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Article

"May I *basil* your house?" Multilingual Writers' Use of Academic, Technical, and Translingual Lexicons Through Literacy Autobiographical Writing in a Thai EMI Program

Shizhou Yang
International College, Payap University, Chiang Mai, Thailand

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Abstract
Unlike earlier studies that approach academic vocabulary learning cognitively, this case study situates vocabulary learning in the classroom context. It features the teaching and learning of academic writing in an EMI program in a Thai university, focusing on five EFL students' use of academic, technical, and translingual lexicons to construct their textual identities in their literacy autobiographies (LAs). Data were collected from a semester-long and autoethnographic-research-oriented academic writing course that focused on a multi-draft LA writing project. They included teaching documents, field notes, students' LAs, weekly reading journals, and course reflections. These data were examined both quantitatively, i.e., by using AntWordProfiler, and qualitatively, i.e., by adopting a classroom-writing-ecology-and-translanguaging perspective. Both the core Academic Word List (AWL)-570 and a word list specifically for social sciences were referenced. All students were found to have grown in their understanding and use of the academic vocabulary and other resources in their later LA drafts and that they used these resources in an orchestrated manner. This study challenges ESP and EAP professionals to adopt a more holistic and dynamic view of their students' meaning-making repertoires in academic writing.

Keywords
Academic vocabulary, technical vocabulary, translanguaging, textual identities, literacy autobiography

1. Introduction

"May I *basil* your house?" My eyes lit up when I read these words in a literacy autobiography (LA) by my American student, whom I will call Maria in this article to preserve anonymity. LA or the writers' own accounts of how they become literate, has been a widely used genre in North American universities but is rarely used pedagogically or studied contextually in English as a Foreign Language (EFL) education (Yang, 2023). By analyzing and contextualizing the lexicon use in the multiple drafts of LAs produced by Maria and her classmates, this study serves three purposes. First, it illustrates that LA

Email: yang_s@payap.ac.th

writing has much to offer in EFL literacy education, including but not limited to the learning of academic vocabulary. Second, it provides insights into the multilingual writer's situated, mediated, and dynamic identity work. Third, it yields new knowledge about literacy by relating to students' experiences. This study thus contributes to the project of decolonizing language teaching and research (Canagarajah, 2022; Li, 2022; Pennycook & Makoni, 2020).

2. Literature Review

2.1 Understanding academic vocabulary, technical vocabulary, and translingual lexicons

Academic vocabulary or words mainly used in academic writing, is crucial in language and literacy education (Coxhead, 2000). It aids both comprehension (Nation, 2001; Webb & Nation, 2017) and production of academic texts (Laufer & Nation, 1995; Yonek, 2008). Recent research (Masrai et al., 2022) shows that L2 learners' vocabulary size positively correlates with their academic achievement. However, given the global promotion of English medium instruction (EMI) (Macaro et al., 2018), concerns have been voiced that students' varying vocabulary knowledge may hinder their learning of subject content (Macaro et al., 2016). Therefore, further research is needed on the teaching and use of academic vocabulary in EMI environments.

Two main approaches exist in the teaching of academic vocabulary: direct and indirect (Huckin & Coady, 1999). The direct approach advocates explicit instructions to increase students' exposure to academic vocabulary (Sibold, 2011; Xodabande & Boroughani, 2023). Corpus studies (Coxhead, 2000; Gardner & Davies, 2014; Kwary & Artha, 2017), which developed or refined academic existing vocabulary lists, often guide teachers' choices of content (Webb & Nation, 2017). In contrast, the indirect approach emphasizes vocabulary acquisition through other activities (Gass, 1999; Reynolds & Ding, 2023). For instance, viewing an academic lecture video and reading online news have been found to facilitate students' indirect acquisition of academic vocabulary (Dang et al., 2022; Dang & Long, 2023). Metacognitive prompts in group settings were also found to facilitate indirect learning (Teng & Reynolds, 2019). For both direct and indirect approaches, researchers tend to use students' recall of word meanings and forms rather than students' actual use of academic vocabulary in writing as the main indicator of their learning outcomes.

Moreover, three biases need to be addressed in studies of academic vocabulary acquisition. First, assuming a unitary academic vocabulary across disciplines is problematic. Words such as "analyze" differ in use across disciplines (Hyland & Tse, 2009). Besides, Skoufaki and Petrić (2021) found that over 1/3 of the Academic Vocabulary List (AVL) (Gardner & Davies, 2014) are polysemous, with multiple meaning senses. Thus, one size cannot fit all. Technical vocabulary, or "words that are closely related to the content of a particular discipline" (Nation, 2001, p. 303), should also be considered (Durrant, 2014, 2016; Evans & Morrison, 2011; Uchihara & Harada, 2018).

Second, the focus on measurement, especially self-reported vocabulary size, raises questions about its reliability (Milton & Treffers-Daller, 2013). Researchers often use self-report to measure learners' vocabulary size, its change over time, and correlate the vocabulary size with the learners' academic achievements (Cameron, 2002; Laufer & Nation, 1995; Masrai & Milton, 2018; Nation, 2001). This method approaches academic vocabulary as information to be deposited and retained in the learner's mind. It neglects learning as a social practice (Wenger, 1998) and the learning of academic vocabulary as part of the academic literacies that learners are socialized into knowing and using (Lea & Street, 2006).

Third, a monolingual bias prevails. Using publications in English as the basis for developing the AWL and other vocabulary lists, these studies neglect the potential for multilingual speakers to use concepts from their heritage backgrounds to create new knowledge. Pedagogical practices at the classroom level may reify the myth that knowing *a* self-sufficient list of academic vocabulary is all that it takes for language learners to become successful academic writers.

Hence the need for classroom-based exploration of multilingual students' learning and use of their wide range of lexical resources in context. In particular, knowing academic words alone is insufficient for successful academic writing, which involves profound identity work (Cox et al., 2010; Hyland, 2002; Ivanič, 1998; Matsuda, 2015). In constructing their voices or textual identities, multilingual writers must draw on both textual and non-textual resources (Canagarajah, 2015; Matsuda, 2001).

2.2 Identity work and literacy autobiography

From a sociolinguistic perspective, the learning and using of academic vocabulary should be viewed as situated identity work. According to Gee (1999), individuals' ways of using words, amongst other things such as believing and thinking, mirrors the communal practice in relation to language use, belief, and thought etc. By using academic vocabulary from a particular community, individuals index and construct their desired textual identities as legitimate members of that community. Take Ivanič's (1998) case study as an example. The students were found to use academic vocabulary or "lexis" to project their diverse identities such as social work apprentice and feminists. These writers also used other resources such as pronoun use and quotations to construct their academic writer identity. Similarly, readers such as reviewers and journal editorial board members were also found to construct the writers' multiple identities based on their use of academic lexicons and non-discursive features such as scope of knowledge represented (Matsuda & Tardy, 2007; Tardy & Matsuda, 2009). These studies encourage us not to fix our eyes only on academic vocabulary.

An academic literacies perspective (Lea & Street, 2006) broadens our understanding of academic writing and vocabulary. It emphasizes examining critical issues such as "identity that are implicit in the use of literacy practices within specific institutional settings" (pp. 228-229). It also recognizes the influence of contending views of knowledge or epistemology on students' writing (Lea & Street, 2006). On the microscale, the contention may involve disciplinary conventions in language use. For instance, the extent to which "I" is allowed in academic writing differs greatly in applied linguistics and science (Hyland, 2001). The same words may contain different meaning in different disciplines (Durrant, 2014, 2016; Granger & Larsson, 2021; Li & Schmitt, 2009). On the macro level, the contention is an aftermath of colonization. It upholds Eurocentric methods of validating, producing, and representing knowledge while overlooking insights from marginalized communities. This ongoing biased knowledge-making process is called "epistemicide" by de Sauta Santos (2014) and "epistemological racism" by Kubota (2020). To disrupt this process, a translanguaging approach has been proposed (Canagarajah, 2022; Canagarajah, 2023; Li & García, 2022). Drawing on my research in a Global South context, I define translanguaging as:

> the act and synergic effects of bilingual or multilingual speakers selecting, deploying, and orchestrating features from their expansive and still expanding repertoire that can be conveyed in multiple modalities, as well as namable languages, dialects, and (native) genres from these linguistic backgrounds. (Yang, 2023, p. 110)

Moreover, we should harness learners' personal experiences, as suggested by Li (2022), "to provide alternative points of reference, horizons, and perspective for knowledge production and at the same time to transform the subjectivities of the learners" (p. 179). Featuring students' experiences and evolving subjectivities, LA writing seems a promising tool for both pedagogical and research purposes in EFL writing education.

As previously discussed, whereas LA has been a common pedagogical genre in North American tertiary education, it is rarely used in EFL writing education (Yang, 2023). Furthermore, existing research tends to treat LAs as self-standing (Canagarajah, 2020), neglecting contextual influences on multilingual writers' LA writing and resultant identity work. A contextual approach is thus needed. Canagarajah (2020) introduced two key contexts for scrutiny. First, the classroom contact zone may influence LA writing and the writer's voice directly (Canagarajah, 2015). More specifically, as the writers interact with the readers,

their *identities* are performed, their *roles* played, their *subjectivities* exercised, and their *awareness* heightened. These dynamic interactions lead the writers to negotiate and project their textual identities or voices. This approach shifts away from individualistic notions of voice, aligning with critiques by other scholars (Matsuda, 2001; Ramanathan & Atkinson, 1999). It provides pathways to examining how the classroom writing ecology (Canagarajah, 2020) influences writing and writer identity through participants, processes, products, and parameters.

Second, a transnational space foregrounds multilingual writers' relationships beyond the classroom. Canagarajah (2020) theorizes transnational space as a liminal space ripe with new identity options. The transnational space is important because "it is not the identity of the [multilingual] authors (i.e., whether they are native or nonnative; citizen or migrant) that explains the trope of becoming but the space in which they locate themselves" (Canagarajah, 2020, p. 33). Canagarajah goes on to argue that such identity work is both "rhetorically motivated and textually achieved" (p. 33). Therefore, multilingual writers can choose to inhabit the transnational space and construct their emergent sense of self through their writing and other resources. LA writing is then not positioned as a site to simply index the writers' existing identities; it serves as a platform to explore their emergent identities, as facilitated by the classroom writing ecology. Expanding the transnational space metaphor, multilingual writers possess two sets of lexicons: transnational terms or words likes the names of home and foreign countries indicating their transnational ties, and translingual expressions or lexicons from non-English origins, in particular the writer's heritage background, suggesting their transnational connections. Thus, we must consider the possibilities for multilingual writers to engage in translingual writing, which is defined by Canagarajah (2016) as "a form of situated literate practice where writers negotiate their semiotic resources in relation to the dominant conventions of language and rhetoric" (Canagarajah, 2016, p. 266). This practice allows competent multilingual professionals (Canagarajah, 2020, 2022; Kim & Park, 2020; Yazan et al., 2021) to transcend monolingual constraints in their fields. Importantly, contextual studies of LAs show that translingual writing is available for multilingual student writers as well (Canagarajah, 2015, 2020; Yang, 2022, 2023). Hence, a contextual approach to multilingual writers' identity work, as partially mediated by their use of academic vocabulary, should consider both the transnational space and associated translingual possibilities.

Guided by a dialogical and transnational/translingual framework to interpret multilingual writers' identity work, with a focus on the impact of literacy autobiographical writing on their incidental learning of academic vocabulary, in this case study, I sought to answer four research questions:

1) To what extent, if at all, is multi-drafted LA writing conducive to international students' incidental learning of academic vocabulary, as measured by the AWL?
2) To what extent, if at all, is multi-drafted LA writing conducive to international students' learning of technological vocabulary?
3) To what extent, if at all, is multi-drafted LA writing conducive to international students' learning of transnational and translingual lexicons?
4) How do the international students use academic, technical, transnational/translingual lexicons to construct their textual identities?

3. The Study

3.1 Context and data

The study was situated in an English-medium-instruction international college in a private university in Thailand. The senior seminar, added in late 2020 as a fourth-year-level required course for English communication major students, served the dual purposes of preparing students for senior projects and internship programs. To achieve these two purposes, I, the instructor, designed a multi-drafted LA writing project, guided the students to engage in autoethnographic research, and asked them to keep a weekly

response journal. To facilitate peer reviews of their LAs, I required that each student keep an online portfolio via a shared Google Docs folder.

The course was taught online due to the COVID-19 situation. As required by the university, I recorded all sessions. The class had seven students from different countries, and each spoke at least two languages. One year after their graduation, five of the students agreed to participate in the research. They signed a written consent to allow me to use their online portfolios as data. Table 1 provides an overview of the five students' nationality and language backgrounds[1].

Table 1

Student Participants' Nationality and Linguistic Backgrounds

Name (pseudonym)	Passport country	Major Languages & Self-Descriptors[2]	English Learning
Zhang	Chinese	Mandarin ("mother tongue"), English ("fluent")	Formal learning since middle school; majoring in English in China
Nancy	German	German ("native"), English ("second language," "academic language")	Home exposure as a child; formal learning since middle school
Jessica	Thai/German	Thai ("limited working proficiency"), German ("limited working proficiency"), English ("L1," "native proficiency")	Attending international school since childhood
Aiko	Japanese	Japanese ("fluent"), English	Learning English since elementary school
Maria	American	Pennsylvania Dutch ("native"), English ("native"), German ("intermediate"), Thai ("superior")	Learning English since childhood

All five students were proficient users of English. To enter the International College, all of them except Maria must, according to the admission requirements, pass a standard English proficiency test such as TOEFL iBT (with a score of 61 or above) and IELTS (with a score of 6.0 or above) before enrollment. Growing up in the USA, Maria was exempted from the English proficiency test. Jessica attended English-medium international schools in Thailand and regarded English as her "L1." All five students have developed a high proficiency through many years of learning and using English.

The data from the students' online portfolios included their multiple LA drafts (D1, D2, D3, etc.), weekly response journals (J1, J2, J3, etc.), and autoethnographic research data. Additional data encompassed class artifacts and teaching documents.

3.2 Data analysis

I analyzed the data by using a mixed method. To understand the five students' differences in their vocabulary use across time, I first used AntWordProfile (Anthony, 2022), a free online tool, to analyze lexicon features of their LA drafts at the beginning (D1) and the end of the semester (D11, or in Zhang's case, her final draft D9). In the quantitative analysis, I focused on the participants' use of words from the AWL-570 (Coxhead, 2000), highlighted in purple in AntWordProfiler's output. I also explored the other

categories: 1. The first 1000 words of the General Service List (gst_1st_1000), indicated in red; 2. The second 1000 words of the General Service List (gst_2nd_1000), marked in green; and 3. Any words not found in any lists (not in lists), presented in black. The broadened consideration addressed the limitation of the AWL-570, which does not cover technical vocabulary and translingual resources. The automatic color coding by AntWordProfiler helped to distinguish word types in students' writing, as will be shown in the Findings.

Furthermore, I utilized the AAWL-SS developed by Kwary and Artha (2017) and analyzed the five students' use of these social science-oriented words in their final LAs. The analysis involved the following steps. First, I compiled the AAWL-SS words to an Excel form and marked them in red. Second, I copied the other three lists from AntWordProfiler in different columns and highlighted them in other colors. Third, I combined these lists in another column and sorted them alphabetically. Fourth, I identified and counted AAWL-SS words in the students' final LAs.

Since multilingual writers might engage in translanguaging or translingual writing by embedding native lexicons not included in any of the lists in English writing (Canagarajah, 2016, 2022), a list of non-English words were also compiled based on students' writing. I used words "not included in lists" as provided by AntWordProfiler as the basis. The list was divided into two types. Transnational resources encompassed words directly naming a geographical location (e.g., Thailand), a language (e.g., Japanese), or a transnational tie (e.g., travel). Translingual resources featured words and expressions rooted in non-English language, such as "天外有天" (literally, beyond the sky, there is another sky; metaphorically, there is always someone more capable than yourself) in Chinese. The frequencies, as provided by AntWordProfiler for each of these lexicons, to gauge the growth in students' use of these resources. Note the distinction between these two categories was an interpretive process. For instance, I regarded the mention of scholars from non-English backgrounds as transnational because it allowed the students to draw on transnational scholarship, especially when these scholars shared the students' linguistic background.

In qualitative data analysis, I combined Pavlenko's (2007) framework, which attends to form, content, and context, and a classroom writing ecology perspective (Canagarajah, 2020), focusing on participants, processes, products, and parameters. My procedure involved comparing lexical use in the participants' first and final drafts, analyzing the form of the LAs, tracing intertextual relationships between the students' LAs and the class writing ecology, and using class artifacts to verify my interpretation of how the classroom writing ecology may have impacted the students' LA writing.

4. Findings

4.1 Use of AWL words

As Table 2 shows, all five students increased their use of academic vocabulary in their final LA drafts.

Table 2

Students' Use of AWL Words in Two Drafts

Students	AWL in D1 (%)	AWL in D11 (%)	Increase (%)
Zhang	2.0	3.0	1.0
Nancy	7.5	7.7	0.2
Aiko	1.7	5.1	3.4
Maria	2.3	3.8	1.5
Jessica	2.8	4.3	1.5
Average	3.26	4.78	1.52

All five students' final drafts have shown an increase in the use of academic vocabulary. The highest increase was 3.4%, made by Aiko, the Japanese student. The lowest increase was made by Nancy, the German student, who showed a gain of only 0.2% to her already high starting point of 7.5%. By average, the five students made an increase of academic vocabulary of 1.52%. It shows that all these students have learned to use new academic vocabulary without having to be explicitly taught. In the case of Jessica, for instance, her D1 contains 11 AWL word forms such as "identified" (2 times) and "culture" (1 time). In contrast, her D11 contains 39 AWL words, more than triple that in her D1. The most frequently used AWL words in her D11 include "identity" (11 times), "communities" (4 times), and "beneficial," "job," "paradigm," and "culture" (each garnishing 3 times).

A similar growth was evident in the American student Maria's LAs as well. Her D1 used 13 unique AWL words. In contrast, her D11 contained 77 unique AWL words. The growth ratio was 5.9 times. Like Jessica, the four most common words used in Maria's D11 are culture-related words: "identity" (15 times), "culture" (10 times), "cultures" (9 times), and "community" (5 times).

Qualitative differences can also be observed in Jessica's use of academic vocabulary. Take the word "identity" as an example. In her D1, she only implied that she struggled with an identity issue without using the word "identity." As she wrote in the beginning paragraph of her D1:

> "I am half German, half Thai, and half English". This was the answer I used to give people when they asked me where I came from. Without a doubt, this makes no logical sense, because three halves make one and a half human beings, but it made total sense in my head back then. At the time, I actually identified myself as "English" because I was so attached and captivated by the language.

In contrast, in her D11, Jessica's usage of "identity" showed two main improvements. First, it was both personalized, as in "my identity," and reflected upon, as in her question, "Which half of me do I have to identify with?" Second, she interpreted her "identity" issue culturally by relating to academic literature about "biracial identity crisis" and discussing its impact on biracial individuals' job trajectories. As she wrote:

> However, my identity has always been in question. Which half of me do I have to identify with in order to be accepted into the society I live in? It is common that biracial kids like me experience what Norwood calls a "biracial identity crisis" (2019, p. 1). I often feel as if "[I am] not enough of one race or that [I] believe [I] have to pick a side, or [I] do not feel like [I] can identify as either because in society's eyes, [I am] not enough" (Norwood, 2019, p. 1). This decision of the identity that is the "best fit" that would help me blend into the community I live in has always created conflict within me (*Navigating Borderland Communities in a Monolithic Paradigm*, 2020, p. 30). This dilemma is something that the majority of biracial kids go through at one point in their life, especially once they grow older and become more self-conscious of their stand in society. It may even have an effect on what jobs they end up having to choose.

Such growth underscores the effectiveness of an indirect approach. Over the semester, as the students engaged in class learning and multi-drafted writing, their understandings about the academic vocabulary deepened, making these lexicons both personally meaningful and professionally relevant. Consequently, gradual incorporation of these words into their LA writing became possible.

4.2 Use of technical vocabulary

The results indicate the five students used AAWL-SS words 84 times in their D11. Prominent word families include: "creation" (22 times), "identify" (10 times), "data" (9 times), "method" (7 times), "literacy" (7 times), and "research" (3 times). None of these words were used in the students' first drafts. See examples 1, 2, and 3 in which some of these technical words are used in context.

> Example 1: Create
>
> This decision of the identity that is the "best fit" that would help me blend into the community I live in has always created conflict within me (Navigating Borderland Communities in a Monolithic Paradigm, 2020, p. 30). This dilemma is something that the majority of biracial kids go through at one point in their life, especially once they grow older and become more self-conscious of their stand in society. It may even have an effect on what jobs they end up having to choose. (Jessica)

In this paragraph, Jessica disclosed a tension in her identity as a "luk krueng" or mixed blood of Thai and German parents (J5). Importantly, it concerns not only herself, but also "the majority of biracial kids." She was relating her personal story with a shared cultural experience. By citing relevant literature, she tried to fulfill the requirement of autoethnographic research for "cultural interpretation." As she wrote in a journal:

> As I mentioned above and a few times during class discussion and past journals, I found it difficult to "explain how my life experiences are culturally, not just personally, meaningful" (Chang, 2008, p. 137) because I was never particularly great with finding relevant sources or academic articles to derive knowledge from. This draft has given me the opportunity to sort of force myself to work on my weaknesses. I always found myself thinking of identity and my struggles within biracial crisis, but now I know there are others who have similar if not identical struggles with their own sense of culture. (J9)

In other words, Jessica gradually acquired the ability to use technical vocabulary such as "creation" as she struggled to interpret her experience from a biracial lens, as expected in the course.

> Example 2: Data
>
> I am 11 years old, at home one evening after school. The phone rings and I answer it, surprised to hear the voice of the city librarian. I have won a $20 prize in the library's story writing contest. My story, a short one about a ship that was lost at sea, has won second place in the sixth-grade category. Numb with surprise and happiness, I walk outside to my current favorite place, the stable where my pony and her foal are kept, and sit in the straw, processing the wonder of it all (personal memory data, 2001). (Maria)

In her D11, Maria included a childhood experience of winning a prize for her story writing. Details about "stable," "pony," "foal," and "straw" helped to portray her farm life as a Pennsylvania Dutch girl. The phrase "personal memory data" in brackets was adopted from the textbook by Chang's (2008) *Autoethnography as Method.* More specifically, Chang (2008) views personal memory data as "a building block of autoethnography because the past gives a context to the present self and memory opens a door to the richness of the past" (p. 71). Thus, in Maria's D11, she used personal memory data to support her eight vignettes and interpret them through the theoretical lens of "edgewalker," a concept introduced by Chang (2008, p. 28). "Vignettes" was a concept borrowed from a study in the course reader. Maria and several other classmates found the vignette approach effective (class discussion, 2020/10/07). Therefore, classroom artifacts informed Maria LA in profound ways, allowing her to utilize technical vocabulary used by other autoethnographic researchers.

> Example 3: Method
>
> Japanese people seem to be trained to obey given works without question since they have been training such behaviours by starting from when they enroll in organizational settings. For instance, PE classes in elementary schools look like a military exercise. As such, most Japanese students probably do not doubt the curriculum for studying English at school. The curriculum is slowly changing but most public schools have still employed a traditional method, 'the

> grammar-translation method." There is a big disadvantage in the grammar translation method because it does not focus on communication with people (Kong, 2011). One day, those students would realize that the essential role of a language is conversations, for instance, when they go to another country. When people could succeed to break social practices or common-sense, the 'iron cage,' they can succeed to adopt new circumstances. (Aiko)

Aiko criticized the Japanese way of teaching English in her D1, calling it "stupid" for a textbook to include sentences like "This is a pen." It ended with a paragraph on her motivation for learning English: "having communication with local people during travelling, so it became my motivation for learning English" (D1). Nevertheless, her D11 delved deeper into this critique. By citing related literature, she identified the "grammar translation method" as the main culprit of Japanese not being able to communicate in English. Thus, she fulfilled the duty of an autoethnographic researcher to situate her personal experience with her cultural background (Chang, 2008).

Arguably, several other unlisted words, such as "multilingual," and those within the general vocabulary, such as "English," can also be considered technical terms. They pertain to the students' field of study, English Communication, and concern the students' writing of their literacy autobiographies by using an autoethnographic approach, a requirement of the senior seminar course (syllabus 2020). See Table 3 for a quick survey of the technical vocabulary used in the course and adopted by the students.

Table 3

Use of Other Technical Words

Topic area	AAWL-SS word families	Category	Frequency in D1	Frequency in D11
language	language	gsl_1st_1000	55	118
	English	gsl_1st_1000	105	253
	multilingual	not in lists	1	8
	translanguaging/translingual	not in lists	0	5
	translation	gsl_2nd_1000	6	11
literacy	practice	gsl_2nd _1000	0	13
	reading	gst_1st_1000	0	15
	writing	gst_1st_1000	0	47
autoethnography	autoethnography	not included	0	5
	story	gsl_1st_1000	0	11
	memory	gsl_1st_1000	0	9
	self	gsl_2nd_1000	0	8
	voice	gsl_1st_1000	0	13

> Example 4: Literacy
>
> As my family highly emphasized on education and literacy, books were the primary source of entertainment in our house. Reading books and bedtime stories was a common practice since I was a little girl. Like Kubota's (2001) early childhood experience with literacy (pp. 97-98), it was my father who sparked my passion for literature by reading bedtime stories to me in the evening. Most books that we read were in my native language German. I grew up associating reading with pleasure. This has stayed with me all my life. (Nancy)

Initially, none of the students used "literacy" in their first LA drafts. For instance, Nancy wrote a narrative comparing the differences between the German and English languages. Nonetheless, over time,

"literacy" emerged as a frequently used term in the class. We discussed its meanings, told stories about literacy events such as "reading bedtime stories," and related to publications such as *Ways with Words* (Heath, 1983). Eventually, "literacy" became the class's way of talking about childhood and schooling experiences with books.

> Example 5: Autoethnography
>
> Chang in "Autoethnography as Method" suggests that "individuals are cultural agents, but culture is not at all about individuality." Each language lets me cross paths with people that eventually shape me into a different person. Each person I meet gives me a deeper understanding of humanity, which lets me reach a hand to people on both sides of me and become a bridge between the two of them. Not only do I learn the new culture I am crossing into, but it is also imperative that I preserve the language and culture that I came out of. (Maria)

Maria's D11 illustrates the students' growing understanding about autoethnography. By the end of the semester, the class had read nine of the chapters from *Autoethnography as method* (Chang, 2008), presented and discussed these chapters, and applied related methods to collect and analyze their autoethnographic data (syllabus, PowerPoint slides, fieldnotes). In Maria's case, she also saw herself as one of the "cultural agents" as "a bridge" between the "new culture" through language learning and "the language and culture that I came out of" (D11). Therefore, the students' learning and growing use of technical vocabulary was contextually shaped by the whole class's ongoing engagement with autoethnographic research.

4.3 Use of transnational and translingual resources

Besides their growing use of AWL and technical words, the five students also used numerous words not included in any of the above-mentioned academic word lists. In D1, these non-listed tokens comprised 6.50% of the total. The rate increased to 10.80% in D11. These lexicons included both transnational and translingual resources. Table 4 summarizes the students' use of transnational lexicons in their first and final drafts.

Table 4

Use of Transnational Lexicons

Transnational Lexicons in English	Examples & frequency of individual words (top three)		Frequency (total count of all terms)	Percentage
D1	German	32	85	0.19
	Thai	12		
	Japanese	6		
D11	German	62	587	0.46
	Thai	45		
	Japanese	44		

Similarly, the students' use of translingual terms saw a slight increase from 0.52% in D1 to 0.70% in D11. These translingual terms allowed the students to perform their multilingual identity by drawing on their non-English language backgrounds. For instance, Zhang used a cultural saying in Chinese. Aiko used the word "*supuringu*," which is pronouncing "spring" with a marked Japanese accent. Importantly, as the students grew proficient in non-English and non-heritage languages, they also began to use these languages in their creative ways of expressing themselves. For example, the American student Maria included in her D11 translingual resources from the Thai language and cultural references: "I am from… *TomYum* noodles and *Somtum*."

Table 5
Use of Translingual Lexicons

	Translingual Lexicons in D1	Translingual Lexicons in D11	Example	Languages embedded
Total frequency	23	90	"May I 'basil' your house?"	Pennsylvania Dutch
Percentage	0.52%	0.70%	"A female teacher would be 'die Lehrerin'"	German

Translingual resources in the form of heritage expressions were used by the five students except Jessica. For instance, Maria used "basil," a Pennsylvania Dutch word meaning "sweep" (D1), to describe her childhood experience in an Amish community. As she explained further in her D11, Pennsylvania Dutch plays an important role in her community:

> Whenever we met anyone who as Amish or had Amish roots, we would speak only PA Dutch to them. To speak English to them would have seemed odd or even prideful. Many Amish people see it [speaking PA Dutch] as a sign of plainness (Fuller, 2005, p. 801). It gave me an identity of an Amish girl growing up in subcultural America. This part of my identity will never be lost, no matter how long I live in a culture different from my mother culture. (D11, Maria)

However, not all students explicitly tapped into their translingual resources. Jessica mainly used her transnational resources by naming and reflecting on her "multilingual" backgrounds. As she wrote in her D11, "However, my multilingual upbringing was a blessing as much as it was a hindrance." She used a translingual term in her journal only once, positioning herself as a "luk krueng" with a different career option from her Thai peers (J9). Nonetheless, evidence shows that Jessica already embraced a translingual orientation in her thinking. As she wrote in J10:

> I personally find myself adopting translingual practices to represent my identity and comfort space more and I agree that we take "translingualism beyond a fashionable academic idea to treat translingualism as a diverse and strategic social practice" (Canagarajah & Gao, p.3). In a world developing and growing with more and more biracial and multilingual people, translingualism should truly be studied further.

In an email, she explained further about her disuse of "luk krueng" in her LA:

> I'm not entirely sure why I didn't use the term "luk krueng" in the rest of my writing for [Senior seminar course]. I might have thought it was too much of an informal word to be using in formal writing circumstances, other than that there is no particular reason I remember. My identity as a "luk krueng" played a big role in influencing my relationship with translingualism for sure. As I mentioned in the above response, as a person of mixed race, I walk on a tightrope between belonging to two different cultures. In a way, my relationship with translingualism formed my identity as a "luk krueng" because it was a way to show who I was without having to constantly explain myself and my race to people. (email 2023/03/28)

Transnational lexicons directly convey the students' national, linguistic, and racial backgrounds whereas translingual lexicons only hint at the students' backgrounds and possibly their relationship with these backgrounds. Despite lacking an inherent academic tone, these resources play a crucial role in helping multilingual writers navigate and represent their multilingual world and construct their academic writer identity. After all, from an autoethnographic perspective, whether a text is academic relies partially on how the writer contextualizes translingual expressions by providing insider views and linking with professional literature, as Maria and other students have done in their LAs. Next, we will consider the participants' use of these non-academic resources together with academic resources in constructing textual identities.

4.4 Construction of textual identities

The students had multiple identities, some of which were amalgamated into their LAs. Importantly, the students did not use their AWL words, technical vocabulary, or translingual resources in isolation, but combined them to shape their textual identities. As the AntWordProfiler analysis shows about Nancy's paragraph below, the technical term "approach" was both personalized and synergized, appearing with words from different lists. Taking the lead is 76% common words in gst_1st_1000. Next in frequency is AWL_570 words and not in lists, both claiming 10.40%. Least used were gst_2nd_1000, at only 3.10%.

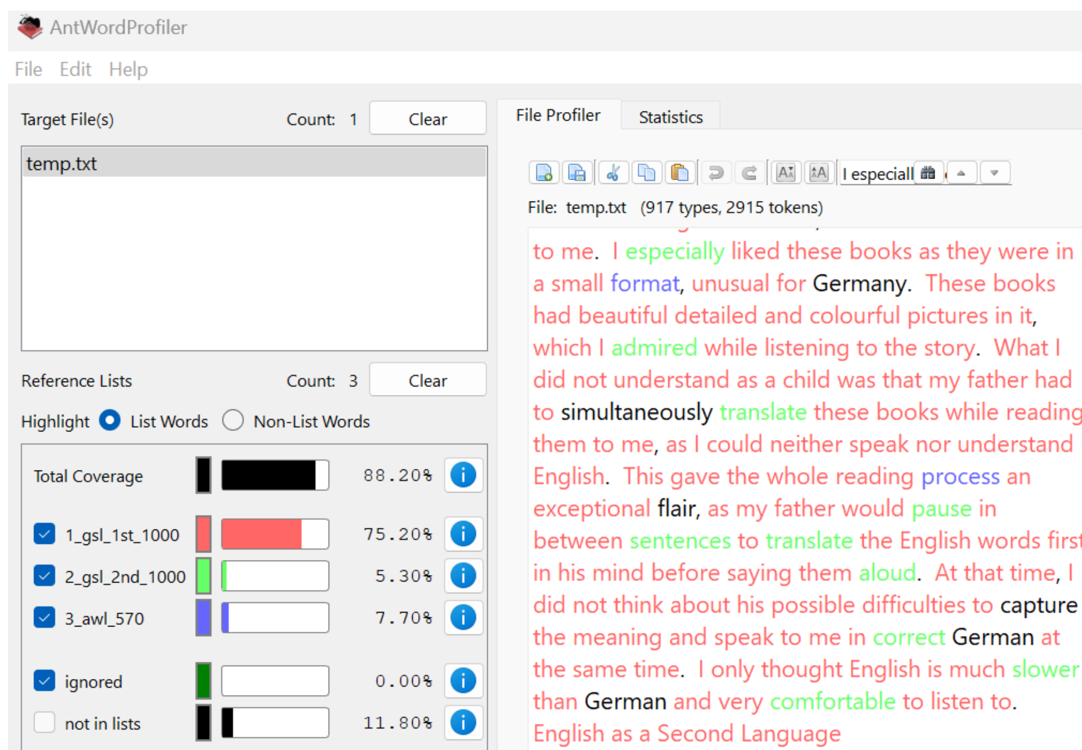
> I understand that all languages must follow specific rules to be readable and understood. However, these rules should not be the determining factor of evaluating a paper, and article or any other research in any academic field. The answer to these problems may lie in accepting translingual approaches. The translingual orientation does not mean to neglect the conventions of Standard English writing, but it encourages multilingual writers to draw upon all their linguistic and rhetorical repertories to negotiate with the mainstream conventions and be critical about their own language use in different writing contexts. (Chen, 2017, p. 45).

In this paragraph, despite using only one AAWL-SS word "approaches," Nancy incorporated the learning about translingualism (Aiko & Zhang's PowerPoint Slides 2020/10/07) through the phrase "translingual approaches." The APA style in-text citation signals Nancy's growing familiarity with the conventions, which I both taught through workshops (cf., PowerPoint slides, 2020/11/24) and expected my students to use in their writing (syllabus & evaluation criteria). Nancy's use of "I" is also worth noting. This contrasts with her earlier belief that "I" should not be used in academic writing, which she learned from other instructors in the International College (Class video, 2020/10/07). This shift reflects her evolving understanding about academic writing as situated and negotiated.

Even low-frequency words not included in the AWL served as an important resource to shape the writers' discoursal identity, as demonstrated in Nancy's LA (See Figure 1):

Figure 1

AntWordProfiler Analysis of Nancy's LA (D11)



As shown in Figure 1, Nancy utilized five unlisted words ("Germany," "flair," "simultaneously," "capture," and "German"), two AWL words ("format" and "process"), an extensive number (over 80%) of common or General Service List words—such as "I," "books," and "pictures"—and a handful of lexicon bundles such as "at that time." This diverse array of resources enabled Nancy to retell her childhood literacy experience in Germany, while performing her identities as a family member initiated into literacy in German and as a student crafting her literacy autobiography. Additionally, by featuring her father's literacy practice of having to "translate the English words first in his mind before saying them aloud," Nancy related to the concept of translingualism, which she wrote about in another part of her LA. As such, she enacted her identity as a member of the classroom community, which had engaged in reading, discussing, and reflecting on the potential applications of translingualism in language education (syllabus, PowerPoint slides, and students' journals).

The following excerpt also showcases the students' growing understanding of the concept of translanguaging.

> *"May I basil your house?"*
>
> These are words I clearly remember hearing my sister asking one day as we were playing in our hayloft. We loved making houses out of the small square bales that filled the upstairs of our barn. I was probably about 8 years old when I remember hearing my 5-year-old sister ask the question. She meant to ask "May I sweep your house?" but could not remember the English word for sweep, thus substituted the word sweep with the word "basil", which in our mother tongue meant, "broom". (D1, Maria)

Basil is not an AWL nor an AAWL-SS word. Nonetheless, Maria used it fittingly to retell her childhood translingual experience or mixed use of different named languages.

The students' growing use of "I" is worth noting. In their D1s, "I" was used 167 times. In contrast, it was used 424 times, more than doubling its frequency. This increase indicates the students' evolving view and acceptance of the role personal experiences can play in autoethnographic research. Take Nancy as an example. At the beginning of the semester, she was adamant that "I" should not be used in academic writing because that is what her professors had said in her earlier years of college. However, as we studied autoethnographic research and read related literature, Nancy became convinced that whether "I" can be used in academic writing depends on context. By embracing "I," the students delved deeper into their personal life and literacy experiences, establishing identities as emergent autoethnographic researchers, multilingual speakers, and translingual subjects.

> In German, it is straightforward to identify if one refers to a male or a female when using job-titles. The German language uses, in general, the suffix "in" to highlight that the person is female. A female teacher would be "die Lehrer*in*" in comparison to her male counterpart, "der Lehrer." Nowadays, even the former generic written format of referring to all teachers as "Lehrer," which would include males and females, got adapted to the inclusive form of "Lehrer/*innen*." This applies to all jobs as well as other areas. A reader would be "Leser/in" if addressed in a written context. (Nancy, D1)

It is worth emphasizing again that the students did not construct their textual identities solely by using academic vocabulary. Composing their LAs in the English Communication Department, they often had to use disciplinary specific lexicons, which may or may not be included in the AWL. Take Nancy's language use as an example. 11.8% of her vocabulary were not included in the AWL or the 2000 general service vocabulary list. Nonetheless, they played an important role in helping Nancy to construct her identity or multiple identities within the academic community. The most frequently used words were "German" (26 times) and "Germany" (4 times); these words helped Nancy to construct her identity as a German. Similarly, two related words "autoethnography" and "autoethnographic," both occurring only

once, signal Nancy's engagement with autoethnographic research, as expected by the course (syllabus, evaluation criteria, PowerPoint slides).

In the same vein, a comparison between Jessica's D1 and D11 shows that she also increased her use of non-AWL resources. Take words not included in any of the lists as an example, in Jessica's D1, words such as "Thai," "German," and "proficient" were used and there were 18 of them. They helped Jessica to construct her identity as a mixed-blood of Thai and German nationalities, who prided herself on her growing proficiency in English. In her D11, Jessica used 86 non-AWL lexicons. Added to her draft includes words such as "multilingual" (6 times), "navigating" (3 times), "borderland" (1 time), "dilemma" (1 time), "biracial" (1 time), and "multiracial" (1 time). They provide a sense of Jessica's engagement with her identity as a multilingual speaker at a more nuanced level by working with issues such as conflict and race. At the same time, they helped her to construct her emergent academic writer identity. Therefore, a translanguaging perspective on multilingual writers' identity work may be important.

5. Discussion

This case study demonstrates that a multi-drafted literacy autobiographical writing project with international students in a Thai university's EMI program has improved their academic vocabulary use, as measured by the AWL-570 (Cox et al., 2010). It affirms the importance of considering task type and learners' engagement quality when assessing incidental academic vocabulary learning (Huckin & Coady, 1999). Furthermore, it challenges the assumption that academic vocabulary MUST be taught directly because of their infrequent use in language learners' daily lives. In the senior seminar course, academic vocabulary such as *identity*, *culture*, and *community* were often encountered through reading, discussion, research, and writing. These terms were interlaced with the classroom writing ecology of products, processes, participants, and even the parameters (Canagarajah, 2020). The integration at the parameter level was facilitated by the course syllabus, which encouraged the students to write their literacy autobiographies for publication.

The study also provides useful insights about the students' learning of technical vocabulary. It includes both words identified by AAWL-SS, such as "create," "data," and "research," and words specific to the course, such as "autoethnography," "multilingual," and "translingual." Besides supporting the claim that technical vocabulary is important, this study shows the effectiveness of teaching academic writing through autoethnographic research. By engaging in a community of practice (Wenger, 1998), the students grew increasingly familiar with the technical vocabulary of the field. This familiarity eventually allowed them to use the technical vocabulary confidently to tell their own stories and interpret their own experiences within their disciplinary context.

One unique finding of the study is the students' growing use of their transnational and translingual resources. These words signal their transnational connections, either explicitly or subtly. They convey these connections by mentioning their background countries, as in Jessica's case, who wrote in her LA, "I am half German, half Thai, and half English." They also incorporate L1 expressions or L1 grammar rules in the English L2 writing, as in the cases of Maria ("May I *basil* [broom] your house?") and Nancy ("A female teacher would be 'die Lehrer*in*'"). All of them engaged in writing their L1 life experiences in an L2, confirming the insight "that identity is at much at play as is ability" for multilingual writers (Steinman, 2005, p. 75). Furthermore, this study suggests that becoming multiliterate and translingual is not just a privilege for multilingual professionals only (Canagarajah, 2022). In a nurturing environment, EFL students can achieve it too.

Lastly, the study challenges academic writing professionals to adopt a translanguaging perspective when considering multilingual students' lexical resources. Translanguaging is political in that it challenges ways languages are named, segregated, and differently valued (Li, 2022). Within a classroom writing ecology, this study shows that a writing teacher can serve as an agent for change by engaging the students in a process of learning about translanguaging and reflecting on their own life and literacy

experiences accordingly. This process can further be facilitated and enhanced by autoethnographic research and multi-drafted literacy autobiographical writing. By doing so, the writing teacher can become a co-learner, explorer, and nurturer of translanguaging as an alternative storyline for multilingual writers. The students' growing capacity to deploy their lexical resources—AWL, technical, transnational, translingual, and even daily words such as "I" —holistically in their final LA drafts confirms the efficacy of this approach. By embracing a translanguaging orientation and practice, the students have become both creative and critical academic writers to address the international academic community. As an illustration of this transformation, Nancy, who once strongly believed that "I" should never be used in academic writing, experienced a shift in her thinking over the semester. In her final LA, she wrote:

> From my personal account as a multilingual, struggling to preserve my German voice as well as female identity in English, I hope that one day there will be the freedom to express myself in ways that show academic knowledge without the strict corset of the English Academia. (Nancy, D11)

By the time this study was written, Nancy had enrolled in a graduate program in a leading university in Thailand majoring in gender studies. Her evolving LA, partially reflecting her own life struggles as a multilingual writer, showcases her textual identities that can only be maximally constructed and understood through translanguaging practice. This study also lends support to the connection between vocabulary learning and academic writing. In particular, it extends the findings of earlier studies that robust instruction can help young monolingual learners use academic vocabulary in their expository writing with deep understanding (Beck et al., 2013; Yonek, 2008). As such, it provides a different scenario for rich vocabulary instruction for multilingual learners: frequent encountering in reading materials, frequent discussion in class, frequent reflection after class, and frequent writing and rewriting toward publication (syllabus, PowerPoint slides). In summary, it uses writing as a method of inquiry (Richardson & St. Pierre, 2018) to explore, understand, and share the rich, complex, and evolving meanings of the students' multilingual and multiliterate lives. Through LA writing, a meaningful literacy project (Hanauer, 2012), the student writers expanded their visions about themselves, constructed their preferred textual identities through translanguaging, and as a byproduct, expanded their academic and technical vocabulary.

There is no space in this paper to discuss the students' evolving use of academic writing conventions such as *et al*., doi, and citation of multilingual scholars in constructing their academic writer identities. Nonetheless, suffice it is to say that the students' growth as academic writers should not be equated to only their increasing use of academic vocabulary, as measured by AWL-570. Instead, we must consider the extent to which the students can orchestrate and deploy these and other lexical resources, including but not limited to transnational terms, translingual expressions, and daily vocabulary to make a convincing and consistent argument.

6. Conclusion

Academic vocabulary plays a pivotal role in shaping multilingual students' academic writer identities in EMI environments. This case study, distinct from prior research primarily by focusing on vocabulary size, delved into the depth and criticality of academic vocabulary learning in a Thai private university's EMI program. The findings suggest that students deepened their grasp of academic vocabulary in their later drafts. The LA writing process also contributed to decolonization by helping the students to overcome their sense of inferiority and bolstering their academic writer identities. Pedagogically, this study underscores the need to emphasize not just vocabulary size but also the depth and criticality of understanding, which is the foundation for effective vocabulary use in writing. LA writing, which encourages students to reflect on their experiences and identities, turned out to be a productive teaching tool to facilitate such a vocabulary learning process.

This study introduces a new approach to academic vocabulary learning in the EMI environment, complementing a technical approach. Academic vocabulary was not explicitly taught but learned organically as the students engaged in a community of practice for (emergent) autoethnographic researchers. As the students developed shared norms, they also began to use academic vocabulary in personally meaningful ways. It is therefore critical to design the classroom writing ecology (Canagarajah, 2020; Yang, 2023) in such ways as to allow the students to:

- Interact with and reflect on products (multilingual writers' literacy autobiographies, peers' writing samples, and literature on translingualism);
- Engage in learning to write as a process (by doing autoethnographic research, documenting their own learning, and writing multiple drafts of their literacy autobiographies);
- Contribute to the community of practice as participants (by attending weekly seminars, writing their own weekly response journals, drafting their literacy autobiographies, sharing their drafts with others, giving feedback to each other's drafts, and revising their own drafts to foreground their evolving subjectivities);
- Confine to and challenging parameters (by wrestling with the APA style conventions, syllabus guidelines, institutional policies, and cultural norms).

Additionally, the study supports incidental learning of academic vocabulary in a classroom context. Through using academic vocabulary, extensive reading, and discussing academic literature, students deepen their understanding and gradually learn to appropriate vocabulary in academic contexts.

This study also challenges writing educators to take a disciplinary and translanguaging view of academic writing. While mastering the AWL words is essential, their use varies across disciplines (Hyland & Tse, 2009; Kwary & Artha, 2017). Thus, the learning of technical vocabulary should be considered. Furthermore, due attention should be paid to multilingual students' use of transnational and translingual resources in their academic writing. The translanguaging thread shown in this study may be extended to other EMI contexts to further the cause of pluralizing and decolonizing academic writing in English (Canagarajah, 2022; Holliday, 2022; Li, 2022).

Notes

1. The other two students were Korean and Burmese respectively.
2. Information based on the students' CVs and literacy autobiographies.

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Shizhou Yang, PhD (La Trobe University, Australia) is an applied linguist, second language writer, writing teacher, and researcher affiliated with Payap University. His current research interests include TESOL, translanguaging, and Global South epistemologies. He reviews for and publishes in international journals. His two books feature L2 autobiographical writing and identity.