward textual justice (Thomas & Stornaiuolo, 2016). Translingual writing is the spacing between the fusion of linguistic codes, modes, genres, and styles (Dovchin et al., 2016). The findings revealed that the shape of translingual writing could serve as a site of cultivation for ITT to place the power at the center of exploring in a constantly shifting moment, shuttling resources, and negotiating identities (García & Kleifgen, 2020) that shall be transformed into transmodal investment for racial, linguistic, and gendered empowerment.

6.3 Transmodal Investment for ITT Empowerment Through Heterosexual Space

Many gay themes remain opaque in our society, idling around as ghosts. For instance, when I wandered around Taiwan, I rarely saw LGBTQ+ images that were referred to as taboo, not only in class but also in society. Fortunately, digital spaces and digital modalities of writing allowed me to blur the boundary between the local and the nation in an era of globalization (Online Portfolio).

In a globalized world, life throws up moments that intrude upon our knowledge, behavior, and enactment, such that LGBTQ+ remain uncharted inside and outside the classroom (Paiz, 2020). I assume that homophobia is a social practice that prevents sexual diversity from being appreciated and recognized (Moore, 2016; Nelson, 2010). In Taiwan, invisible communities are perceived as dangerous, aberrant, and impure according to the heterosexual representations of family and romance from an early stage in life (Kubota, 2003). This sets up an assailable threshold to cross; nonetheless, digital spaces empower many underappreciated marginalized communities and equip me with the tools required for deconstructing and decontextualizing the assumptions established by mainstream discourse (Thomas & Stornaiuolo, 2016). Transmodal space comes as a beacon of light to throw the fixity of geographic boundaries into disorder and irradiates

how one utilizes mutual resources from translocal and transnational sources (Hawkins, 2018) to build imagined identities and communities for the transformation of investment (Darvin & Norton, 2015) in the unwieldy heterosexual space. The findings indicated that writing is not only interpreted in traditional versions (Cope & Kalantzis, 2009) but also in virtual and global encounters across a state of fluid integration, sensitive informativity, and meaning-making that is always emergent and empowers ITTs with cultural participation to reforge historical legacies and meaning.

7. CONCLUSION AND IMPLICATIONS

Self-narrative writing through translingual writing and transmodalities grants an opportunity for ITT to reframe the microcultural contexts between heterosexual and homosexual understanding. At the intersection of gender, race, and language, ITT's identities have been detached from the muted, silenced, and marginalized to be recentralized, revoiced, and restoried that capitalize on powerful autoethnography to read and inscribe himself into existence. As depicted in the data, the heterosexual market has penetrated across the globe, such as within the U.S.A. and Taiwan. Using translingual writing and transmodalities, this study invites a glimpse into the ever-emergent resources that ITT brings in particular lenses to (re)negotiate and (re)construct his gendered, racialized, and linguistic identities. However, I acknowledge that this study solely concentrates on what remains to be done that might not be the case for others while windowing into insight into how the hidden identities are in a position of inferiority and invisibility in TESOL field is imperative. In the context of the transnational world, identity is like a clay to be pulled apart and put together and work to be fashioned and refashioned at every turn that is not something fixed but dynamic zooming in and out of our social and cultural engagements, such as gendered literacy practices daily.

In addition, future studies could center around the ITTs' online digital spaces and writing that might inform of gendered identity construction, pedagogical decision-making, and power differentials on and offline. When we consider the age of globalization, we might ask ourselves, as Alexander and Banks (2004) argue, in the context of digital spaces that open up options for LGBTQ+ to rehearse and role-play identity that questions the rigidity of heterosexual framework. The resistance, in turn, might aid in understanding how LGBTQ+ and non-LGBTQ students and teachers the digital spaces they created will come into being about them, who will engage as their textual hosts and guests for meaning making, and who will build and reshape that "underappreciated spaces and identities." Here, it is important to note that being literate means being critically conscious of a given situation, particularly LGBTQ+, and can read and reread the contexts and situations for a safe or challenging self-representation and self-identification. An erasure of attention to the underappreciated communities prevents TESOL or related field scholars from understanding how to create a more inclusive and safe space in and outside educational landscapes. Scholars in TESOL have

put forward critical queer inquiry (CQP, Moore, 2020; Nelson, 2006; Paiz, 2020) as a window into the articulation of silenced words, invisible identities, and knowledge reproduction, as well as grant power to the oppressed, but in the future research, scholars could centralize the non-English countries. In a digital and global world where we approach the new, ever-expanding modes of transmission across spaces and time, the constructs of under-researched communities are in dire need of educational and individual desire. Otherwise, scholars limit themselves to contemporary gendered, racialized, and linguistic practices across differences and diversity. Indeed, these modes are embedded in sociocultural, sociopolitical, and socioeconomic practices in asymmetrical power relations that are equally important and closely linked to the border-crossing in a relationship of transnational, translingual, and transcultural turns in an ever-shrinking stream. Potentially, the implications of digital critical queer pedagogy (DCQP) might stride toward a more inclusive, equitable, and sustainable space that aids ESL and EFL teachers in cultivating differences not only as the norm but also as the pedagogical transformation for diversity. Subsequently, the implementation of DCQP in one's curriculum and instruction could be achieved using the following structure (this can be adopted to the local contexts as needed).

1) Perhaps defining or even reconfiguring the queer pedagogy is not enough to achieve the current ever-shifting framework; in other words, in what ways could DCQP (dis)empower an ongoing articulation of one's identification and representation in the heterosexual market, wherein all sexual and gendered identities are produced through power-laden structures in translocal and transnational contexts. Thus, we can investigate how the connection between "deterritorialization and reterritorialization" (see Motha, 2014) might inform the DCQP transformation. For example, we can ask our students to draw on their social media contexts (e.g., Facebook, Instagram, etc.) while inquiring into the oftentimes silenced words and worlds across globalization. This might contribute to the cultural markers of ecological detachment and re-assemblage for new vision and emerging knowledge production that might prohibit language learners, particularly LGBTQ+ learners, in and out of the classrooms?

2) Usually, ESL and EFL teachers have ready-made instruction material, which, as Kappra and Vandrick (2006) noted, does not include "controversial topics" but only monosexual content for profit. In this case, ESL and EFL teachers should map open-ended questions and problematize the very nature what is considered "unallowable" to create more inclusive material. Further they should explore how DCQP facilitates LGBTQ+ language learners in understanding the crossroads of gender, race, and language (e.g., naming, gender pronouns, role-play, etc.). It is important to assess how one's culture is shaped, negotiated, and reproduced within the heteronormative system that might mask opportunities for non-LGBTQ+ learners to see different perspectives through different lenses. This could cause DCQP to be laden with homophobia and even xenophobia, requiring inquiry-driven pedagogy for depathologizing, denaturalizing, and deconstructing the rigid framework while

allowing an imagined identity to flourish. Despite the possibility of opening up a new digital space, it might lead to constrained other identities and opportunities.

3) Lastly, self-reflection and self-reflexivity are two crucial components of social change and gender equity while foregrounding how ESL and EFL teachers pursue equity and social justice without perpetrating the relationship between the oppressed and the victimized. Simply put, these two components help in the monitoring of one's asymmetrical power relations with both non-LGBTQ+ learners and LGBTQ+ learners in ESL and EFL classrooms. For instance, we constantly self-reflect on what resources or instructional materials we could provide or ever limit one's opportunities for learning. Concurrently, self-narrative writing leads to praxis-driven pedagogical narratives in the intersection of gender, race, and language. An intriguing question comes to the fore: how are (non)LGBTQ+ teachers' sexual and gendered identities mediated through the adjustment and representation in class? Namely, how do (non)LGBTQ+ teachers employ CQP as a site of struggle for fostering tolerance, freedom, and safety for teaching practices. Consequently, such an effort can create a space for teachers and potential (invisible) language learners to ameliorate ongoing co-learning opportunities and cultivate (digital) critical queer pedagogy and processes.

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Chi Chang is a Ph.D. student in the Department of Language and Literacy Education at The University of British Columbia. His research focuses on the invisible transnational students' underrepresentation of silenced identities and oppressive heteronormative discourses in applied linguistics that English language and literacy education exists in an intricate tapestry of the transnational and transcultural world shaped by inequitable conditions. Through expansive and queer orientations to language education, he seeks to create, cultivate, and support spaces, opportunities, and systems that challenge such inequities alongside other (LGBTQ+) teacher-scholars.

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