RHETORICAL AGENCY IN DIGITAL STORYTELLING: NEW AMERICANS' VOICES IN THE CHTHULUCENE

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ABSTRACT

This study explores New American (refugees, immigrants, and asylum seekers) storytelling and agency through Donna Haraway's concepts of the Chthulucene (pronounced thulusene), making kin, and staying with the trouble. Haraway's framework positions this study in the Chthulucene era, where humans recognize that solving global issues requires making connections and taking collaborative action. This study demonstrates how New Americans can create counter-narratives through Digital Storytelling (DST) in the Chthulucene. An analysis of ten New American participants' DST processes and story choices is provided. This research responds to three main questions: How do New Americans shape their digital stories through specific choices and how do these choices display agency? What do their storytelling processes reveal about agency through their rhetorical and linguistic choices? Finally, how do New Americans display their agency in multimodal storytelling? Participatory Action Research (PAR) is used to frame the research questions. Alongside the collaborative, flexible, and adaptable nature of PAR, the Story Center's Digital Storytelling (DST) model was selected as the appropriate approach to facilitate DST workshops for New American participants. Three separate workshops included ten New American participants from different backgrounds. Approaches such as focus groups, story workshop reflections, and individual interviews were used to respond to the research questions. After transcribing focus groups and individual interviews, all data was coded using Grounded Theory. The findings suggest that participants make storytelling process, rhetorical, linguistic, and multimodal story choices by being intentional in using their original voice and agency as counter-narrators. Participants' storytelling process choices indicate that past storytelling constricted their agency while DST provided an opportunity for their agency to be visible. Furthermore, participants' rhetorical choices demonstrate their audience and

situational awareness. In addition, linguistic choices illustrate that participants' understanding and use of English demonstrates translingual practices. Moreover, multimodal story choices display their innovation and commitment to personal intentional storytelling. Additionally, participants' experiences in storytelling and how they implement their agency varies by individual. This study demonstrates what doing research and practicing pedagogy that operates in the Chthulucene might look like for Rhetoric and Writing Studies to remain relevant.

ABSTRACT (FRENCH)

Cette étude explore le processus de la narration et la capacité des nouveaux Américains (réfugiés, immigrants et demandeurs d'asile) à le contrôler, et ce, à travers les concepts de Donna Haraway sur le Chthulucène (prononcé thulusène), se lier entre eux et faire face aux problèmes afin de les résoudre. Le cadre de Haraway positionne cette étude à l'ère Chthulucène, où les humains reconnaissent que la résolution des problèmes mondiaux nécessite la création des liens et la prise des actions collaboratives. L'intégration des nouveaux Américains dans leurs nouvelles communautés est un problème social critique alors que le nombre de réfugiés, de demandeurs d'asile et d'immigrants réinstallés aux États-Unis est en augmentation continue. Cependant, cet effort d'intégration peut être menacé par un langage discriminatoire et de violence contre eux en raison de stéréotypes et de récits généralisants.

Cette étude montre comment cette tranche de la société peut créer des contre-récits grâce à la narration numérique. Une analyse des processus de ce type de narration et des choix de narration de dix nouveaux américains participant à cette enquête est fournie. De ce fait, cette recherche répond à trois questions principales: Comment les nouveaux Américains façonnent-ils leurs récits numériques à travers des choix spécifiques, et comment ces choix affichent-ils leur capacité à contrôler lesdits récits? Que révèlent leurs processus de narration sur contrôler leur récits à travers leurs choix rhétoriques et linguistiques? Enfin, comment les nouveaux Américains affichent-ils cette capacité dans la narration multimodale? La recherche-action participative (RAP) est utilisée pour formuler les questions de recherche. Parallèlement à la nature collaborative, flexible et adaptable de la PAR, le modèle de narration numérique du Story Center a été sélectionné comme l'approche appropriée pour faciliter les ateliers aux nouveaux américains participant à cette enquête.

Trois ateliers distincts se sont ainsi formés, comprenant dix participants néo-américains de différents horizons. Des approches telles que des groupes de discussion, des réflexions en atelier de récits et des entretiens individuels ont été utilisées pour répondre aux questions de recherche. Après avoir retranscrit les groupes de discussion et les entretiens individuels, toutes les données ont été codées en utilisant la Grounded Theory. Les résultats suggèrent que les participants font des choix de processus, rhétoriques, linguistiques et multimodaux en utilisant intentionnellement leur voix et leur capacité d'origine en tant que contre-narrateurs. De plus, les expériences des participants en matière de narration et la façon dont ils mettent en œuvre cette capacité varient selon les individus. Les nouveaux processus de narration américains, les actions agentives et leurs choix rhétoriques, linguistiques et multimodaux démontrent tous leurs récits et leur voix originales dans le Chthulucène. Tous démontrent comment leurs récits originaux et leur voix fonctionnent pour construire la vision de Haraway sur la Chthulucène.

-Translator Dr. Rachida Sadouni

ABSTRACT (ARABIC)

تعنى هذه الدراسة بعملية السرد التي قام بها الأمريكيون الجدد (اللاجئون والمهاجرون وطالبو اللجوء)، وقدرتهم على التحكم على هذه العلمية من خلال مفاهيم دونا هاراواي عن الكثولوسين (التي تُلفظ ثولوسين)، تكوين علاقات فيما بينهم، ومواجهة الصعوبات للتغلب عليها. ويضع إطار عمل Haraway هذه الدراسة في عصر Chthulucene ، بحيث يدرك البشر أن حل المشكلات العالمية يتطلب إجراء اتصالات واتخاذ إجراءات تعاونية. ويعد المندمجون الأمريكيون في مجتمعاتهم الجديدة قضية اجتماعية حرجة، بحيث يرتفع عدد اللاجئين وطالبي اللجوء والمهاجرين المعاد توطينهم في الولايات المتحدة. ومع ذلك ، يمكن أن يتعرض جهد الاندماج هذا للتهديد من خلال اللغة التمييزية والعنف ضدهم بسبب القوالب النمطية والروايات المعمّمة.

وتوضح هذه الدراسة كيف يمكن للأمريكيين الجدد إنشاء روايات مضادة من خلال عملية السرد الرقمي (DST). ولذلك عمدنا إلى تحليل عمليات السرد الرقمية قام بها عشرة أمريكيين جدد شاركوا في هذه الدراسة. وعليه، يسعى هذا البحث إلى الإجابة على ثلاثة أسئلة رئيسية: كيف يصوغ الأمريكيون الجدد تجربة السرد الرقمية من خلال خيارات محددة وكيف تُظهر هذه الخيارات قدرتهم على التحكم على هذه العملية؟ وماذا تكشف عمليات السرد الشخصية عن الفاعلية من خلال خياراتهم اللغوية والخطابية؟ وأخيرًا ، كيف يعرض الأمريكيون الجدد قدرتهم على التحكم على عملية السرد المتعددة الوسائط؟

يستخدم البحث الإجرائي التشاركي (PAR) لتأطير أسئلة هذه الدراسة. وإضافة إلى الطبيعة التعاونية والمرنة والقابلة للتكيف لـ PAR ، تم اختيار نموذج السرد الرقمي (DST) التابع لمركز القصة باعتباره النهج المناسب لتسهيل ورش العمل DST للمشاركين الأمريكيين الجدد. وعليه، تم إنشاء ثلاث ورش عمل منفصلة ضمت عشرة مشاركين أمريكيين جدد من خلفيات مختلفة. وتم استخدام مناهج مثل مجموعات التركيز وتأملات ورشة عملية السرد والمقابلات الفردية للرد على أسئلة البحث. وبعد نسخ مجموعات التركيز والمقابلات الفردية ، تم ترميز جميع البيانات باستخدام نظرية الأساس. وتشير النتائج إلى أن المشاركين يقومون بخيارات عملية، وخطابية، ولغوية، ومتعددة الوسائط من خلال التعمد في استخدام صوتهم الأصلي وقدرتهم على التحكم على عملية السرد كرواة مضادين. بالإضافة إلى ذلك، تختلف تجارب المشاركين في سرد قصصهم الشخصية وكيفية قيامهم بتنفيذ هذه القدرة باختلاف كل فرد. وتُظهر عمليات سرد القصص الشخصية الأمريكية الجديدة ، والنشاطات الفاعلة، وخياراتهم الخطابية واللغوية والمتعددة الوسائط قصصهم الأصلية وصوتهم في Chthulucene. ويوضح كل هؤلاء المشاركين كيف تساهم قصصهم الأصلية وأصواتهم في بناء رؤية Haraway حول مفهوم "ثولوسين".

-Translator Dr. Rachida Sadouni

ABSTRACT (BERBER)

Tazrawt-a tesminnig azerruy n wallas i xedmen yimarikaniyen imaynuten (izrazaɣen ,iminigen d wid yebɣan arazuɣ), d tezmert-nsen ɣef uswеḍ-is s yimmektan n Donna Haraway ɣef Chthulucéne, s lebni n wassaɣen deg agar-asen akken ad mmagren uguren , wa ad ten-frun. Akataṛ-a n Haraway yessers tazrawt-a deg tallit n Chthulucéne, anda ara gezun yemdanen d akken ferru n wuguren imaḍlanen yeḥwaj aslali n wassaɣen, taywalt akk d tigawin n umɛiwen. Amsidef n yimarikaniyen imaynuten deg tmazdayin-nsen timaynutin d ugur anmeti uzɣin, macca amḍan n yizrazaɣen,wid yebɣan arazuɣ d yiminigen yerṣan deg tmurt n Marikan deg tmerniwt tasulant. Imil tarna-a n usidef tezmer ad tettwasdiddi s wawal asnaḥyan d tekṛit mgal-nsen s tmentilt n tannayt tursilt akk d wallasen ismatuyen.

Tazrawt-a temmal-d amek zemren yimarikaniyen imaynuten ad slalen allasen yellan mgal s usurf n wallas amuṭṭun. Ɣef waya tella-d tesleṭ n yikala n wannaw n wallas-a akk d wefran n win i xedmen mraw n yimarikaniyen imaynuten i yettekin deg tsestant-a. Ihi, anadi-ya yettara-d ɣef kṛaḍ n yisteqsiyen igejdanen: Amek i d-meslen yimarikaniyen-a tirmit n wallas amuṭṭun s tefranin timaɣlayin , d wamek i d-ssebganent tefranin-a tazmert-nsen ɣef uswеḍ n wallasen-a ? D acu i d-yeskan uzerruy n wallas ɣef uswеḍ n wallasen-nsen s tefranin-nsen tismuktayin d tesnilsanin? Ɣer taggara, amek i d-ssebganen anadi-tigawt adrawan (PAR) yettwasexdamen akken ad nessenfali isteqsiyen n unadi. Amsadaɣ , taɣara tanejmut, tulmanant tamezgayt n (PAR) annaw n wallas amuṭṭun n Story Center yettwafranen am temyadast yussan i wakken ad yifsus uxeddim deg tsawert, i yimadrawen imarikaniyen imaynuten yettekin deg tsestant-a.

Kṛaḍ n tsawarin yemgarraden i d-yettwasulɣen, i d-ijemɛen mraw n yimadrawen imarikaniyen imaynuten seg yizura yemgarraden. Deqs n temyadasin i yettwaxedmen am yegrawen n wemyenna, aswingem, deg tsawert n wallas, d umesnala amdawan i wakken ad tili

tririt ɣef yisteqsiyen n unadi. Deffir tmarrawt n yegrawen-a akk isefka ttwaselgen s usexdem n tiẓiṛt tamatut. Igemmaḍ akk ssamaren d akken imadrawen xedmen afran n wezerruy, tismektayin ,tisnilsanin d tuget izurat s usemres n yimesli-nsen anaṣli d tezmert-nsen ɣef uswaḍ am mgal allasen. Renu ɣer waya, mgarradent termiyin n yimadrawen deg tallast-nsen d wamek ssemrasen tazmert-a, s umgirred n yemdanen. Izerruyen imarikaniyen imaynuten, tigawin tisemsayin d tefranin tismektayin, tisnilsanin d tuget izurat i d-yemmalen allasen-nsen d yimesla-nsen inaṣliyen deg cuthulucéne. Aya yemmal-d amek ttwassemrasen tallasin-nsen d yimesla-nsen deg wansay n tmuɣli n Haraway ɣef Chthulucéne.

-Translator Nacera Babou

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DEDICATION

For my parents, siblings, husband, in laws and best friends who have all been instrumental and inspirational. This work is only at this stage because of you.

For all this study's participants, New Americans and displaced people everywhere, especially those whose stories are yet to be told.

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CHAPTER 1: INTRODUCTION

In Rhetoric and Writing Studies, writers' agency is a concept that there is much debate and not enough resolution about. This study explores the concept of agency in a community setting to learn more about it. I define agency as an action that people do, rather than something that they have. The idea that people give or receive agency as if it is a commodity that those with power give to those without is flawed. This idea assumes that underrepresented communities do not have any agency on their practices. For example, slavery is a system that had strong ideological, political, and economical pillars, someone could argue that if slaves were people who had agency why didn't they get out of it. Agency is an action that is applied to situations. Therefore, when faced with a strong system like slavery, it took a long time for the agentive actions of African American Black people to gain freedom (assert their agency). However, during slavery there was still much resistance where slave narratives and chants demonstrate their voices within a system that oppressed them. There's still a way to counter the dominant narrative within strong systems. This study's goal is to demonstrate that agency can be visible within systems of power through counter-narratives.

This study focuses on New American counter-narratives and community integration efforts that are often in conflict with mainstream stereotypical narratives. These counter-narratives act as an example of what Haraway calls the Chthulucene. In Haraway's (2016) *Staying with the Trouble: Making Kin in the Chthulucene*, the Chthulucene (pronounced *thulusene*) "is a compound of two Greek roots (Khthon and Kainos) that together name the kind of timeplace for learning to stay with the trouble of living and dying in response-ability on a damaged earth." (Haraway, 2) She adds that it is an epoch in which the human and nonhuman are inextricably linked in tentacular (interrelated) practices (Haraway, 2). She further explains

that the Chthulucene requires “sym-poiesis,” making-with, rather than “auto-poiesis,” self-making. To live in an interrelated multispecies world, “sym-piosis” is critical for collaborative problem solving (Haraway, 61). “Staying with the trouble,” therefore, means actively, creatively working together to resolve current world issues as they arise. She utilizes the concept of the “Chthulucene” to focus on creative collaborative solutions. Haraway contrasts the concept of the Chthulucene with the Anthropocene (human-centered worldview) and the Capitalocene (capital-centered perspective). She argues that the two latter perspectives have not yielded results but have instead created many global crises such as environmental problems, displacement crises, and so on. This study demonstrates an example of how Haraway’s vision of the Chthulucene might be realized through collaboration and action. This can be achieved by connecting and working with the New American community to create narratives that counter mainstream understandings of the immigrant community in the U.S. Mainstream narratives refer to media and dominant stories that generalize and stereotype New Americans. As this study shows, these stories respond, directly and indirectly, to those that harm New Americans and hurt their integration efforts.

Dominant narratives often negatively portray New Americans as one stereotyped group, whether they are refugees, immigrants, or asylum seekers. Theses narratives are not just stories in the media or community prejudices, but can be harmful discrimination at work or social exclusion. For example, claims that refugees bring Tuberculosis, which were published by Valley News, Fargo, ND in 2016, resulted in some host community members fighting resettlement efforts in Bismarck, ND. Another stereotype, that Muslims are terrorists, not only perpetuates xenophobia, but directly led to a vandalized mosque in Moorhead in 2021. Many news organizations reported on this incident. For example, News week’s article wrote about the

graffiti such as “Death to Islam” and others that were written on the walls, doors, windows of the mosque. Nationally, a common stereotype such as “Asian women are submissive” feeds into the fetishization of Asian women and has led to bigotry and violence, including the March 16th, 2021 mass shooting of 6 Asian American women in the Atlanta Spa. These stories of misinformation and stereotypical generalizations lead to discrimination and violence. This study illustrates that these stereotypical stories are false and provides space for counter-narratives to surface instead. These counter-narratives individualize and humanize New Americans as they create their own stories.

Dominant narratives can also be a result of well-intentioned news or community efforts. For example, many community storytelling projects and newspaper or magazine interviews ask the same question of immigrants: “What is your experience in the local area?” Community storytelling projects and journalists take their recording and notes, write their piece, and most of the time, interviewees do not receive an opportunity to do final edits. This is a common journalistic process; however, when working with underrepresented communities, any misrepresentation of information can be serious for the person or their communities. In existing local counter-narrative efforts, community organizers and researchers need to recognize participants' agency and their power over their stories. In using Participatory Action Research (PAR) and Digital Storytelling (DST) to conduct this study, I demonstrate how those responsible for telling the stories of immigrant community members might promote agency and voice through different storytelling approaches. The Fargo-Moorhead metro area is a diverse area south east of North Dakota and North West of Minnesota. Many New Americans have changed the fabric of the community for decades now. Media, economy, educational, employment and

other services have been working on integration practices with New Americans for mutually beneficial outcomes.

In this context, this study, explores New American counternarratives by discussing four major areas of relevant scholarship. First, digital storytelling and agency in the classroom and community addresses DST projects in classrooms as well as community settings. The advantages and disadvantages of DST in both settings help situate this study as a community university collaboration. Second, academic and community collaboration and literacy illustrates case studies of projects that were initiated by academic researchers or that were service learning classes. The conversation of how to navigate these collaborations inform my decisions in this study. Third, translingualism and translanguaging in relation to multimodality and agency discusses the important conversations in Translingualism and how this concept relates to multimodality and agency. Transmodality is a concept that is explored as a new perspective to understand agentive practices that are multimodal and translingual. Fourth, the New American community's counter-narratives in the Chthulucene defines the concept of the Chthulucene more and addresses counter-narratives as well as the urgency versus emergency of counter-narratives by New Americans.

This study analyzes New American participants' rhetorical choices when creating digital stories. Their decision making demonstrates their unique voice and agency. Since New Americans do not typically have opportunities to make choices in sharing their stories with the public, this study considers their stories as counter-narratives. Additionally, this study is positioned in the Chthulucene because collaborative action is a central goal of this research. This study's research questions are: How do New Americans shape their digital stories through specific choices, and how do these choices display agency? What do their storytelling processes

reveal about agency through their rhetorical and linguistic choices? And, how do New Americans display their agency in multimodal storytelling?

Participatory Action Research (PAR) was used to respond to this study's research questions. PAR's methodological principles, such as flexibility, collaboration, and co-construction, fall in line with working in the Chthulucene. PAR's action-oriented and collaborative characteristics create a fitting framework for research on counter-narratives with New Americans. As the study is community based, PAR facilitates flexibility and adaptability as well as collaborative practices. Due to researchers in the past misusing information in a way that harmed underrepresented communities, trust has to be gained. The trust needed to work with underrepresented communities can be afforded by the above mentioned PAR principles. Focus group recordings, Digital Storytelling (DST) workshop field notes, and individual interviews were collected to generate data for analysis. These three approaches were aligned with a seven-step DST workshop model. The seven-step DST model was inspired by the Berkeley, California, Story Center's approach to personal narrative. As a non-profit organization that focuses on teaching digital storytelling, the seven step model focuses on a moment of change in someone's life and their gained perspective on it.

Ten New Americans from different cultural backgrounds were selected to join the study. After the IRB approval, I gathered a group of new Americans to learn about the study and decide if they wanted to join. Three groups were created: Group A with 3 participants (Fatima, Ali, and Adam); Group B with 2 participants (David and Judy); and Group C with 5 participants (Edward, Tanya, Maria, Leila, and Aymen). Groups A, B, and C each went through a DST workshop and created a total of ten digital stories. The participants who joined the study met on the NDSU campus for focus groups and story creation, but selected different locations for in person

interviews. Due to COVID-19 and university closing, a group of participants (group C) met in person for the focus group, then virtually for story creation. I also met with group C participants individually in person with social distancing and masks for individual interviews. Transcriptions of the interviews and focus groups were joined and studied for emerging themes that answer the research questions. Then, a codebook was created to analyze the themes and identify patterns of stories, processes, and choices.

To identify New American storytelling practices and their choices, the four major areas of literature are explored in this study. This literature review includes discussion of : 1. Digital storytelling and agency in the classroom and in the community, 2. Academic and community collaborations and literacy, 3. Translingualism and translanguaging in relation to multimodality and agency, and 4. The New American community's counter-narratives in the Chthulucene. A detailed discussion of each area can be found in chapter two below. Chapter three defines PAR research and addresses this study's methods and approaches. Chapter four considers the data in relation to the first research question about storytelling practices, processes, and agency. Chapter five analyzes the data in relation to the second and third research questions on participants' rhetorical, linguistic, and multimodal choices in creating their DSTs. Finally, chapter 6 provides a synthesis, discussion and conclusion for this study.

CHAPTER 2: AGENTIVE DIGITAL STORYTELLING WITH NEW AMERICANS

In this study, I respond to three main inquiries: First, how do New Americans (refugees, immigrants, foreign born residents, and international students) shape their digital stories (DST) through specific rhetorical choices? Second, what do their storytelling processes reveal about agency through their linguistic choices? Third, how do New Americans display their agency in multimodal storytelling? Before answering these questions, this chapter situates this study in relevant literature.

This study's focus lies in three major areas: agency, Digital Storytelling (DST), and community literacy with New Americans. As agency refers to the voice and power of participants, I focus on how different scholars define and use this concept in relevant research. With DST, the idea of creating short videos using mixed media to tell personal or community stories is explored. Additionally, because agency and DST both implement language(s), I also demonstrate how translingualism illustrates participant linguistic practices. Furthermore, in working with New Americans, I consider the systems of academic and community work. Finally, I explore literature that demonstrates how community collaboration with underrepresented communities such as New Americans implement storytelling projects as counter narratives.

To address these topics, in this chapter, I discuss four major scholarship areas that shaped my study's direction. First, I introduce DST advantages and disadvantages in the classroom and community. Second, I explore scholarship in academic and community collaborations & literacy. A definition of literacy is provided, then followed by how it can apply to both community and the academic contexts. Third, translingualism and translanguaging are explored in relation to multimodality and agency. Moreover, I define the concepts of translingualism and translanguaging. Furthermore, I connect these aforementioned concepts with multimodality and

agency. Finally, I present the rationale for New American counter narratives in the community and academic contexts. In this community context, the literature demonstrates the rationale for community action now.

Digital Storytelling and Agency in the Classroom and Community

Scholarship in digital rhetoric that discusses DST has covered two major topics: first, implementing DST in composition classrooms and second, DST projects established in different communities. DST refers to storytelling using digital media that is implemented in communities and classrooms. This form of storytelling grew out of social media use and availability of digital video software where a mix of pictures, audio, video clips, and voiceover are combined to make a short video product. This genre has been adapted to tell personal and community stories for different purposes. Thanks to rhetoric and composition and digital rhetoric literature that argues to meet students where they are technologically, DST has been adopted by many teachers. The use of DST in the classroom led to many conversations regarding the technology aspect of DST, but also other kinds of impact such as agency, language use, L2 composing, and social and personal action. Additionally, the scholarship in this section can help researchers better understand the opportunities and limitations of DST as a process for community building.

Literature on DST in the classroom indicates positive experiences in meeting pedagogical goals such as effective use of technology in the classroom and student voice and agency. Scholars have shown that one of DST's advantages lies in improving student autonomy (see Hafner and Miller, 2011 for an example). Another advantage is that DST enables students to use multimodality (see Yang 2012 for an example of how). Additionally, DST develops a sense of voice. For instance, Benick (2012) and Castenada (2013) demonstrate that DST enables students to be their authentic selves and communicate who they are. Moreover, Vang (2017) presents a

program that brings the realities of the students' experiences to the public and policy makers. In Vang's study, students implemented voice and agency for action to urge changes in school environments.

A growing number of scholarship on the use of DST in composition classes provides insight into a positive experience. For example, Hafner and Miller's (2011) article, "Fostering Learner Autonomy in English for Science: A Collaborative Digital Video Project in a Technological Learning Environment" draws on students' accounts to evaluate a digital video project and associated technological environments. In particular, Haffner and Miller describe the potential of the project to provide students with opportunities to exercise their capacities as autonomous learners within a structured language learning context. As compared to storytelling orally and in writing, DST offers the same advantages of relaying events. However, DST offers the unique opportunity to work with multimodal tools that offer skills that can be used beyond the storytelling process.

Another instance regarding DST in the classroom includes Yang's (2012) "Multimodal Composing in Digital Storytelling," where he illustrates how and why DST matters. First, participants approached the development of multimodal digital storytelling with the creation of a hybrid text and with dialogic orchestration of multimodal resources. Second, participants' digital story design and orchestration of multimodal resources were guided by student choices and intent. Third, the study participants experienced imagination and re-imagination when assigning meaning to the semiotic (visual and audio) resources used in their digital story. Yang argues that immersing study participants in the physical and digital approaches of creating their stories enriches their experience as they further develop their digital skills.

Another advantage of using DST in the classroom is creating shared stories that enable community building. In the specific context of having diverse and immigrant students in higher education classrooms, DST can teach scholars pedagogical approaches that are helpful in similar contexts. In "Digital Storytelling and Diasporic Identities in Higher Education," Benick (2012) considers student-generated digital stories as a means to authenticate the multiple perspectives of learners and create space for their diverse voices in post-secondary education. Benick reflects on how immigration and technology as "twin forces" can benefit pedagogical approaches in the classroom. He explores the use of digital storytelling as a tool to work with immigrant students using technology in an attempt to learn new pedagogical approaches that can benefit composition classrooms. Through an experiment in a diverse classroom, Benick's assignment to create digital stories enabled students to learn more about their own journeys and created a sense of shared community.

Furthermore, in a foreign language classroom, DST can be used for identity performance. Castenada's (2013) "I am proud that I did it and it's a piece of me: Digital storytelling in the foreign language classroom," examines students' experiences and language learning in their high school fourth-year Spanish class. He recounts that his study was a collaborative experiment to assess how to use DST for learning in a foreign language classroom. Castenada demonstrates that students were worried about language use in the language they were learning, as well as technology use, but were able to deliver the central task which is creating a rich story. Castenada's study illustrates that students had the opportunity to practice the foreign language that they were learning. In addition, students used technological tools even if they were not confident at the beginning. Consequently, the class project gave students a space to learn while they communicated using their own voice to tell their stories.

Beyond in-class activities, DST can be a tool for community collaborations where students practice change making. In "Engaging Youth to Change Their School Environment: A Photovoice with Hmong Youth," Vang (2017) presents a program that brings the realities of the students' experiences to the public and policy makers to urge changes in school environments. As resettled refugee youth, the Hmong students' stories of their journeys, resettlement, and their new life in their new communities. Thanks to this class project, the students were able to identify and discuss issues within their immediate environment, thus becoming community change agents. In this service-learning environment, Vang implemented DST as a tool to teach students community engagement.

While Vang included his students in a community project, some scholarship involves community members as participants. There are a variety of DST projects that are built in collaboration with different communities. Community in this context refers to a group of people who share similar backgrounds, interests, struggles, and triumphs. They are typically from similar ethnic, cultural, and racial backgrounds. When put in comparison with academic research, community research means that a researcher from an academic background runs their research not with students, faculty, or university staff, but outside that context. Community literacy projects are those initiatives that enable the teaching and learning with a particular group of people outside the university. These projects may either start by the community themselves based on a need, or by the researcher attempting to fill a perceived need.

Due to the change in setting from academia to community, there are some considerations to take into account. For example, selecting the appropriate media for a digital project can make it more accessible. DST projects established with community members as participants provide insight into how the choice of media affects community-researcher collaborations. Getto et al.

(2011) discuss the importance of using familiar media when collaborating with community participants. Using media that is familiar to community participants results in their comfort and trust, which in turn enables them to use their agency during community collaborations. They argue that stable meaning making happens when researchers and other facilitators of new media composition are cognizant of existing mediums that community members use to represent themselves. In addition, it is important for researchers to comprehend the complex ways of life embodied by those mediums. Getto et al. suggest that because all cultural practices resist mediation to some degree, researchers in community settings should use existing practices and structures as infrastructures for building new compositions.

DST in the classroom and community has many advantages and considerations. When employing DST in the classroom, student autonomy, voice, and multimodality can be amplified. In the community setting, students and community participants can all benefit from creating DSTs. For example, working with familiar media to share stories for community change can have a positive impact on everyone. This context is also a learning environment for academic and community collaborations.

DST has also been shown to create opportunities for displaying agency due to the practice's participatory nature. Li (2007) and Zhang (2017), for example, explore how DST projects with immigrant participants empower and enable their agency to be recognized. Furthermore, Sawhney (2009) considers the role of digital storytelling for creative empowerment of underrepresented youth in refugee camps. For these youth who feel voiceless under their lived circumstances, DST projects give them a platform to perform power and agency. Moreover, DST can afford a democratized method for community voices (Burgess 2006). Thanks to the use of familiar media, many DST projects such as those mentioned above create a safe space in which

participants showcase power and use their voice to tell their stories. This literature provides a few of many examples that argue DST's impact on agency for many reasons. The participatory nature of DST, the focus on personal story, and the use of media together enable immigrant underrepresented populations to share their voices.

Having established that using familiar media is helpful for DST, there are other variables that come up in the DST literature based on which communities, researchers work with. One of the variables is access to technology within underrepresented communities. In his dissertation *Self-Representation of Chinese Migrants Using Digital Storytelling for Social Inclusion*, Zhang (2017) identifies potentials and constraints for digital storytelling in forming and amplifying migrants' individual voices. He argues that on the one hand, DST empowers migrants by providing them with quality access to new media technologies and is useful as a research method for media production. On the other hand, DST may be a difficult method for language learners trying to communicate in the language they are learning. Finally, he notes that there may also be a level of discomfort with technology use with some participants.

Another variable is the interconnected relationship between power and media in underrepresented communities. Li's dissertation (2007) "*Digital Storytelling as Participatory Media Practice for Empowerment: The Case of the Chinese Immigrants in the San Gabriel Valley,"* argues that DST should be viewed as an innovative participatory media practice. Li suggests that DST empowers those involved both as a process and a product. His project included the American Chinese Culture Association (ACCA), which created digital stories for the organization and community. Li's collaboration with ACCA yielded powerful immigrant stories that could be used by the organization for several purposes. Additionally, these DST

stories were also a factor in community building. Importantly, the ACCA collaboration gave voice for participants to create their own stories.

The third variable involves DST community projects that can empower underrepresented communities by providing opportunities for voice. For example, Sawhney's (2009) "Voices Beyond Walls: The Role of Digital Storytelling for Empowering Marginalized Youth in Refugee Camps," considers the role of digital storytelling for creative empowerment of underrepresented youth in the camps. Through a three-year program of workshops conducted in the context of Palestinian refugee camps in the West Bank and East Jerusalem, Sawhney's analysis showcases amazing resilience through the work of storytelling projects.

One of the salient DST advantages in the classroom or community is participants' agency. Agency for underrepresented communities can be defined differently; however, they can easily be recognized in DST. The participatory nature of creating digital stories such as choosing a moment to focus a topic on, selecting images, audio, video, and digital mixing all contribute to individual participant choices. In communities, the voices of individuals are not always sought out or identified easily. Therefore, DST community and academic projects that amplify stories can be a source of community building and development, as well as empowerment.

Reflecting on the scholarship above, advantages of using DST as a storytelling tool differ from the classroom to the community contexts. In the classroom, it is beneficial to use DST for student voice and agency, multimodality, foreign language instruction, and more. However, it is necessary to be cautious regarding the impact instructors expect of DST. In the community setting, the literature shows that DST collaborations can give and recognize power. Nevertheless, expectations of community change may be disappointing and discouraging in some instances. At times, DST can in fact be rewarding for all those who take part in it. In both contexts for DST

projects, scholars can establish realistic expectations; trial and error are not only okay but needed.

Academic and Community Collaborations & Literacy

Community projects based on literacy have provided an opportunity for scholarship to flourish. The definition of literacy and its characteristics has been questioned and adapted to this new environment of community work. While literacy is commonly understood as a powerful tool that learners gain power by using, some community literacy scholarship suggests that literacy does not hold its own power. Therefore, the agency and power that is recognized stems from the participants. Moreover, with the difference in settings, a distinction between how academic and community projects run is an important point of inquiry. Consequently, literature regarding the relationships between these two systems, especially when working with underrepresented communities, includes the works discussed below. Furthermore, participant agency with underrepresented communities becomes central in an academic-community collaboration.

Community literacy has its challenges but also many rewards. Understanding literacy as a social act, realizing that the context where literacy happens matters, and that the community is a context affords a unique perspective; all of these understandings contribute to community literacy scholarship and help the participants significantly. In their work titled, "Limits of the Local: Expanding Perspectives on Literacy as a Social Practice," Brandt and Clinton (2002) use two analytical concepts--"literacy in action" and "sponsors of literacy" --to expand the idea of community literacy work. These concepts help illustrate that the value of literacy is not only in learning to read and write but in the value it can provide learners. Considering literacy as "a thing," or an object that does not wield its own power, enables the understanding that agency as inherently held by participants. Therefore, literacy is a tool that enables researchers and

instructors to recognize the agency of participants. Perceiving literacy as a "thing" proposes that "Literacy is neither a deterministic force nor a creation of local agents. Rather literacy participates in social practices in the form of objects and technologies, whose meanings are not usually created nor exhausted by the locales in which they are taken up" (Brandt and Clinton, 2002). Brandt and Clinton propose that scholars understand literacy as a tool and "object" to recognize power instead of thinking of literacy as holding its own power that can be passed on to participants.

Questions of agency in relation to literacy have always been subject to debate. In "Community Literacy and the Rhetoric of Public Engagement," Flower (2008) explores the conversation on the agency of writers in community literacy projects. Flower writes that on the one hand, an author's original voice could be considered a display of agency because they can be themselves. This original voice can be nonstandard and from the margins. This camp, Flower suggests, believes that original voice has its own power and agency as is. On the other hand, she presents another camp that argues that the author of academic discourse could be one with agency because they join the "language of power." This means that authors can gain power from writing in the standard. However, both camps are questionable, as the one gives room for originality but not necessarily power. The second provides power but strips a part of identity away.

The systems in which the university and community function may not share basic principles of operation. Community projects of literacy or research in collaboration with universities have an unstable history. For example, mistrust by participants on the intention that the university brings to communities can be paralyzing. This difficulty becomes especially important when a minority or underrepresented community is the subject of the research by

academics. This section presents what community literacy involves and how it works. It also explains the tensions that exist between the community and university as well as why community literacy work is valuable. Finally, questions of agency in relation to community literacy are explored below.

When attempting to run a research project in the community, it is important to find the best way for the university as an institution to interact with the community. In *Gravyland*, Parks (2010) chronicles the history of an urban university writing program and its attempt to develop literacy partnerships with the surrounding community while having to work within and against a traditional educational and cultural landscape. Parks describes classrooms where the community takes a seat and becomes part of the conversation. This class-community collaboration resulted in a selection of writing produced by study participants. Parks shows that writing alliances between universities and communities are possible and needed while illustrating the importance of thinking carefully about how to navigate these different systems.

While academic work has a structure and style to follow, community work does not typically follow a linear structure. For example, the success or failure or an academic project is predictable based on a set of identifiable variables. However, in community collaborations, a community literacy project's success or failure and its impact varies. Cella and Restaino's (2012) work illustrates this point in *Unsustainable: Re-Imagining Community Literacy, Public Writing, Service-Learning, and the University*. Cella and Restaino explore short-lived university/community writing projects in an effort to rethink long-term sustainability in community writing work. They examine short-lived projects that "failed" to remain sustained in order to learn from them for future projects. In addition to these short-lived projects' perceived

failure, they provide researchers with insight that some community projects are only meant to serve a purpose for a short time.

In projects that are highly collaborative with community members, it is not easy to decide a project failed or not worth studying because parameters of success and failure vary by context. In works such as Clifton's (2012) "Mastery, Failure, and Community Outreach as a Stochastic Art: Lessons Learned with the Sudanese Diaspora in Phoenix," failed community projects are important to learn from. Even though Clifton uses the term "failure," she urges scholars to redefine "failure" and "mastery" in relation to each other. Clifton's study involved studying a community project where she collaborated with the Lost Boys of Sudan in Arizona. She used "techne" to analyze, through case studies, how her work with participants shifted from what was originally planned to what her participants needed day to day. Even though she went in with an intention to create literacy programs with a specific vision, the participants she worked with had more urgent literacy needs that she could not have predicted. Clifton's adaptability and flexibility illustrates that she did not fail; rather, she in fact mastered community-academic collaborations. A vigorous discussion of what "failure" and "mastery" mean in community work is offered regarding how community insight is valued. Clifton demonstrates that "forging community partnerships at the intersection of failure and mastery" is the key to university and community collaborations (p. 231). The tensions created by these different systems of operation demand that researchers make a shift in their perspectives.

University community literacy projects raise questions of agency due to the complicated history of academic and community research. This is especially true with underrepresented communities. The question of who benefits from the research and where agency lies is at the center of community-university research. When academics plan to run a collaboration with

underrepresented communities that center on literacy, it is important to go prepared. The literature above helps understand the context that researchers step into. For example, Brandt and Clinton's (2002) definition of literacy as not holding its own agency, accompanied with Flowers' (2008) questions on agency, can prepare scholars to learn to recognize agency in participants. This can happen through participants' own literacy practices and epistemologies. A cautious call by Cella and Restaino (2012) and Clifton (2012) prepares researchers for putting the communities' needs first. Flexibility, adaptability, and open mindedness are all crucial criteria that define community literacy projects.

Translingualism and Translanguaging in Relation to Multimodality and Agency

Questions of agency and multimodality have been discussed in the areas of DST and community-academic scholarship. A unique niche that has limited research includes the use of language by multilingual participants in community settings in relation to participant agency and multimodality. The scholarly conversations in translingualism can help researchers pose more questions in this area. In order to understand the relationships between translingualism, translanguaging, multimodality, and agency, this section explores the concepts of translingualism and translanguaging. I first define translingualism generally. Then, I present the literature on translingualism as a theory and the action of translanguaging in relation to L2 writing scholarship. Additionally, I discuss translingualism and translanguaging scholarship in relation to writing processes. Finally, I explore translingualism in relation to multimodality and agency.

Translingualism, Translanguaging, and Writing Processes

This scholarship focuses on translingualism as an approach to rethink multilingual writing processes as well as address translanguaging as a practice. This literature demonstrates how translingualism operates in the classroom and how students and teachers approach it

differently. In addition, I explore code meshing, multilingual writing and how they both relate to translingualism. Moreover, I introduce research on a community project that illustrates translanguaging in the community setting. Finally, translanguaging as a practice is defined and framed with examples.

Translingualism is a language ideology that welcomes multilingual and multicultural practices. It comes in response to the need for inclusive language ideology that embraces difference and makes a shift from focusing on which terms to use and on critical language issues. Extensive scholarship has been produced in the midst of current conversations on how to label multilingual and multicultural writers. For example, Leonard's (2016) article, "Where we are: The "Global Turn" and its Implications for Composition," calls composition scholars to move away from nationalistic methodology. She suggests that nationalistic methodologies usually study the language, nationality, culture, and literacy of one group of people. Instead, she suggests that scholars should reframe research questions relating to literacies to focus "on how migrant writers' movement among these [literacies] alters or affects their literacy" (p. 129). This shift, she argues, allows researchers to respond to more urgent and critical language, literacy, and composition issues. Translingualism ideology and theories share this principle.

In encouraging the field and defining translingualism, "Language Difference in Writing: Toward a Translingual Approach," Horner, Lu, Royster and Trimbur (2011) argue that translingualism allows scholars to look beyond the standard of English and its varieties. Horner et al. invite researchers to accept the fact that the US and most countries of the world are multilingual by selecting the translingual approach to teaching composition. They suggest that it is time for US teaching approaches to represent this reality. Horner et al. write that "This approach sees difference in language…as a resource for producing meaning in writing, speaking,

reading, and listening…The possibility of writer error is reserved as an interpretation of last resort" (p. 303). This directly rejects a deficient view on language where if one does not learn "the standard," they are "wrong."

Horner et al. demonstrate that two types of responses to language difference have been adopted in the past: first, the traditional response, where no differences or variations are accepted to aim for the standard. This refers to the belief that all multilingual and multicultural writers have to learn the standard and use it to be perceived as powerful and good writers. This idea has been challenged many times. Second, Horner et al. present a common response in the belief that researchers should acknowledge language differences and label different English contexts, including academic, business, and street Englishes. This idea suggests that there are recognizable linguistic patterns that all users can fit into. The latter belief allows for some diversity, but it is rigid. According to Horner et al., both of these approaches are problematic in their own ways because the two types ignore fluidity, pursuit of new knowledge, and learning in different contexts, which a translingual approach welcomes.

Both multilingual and monolingual students can benefit from the translingual approach in different ways. Horner et al. suggest that English learners can rely on their knowledge of other languages, using translation as needed, until they gain a position where they do not need that for comprehension and communication anymore. Monolingual learners are encouraged to study and use other varieties of English and other languages to enrich their repertoires. The translingual approach also affirms language rights of immigrants against an English-Only language policy. The latter policy involves restricting multilingual students to only using English in their learning of the language and are not allowed to translate for meaning making. The translingual approach

aims to preserve native languages while maintaining the definition of the English language as one rich with varieties that are all acceptable across contexts and users.

Even though translingualism may appear as a new concept, many students and teachers already engage in it. It is important that students are not the only ones faced with this challenge, but that teachers are also willing to learn with them. In "Translingual Writing and Teacher Development in Composition," Canagarajah (2016) uses his classroom as a site for teacher development on translingual practices. He argues that teachers should learn how to be flexible with the varying literacies students bring thanks to the applied translingual orientation to teaching writing. In the same study, Canagarajah suggests that putting translingualism and monolingualism in contrast is beneficial. He assigns his students readings from both "orientations" because monolingual practices and beliefs are "still dominant." Based on his observations, the findings suggest that all students in the teacher training course had "varying readiness for translingual writing" (p. 271). As he assigns his students different reflective writing on their readings and practice, Canagarajah both provides important readings in the field and an opportunity to practice translingual reflection.

In comparison to monolingualism and multilingualism, translingualism is negotiable. In Canagarajah's (2013) "Negotiating Translingual Literacy: An Enactment," he demonstrates examples of how to understand and define literacy and translingualism as negotiable. Canagarajah opines that translingual literacy is mobile, multilingual, multi-symbolic, multimodal, and involves negotiation. Literacy in this definition is not a teaching theory, but is used to advance the theorization of teaching further (p. 41). Because the classroom can be a contact zone of different literacy practices, strategies of negotiation are necessary.

Translingualism can be defined as a language ideology that asserts that language does not exist in separate “boxes" in a bilingual or multilingual mind. Meanwhile, bilingualism and multilingualism hold the belief that languages are separate entities that can meet to mix and match sometimes. It is from the second ideology that the terms code switching and code-meshing come from. Because Multilingualism and bilingualism assert that languages are sets of separate codes, it is assumed that when language users “go between languages,” they code switch, i.e., go from one language to another. It is important to understand these terminological distinctions because they create a shift in perspective and practice. Therefore, using the appropriate terms leads to using them in the appropriate settings, situations, and programs.

While translingualism refers to the ideologies surrounding our understanding of language use, translanguaging is the actual practice of users as they freely go across linguistic boundaries. The act of translanguaging is the practice that results from translingual ideologies of language use. Therefore, translanguaging assumes going across one continuum, not separate boxes of linguistic repertoires. In their edited collection, *Translanguaging with Multilingual Students: Learning from Classroom Moments*, García and Kleyn (2016) put together an analysis of how translanguaging as a theory could be applied and how it would affect our understanding of language and bilingual education. In the forward to García and Kleyn’s collection, Otheguy describes a project that was undertaken at the City University of New York (CUNY) and supported by the New York State Initiative on Emergent Bilinguals (NYSIEB). The CUNY NYSIEB project holds the belief that multilingual students and their teachers are “natural translanguagers and engage them in the development of an approach to teaching and learning centered on translanguaging” (xi). He clarifies that “bi” refers to two languages, “multi” refers to multiple languages, and “trans” means across boundaries of languages. Otheguy claims that what

he calls “the social view” enables teachers to see bilinguals as having two separate languages, while the students view themselves as having one language because they have “unitary competences.” He also foreshadows that the case studies in García and Kleyn’s collection analyze teachers’ processes in moving from the social view of bilingualism to the insider view which results in recognizing translanguaging practices. Otheguy further explains that while some scholars define the movement between the two perceived separate languages as code-switching, students and teachers who join “the insider view” understand that they are not actually code-switching, they are translanguaging within one linguistic repertoire. For Otheguy, translanguaging is not a new word for an old practice; it is a new perspective on the same practice. In fact, it is a matter of perspective, not practice. While the students are doing the same task of producing fluid mixed linguistic symbols, some scholars and teachers view it as going between two different linguistic repertoires, while those who join the multilingual student perspective view the process as going back and forth within the same linguistic repertoire. In the CUNY NYSIEB project, bi- and multilinguals are also allowed to use their full linguistic repertoires.

Translanguaging enables multicultural and multilingual students to use their full linguistic repertoire, which means they may use their native languages in communication. This practice is not typically viewed as conducive to learning, especially by monolingual practitioners. However, when instructors who are monolingual want to try translingualism, it is good practice to refer to Garcia et al.’s (2017) “Socioemotional Well-Being and Social Justice.” In their work, Garcia et al. encourage teachers to listen first and get to know the student fully before successful translanguaging can happen (p. 155). It is a matter of perspective where the teacher values student languages, experiences, cultures, and identities in the classroom. Through

connection and understanding between teachers and students' needs, any discomfort that arises fades away.

For successful translanguaging in the classroom, Garcia et al. suggest that teachers practice student valorization in four ways. First, respect students' language and cultural practices. Second, care for students and their learning. Third, consider the classroom like a family, where members can feel like a unit sometimes, or grow or struggle as individuals some other times, but just like a family, be able to connect. Finally, the teachers and students learn and translanguage together (p. 156). An important emphasis is placed on respecting what students bring in. For example, through one teacher's classroom activities, students can learn how to be "bilingual Americans." The perspective that students "are not fully native in either" language is a deficient view, whereas embracing their full set of experiences and languages allows for dynamic bilingualism (p. 159). Therefore, an instructor's perspective and ideology in regard to language practices and processes can help or hinder translanguaging attempts.

Translanguaging in the classroom is a practice that still needs honing. Canagarajah's (2011) "Codemeshing in Academic Writing: Identifying Teachable Strategies of Translanguaging" attempts to help teachers identify moments of translanguaging and how to use them to meet course outcomes. If translanguaging can be defined as "an integrated system" of multilinguals' literacy and writing, the spoken act of "translanguaging" would be called code-switching. He argues that Codemeshing is studied much more in community contexts. Canagarajah's work asserts that translanguaging in literacy/writing and classroom contexts has been analyzed less than it should be. In his analysis, he illustrates that instead of asking students to only use the language taught in the classroom as typically done, translanguaging practices allow instructors to engage with their students in different languages. Teachers can make a

translanguaging moment work with their planned outcomes while meeting the students where they are linguistically.

The examples above of scholarship on translanguaging and translingualism shed light on the distinction between these terms. Translingualism is an ideology that students or participants can use or learn, whereas translanguaging is the actual practice of going across linguistic repertoires. The classroom and community instances that are presented above exhibit the different approaches and perspectives when it comes to these two concepts. In addition, language and writing processes related to translingualism and translanguaging share the agreement that they serve multilingual and multicultural students in a more inclusive and empowering way.

Translingualism, Monolingualism, and L2 Writing

After establishing the distinction between translingualism and translanguaging in relation to writing processes, the section below describes scholarship about monolingualism and critiques of translingualism. Monolingual ideologies are typically defined to illustrate how they differ from multilingual ones. However, some literature suggests that researchers should define monolingual ideologies in a way that is productive to composition and language work. Additionally, moving away from monolingual practices can lead researchers to look at L2 practices and scholarship, but some scholars referenced in this section warn of confusion and conflation between L2 writing and translingualism. Moreover, I provide a close look at how translingualism differs from L2 writing. The relationship between all these areas and terms allows researchers to use the appropriate terminology and methodology when teaching or researching.

In the debate on how to respond to monolingual language policies where there is a focus on a standard variety of English, Watson and Shapiro (2018) say that scholars are not in

consensus. In their article, “Clarifying the Multiple Dimensions of Monolingualism: Keeping Our Sights on Language Politics,” Watson and Shapiro clarify exactly what the fight is against, so that research can move forward to protecting multilingual learners. They identify four ideologies of monolingualism. The first one refers to monolingualism as Standard Language Ideology. This defines language as a set of correct codes, an arbitrary, stable, and unified standard. This understanding assumes that anyone who does not adhere to this definition is unable to communicate in English correctly. Second, another ideology of monolingualism is Tacit English Only policy. This illustrates the dominance of English as the *lingua franca* of the US in all domains. This ideology involves restricting multilingual students to only using English in their learning of the language, where they are not allowed to translate for meaning making. The next two ideologies focus on one language in relation to others. The third ideology is monolingualism as the Myth of Linguistic Homogeneity. Even though composition classes demonstrate diverse students and languages, teaching approaches still assume linguistic homogeneity. For example, most teachers don’t prepare to teach different varieties of English to already diverse classrooms. Fourth is the ideology of monolingualism as the Myth of Linguistic Uniformity, Stability, and Separateness. This belief holds that language in general is one unit of codes that does not change. Once one knows all the codes for one language, one “master[s]” it. If languages come into contact, they should not be used together, in order to keep the languages “pure.”

In order to move into the translingual approach for both monolingual and multilingual users, it is important to move away from different monolingual ideologies that inform instructor’s classroom practices. The rhetoric used to respond to monolingual language policies that focus on a standard variety of English have to be visibly different from translingual ones. In

his work, “The Rhetoric of Translingualism” (2016), Gilyard argues that translingualism cannot truly be implemented until there is a clear distinction with monolingualism. He emphasizes that this shift is not only in perspective but also in praxis. He asserts that language should be considered “situational, political, arbitrary, and palimpsestic” (p. 284). Gilyard also brings awareness to the fact that the translingual approach allows for different English varieties from the standard. He adds that “we don’t all differ from said standard the same way,” referring to “groups that have been traditionally underrepresented in the academy” (p. 286). Based on the context or background of the research or classroom, the “standard” may be what researchers are trained to do or something different. Gilyard suggests that translingualism enables reflection and action on what researchers consider standard practices and creates room for them to define it. Since so-called standards display power, it is essential to have different varieties for different communities within translingualism.

As the field of composition embraces the translingual ideologies, pedagogies, and terms, it is important to use them appropriately. In “The Lure of Translingual Writing,” Matsuda (2014) warns the field about losing the distinctive meaning of translingualism. He indicates that inflating a term can result in it losing its descriptive and explanatory power, leading to its trivialization and eventual dismissal. Matsuda suggests that inflating the term translingualism may prevent researchers from debating language differences. Additionally, he argues that while translingual writing gains fast popularity in theory discussions, it is not keeping up in classroom practices. Moreover, Matsuda expresses his worry about teachers who want to apply translingual writing theory in their classrooms while they may not understand the concept fully. He argues that it is dangerous to put a new movement in contrast to a previous one only to keep up with emerging terms and fields in the name of superficial progress.

Furthermore, Matsuda provides a set of reasons why it is necessary to be critical before embracing translingual writing by listing some common misconceptions. First, he asserts that translingual writing is not a product resulting in mixed language, it is a process of mixing and rhetorically selecting linguistic codes. He further differentiates code-meshing and translingual writing when he references Canagarajah's study "Negotiating Translingual Literacy: An Enactment" (2013). Canagarajah uses translingual writing to refer to a larger ideology and code-meshing to a specific act. Matsuda also cautions scholars and teachers on the idea of "linguistic tourism." He suggests that some scholars and teachers may be fascinated by the "alien" languages used in translingual writing, but that is not enough to engage in practicing its theories. Moreover, Matsuda provides a path to understand translingual writing and engage in it ethically and positively. For example, he urges scholars and teachers not to follow the "tourist guide" approach and learn more about language and its users from our field and beyond.

Second language, or L2, writing is an established term and discipline within composition that studies the writing produced by multilingual users. With literature published on translingual approaches and language ideologies, L2 writing scholars have felt there may be some confusion between translingual and L2 writing. Atkinson at al. (2015) wrote "Clarifying the Relationship Between L2 Writing and Translingual Writing: An Open Letter to Writing Studies Editors and Organization Leaders" in response to a growing misunderstanding. In their open letter, Atkinson et al. recount that some scholars view L2 writing and translingual writing as somehow competing with each other or that one is replacing the other. Atkinson et al. also claim that some discussions that occur in translingual writing have already been part of conversations in L2 writing. They explain that translingual writing focuses on the relationship between L1 and L2 in new ways. Furthermore, Atkinson et al. illustrate that, pedagogically speaking, L2 writing has already been

doing work related to how students write in L1 vs L2 and how to help writers in L2, while ensuring that they can maintain agency and display identity.

This clarification offers significant insight into differentiating between the practices of translingualism and L2 writing. Therefore, it can be understood that L2 writers use translingual practices in their writing. The scholarship above suggests that when a writer composes in a language other than their first or native language, they go through new writing processes in each language. Bi- and multilingual ideology asserts that the writing process in L2 is that of going *between* two or more different languages, while translingual ideology describes a process of going *across* one full repertoire of language. Thus, the distinction between L2 and translingual practices is that of linguistic ideologies regarding the writing process.

The translingual approach is one that does not compete with L2 writing but complements it because it is situational and flexible. Based on the literature in this debate, translingualism needs to be used cautiously and only in appropriate situations. When comparing translingualism with monolingualism and multilingualism, the striking difference lies in assumptions about languages and practices. One of the takeaways indicates that when monolingual students try to apply translingualism, they may do so with different varieties of English. The other takeaway refers to multilingual students' application of translingualism as they congregate all their language and literacy practices into one repertoire and use it as a collective.

Translingualism, Translanguaging, Multimodality, and Agency

With all the background research in translingualism and translanguaging as practices and ideas, their relationship with other concepts in the field of rhetoric and composition has been less dominant. In this section, I first present literature that discusses translanguaging and voice. Then, work on translanguaging online is illustrated. Next, I address a few works that find the niche

where all three (translanguaging, voice, and multimodality) areas converge. When this convergence happens, there is potential for social action. The literature below demonstrates how translanguaging with multimodalities and agency happens in both classrooms and communities.

In recent years, some scholarship emerged to discuss how different groups of people from underrepresented populations use translanguaging to display their voice. Alvarez's (2017) *Brokering Tareas* examines a grassroots literacy mentoring program that connected immigrant parents with English language mentors. Alvarez describes how the project mentors helped emerging bilingual children with homework and encouraged positive academic attitudes. Specifically, Alvarez gives an ethnographic account of literacy practices, language brokering, advocacy, community-building, and mentorship among Mexican-origin families at a neighborhood after-school program in New York City. He argues that engaging in literacy mentorship across languages can increase parental involvement and community engagement among immigrant families. This suggests that both students and their families are able to share their voice regarding their learning. In this bilingual environment, translanguaging practices are rich. Alvarez's research also offers teachers and researchers possibilities for rethinking their own practices with the communities of their bilingual students.

In an invitation to move away from the debate on whether or not having standard English or varieties of English (as a standard), Lu and Horner's (2013) "Translingual Literacy, Language Difference, and Matters of Agency," argue that scholars focus on writing that makes a difference. They call on scholars to avoid asking whose writing is different and how it is different; instead, they argue that scholars should ask whose writing is making a difference, how, and why. Moreover, Lu and Horner suggest that writing conventions such as context should not be perceived as stable non-moving entities, but rather as an emergent process. They present a

temporal-spatial perspective towards language, language users, practices, conventions, and contexts. This framework affords an understanding that language is an emergent process and its users are constantly producing language and writing. Furthermore, Lu and Horner assert that convention can convey agency. Even though convention may seem rigid, it can also be powerful. Agency does not have to differ from what is similar or "the norm," or be something new; it can come out of the convention and every day.

Lu and Horner also provide a new perspective on agency with a translingual lens. Agency is described as "the need and ability of individual writers to map or order, remap or reorder conditions and relations surrounding their practices, as they address the potential discrepancies between the official and practical" (p. 591). Therefore, the primary function of writers with agency is to write in a way that challenges the official variety of English by using practical situations. Lu and Horner describe a student's writing that may sound different but lead us away from analyzing whether or not it is different from the standard. Instead, they explain how to put the writing in context with other similar works and sources that could inform it and challenge it further. They propose that student writing should not be placed in comparison with other student writing, as similar or different to each other or to "the norm," but rather, teachers should analyze what the writing is doing to make a difference in the world and how and why students chose to do that.

Rhetorical agency while translanguaging emerges as a topic worth exploring further. In her work, "Multilingual Writing as Rhetorical Attunement," Leonard (2014) argues that translingual writing uses some level of "rhetorical attunement." This means that multilingual writers "tune" into a situation and adjust their writing as the situation requires. Leonard suggests that "writers call on or create literate resources in the process of making do, asserting

themselves, or communicating on the fly in specific rhetorical situations" (p. 228). It is a similar practice to rhetorical situations and writing for different audiences. Leonard also argues that when multilinguals are displaced, they do not leave one literacy, history, and culture in the past; they carry those literacies with them. This means that multilingual users have access to different rhetorical situations and techniques for how to "tune" into them. In the translingual ideology where multilingual writers have access to the different languages and literacies they know besides English, rhetorical attunement becomes a challenging, rich, and agentive practice.

Another body of literature focuses on the relationship between translingual and digital/multimodal space as an important intersection for the future direction of composition studies. In "Multimodality, Translingualism, and Rhetorical Genre Studies," Gonzales (2015) argues that teachers and students of L1 and L2 learners can benefit from teaching genre-based writing that uses multimodality and translingualism. Multimodal composition taught with a rhetorical genre pedagogy offers an opportunity to perceive writing as "socially situated." This means that scholars who work on multimodality can shape the online and social media platforms as rhetorical genres with conventions and social situations. This approach helps students avoid viewing genre conventions as rules that have to be followed all the time because they understand that these multimodal tools can be reshaped as needed. The learning that students transfer from their multimodal experiences into genre-based concepts will enhance their composition practices.

Shipka (2016) adds to Gonzales' argument when she also suggests that the term translingualism is not used to refer to the linguistic background of students, but rather the diversity and multiplicity that this approach brings to composition studies. Shipka and Gonzales' inclusion of multimodality to conversations about translingualism is useful because multimodality and translingual writing both allow for the composition classroom to be more

inclusive and fluid. Therefore, genres can be taught with the varied technology/modes available and the multiple linguistic options that students and teachers both bring.

Translanguaging online in the community context has been little explored, but can be helpful in further understanding translanguaging in digital communities. Melo-Pfeifer and de Araújo e Sá's (2018) "Multilingual Interaction in Chat Rooms: Translanguaging to Learn and Learning to Translanguage" demonstrates a strategic use of translanguaging skills with specific affective, cognitive, and social goals. Melo-Pfeifer and de Araújo e Sá illustrate that the romance languages users who participated in this study were learning class content while implementing translanguaging practices. They also noticed that their study participants were accepting and rejecting what constitutes their common translanguaging vocabulary. Because translanguaging is creative work that comprises the "random" selection of linguistic codes, users in a particular context or community dictate what is acceptable and what is not.

In connecting translingual practices and multimodal composition, Martin et al.'s (2019) study "Pedagogies of Digital Composing through a Translingual Approach" is one of the few that explore this niche. In order to create what they call "dynamic and inclusive" classrooms, Martin et al. claim that teachers should select familiar digital and linguistic practices and theories to use when implementing a translingual multimodal project (p. 144). While some scholarship offers new techniques, methods, and contexts for translingual writing and digital composition, Martin et al. argue that "we can draw on established teaching practices and resources to foster digital translingual classrooms" (p. 144). They define rhetorical navigation as the practice of aligning their pedagogical goals with existing composition theories while applying translingual and multimodal projects.

Language and identity are inseparable. In digital media, there are many affordances and challenges to using translingual and multimodal voice. Schreiber's (2015) "'I Am What I Am': Multilingual Identity and Digital Translanguaging," presents a case study of the multilingual writing practices of a Serbian university student on Facebook. Schreiber examines how the participant used multiple varieties of English and Serbian, images, and video to shape his online identity and establish membership in local and global communities as an artist. The Serbian student's use of Facebook with different media enables him to communicate using his voice in a variety of ways. Moreover, Schreiber suggests that the participant's creative space allows for not only his individual, social, and artistic voice to come out, but also his creative, digital, and translanguaging one.

Translanguaging scholarship also addresses its potential to empower underrepresented students. For instance, Cioè-Peña and Snell's (2015) work, "Translanguaging For Social Justice," discusses the classroom environment in relation to New American learning. In this article, Cioè-Peña and Snell suggest that in speaking about newcomers who are identified as English language learners, teachers sometimes indicate that these children come to school "with nothing" (NP). The translingual view of language allows teachers to view students as coming with "something" because they bring their previous language(s) and their previous learning and literacy experiences to school. Once translingualism as a lens is adopted by the teacher, deficiency becomes richness. The act of translanguaging, therefore, becomes a rich source of content to work with. This inclusive pedagogy enables students and teachers to grow and learn in a just environment.

The translanguaging practice mixed with multimodality forms a new concept referred to as transmodality. Transmodality in classrooms or communities can be a rich site for debate on

best practices. However, in the spirit of keeping focus on learning to work with multilingual students or train monolinguals in translingual practices, researchers move to analyze agency and voice in different contexts. The literature that comes out of these contexts demonstrates that transmodal practices can benefit different kinds of learning. As the convergence of translanguaging with its flexibility, and multimodality with its abundance of choices, researchers and participants can learn to recognize agency and voice.

In discussing translingualism, translanguaging, multimodality, and agency, this rich scholarship displays many differing approaches and definitions. While some focus on defining translingualism against monolingualism, L2 writing, and similar fields, others keep the focus on what impact it can have on students and communities. In addition, translanguaging as a practice also shifts from being applicable with multilingual users to monolingual ones as well. However, the question of translanguaging in relation to both agency and multimodality becomes central regardless of who the students or participants are. Agentive transmodality in the community or classroom settings is a slightly paved path for researchers. This particular focus allows researchers to be involved in social based inquiries, which enhances our learning of threshold concepts such as agency and voice.

The New American Community's Counter Narratives in the Chthulucene

The scholarship in the above sections helps clarify that the focus of my study rests in how New American participants use transmodal storytelling to show agency. This agentive transmodal storytelling that New Americans undertake is a way of sharing their own narrative. In fact, this New American narrative serves to counter current local and national narratives negatively representing this community. Additionally, this negative representation in the media comes as result of community discrimination. Agentive transmodal storytelling responds to

discrimination that results from New Americans' experiences as they work on integrating into their new host communities. New Americans as newcomers, who have to learn all the systems in which they are immersed, can be received with fear, judgement, and sometimes aggression. These host community actions can result in discrimination and false narratives that dominate media and community life.

My research treats New American marginalization and negative representation as a social problem in need of addressing and resolving. As a social problem in nature, the issue of agency requires framing within society. The three main perspectives that shape this study's framework include: the concept of the Chthulucene, urgency vs emergency, and prejudice reduction vs collective action. These perspectives provide insight into how I understand and contextualize the study and research questions. In this section, I first discuss dominant narratives about and of New Americans. Then, I explore the concepts of urgency vs emergency, and prejudice reduction vs collective action in the Chthulucene. I connect these concepts together to frame the topic of how New American participants in this study use transmodal choices to create counter-narratives.

Dominant Narratives of and about New Americans

New Americans have rich stories of triumph, struggle, and everything in between by the time they resettle in the US. Dominant narratives portray New Americans as deficient, unable, and uneducateable. Local and national news stories and mainstream narratives often dominate New Americans' voices. In fact, New Americans hold different epistemologies, experiences, and narratives that represent them as knowledgeable and adaptable. In this section, stories of struggle are presented to showcase some dominant narratives that are used in scholarship when covering New American community literacy. Then, I discuss the power of storytelling and what it could

look like for underrepresented communities. Finally, counter narratives emerge as the needed response to dominant narratives that portray New Americans as victims, lazy, dangerous, and sick.

Stories of New American struggle need to be told because it is an important reality to reflect. The literature in this area covers literacy projects that illustrate the realities on the ground when New Americans work on integrating into their host communities. For example, Bestman's (2006) study provides insight into stories of struggle involving a group of Somali Bantus who lived in Somalia, and later sought refuge and lived in Lewiston, Maine. This story of resettlement tracks Bestman's study participant journeys from their home country to their new communities. She shares New Americans' experiences as "secondary migrants" who grapple with the struggles of xenophobia, neoliberalism, and grief. Bestman asks what humanitarianism feels like to those who are its objects and what happens when refugees move in next door. The discrimination that Bestman describes is common for many New Americans. Her narrative demonstrates what it looks like on the ground when opportunities are limited and resources are not available.

A similar story of movement and integration efforts discusses systemic failures in literacy and education. In *Mogadishu on the Mississippi*, Bigelow (2010) portrays Somali youth's experiences of resettlement as occasional triumph and systemic struggles. Bigelow focuses on linguistic skills and (in)educability within the American public-school system. In her study, a small group of Somali teenage girls received tutoring after school because US schools were not accommodating to refugee youth. New American stories such as this one tells a reality through the lens of community researcher collaboration.

When stories are told about New Americans, they portray a picture that the researcher can see and present their findings from their perspective. However, when participants themselves

use their own language and parameters in telling their own stories, it can be more impactful in matters of agency and power. This impact can be powerful and positive. In "From Storytelling to Writing: Transforming Literacy Practices Among Sudanese Refugees," Perry (2008) claims that storytelling can be transformative for New Americans. Perry's study involves her community work with the Lost Boys of Sudan who resettled in Michigan. She asserts that, based on her analysis of participants' stories, storytelling can be transformed and have the power to transform its users. She suggests that once participants shared their stories, they gained a new status both as they communicated through literacy and as the stories provided users with agency and voice. Perry's argument supports the idea that literacy is power, and when participants practice literacy, they gain power from it.

Scholarship in storytelling suggests that the narratives of a group of people represent their individual and community experiences. This renders personal experiences and stories as cultural capital as they preserve and represent culture itself. Depending on the position of the narrators/storytellers in society, however, the stories may hold more or less power. In "Whose Culture Has Capital? A Critical Race Theory Discussion of Community Cultural Wealth," Yosso (2005) applies a Cultural Race Theory (CRT) lens to change the conversation around students of color in the classroom. The dominant conversation places students of color at a disadvantage in classrooms because they presumably come from poverty and illiteracy. Yosso criticizes cultural capital as it frequently represents the culture of dominant groups. Her article proposes a "community cultural wealth" perspective, which encompasses different facets of a student's identity and allows new epistemologies and stories, as well as ways of telling, to emerge.

The narrative that is presented by most media regarding New Americans being victims, lazy, dangerous, and sick is false or generalized. Therefore, it is time to hand the microphone to

New Americans themselves to tell their own stories. In this effort, it is critical to look into scholarship in counter narratives. Bamberg and Andrews (2004) put together a helpful guide in *Considering Counter Narratives: Narrating, Resisting, Making Sense*. They collect works addressing the nature of shifting narratives and the necessity of counter narratives to be fluid and effective storytellers. Counter narratives serve an important role in responding to dominant narratives in an attempt to reclaim some power back. Bamberg and Andrews' message aims to unify when they bring together highly diverse opinions on counter narratives and claim that the approach to counter narratives may differ but the purpose of responding back with one's voice is undeniably powerful. Bamberg and Andrews also suggest that the audience is of most importance in counter narrative work.

Stories of struggle gathered in a community researcher collaboration showcase community issues that need to be addressed. At the same time, these stories are often framed as interviews for a specific situation of struggle in most community collaboration scholarship. These stories and this research is crucial to continue. However, what is missing from a storytelling perspective, is New American participants telling their own stories with their topics of choice and their own goals. This is where counter-narrative personal storytelling projects come into place.

Urgency vs Emergency and Prejudice Reduction vs Collective Action in the Chthulucene

In this section, I weave together the three perspectives that shape the framework for my study. The discussion of urgent vs emergent social issues allows researchers to understand the need for this study in the community. The distinction between urgent and emergent issues helps communities decide whether to respond now to what they see or to research the source of the problem and resolve it from the source. Moreover, a model of responding to community issues

presents two options: prejudice reduction and collective action. Prejudice reduction refers to responding to the visible surface issue, and collective action organizes and empowers community members to take action. However, these two sets of frameworks enable us to only understand the problem and how to solve it, but do not emphasize how and when. Haraway's (2016) concept of the Chthulucene helps communities start the work now and in collaboration.

Urgent and emergent responses can be illustrated through the analysis of "Saving the Babies: Looking for Upstream Solutions," by Mayer (2017). In this article, Mayer presents a striking conversation about whether scholars and communities should respond to social problems as an *emergency* or *urgency*. He uses a metaphor about babies falling into the river and drowning as representing the problem society has to respond to. The emergency response requires stopping the situation by intercepting the babies and saving them as they show up in the river. Additionally, he illustrates that emergency responses deal with the problem at sight and therefore fixes it temporarily. The urgency response, however, involves finding out how, why, and from where the babies are coming and stopping it at the source. The urgency response, in turn, reflects long term solutions. I agree with Mayer as he argues that both solutions are necessary, as communities must help those who are currently in need, those who will become victims, as well as the systems at fault.

Another model for community change focuses on who gets to identify the issues and what to commit to in response. In their article, "From Prejudice Reduction to Collective Action," Dixon et al. (2016) present two psychological models of social change: prejudice reduction and collective action. Dixon et al. illustrate that the prejudice reduction model primarily addresses the question, "How can we get individuals to like one another?" whereas the collective action model posits, "How can we get individuals to mobilize together to challenge inequality?" While

Dixon et al. do not favor one model over another, as they both address inequalities in different ways, they bring up the issue of who realizes the problem and who resolves it. In other words, the prejudice reduction model helps researchers and communities identify the problem of prejudice. Meanwhile, collective action empowers researchers and communities to act.

Regardless of the approach taken to identify a community problem and plan resolution, the idea of responding to it in the present and in collaboration is an important one. In Haraway's (2016) *Staying with the Trouble, Making Kin in the Chthulucene,* she defines the Chthulucene as humanities' epoch in which the human and nonhuman are inextricably linked in tentacular practices. She further illustrates that the Chthulucene requires sym-poiesis, or making-with, rather than auto-poiesis, or self-making. In other words, the idea of "staying with the trouble," for Haraway, means actively working with current world issues and ones that arise creatively and in collaboration. She utilizes the concept of the "Chthulucene" as the present time when human beings focus on "staying with the trouble." This means facing our world and community issues now in the present and in collaboration. This collaborative spirit, she believes, is necessary to solve current societal dilemmas. Learning "to stay with the trouble" means that communities and scholars alike allow themselves to realize the full extent of the problems. Haraway suggests that only once humanity understands its shared fate and struggle, will people work towards a future together. Working in the Chthulucene in the context of my study means moving away from passive into action-oriented storytelling to respond to discrimination and negative dominant narratives. Moreover, it insists on responding to these two problems of discrimination and negative dominant narratives now and in collaboration.

The framework of urgent and emergent solutions becomes crucial based on the goals of the community. Furthermore, the idea of prejudice reduction and collective action enables

communities to respond to their needs appropriately. Researchers working on community literacy and addressing community problems can implement staying with the trouble in the Chthulucene to respond to discrimination and negative dominant narratives. In the New American community context, counter-narrative personal storytelling is central to responding to the current discrimination and negative dominant narratives.

The above four major sections within this chapter present researchers with varied literature about digital storytelling in the classroom and community; academic and community collaborations and literacy; translingualism and translanguaging in relation to multimodality and agency; and New Americans' counter narratives in the Chthulucene. This literature showcases interdisciplinary work that aims to solve questions of agency in an underrepresented community context with multimodal and translingual practices.

CHAPTER 3: METHODOLOGY

This study analyzes how New American participants use DST to tell their stories. The goal of this study is to explore how participants use their agency to create counter-narratives against discriminatory and negative dominant narratives. This study analyzes New American community members' digital stories rhetorically. To do so, I explore which stories participants choose to tell and what rhetorical practices they use to tell them illustrates how participants demonstrate their agency. Moreover, I identify the linguistic choices that New Americans make to tell their stories and how those display their agency. Additionally, I describe how participants use multimodal choices such as images, music, and voiceover to display agency.

In this chapter, I discuss the Story Center DST model that I use in my workshops with participants. I, then, introduce scholarship on and with Participatory Action Research (PAR). This chapter, furthermore, describes this study's research practices and rationale for using PAR. I explain how PAR methodology serves as a good fit for this study's research questions by framing it within community literacy projects and research. I discuss challenges that PAR presents in terms of study impact and other issues that arise. In addition, I explore how this study manages PAR challenges. Then, a study overview is presented where I detail participant recruitment approaches as well as the three stages of the DST workshop (pre-story focus groups, creating digital stories, and post-story individual interviews). These sections detail the processes that were followed by participants throughout the study. Finally, a data transcription and analysis discussion section demonstrates methods of understanding, organizing, and analyzing the data after all workshops and follow up were done.

The Story Center's DST Model

The Story Center is an organization that studies DST and teaches their approaches to constructing narrative within different communities and organizations, both in the US and the world. Their digital and personal narrative approaches set them as unique as they describe their mission, "recognizing that lay practitioners could make enormous creative contributions, pioneering artists wanted to make art accessible to all, especially those traditionally left behind" (StoryCenter Website). Additionally, their social action and justice-oriented goals enable DST projects to be implemented in many community, organizational, and cultural contexts for empowerment and action. The organization adds that, "the work of these artists and a broad range of collaborators gave voice to powerful stories of harm, healing, and hope in the midst of social and political conflict" (StoryCenter Website). The table below illustrates the DST Story Center model and how I aligned it with the three stages of this study's workshop.

For this study's research, I used the Story Center's seven step process for digital storytelling (Appendix E). Due to my experience and interest in the Story Center's DST method, I organized DST workshops for this study as a means not only to meet the New American community's needs to provide counter-narratives, but also to benefit academic research concerning agency and voice within this workshop context. With the personal narrative focus of DST and the self-guided approach, Story Center's model fits these study goals well. The Story Center DST model also suggests that participants make a three- minute video story. This length is useful to limit the content of the story to one moment and one insight at a time. Since step 4 (hearing your voice) can reflect script writing and selection of sound or music, it falls in both the first and second stage. Script writing happens within the first stage of the workshop, however, selecting sound and music happens in the story creation phase.

Table 1

Seven Step Process

DST Workshop Stages	Story Center's Seven Step Process for Digital Storytelling		
Stage 1: Focus Groups	Step 1	Owning Your Insight	Refers to the storyteller identifying a new perspective on one important moment in their life.
	Step 2	Owning Your Emotions	Refers to identifying which emotion this perspective brings to the surface.
	Step 3	Finding the Moment	Refers to setting a scene that describes the moment and emotion within one's story.
Stage 2: Story Creation	Step 4	Hearing Your Story	Refers to either script writing, or the use of sounds and music that the selected moment, insight, and emotion bring up.
	Step 5	Seeing Your Story	Refers to images, video clips, and other visuals that represent the story.
	Step 6	Assembling Your Story	Refers to the software used to mix the visual and audio elements to create the story digitally.
	Step 7	Sharing Your Story	Refers to participants' decisions about whether or not to share the story, with whom, and for how long.
Stage 3: Individual Interviews *reflective addition to the DST model.			

The seven steps of DST are the points used by the Story Center to define a personal story through the participant's perspective. When running a workshop or collaborative community project, the Story Center facilitators have a set of strategies to implement these seven steps without explicitly stating these steps to participants. For example, the "story circle" is a strategy that story center facilitators implement to help participants come up with insight, emotion, and moment. I attended several DST workshops by the Story Center which implemented "the story circle." It is the first meeting during a DST workshop when all six to ten participants gather to introduce themselves and discuss potential topics they are interested in. The facilitators guide the

participants to give feedback to each other on how to identify the insight, emotion, and moment of the story.

Participatory Action Research Scholarship and Rationale

Participatory Action Research (PAR), community-based research, community action research, and many similar terms are used to describe the same process. These terms all describe research projects that are done in a community setting with extensive collaboration, leadership, or initiative with participants throughout the research. The goal of such research can vary from social action to simply implementing trustworthy, beneficial, and transparent research methods. These methods come in contrast with traditional and academic methods of research, namely qualitative, quantitative, and mixed methods. Frequently, when academic researchers go into a community using academic methods, they gather research that they deem beneficial for them with no added value to the community. The scholarship in this section defines PAR's principles and characteristics using examples of studies that have implemented it. I also explore advantages such as social impact, and challenges such as sustainability. In discussing benefits and drawbacks, I connect PAR scholarship with this study and discuss my rationale for selecting it as my method.

PAR Definition, Principles, and Advantages

One of PAR's advantages as a community-based method includes benefits that set it as unique from traditional and academic ones. PAR's participatory, adaptability, collaborative, and flexible characteristics enable it to provide researchers and participants with a mutually beneficial experience. The scope of PAR impact can go across several disciplines and even beyond that to affect systems, organizations, and communities. As a research method that is inclusive, I understand PAR as a tool to listen to underrepresented communities not only in the

research questions I posed, but also the approaches I follow when recruiting and working with participants. Some PAR scholarship discusses the impact this method had on youth art education (Miraglia et al., 2014) as well as sexual health conversations (Licona and Russell, 2013). Moreover, organizing a research project for the purposes of empowerment and voice can easily be enabled by PAR. Using PAR's characteristics of participatory and collaboration, social action and justice can be sought out by recognizing voice in underrepresented communities. In other words, when underrepresented communities are given opportunities by involving them as participants of a study where they can collaborate throughout, using PAR, this can result in powerful voices. In comparing PAR with traditional qualitative methods, qualitative methods can have the potential and be used for social action. However, qualitative methods used in the academic context and/or within classrooms, or with pre-designed research, simply do not have the capacity that PAR does in creating social impact and changed circumstances. Thanks to PAR's advantages as a method, many scholars have adopted it and praised its benefits.

Scholarship in PAR invites researchers to move away from traditional academic research methods and explores community driven research when collaborating with communities for the many benefits it offers researchers and participants. For example, Montoya and Kent's (2011) "Dialogical action: Moving from community-based to community-driven participatory research" introduces an application of dialogical action. Montaya and Kent demonstrate how community-based research goes beyond traditional focus group methodology to promote the creation of an evolving and dynamic dialogue among campus and community stakeholders. They discuss the importance of building real and lasting relationships with the communities that researchers collaborate with using PAR. This is a stark distinction with researchers who uniquely establish contact with communities to run their project and then leave, benefitting only themselves. The

success, longevity, or impact of community collaborations do not often interest traditional academic researchers. PAR's collaborative and participatory principles ensure that the research will be based on community feedback, need, or initiative. This is important for future relationships with the community. Community driven research is also crucial for reliable data and accurate representation of community issues and needs.

PAR literature has grown significantly in many scholarly fields. One of the influential works involves applying PAR principles to youth in art education. In *Inquiry in action: Paradigms, methodologies, and perspectives in art education research* by Miraglia, Marzilli, and Smilan (2014), they offer resources for inquiry and action in their field. Miraglia et al. illustrate methods and approaches in the field of art education that can be used by scholars, K-16 art teachers, and practitioners in other disciplines, administrators, policy makers, and interested community members. PAR can, therefore, be applied to different fields of scholarship as long as the same principles of participation, adaptability, collaboration, and mutual benefit are followed. Miraglia et al. demonstrate that the scope of the research and its impact can go beyond the researcher and their participants to influence systems. Similarly, Selener's (1993) *Participatory action research and social change* demonstrates methods and approaches that can be used by researchers for social change. Selener also emphasizes that PAR can be implemented in several social contexts such as communities, schools, and organizations.

For community action to have social impact beyond the immediate participants and the scope of the study, it is important to explore successful strategies for action. Licona and Russell's (2013) "Transdisciplinary and community literacies: Shifting discourses and practices through new paradigms of public scholarship and action-oriented research" demonstrates how PAR can make social impact. Licona and Russell sought to be informed by and to inform

policies and local practices to initiate broad conversations that address sexual health and healthy sexualities for youth. They suggest that researchers can ultimately develop innovative collaborations, programs, and research for long-term impact.

PAR for social change can be empowering when in collaboration with underrepresented and underrepresented populations. Jolivétte's (2015) *Research justice: Methodologies for social change* examines the relationships and intersections among research, knowledge construction, and political power/legitimacy in society. They present a new and highly innovative concept called Collective Ceremonial Research Responsiveness (CCRR), which envisions equal political power and legitimacy for different forms of knowledge. Jolivétte illustrates how the co-existence of these various epistemologies can lead to greater equality in public policies and laws that rely on data and research to produce social change. The forms of knowledge that participants demonstrate through PAR can enrich community building efforts.

The participatory nature of PAR enables action. The highly collaborative approach to designing a study is what sets PAR apart and empowers participants, organizations, and other stakeholders to social impact. In *Research Design: Qualitative, Quantitative, and Mixed Methods Approaches,* Creswell (2009) argues that the advocacy or participatory worldview "contains an action agenda," which sets it apart from other perspectives (p. 9). With PAR's participatory nature, many PAR projects aim for social action. Creswell cited Kemmis and Wilkinson (1998) for the principles they established if a researcher embarks on the advocacy/participatory journey.

As emphasized in Creswell's argument, Kemmis and Wilkinson (qtd. Creswell, 10) first suggest that PAR enables changes in the practices involved in community collaborations. Second, it is a tool for empowerment where participants can respond to and fight against an unfair status quo. Third, Kemmis and Wilkinson also argue that PAR's power in giving voice

and power can affect systemic change. Fourth, they maintain that it is highly collaborative as research is done “with” rather than “on" participants (p.10). In Creswell’s definition of the participatory methodology, he uses Kemmis and Wilkinson’s principles to emphasize that social action is an important part of PAR.

In summary, having established what PAR principles are and how they can have impact on social life and systems of power, many scholarly disciplines have taken the principles and applied them. A large number of PAR scholarship has been done in several research and disciplinary areas. Researchers such as Skinner (2012), Shamrova and Cummings (2017), Cammarota and Fine (2010), Spaniol (2005), (Yonas, Burke, and Miller. 2013), Wang (1999), Koo (2017), Zullo (2011), Blythe, Grabill, and Riley (2008) have all explored PAR in their fields. These scholars have collectively enriched PAR contexts, participants, and approaches. In community literacy and rhetoric and composition, PAR methodology is a newer concept with some existing scholarship. Some of the impactful literature I reference in this chapter include: Wells’ (2014), Besteman (2016), Bigelow (2010), Cushman (1998), Parks (2010), Luther and Farmer, Parks (2017). Additionally, there is still a considerable amount of knowledge that can be transferred from scholarship in other areas. Community literacy has often done community collaborations that fall under PAR principles. Both community literacy and rhetoric and composition will benefit from implementing PAR principles, as well, in the same ways mentioned above.

PAR, Challenges and Rationale

This section discusses PAR principles and how they translate to the academic researcher setting. Implementing PAR in an academic setting can create challenges and opportunities for researchers and communities alike. Herr and Anderson (2014) discuss the differences between

the academic and community setting. First, they establish the principles that would allow PAR to thrive in an academic and community collaboration. This indicates that co-designing the study with participants is an important element. Second, participants' involvement and collaboration are essential. Third, they distinguish between academic and community goals in research, in that traditionally, the first creates for public knowledge and the other for local. Herr and Anderson suggest that there are ways to reconcile these differences. This collaborative approach is emphasized as it enables participants, particularly underrepresented ones, to have a voice and create action for change. Her and Anderson's contribution helps me justify my choice of PAR below.

PAR's potential for changing circumstances and situations is high but can face a few challenges. Wells (2014) discusses how her study participants enabled systems and organizations to change, not only participants and researchers. This section also discusses examples of PAR with underrepresented communities when Cushman (1998) provides an African American case study on how PAR enabled structures of power and individual agency to surface. Moreover, when collaborating with underrepresented communities such as New Americans, Besteman (2016) adds that PAR exposes discrimination. However, discussing hard topics can be transformative. Bigelow (2010) discusses how literacy and educational support for New Americans can be empowering while utilizing PAR methods to share stories of struggle and transformative learning throughout her collaborative study.

While PAR offers many advantages, it also may face challenges. For example, community projects can be unsustainable, as Cella and Restaino (2012) demonstrate in their study. Due to the lack of volunteers, financial, or other resources, many community projects are short-lived. This can affect an academic study negatively, if the researcher does not understand

the nature of community projects. Moreover, the question of who gets to represent a community can have negative effects on the collaboration or the community. Blumenthal (2011) demonstrates that it is important to negotiate with the community participants for them to decide who gets to represent the community's voice. He brings attention to the researcher to beware of not generalizing voice to a whole community and localizing knowledge making. Because PAR promises empowerment through its collaborative approach, an action oriented and transformative study is expected. However, Klocher (2015) warns against having this expectation and prepares researchers that those with an action agenda have to be patient with the waves of social impact. Finally, this section ends with the challenge of adapting community and academic research systems to work together successfully. Parks (2010) discusses how he adjusted a literacy writing project to fit institutional needs while maintaining community needs. Additionally, the issue of voice in community literacy is essential, especially within PAR. As a participatory method, PAR promises giving and recognizing voice and agency. Luther, Farmer, and Parks (2017) discuss expectations and issues that arise with voice and community literacy while using PAR. I put together this scholarship to inform my rationale for using PAR with its advantages and how I navigate its challenges.

Scholarship in PAR research enables researchers to first learn about operating community and academic research. One of the prominent works of literature in this area is Herr and Anderson's (2014) *Action Research Dissertation*. Herr and Anderson provide a guide for PAR research in an academic dissertation setting. The transition from community-based research that typically defines PAR, to an academic and specifically a dissertation context is helpful in learning how the two systems differ. Herr and Anderson illustrate that action research is not only appropriate for a dissertation, but also is a deeply rewarding experience for both the researcher

and participants. They demonstrate how action research dissertations are different from more traditional dissertations and prepare students and their committees for the unique dilemmas they may face, such as validity, positionality, design, write-up, ethics, and dissertation defense. I knew that PAR's flexibility, empowerment, involvement, and action-oriented agenda is a good fit for DST workshops with New Americans. Therefore, PAR allowed me to justify my research structure in the context of a dissertation study.

Herr and Anderson first establish that the participatory worldview integral to PAR relies on the participants to co-design the study. This means that participants take part in making decisions related to research questions, data gathering approaches, selecting types of data, as well as being involved in understanding and analyzing data. The idea of co-designing a study with participants is not necessarily a popular one in academia. However, Herr and Anderson illustrate that parts of PAR can be negotiated with parts of academic research practices. The best way to design actions that benefit the participants is to involve study participants throughout the process and adapt as needed. Additionally, Herr and Anderson maintain that the study defines the methods, not vice versa. This means that the study objectives and community needs come as a priority, then methods and approaches that fit and help meet those goals can be identified. They also highlight the importance of individualizing PAR research, not based on researcher preferences but participants' needs.

When designing my study, I asked New Americans to participate in DST workshops to create stories that they could shape in any way they wanted. I wanted to give participants more time and choices than they usually have in other storytelling formats. PAR enabled me to adjust the workshop and co-design it with the participants. Outside of academic and dissertation expectations, PAR facilitates co-design from the initial stages of research questions all the way

to data interpretation. However, because this study falls within a timeline and committee expectations of original research, as well as IRB's expectations of study descriptions, I was not able to co-design the study in all aspects of the research. Herr and Anderson understand this situation and advise negotiating PAR with academic expectations. Therefore, I asked participants to co-design parts of the DST workshop.

In contrasting PAR with academic and qualitative research, Herr and Anderson set the basics when they argue that action research is inquiry that is done "by or with " participants, but never "to or on" them. One of the practices that enable participant collaboration is reflexivity, because action researchers must interrogate the process and allow participants to shape the study as they go. Researcher and participant reflection enables awareness of processes that empower participants and provide unique insight to researchers. While traditional research thrives on a previously designed study that observes, interviews, gathers data, and applies research frameworks onto participants, PAR demands collaboration in each step. As a member of the New American community, I position myself as a co-constructor with participants. My background, experiences, and previous collaborations with New Americans in several community projects equips me for PAR "with and by" New Americans. Furthermore, I chose to conduct pre-DST workshop focus groups and post-DST workshop individual interviews as reflective practices with participants. The focus groups were planned to meet this need to learn the participants' perspective of DST and investigate their previous knowledge, experiences, and expectations. The individual post-DST workshop interviews were meant to help inform the decision-making process of participants to recognize their voice in DST choices.

Herr and Anderson acknowledge the clear divide between the goals of academic research and community work, the former producing public and the latter local knowledge. Public knowledge refers to research that can be generalized across communities and institutions, while local research mainly serves the specific community with a precise set of circumstances. However, localized research is transferable to new settings, which would allow it to serve as public knowledge. Even when localized knowledge is gathered and does not apply to another locality in exactly the same way, researchers may learn from the structure of the study and its impact. In my study, I do not generalize ten local New American participants from different backgrounds to the experiences of all New Americans, even within the same locality. All individual's experiences and choices are different and unique. Therefore, even though my study as a dissertation is expected to generalize knowledge, I use PAR's principle of localized knowledge that can be transferable to other locations. In other words, a similar study can be done in a similar location and with participants from similar backgrounds. However, my results only apply to the participants of this study and my methods and implications, as well as lessons learned can all benefit the fields of PAR and composition and rhetoric (and related areas).

Several scholars discuss the impact of PAR in changing circumstances, situations, and systems. Herr and Anderson recognize that PAR has been implemented for social action purposes. They further assert that changes occur within the research setting or within the participants and researchers themselves. Herr and Anderson suggest that unlike much traditional research that frowns on intervening in any way in the research setting, action research demands some form of intervention. The goal of PAR research is to change circumstances through action. My study's intervention responds to dominant narratives that negatively represent New Americans and discriminate against them. This research contributes to the social movement that

creates counter narratives by recognizing agency in New Americans who make and tell their own stories. In addition to the social impact this research intends to make, I demonstrate how academic collaborations with communities can be implemented to influence academic fields to take up similar research topics. Furthermore, within the research setting with my participants, I asked how the DST workshop process worked for them and I made the changes necessary within this study, and took note of suggestions and recommendations for future studies.

In community literacy, many community-based projects result in larger social impact. Wells' (2014) "Investigating adult literacy programs through community engagement research: A case study" discusses advantages of implementing PAR in partnership with a community literacy organization. Wells argues that the participatory methods afforded by community-engagement research can allow researchers to achieve insight into particular programs while contributing to local literacy. She also adds that understanding the characteristics of particular programs can contribute to knowledge of the field of adult literacy education and help collaborators develop engagement projects that support adult literacy. As I collaborate with New American participants to tell their stories, this type of partnership fits in the community literacy description of the field. Therefore, I use Wells' understanding of community projects' impact beyond participants and researchers to influence counter-narratives of New Americans using their own agency.

Within the context of PAR collaborations for literacy with underrepresented communities, Cushman (1998) explores literacy and power with African American community participants. Implementing community-based approaches, she illustrates what such research can look like. In *The Struggle and the Tools: Oral and Literate Strategies in an Inner-City Community*, Cushman presents the oral, literate, and analytical strategies (the tools) that inner

city residents use to gain resources, access to social institutions, and respect (the struggle). Cushman's work honors both the types of agency present in the struggle, and the kinds of linguistic savvy present in the tools. One of the intriguing moments in her study is when one of the study participants, Afriganzia, provided a useful breakdown of hierarchies within her community. This information was based on who has the most access to knowledge and resources. Afriganzia's observation enables Cushman a perspective she would not otherwise have. In her study, participants had a voice that PAR approaches amplified through collaboration and trust. Cushman's study involves PAR principles such as collaboration with participants. Even though the study was pre-designed due to the academic part of the collaboration, the high level of involvement with participants set it as PAR research. As Cushman provided approaches and techniques for participants to share their epistemologies, things that she would not even be able to think of as "data," she gained insightful new knowledge thanks to PAR collaborative principles. In my study, I use both pre-DST focus groups and post-DST individual interviews for the same purposes of gaining insight that I might not be able to see otherwise. By asking participants about their expectations of the DST process, their previous storytelling processes before, and also by asking them about how our DST workshop went, what they learned, and how they made decisions, my results reflect their own perception of their agency. My results would not reflect participants' perceptions without their input.

When using PAR with underrepresented communities such as refugees, the collaboration can bring up difficult topics that need to be addressed. In *Making Refuge,* Besteman (2016) follows the trajectory of Somali Bantus from their homes in Somalia before the onset in 1991 of Somalia's civil war, to their displacement to Kenyan refugee camps. Then, she describes their relocation in cities across the United States, to their settlement in the struggling former mill town

of Lewiston, Maine. Tracking their experiences as "secondary migrants" who grapple with the struggles of xenophobia, neoliberalism, and grief, Besteman asks what humanitarianism feels like to those who are its objects and what happens when refugees move in next door. Besteman's method of mapping her participants' journeys using their stories implements PAR's participatory nature and social action impact. In my study, I join Besteman in recognizing the discrimination that refugees and New Americans face. I focus on responses to negative representational narratives and narratives of discrimination. By using PAR, I do so not as myself as a researcher or individual, but as an ally and member of a community that collectively responds to counter-narratives with agentive DSTs.

Transformative research that contributes to the community distinguishes PAR from other research methodologies. In the community literacy setting with refugees as an underrepresented community, Bigelow's *Mogadishu on the Mississippi* (2010) offers insight into what transformative research could look like for both the researcher and participants. Bigelow investigates the language learning, literacy development, and schooling and community experiences of the Somali population in Minnesota, a community which is Muslim, refugee, and under-schooled. Using PAR methodology to collect stories and reflections of her participants' literacy journey, Bigelow illustrates co-participation, learning, and transformation for both her as a researcher and her participants. In my study, participants engaged in DST using the Story Center's method which is transformative in itself. As an organization that focuses on creating DST with different communities and teaching DST practices across the country and internationally, the Story Center's self-reflective personal narrative point of view, in addition to multimodal and rhetorical choices, their DST process is fitting the empowerment and

transformative goal of my study. Therefore, I implement PAR in designing the DST workshops so that New Americans participants in my study gain transformative knowledge and skills.

However, with all the advantages that come with community PAR research, there are a few challenges to consider. Cella and Restaino's (2012) *Unsustainable: Re-imagining community literacy, public writing, service-learning, and the university* considers the issue that community-based projects may not be sustainable. Cella and Restaino respond to what has been an increasing acknowledgement in community literacy research that, for a variety of reasons, many community-based writing projects do not go as initially planned. Therefore, they provide a framework for thinking about and studying such projects. *Unsustainable* affirms that unpredictability is an indispensable factor in the field of community literacy and argues that such unpredictability demands a theoretical approach that takes these practical experiences as its base. In my study, I selected ten New Americans as participants because it is a number that I could work within the scope of my timeline. Additionally, I could involve them in study decision making in a sustainable way for my study and for their feedback to be taken into consideration. Moreover, my knowledge of PAR principles and community literacy projects' tendency to be unpredictable prepared me for participant interventions and other factors that changed the course of the study.

The largest unpredictable factor in this study is that the university closed for in-person operations in the middle of DST workshops due to the COVID-19 pandemic. As a result, the participants and myself had to adjust to a virtual system for the remainder of the tasks. Being aware that this study was not a controlled environment, as researchers often like to think their study is, can be unsettling at times. However, realizing that community participants are prepared

for this uncertainty, it is the way researchers guide them through it and factor in the changes that makes it a good experience for everyone in the end.

Representation can be problematic when implementing PAR. Different community participants may disagree on how to run the project within their community, which leaves the researchers in a stagnant position. Blumenthal's (2011) question, "Is Community-Based Participatory Research Possible?" addresses the use of the Community Based Participatory Research (CBPR) approach. CBPR refers to research that extensively collaborates with a specific community for their benefit. With this method comes the essential question of "who represents a community?" Community negotiations arise in an attempt to answer this question. Who gets to speak for the whole community's experiences authentically is a choice the community itself needs to make. If there are competing ideas about representation, the researcher may face challenges at this stage. Although a challenge, these conversations also represent an opportunity for better community building amongst participants. Even though the answer to whether or not CBPR is possible may be a 'yes,' the heavy responsibility of making a difference falls onto the scholar and the participants equally.

In my study, every participant represents themselves and not the groups they belong to. As a group, the New American participants are referred to as New Americans because they belong to this group and share experiences relevant to this study. They do not represent all New Americans in all settings. The shared experiences that participants have in this study include being grouped as foreign newcomers to the U.S. who face negative dominant narrative representations and discrimination. Researchers and communities can either avoid this problem of representation by not generalizing their language, or be prepared to have community negotiations as part of their study. Another way to avoid or lessen representation issues is if the

researcher belongs to the same community as participants. As an international student and a member of the New American community, I am not looking from the outside in, but from within the community.

PAR literature suggests that those attempting it need to be prepared for the emotional pitfalls of research endeavors that seek to tangibly intervene in traumatized people's lives. In “Participatory Action Research: The Distress of (not) Making a Difference,” Klocker (2015) reflects on a PAR project conducted with Tanzanian child domestic workers. First, the emotional burdens of PAR are distributed across the research team. Researchers should carefully consider the appropriate level of participation to pursue. Second, there is no guarantee that the impact of PAR projects would be unambiguously positive. The risk of doing more harm than good can weigh heavily on the minds of the research team. Third, when PAR projects are conceived with the intent of producing long-lasting structural changes that benefit underrepresented people, so-called failure can become a source of great distress. Keeping Klocker’s fair warning in mind, it is necessary to consider whether this type of work is worth the risks and work on mitigating potential difficulties. For my study, the larger goal is to reverse negative dominant narratives and respond to discrimination. As a researcher, realizing that this is a large social issue that requires time and consistent collaborative work, I plan my study understanding that it is one of the many steps it will take to resolve this issue. My contribution in the present to this larger issue is creating DSTs by New Americans themselves to use their agency to tell counter narratives.

Acknowledging PAR’s positionality in connecting community and academic research, this type of project can face many difficulties. The systems, politics, ideologies, and goals of each differ widely in many instances. In Parks’ (2010) *Gravyland: Writing beyond the curriculum in the city of brotherly love*, he highlights many of the obstacles the organizers of the

New City Writing Program, a community writing center, faced. He demonstrates that writing alliances between universities and communities are possible but they must take into account the institutional, economic, and political pressures that accompany such partnerships. Blending the theoretical and practical lessons learned, Parks argues that the voice of the professor must share space with the voices of the community, and that students come to gain self-recognition and make collective efforts to seek social justice. This agenda meets classroom needs and outcomes. Therefore, institutional challenges are not pedagogical ones; rather, they are administrative. Negotiating them can be made easier using the pedagogical value of community engagement. In my study, the institutional issues I expected were that my study would be perceived as political. It is something I am prepared to respond to if it comes up as a challenge. This study has not received any remarks of that nature but it was something I expected and I am prepared to respond by referencing the pedagogical and academic benefits of the study. Parks helps researchers realize that these institutional issues may arise, and when they do, researchers have to be prepared to make a case and negotiate the value of community collaborations and engagement.

Moreover, in his collaboration with Luther and Farmer, Parks (2017) further discusses community engagement projects when exploring voice and community literacy. In "Special Issue Editors' Introduction: The Past, Present, and Future of Self-Publishing: Voices, Genres, Publics," Luther, Farmer, and Parks suggest that the problem of voice is not one of personal exploration or authentic self-expression, as in “true voice” constructions of authorship. Instead, voice is real because it is originally social, not individual. Voices are heard, and only heard, because they exist in relation to other voices. Community literacy activists know firsthand what, Mikhail Bakhtin, stated, “A single voice ends nothing and resolves nothing. Two voices is the minimum

for life, the minimum for existence" (qtd. in Luther, Farmer, & Parks, p. 252). Collective voice becomes part of PAR and integral to community academic collaborations for literacy. In my study, the voices of ten New Americans are congregated to create their DST's and make choices in counter narrating against discrimination and dominant narratives.

I implemented PAR methodology because the advantages it offers were a good fit for my study goals, and its challenges could be mitigated. I used PAR in a community-academic collaboration, which typically has its challenges due to the differing systems. However, Herr and Anderson's (2014) contribution in this area enabled me to first understand that PAR can be used in dissertation research successfully and prepared me for it. Second, I created flexibility in some parts of my study where participants could shape the DST workshop based on their needs and preferences. Third, I added reflective approaches to the DST workshop to give voice to participants about the process and meet my research needs as well as their community needs. Fourth, even though my study as a dissertation is expected to generalize knowledge, I use PAR's principle of localized knowledge from a small community group that can be transferred to other locations with similar characteristics. Fifth, this research contributes to the social movement that creates counter narratives by empowering New Americans to make and tell their own stories. In addition to the social impact this research intends to make, I demonstrate how academic collaborations with communities can be implemented to influence academic fields to take up similar research topics.

In utilizing PAR methodology, I also use Wells' (2014) argument that community projects have an impact beyond participants and researchers to influence counter-narratives of New Americans using their agency. Additionally, Cushman's (1998) contribution influenced my decision to create both pre-DST focus groups and post-DST individual interviews for purposes

of gaining insight that I might not be able to see otherwise. In my study, I join Besteman (2016) in recognizing the discrimination that refugees and New Americans face. I focus on responses to negative representational narratives and narratives of discrimination. By using PAR, I do so not myself as a researcher or individual, but as an ally and member of a community that collectively responds to counter-narratives with agentive DSTs. The New American participants in this study engage in DST using the Story Center's method, which is transformative in itself. I use Bigelow (2010) as a guide in how to identify and apply transformative PAR. I implemented PAR in designing the DST workshops so that New Americans participants in my study could gain transformative knowledge and skills.

PAR's challenges can be a hindrance to community research. However, I used scholarship that described similar challenges to prepare me to mitigate them. Cella and Restaino (2012) discuss the sustainability of community projects. My knowledge of PAR principles and the nature of community literacy projects to be unpredictable prepared me for participant interventions, as well as other factors that changed the course of the study. The largest unpredictable factor in this study is that the university closed for in-person operations in the middle of DST workshops due the COVID pandemic. The participants and myself had to adjust to a virtual system for the remainder of the tasks. Keeping Blumenthal's (2011) caution on community representation in mind, I consider that every participant represents themselves and not the groups they belong to. As a group, the New American participants are referred to as New Americans because they belong to this group and share experiences relevant to this study. They do not represent all New Americans in all settings. For my study, the larger goal is to reverse negative dominant narratives and responding to discrimination.

PAR limitations were mitigated to establish the plan for my study. Utilizing Klocher's (2015) writing on the possible impact or burden of making a difference in participants' lives, I planned my study understanding that it is one of the many steps it will take to resolve this issue. In considering the institutional issues, I referred to Parks (2010) to establish my response to potential challenges. Parks helps researchers realize that these institutional issues may arise and when they do, researchers have to be prepared to make a case and negotiate the value of community collaborations and engagement. Finally, Luther, Farmer and Parks' (2017) discussion of community voice for community good frames my choice to use PAR. I implemented PAR with its advantages and challenges because it gives and recognizes the voices of New Americans in counter-narrating against discrimination and dominant narratives.

This section of the methodology has established PAR scholarship while discussing the method's principles, definitions, and advantages. Then, I discussed PAR's action agenda, the challenges and limitations, as well as the rationale for my choice to use PAR. PAR, or community-based research, can be adapted and merged with academic research in ways beneficial to both. It was important when implementing PAR for my study to be fully informed of the powerful benefits such as social action, but making those expectations realistic to the context of this study. The limitations of PAR can be serious for individuals, communities, and organizations; and preparing for this potential impact helps in better preparing a safe but influential study. In the next section of this chapter, I present my study overview with details on how I recruited participants and the three major stages of my study (pre-story focus groups, story creation/DST workshop, and post-story individual interviews.) Finally, I end this chapter with a section on this study's data analysis and interpretations.

Study Details

In this section, I provide a description of my background and positionality, where I first discuss how my life experiences shaped my research. Next, I describe the three parts of my study. As a PAR study, I implemented both pre-planned components and flexible ones to ensure participant involvement. In part one, I describe participant recruitment and participants' details. In part two, I explain DST workshop preparation (pre-planned elements of the research). Part three describes the DST workshop process. This study was also influenced by an unpredictable factor with the lockdowns following the spread of COVID 19. Due to the impact of COVID-19, with the university closing, many adjustments had to be made throughout some study stages.

Positionality and Background

Recognizing my positionality as a researcher allowed me to choose the appropriate scope for my research and select participant recruitment approaches. I was cognizant of the potential difficulties that could arise during a study conducted between a PhD candidate from a university and New American community members. The academic and community contexts operate differently when running research projects; as noted previously, the researcher is historically concerned with gathering data through observation, while the community may mistrust academic research, as they may see no obvious benefit to the collaboration. However, my positionality as an international student and member of the New American community established new dynamics of shared experiences and trust. Moreover, as a community volunteer in several community literacy projects over the past seven years, I gained an insider perspective on local projects with New Americans. Therefore, I built connections with many New Americans with whom I had collaborated before.

With the volunteering experience that I gained as an English language tutor for adult New Americans and as a project manager of a local storytelling project, I was able to narrow down the community's need for powerful storytelling to counteract negative mainstream narrative. As an adult English tutor in two local organizations, I helped refugees and immigrants learn and practice English. Their tenacity, resiliency, patience, and avid learning attitudes were inspiring. Their stories varied from their new life in their new communities, to past stories of home, and the journey in between. Therefore, I was dismayed whenever I noticed dominantly negative or generalizing stories about New Americans. While I observed highly motivated and hard-working individuals, national and local news stories frequently portrayed the same people as incapable and a burden to the community. A possible solution to this problem of negative community narratives presented itself when I had the opportunity to manage a social media-based storytelling project where I was able to assist foreign-born residents in the local area in telling their stories. It was important for participants in this social media project to have a voice and thereby influence the dominant narratives. Through my community experiences, I recognized that counter narrating with powerful storytelling was a largely untapped area. In an effort to meet this community need, I designed this study that would contribute towards building powerful counter-storytelling.

PART 1: Participant recruitment and participant details

After receiving IRB approval on my study methods with my advisor Dr. Lisa Arnold as Principal Investigator and myself as a co-PI, I started recruiting participants and we ran the DST workshops in collaboration. In this section, I illustrate my steps for the process of participant recruitment and discuss how participants were divided into three groups. I also explain how group A acted as the pilot for the study. I describe how, based on participant feedback and my

observations from the pilot workshop fieldnotes, I set up the next two groups' workshops. My experiences as a community volunteer and my position as a member of the New American community provided the trust and credibility needed for this study collaboration. Additionally, this position provided me with the relationships and connections in the community to invite participants for my study. The recruitment process was a call to join a storytelling project, and ten participants joined the study by signing the consent form, after reviewing and agreeing to the risks and benefits.

For this study, I recruited adult New American community members who were interested in creating their stories from my existing community contacts. I reached out to several New Americans using phone calls, texts, and community meetings so that I could speak with participants in a manner they would find comfortable (find recruitment script in Appendix B). I described the project idea to them regarding DST workshops and asked them if they would like to learn more. I did not recruit participants based on their country of origin, religion, languages spoken, residency status, or other cultural variables. These cultural distinctions can be potentially informative but can also perpetuate stereotypes and generalizations; therefore, I did not consider these factors when recruiting participants. Also, due to the small number of participants in this study, such distinctions would not be productive.

New Americans, as a community, share similar experiences of relocation and adjustment to a new culture. Different groups of New Americans such as refugees, asylum seekers, and immigrants, while sharing similarities, are largely different in many ways. While refugees and asylum seekers may come to the US due to safety concerns, hardship, and prosecution, immigrants largely come for better work and educational opportunities. Though the motivation or manner that they arrive in the US differs, New Americans have the shared experience of

adjusting to unfamiliar social, economic, and cultural systems. Moreover, host communities frequently are ignorant of the differences between these groups of New Americans. Refugees, immigrants, and asylum seekers often experience similar kinds of discriminatory and underrepresented treatment from their host communities. When seeking New Americans to join this study, my main focus was the selection of participants who were willing to create their personal stories digitally.

Study groups of participants

Having attended a three-day Story Center DST workshop, I selected the seven step DST model for my study (Appendix E). From initial conversations with community members describing my idea for this study, running a three-day workshop was not well received. New Americans communicated with me that the timeline had to be shrunk due to their work schedules and other calendar conflicts. With my knowledge at the time of existing DST workshop projects, I decided to organize a two-day DST workshop. With only the one DST workshop experience I had by the time I scheduled the pilot with group A, I thought it was important to keep the agenda and timeline similar to the workshop that I attended at Story Center. I created an agenda for a two-day workshop using the same elements from the workshop I had experienced firsthand. Knowing that five hours a day for two consecutive days may be considered a long time, I considered the workshop time beneficial as a connection and learning experience. I had contacted fifteen to twenty New Americans. Five of them did not respond or they did and immediately declined. The remaining ten to fifteen contacts attempted to schedule a meeting, but five did not respond on their interest or availability. Ten participants remained in negotiation with me on when to meet to learn more about the study, while they were taking time to think about possible involvement.

In order for PAR to have flexible components, one of the options is to have a pilot group of participants and learn from it. A pilot study can allow researchers to learn more about participant needs for the study in real time. This process requires quick adjustments during the pilot as well as restructuring parts of the study after it. Additionally, due to the difficulties of scheduling a group of ten New American participants for a single DST workshop, I confirmed a first meeting with the first few participants for a pilot DST workshop. Herr and Anderson's (2014) chapter, "Designing the Plane while Flying it," discusses the important role of having a pilot study. They suggest that "a pilot study is likely to simply be early cycles of research in an ongoing research spiral" (p. 86). Therefore, a pilot study in this sense is not a test that is discarded for study considerations; instead, it is counted as a part of the total participants. The New Americans participating in the pilot study are included in the total ten participants. This is how this study's pilot group was formed with Ali, Adam, and Fatima as the initial group of participants, which I call Group A. Then, based on my observations and pilot participants' feedback, I set up two additional groups with two participants for Group B (David and Judy) and five participants for group C (Tanya, Edward, Leila, Aymen, and Maria, Group C), respectively. The names used for participants are all pseudonyms.

In the pilot study (group A), Ali is an undergraduate student in a local university, originally from Iraq. He identifies as a member of the Yazidi ethnic community and a refugee. Adam is a graduate student in a local university, originally from Iraq. He identifies as Muslim and asylum seeker. Fatima is a customer service worker, originally from Somalia. She lived in Uganda for many years and identifies as a refugee. Group B consisted of David, who immigrated to the U.S. as a young child, and Judy, who is a recent immigrant as an adult. Group C was composed of Tanya from Russia and Maria from Dominican Republic as recent immigrants,

Leila from Bangladesh and Edward from Rwanda as immigrants with temporary visas, and Aymen from Somalia as an asylum seeker.

This research involved some benefits and risks that I disclosed to participants in the process of recruitment. I explained that the social benefits included connection with others through storytelling. Thanks to the collaborative nature of the DST workshop, participants could gain understanding of their own and each other's stories. Additional benefits that participants could take advantage of by taking part in this study involved multimodality, agency, and storytelling. Participants worked with iMovie and WeVideo, digital tools they may or may not have experienced before, to mix visuals, audio, and video. This experience was meant to be empowering, as it had the potential to ignite interest in working with these multimedia tools further. New American participants reflected on their stories in a new way afforded by DST, which revealed how agency was manifested in their practices of storytelling. When participants told their stories with agency, the participatory nature of the study enabled their individual voices to manifest. Furthermore, it was anticipated that participants might develop an interest for storytelling and community building that would lead them toward personal and community change.

Participants were informed about the risks of participating in the study, which included: differing familiarity and proficiency with digital technology, privacy and comfort concerns when sharing stories in a group setting, and privacy beyond the group. When discussing the risk that involved unfamiliarity and discomfort concerning technology use, I explained that I would be available to help participants who encountered challenges and would walk them through any difficulties. To address privacy concerns regarding sharing stories in a group setting, I reminded participants that they should choose to share stories that they were comfortable with. If a

participant was willing to share a private story but did not want it to go outside of the group, I stressed that confidentiality could not be guaranteed, while encouraging all participants to protect each other's privacy. I also explained to participants that all of their names would be removed and replaced with pseudonyms in any reports about the study. I explained that I would remove all identifiable information from the data and would then store this data on my password-protected computer.

Before signing the consent forms, this study's stages (pre-story focus groups, story creation/DST workshop, and post-story individual interview) were described to participants, so they could make a decision on whether they were interested in joining the study to create their stories. The New Americans who agreed to meet in person for more information were presented with the consent form that described the study in more detail. They asked questions, then all the New Americans present signed a consent form (Appendix A) and joined the study.

My positionality as a researcher and a member of the New American community, as well as my community involvement, facilitated participant recruitment. Therefore, it was easy to identify contacts, present the idea of my study, and negotiate study elements. The inclusion of a pilot study and two groups of participants facilitated the process of going through the DST workshops with each group on their own time. The diversity among the group of participants ensured different experiences that enrich this study. As a PAR study, my research involved a preparation of some research elements and flexible components for co-design and negotiation. Part two details DST workshop preparation. Finally, part three demonstrates the processes of the study, including flexible elements of the DST workshop.

PART 2: DST workshop preparation

As a PAR study that involved community and academic collaboration, there were some elements of the research that I pre-planned that were essential to maintain a study structure. The use of the Story Center's model of DST was purposeful in alignment with PAR collaborative practices. In this section, I introduce this DST model and my rationale for selecting it in more detail. I then discuss other pre-designed elements of the study (DST workshop stages: focus groups, DST story creation and fieldnotes, and follow up interviews.).

DST Workshop stages: focus groups, story creation and field notes, and individual interviews

As illustrated in the Story Center DST model table above, I aligned the three stages of this study -- focus group, story creation, and individual interview-- with the seven steps of DST and added a reflective component in the form of follow up interview. In this section, I illustrate how I weaved these practices together to create a PAR partnership with New American participants. I do not describe in this section how each group's practices were different from the others. I discuss those details in part 3 (DST workshop processes). In this section, I define flexible and predetermined aspects of the study for all groups.

The focus group stage of the DST workshop included many steps, most of which were predefined and planned ahead of time. Some elements of the focus group were flexible. This was the first stage of the study where participants engaged in the first four of the seven DST steps: owning your insight, owning your emotion, finding the moment, and hearing your story: script. The groups had conversations that served as both a focus group where participants responded to questions about their previous storytelling experiences, as well as a story circle for their current stories (find focus group questions in Appendix B). I asked the focus group questions about

participants' previous storytelling experiences and expectations of the DST workshop. In addition to these questions, participants reflected on potential topics for this workshop.

At this first stage, during the story circle portion, all participants reflected on the topics about which they could share stories and received feedback from me to refine the insight, emotion, moment, and script. Although the DST workshop, as a whole, serves to respond as a counter-narrative to negative dominant stories, I believe that stories made with and by New Americans themselves regardless of topic serve that purpose. The fact of displaying participants' voice establishes them as agentive counter-narrators. Therefore, participants were asked to create personal stories, but the topics were left for them to choose. In the focus groups, all participants were asked to write a script of their story. They then decided whether they needed to revise or not.

The time that was provided for the story circle during each focus group ranged from 20 to 60 minutes, and was used to share possible story topic ideas. These four first steps did not have to be achieved in this order, but served as a checklist to compose a personal story using the Story Center's DST model. To identify "insight," participants were asked to think of a story from the first-person perspective. They were also encouraged to think of an event about which they gained a new perspective. While the definition of "insight" was predetermined, participants had flexibility in that they could select the topic of their story, and any aspect of their lives could be the focus of the story. To identify "emotion," participants were asked to define the emotion they wanted their audience to feel. At the same time, they were encouraged to select and name the emotion they wanted their story to focus on. To "find the moment," participants were asked to identify one moment when they gained new insight. This helped them find one experience to focus on instead of thinking of the whole of their life stories, or a series of events. Similar to the

other steps, while “finding the moment” was predefined, participants could decide what the moment was. The feedback they received from me as a facilitator was to guide them to a narrower focus, and it was up to participants to define what the moment was and why it was significant.

At the end of the focus group workshop stage, to “hear their stories: write their script,” participants were asked to write a draft of a script. They were audio recorded reading the script out loud while timing themselves. This step ensured that the script made a story of less than three minutes. Once the scripts were revised for content and fit the correct time frame, they were ready and put aside. While these steps were predefined, the story topic of the scripts was not predetermined and was the choice of participants, as described above. Audio recording the scripts occurred in a smaller conference room to control the noise and sound quality. Dr. Arnold and myself recorded alternately when possible. The participants read their scripts, we timed them and evaluated their tone, voice and volume, and provided other feedback when appropriate. Participants sometimes had to record more than once after they heard their recording, to create a better quality sound and to ensure the story would be three minutes or less.

In the second stage of the workshop, during the “story creation” stage of the DST workshops, each group had pre-planned elements: selecting the story, images, music, audio, video, and organization of their story. Study participants collaborated with each other and myself (as the workshop facilitator), and for the first two workshops with groups A and B, my co-facilitator Dr. Arnold. During story creation, I took field notes of processes, decisions, interactions, and any other parameters that proved unique or important to participants. These research notes reflected participants’ choices and agency throughout the process. The process of learning involved myself, Dr. Arnold, and the participants as we collaborated on creating digital

stories together. While the story creation stage had many preplanned elements, it also had flexibility within each of the DST steps. The choices participants made while implementing these steps provided them with many decisions to make as far as visuals, audio and other digital elements, such as the sequence of visuals in creating a DST and transitions between scenes. The study participants followed these stages over a period of time with my assistance, as well as Dr. Arnold for group A.

During the story creation stage, the remaining of the seven DST steps were undertaken. After having a script that represented all of the insight, moment, and emotion, "seeing your story" meant that it was time for visuals. Participants were asked to identify images, short clips, and visuals that they wanted to use to represent their stories visually. They looked through their phones and albums for personal photos (virtual or physical). At the same time, participants had the flexibility to decide whether they wanted to use visuals with explicit meaning, i.e. those that portray the story content directly, or abstractly. For example, if someone mentioned their childhood home, they could have a picture of their actual childhood home, or they could use a generic image of a home to stand for the same meaning. Sometimes participants used abstract visuals that conveyed metaphorical meanings such as using an image of a tree to convey the meaning of being rooted or branching out. Participant groups also had choices in visual formats: scanning or taking digital photos of older physical photos, taking photos or short clips in the present, or using visuals from the stock images found online. The choices that participants made were all individual and based on their preferences.

The "hearing your story" DST step refers to both script/audio recording and music/ambient sound. I asked participants to identify music or other audio they wanted to layer their story with, in addition to their voiceover. Participants made decisions on audio/music or

other sound of their choice. The three groups had the flexibility to select different kinds of audio from live noises and sounds to music or instruments in the background. Participants used their own creativity and judgement to decide whether they wanted to use audio or not and which ones to use. Once the choice was identified, the participants could then seek the audio to save, download, or upload it.

When "assembling" their stories, participants put pictures, video, audio, and voiceover together. In the video editing space, participants layered their multimedia and created the sequence of the story. Even though none of the participants had previous experience with video editing, we all learned together. Each participant made several rhetorical choices on language, images, audio and editing. Finally, when "sharing" their stories, participants watched their stories to see the result of their choices and celebrate their voice. In groups A and B, we screened the DSTs and watched them together. After that, participants had a choice about whether to share their stories with their families, friends, publicly or keep them private. Group C was impacted by university closing due to COVID, so they did not watch the stories together due to difficulty of scheduling a virtual screening. I watched it with them individually when participants finished editing.

During the individual interviews stage of the DST workshops, participants responded to follow-up questions reflecting on their experiences creating their DSTs. The interviews varied in length based on the depth of information and the time the participants had allocated for our meeting (20-60 minutes). The questions were the same for all participants. The location varied from a small conference room on campus, to a coffee shop, a community tutoring office, and parks around town. During these individual interviews, I asked participants questions about their DST experience and choices (find questions in Appendix C). Participants in this stage had

flexibility as far as location, time of meeting, and their own reflections on the process and choices they made during the DST workshops.

The three stages of this study's DST included focus groups to gather information on participant expectations, story creation where participants composed their DSTs, and individual interviews where they reflected on their experiences. Additionally, this study involved my fieldnotes after each workshop meeting to reflect on the processes of the DST process. The following section draws from my notes and observations to detail how the methods went with each of the three New American groups of participants.

PART 3: DST workshop process

This section discusses groups A, B, and C's processes during the DST workshops. The described stages above informed the preplanned and flexible components of the study, as it was pre-designed with the participants initially. This section describes how the processes unfolded and introduces circumstances that changed some preplanned elements, such as the impact of COVID-19. Additionally, the pilot study was a beneficial experiment that informed the participants' practices within and beyond that group.

Pilot group (A)

Ali, Adam, and Fatima's workshop, as the first DST group I facilitated, was experimental in many ways. I had predetermined many aspects of the workshop based on my experience with the Story Center DST workshop I had attended in 2019. The seven step DST model and the three stages of the workshop mentioned above served as a structure for this pilot. Two more aspects of the pilot's workshop were predetermined: the workshop location and the itemized agenda. Three locations were selected for the different activities of the DST workshop. For consistency, the focus group meeting with Ali, Adam, and Fatima was scheduled in a large conference room on

the NDSU campus. Meanwhile, story creation was planned to occur in a computer cluster so that all participants worked using the same computer system. For participants to log into the computer systems on campus, I obtained permissions and username/password combinations from the IT department for non-university students/staff. For recording the voiceover/script, participants used a smaller conference room to control noise and sound quality. The three participants were provided with a two-day consecutive agenda with detailed content for five hours each day. I aligned the DST seven steps with the three stages of the study and added a reflective follow up interview. I set them up in the following manner: the focus group (insight, emotions, moment, and hearing your story: script), story creation (hearing your story: music/sound, seeing your story, assembling your story, and sharing your story), and finally, individual interviews for reflection.

The first day of the DST workshop with the pilot participants Ali, Adam, and Fatima was scheduled on Feb 15th, 2020. During the focus group, Ali, Adam, and Fatima met with Dr. Arnold and myself in the large conference room on NDSU's campus. I provided snacks since we were scheduled for five hours. I also invited participants to take breaks as they needed to. A small video recorder that was acquired from the NDSU IT department was set up to save the session for later transcription and reflection. DST model handouts were provided to participants as they were learning how to define story in this context. The three participants were introduced to the research project in more detail, introduced to each other, learned more about the DST workshop model, watched some DSTs from the Story Center YouTube channel, and then moved to the "story circle" step. Once they watched the videos, Ali, Adam and Fatima had a good idea about what their end product could look like.

Participants used the “story circle” to share possible story topic ideas, then they received feedback on the elements of insight, emotion, and moment. Ali asked if a moment he was thinking about would work for this project. Once he described a moment of change that still impacts who he is today, I responded that as long as it was a focused personal reflection, it was his choice. Adam found a letter to his son that he had put together previously. He asked if it would work and once, he read through it, I provided feedback on how to select a moment to focus on. Fatima told me her refugee journey and informed me that she wanted to tell that story. I mentioned to her that for this DST model, she may select one moment of the journey; even though there were many significant stories, I suggested she choose only one to focus on in that moment. Once they chose a story topic, participants were asked to write it into a three-minute script. Ali wrote his script, then I read over it and provided feedback on his scene setting because emotion and insight were clear. Adam had the story written previously, so he edited it for the purposes of this workshop. Fatima did not write herself. She was hesitant to write and was more excited to tell it orally. I took notes as she spoke, so that she could have a focus with which to revise her script later.

This first DST workshop day was productive in applying the first four of the seven steps model with its pre-planned and flexible elements. The next day of the workshop (February 16th, 2020), participants finished writing their scripts, then they timed themselves reading them to fit the three-minute limit. Once the script and timing were good, it was time to make audio recordings. While Ali and Adam recorded their scripts with Dr. Arnold, I helped Fatima revise hers, then she went with me to record last.

In the “story creation” stage, Ali, Adam, and Fatima started by learning about iMovie, the video editing software available on the university computers. They spent some time at the end of

the first day of the workshop learning how to use iMovie in the computer cluster. Ali and Adam were exploring the options and experimenting with buttons, while Fatima needed some extra assistance to follow along. Once she was on the same page, I demonstrated how to upload files into the iMovie timeline, how to use the narrate option to record into the software, add transitions, titles, and find stock media (audio and visuals provided by the software). All three participants explored these options, asked questions, and knew how to prepare for production the next day. On the second day of the DST workshop, they logged on to iMovie for a quick overview.

As participants worked on gathering images for their stories, I helped Fatima find photos that she wanted to include. She did not choose images on her own; instead, she and I together came up with what themes of the story she wanted to represent visually. I asked her what someone watching her story should see to convey the emotions of her story. That was when she told me to look for specific imagery. I did and we saved images that she liked on the computer to then upload into iMovie for assembling. Adam and Ali selected images from internet searches. They both said that they wanted to find Google images that represented the scenes in their stories.

Participants' choice of sound was music. I had access to iTunes and planned to find the songs participants needed through that, then send the songs to participants as files on a flash drive. However, when participants had to copy their selected music from my iTunes to their computers, it did not copy as a file as I had anticipated. This delayed the progress of the workshop for a few minutes. Participants, Dr. Arnold, and myself started searching how to download and copy music from YouTube to a desktop so that participants could then upload it to iMovie. Finally, Dr. Arnold found some possible programs to convert YouTube videos into MP3

files. Simultaneously, Ali also identified a program that did the same, so after all three participants gave me their artist and song or music title, I found them and converted them to an MP3 file on the main cluster computer, then uploaded it to a flash drive for all three of them to use. I also sent them the audio recordings of their scripts using the same flash drive.

During story assembly, all participants had uploaded their images, music, and voiceover at their own pace with assistance from Dr. Arnold and myself. They created a timeline for their stories using their own creative thinking. Even though none of the participants had experienced video editing or iMovie before, we all learned together. The time it took everyone was uneven, when some were waiting for me to help others until I could assist them. On the one hand, they understood that there were different needs and only one facilitator familiar with the program, but they also may have felt they could leave early if done and did not appreciate waiting for others to be done. With more time, the stories would be further edited; however, with the time limitations of the workshop, we had to stop in a satisfactory place with potential for better quality videos. Participants at the end of the workshop shared their stories with me on the flash drive for a screening on the projector screen in the room. In sharing their story, participants watched the stories together in what was dubbed a DST premiere. They celebrated their work and were proud of their accomplished stories. After the DST workshop, participants had a choice about whether to share their stories with their families, friends, publicly or keep them private.

During the individual interviews stage of the DST pilot workshop, follow up questions and approximate meeting time (20-60 minutes) were predetermined. Although the location was preplanned at the NDSU campus small conference room, each participant had different preferences. I met with Ali in a coffee shop to record his responses to the interview questions. He reflected on the process and his choices while creating his story. I met with Adam in a small

conference room on campus to interview him about his experiences, responding to the same prompts as Ali. Finally, I met with Fatima during a community refugee and immigrant English adult tutoring meeting. I tutored for one hour and met with her for the interview after that. All three participants scheduled their interviews within about a week of the DST workshop.

Pilot study reflections

Positive pilot group experiences included participants' active engagement throughout the workshop. All three participants went through the stages of learning and came up with a unique story. Participants understood the DST Story Center model and its approach to storytelling. They were willing to go through the seven-step process, thinking of a moment, then emotion, selecting visuals, and choosing audio that went with it. They enjoyed watching video stories, writing their scripts, and gathering visuals and audio. The media lab production part was new but exciting to participants. Because of these positive experiences, I did not make any changes to these aspects of the study in the next two study participant groups.

Aspects of the workshop that made the most sense to participants included watching similar DST video examples, learning iMovie, and digital composing. Participants did not want to spend much time going over the storytelling approach, the seven-step process, and any part of the workshop that was based on readings and definitions. It was challenging to teach iMovie to participants in a short amount of time, but they considered it a learning experience. During the pilot workshop, I was concerned about using the time we had appropriately. I wanted to make the most of this experience since everyone sacrificed 10 hours of their weekend. The seven-step approach to storytelling worked well, but I understood after the pilot that they could be introduced differently, and the format did not have to be a two-day workshop. It was a great experience to see participants creating their stories. My perception of participant experiences was

that they were worried about how much time they were asked to put into the workshop. They expressed their opinions that they preferred different timelines, but that they wanted to experience DST. Participants became less concerned with time once we were past thinking about preparation and definition and started writing, sharing, and producing. There were many interventions throughout the DST workshop creation stage. Some interventions included assisting participants to find, download, or upload materials, and others involved feedback, guidance and definitions. All these facilitator contributions were expected and good for this kind of community collaboration.

Based on the experience of this pilot workshop with group A, I made modifications for the next two DST workshops. Participant groups B and C also watched DST videos. However, I did not go over the seven-step model or defining story in as much detail at the beginning, but dispersed it throughout the workshops as needed. Additionally, I planned to provide iMovie and technological assistance, while avoiding the time-consuming activities such as downloading music. For groups B and C, I planned more production time, only explaining concepts as needed. I also reflected on ways to give flexibility to participants to select the timelines that worked for them for the workshop instead of scheduling a two-day workshop again. In groups B and C, I implemented the same mindset of support as needed.

With these reflections in mind, I started thinking that the Story Center workshop I had previously attended was meant for community organizers, not actual community members. The two-day format was a training and not a community project, with all its challenges and opportunities. I wondered how the Story Center might organize stories creating opportunities when they are running a community collaboration. Therefore, I emailed Amy Hill and Rob Kershaw who work at the Story Center to learn more about their process. They both affirmed

that it was important to ask community members to select a timeline and make decisions during an initial meeting with them. I implemented their feedback as well as my reflections and Ali, Adam, and Fatima's insight when planning the next two DST workshops. In addition to the experiences and reflections of the pilot workshop, I also joined two Summer and two Fall 2020 online Story Center training workshops, including one certificate for facilitation course during Summer 2020. The certificate course laid the foundation for the DST story model, I practiced facilitation, studied the approaches and rationale for personal narratives, and was a certified DST facilitator at the end of the course. These training sessions have added to my knowledge of the Story Center model in a way that benefitted the later DST workshops.

Group B

Group B's workshop was scheduled with participants David and Judy on March 14, 2020. The participants were also briefly introduced to the seven-step process and the flexibility of hours and schedule. David and Judy planned to meet for the first time for two hours, then schedule additional meetings as they went. The first hour was planned to include introductions of participants, followed by, a brief explanation of the project and a showing of DST example videos. During the focus group, I shared my experience with DST then connected it to the workshop agenda. Additionally, I played some DSTs from the Story Center's YouTube channel. I explained to them the different visual, and digital features these stories used such as combinations of short video clips and images. Then, I described the personal narrative approach using insight, emotion, moment, and script. I emphasized that due to the personal nature of the stories, it was more appropriate to have pictures of oneself or that were taken by the participants versus public domain ones. However, I explained that if used as abstract metaphors in the

appropriate sequence, public domain visuals such as iStock could be used for research when we reached story creation.

During this meeting, participants responded to the planned-out questions regarding their previous experiences with storytelling and expectations of DST. David and Judy discussed with each other when to meet again and for how long, and they agreed to meet for two hours over the next two or three days, then see if we needed to stay longer or adjust the timeline. During the second hour, participants answered questions about their previous storytelling experiences and their expectations of the workshop.

An additional hour was agreed to reflect on topics. To select a topic based on insight, moment, and emotion, David and Judy used "Story Stitch" cards by Green Card Voices to think of topics. I decided to use these cards with groups B and C because I received feedback in the pilot group A to provide topic examples. These cards are from a card game developed by Green Card Voices, which is a non-profit that collaborates with refugee and immigrant participants to tell their stories. The cards were created to facilitate conversations between storytellers and evolved to be used in any context beyond the organization to facilitate conversation and storytelling. The cards include topics of conversation varying in seriousness to help people socialize through story. The deck includes general topics of conversation and serious questions about immigration, refugee journeys, and other difficult life story topics. I divided the deck into two random parts; each participant had a list of topics to look through and chose ones that they might write about. Then, they exchanged decks to see all topics and chose more if they wanted to have more options. Both participants ended up with at least four possible topics. Participants used the story circle to discuss the prompts, and they received my and each other's feedback using the concepts of insight, moment, and emotion. For script writing, they wrote down the

prompts so that they could decide if they wanted to select one and start writing about it at home. On the second day, David and Judy met, they had both selected and wrote their topics prior to the meeting. They read their stories for feedback and for timing multiple times. They were able to both audio-record their stories in preparation for when we met in the media lab.

During story creation, on day two of the workshop, the participants wanted to go to the computer cluster to create their stories; however, we did not have access to the lab yet because we were ahead of the planned schedule. Therefore, we left early. It was Spring Break and I was able to gain access to campus buildings to continue the workshop the next day. On this day, participants worked on creating their stories in the computer cluster. I started working on storyboarding with Judy an hour before David arrived. Storyboarding refers to the organizing of information like aligning script scenes and text with numbered and preselected pictures. This can also include layering music and audio. It was helpful for her to listen to the story multiple times while numbering the images in the order she wanted them to show. The visuals she selected were a mix of her own and abstract internet images that represented the story content. In addition, she decided how long she wanted the images to show on the screen. When adding sound, I was also able to convert her song into a file that we could copy into my flash drive. Once she finished storyboarding and preparing her story outline, the computer cluster was open for the group and David joined. He did not spend time storyboarding.

At the end of the workshop, while assembling their stories, Judy was ready with her storyboard, and David, equipped with his previous experience making a YouTube video, had also collected all the elements of his story. He mentioned that he had made a digital video and uploaded it on YouTube a few years ago. It was a video game tutorial, so it included visuals, voiceover, and remixing, similar to this DST model. The participants both used iMovie. Once the

stories were completed, we had a DST movie premiere where we watched the stories and celebrated their accomplishment. David and Judy had the choice to share their stories with family, friends, or keep it private. Later, I met participants in a small conference room on campus to ask participants follow up questions during individual interviews.

With group B, many of the changes implemented after the pilot seemed to work well. The timeline adjustment was a negotiation between the participants and myself throughout. This was not only beneficial because we could schedule workshops as needed, but also because they were involved throughout the process and made decisions about how the study worked for them. The added experience from the pilot, my inquiry, and further learning from the Story Center all contributed to the addition of knowledge and techniques for the DST workshop. For example, storyboarding and the distinction between personal images versus public domain ones were new concepts implemented in this group, and I planned to use them for the last group.

Group C

The first meeting with the group C was on March 16th, 2020, which meant that it was scheduled within the same week as group B meeting. Tanya, Edward, Leila, Aymen, and Maria joined this meeting to demonstrate interest in the study, sign the consent forms, and start the focus group. Dr. Arnold joined to help facilitate if needed. During this first meeting with the group, I introduced the project and workshop stages, the DST approach, and the goals of the study. All participants asked questions, engaged with the process, then signed the consent form. Once I moved to the focus group questions, participants went around the room and everyone discussed their previous experience with storytelling, as well as possible topics they might create their stories about. There was a significant number of organic conversations where participants commented on and added to each other's life stories and experiences. Since there were five

participants, having discussed the project in depth and everyone sharing their possible story topic, it was time to schedule a next meeting to continue this conversation. However, after we chose a time to meet, I received an IRB email about having to stop research temporarily after the university closed due to the COVID-19 pandemic, so I contacted participants to inform them of this update.

After the IRB office sent an email saying to stop in-person human subject research, my planned meeting with this participant group was cancelled and not rescheduled. There was no update from the IRB office on how to proceed, so after two months spent transcribing the previously collected data, I applied for an amendment to move the research to an all-virtual format, after confirming that participants agreed to this change. Once the amendment was approved, I checked in with all five participants, and they agreed to meet on Zoom to continue focus group activities. I scheduled a two-hour meeting on Zoom, invited all five participants to continue with focus group activities, planned story creations and individual interviews as needed.

The agenda for the online meeting included story circle approaches so they could discuss their topics and write their scripts. One participant, Tanya, was unable to join this meeting, but the other four participants joined. Because no one had decided on a topic and it had been too long since we last met, we spent most of our time on choosing the topic, focusing on insight, moment, emotion, then moving to script. The participants had to be reminded what topics they mentioned they could talk about at our first meeting. I shared my notes with them and reminded them of the process of making stories digitally. I also updated them that we could use WeVideo instead of iMovie. This unpredictable change in circumstances during a global pandemic required more flexibility. I asked participants about how they wanted to move forward. I asked them if they would like to finish their stories individually, with only my help, or as a group. They

said that they would like to try to remain as a group for the next meeting and adjust as needed in the future.

The focus group meeting focused on writing a script and receiving feedback. I asked all participants to take a few minutes to write on the topic they selected. After establishing a story idea, I shared the story circle rules for listening and respectful constructive feedback. Then, the five participants were asked to time their script audio recording. They had the option to record using their phone, an audio recording device, or the narrate option on WeVideo that goes into the story timeline directly. Since Tanya missed this second Zoom meeting, I worked with her individually to catch up on selecting a topic, writing a script, and recording her voice over.

In the story creation stage, participants were able to login from their home/work space at a convenient time to continue working on their digital stories. Selecting photos and music were done individually by participants, sometimes with my assistance, but not with each other. Since we did not have time for selecting images to storyboard during the last Zoom meeting, I followed up with each one individually to ask them to be prepared for the next meeting. I offered to help think through any stage or be online with them as they were thinking of or planning any part of their stories. I reached out to all five consistently and we scheduled Zoom calls to go over part of their stories. Some other times, they text or message me questions about images or expectations and I respond accordingly. We used WeVideo for story making. WeVideo is an online platform that all participants could have access to regardless of what technology they had access to. When it was time to assemble their stories, I shared the WeVideo link with everyone. Participants informed me that they could get into the system but not to the folder I created for this group on my account. I then gave them my account email and password to login as me so that they gained

access to more WeVideo options than they would using a free account. This gave participants more images, audio, and transitions to work with.

We scheduled a third Zoom meeting for video production, assuming that everyone had all the elements of the story necessary. However, Aymen and Edward did not make it to the meeting and Tanya, Maria, and Leila were at different places in their story creation. While Leila and Maria wanted to think about their own stories and planning, Tanya was selecting pictures. As participants were at different places in their story creation process, we collectively decided to continue following up on each one individually to complete their stories in the next meeting. Once the stories were completed with each individual participant, they shared it with me, so we watched it together to celebrate their voice and accomplishment. They then had the option to share it with their families, friends, in public, or keep it private.

During the individual interviews, I asked each participant the same questions about their process and story reflections. The locations varied for each participant, and due to COVID restrictions we met outdoors. Edward did not have time to meet for an in-person interview, so he filled out his responses to the questions and submitted it to me via email. I met with Tanya at her apartment. Aymen, Leila, and Maria met with me at convenient parks outside. I audio recorded all the interviews and thanked participants for their time and patience with the unpredictable nature of this workshop.

The study overview above provides an extensive account of applied methods to collect data. Keeping in line with PAR principles, I implemented the co-design principle as well as flexibility and collaboration with New American participants. The previous sections established how data was gathered, the planned aspects of the study and flexible ones, in addition to changes

that occurred including unpredictable ones. The following section in this methods chapter discusses how I organized all the data gathered and the methods I used to understand them.

Data Transcription and Analysis

This section discusses what triangulation of approaches means and why it was used in this study in preparation for analysis. Then, I describe how the individual interviews, along with the focus group audio recordings, were transcribed. Moreover, I explain my use of grounded theory and inductive coding to identify themes and codes within the triangulated data. Furthermore, a codebook was developed to identify and organize themes of DST choices and their relation to agency. Finally, I illustrate how I analyzed the data using the codebook.

Since PAR encourages collaborative data analysis, having participant's responses and my own notes to understand participant experiences was a central focus. In order to analyze this study, a triangulation of the approaches that were used during the DST workshops: focus group transcript, interview transcripts, and my fieldnotes (of story creation) was critical. Triangulation of approaches means that each set of data from one approach is validated through confirmation with other sources of data in the other approaches utilized. Triangulation uses three different points to cross-analyze data for better accuracy and reliability. It ensures validity and better understanding when used on either method (Creswell 2009, Corbin and Strauss 2008, and Patton 2002). Having established that all focus group and interview transcriptions, in addition to my field notes, were combined for analysis of results and coding, a description of the transcription processes is due.

I transcribed all individual interviews and focus groups manually myself. Because participants are New American multilingual speakers, I did not want to risk mis-transcription by automated systems. I also thought it was financially demanding to do so. Additionally, as I

planned to analyze language use for translingual examples, I wanted to be familiar with the exact wording that participants used. I transcribed each unit of speech based on this definition. A unit of speech is a group of words that make a full sentence with the grammatical structure of subject-verb-complement. Since interviews and focus groups were informal and semi-structured, the participants' speech was oral, and defining units was based on meaning and shortest grammatical sentence structure. I added [sic] to all sentences that did not fit grammatically in standard English. This typically signals that a sentence is wrong grammatically. I implemented it because it is expected practice, but for me it does not mean that speakers way of using language was wrong, it means that it was written as spoken and nothing changed in the transcription process.

The concept of the unit of speech was also used to identify codable units. I implemented inductive coding where the emerging meaning of the transcribed texts came from reading through sections of the text. Next, I noted down observations of common themes that participants used to discuss their stories and process to create codes. I also used Corbin and Strauss's (2008) definitions of coding as they illustrated how large categories can encapsulate small concepts (p. 160). From my observation of the transcribed triangulated data, I identified large categories and smaller codes that relate to my research questions. A codebook was developed with explicit definitions for each code and examples of the kinds of responses that would fall under each code. All codes were grouped under themes. For example, one theme is "story as a product," and codes that can be identified within this theme are "defining story" and "story in cultural contexts." Once the codebook was ready to be applied across all data, the data were segmented into units, and the transcripts were imported into Dedoose, a program designed for qualitative research and the coding of open-ended data. Every segment was coded once, unless it was not relevant. The codes were tested on approximately three individual interviews and one focus group in

collaboration with the DST workshop co-facilitator and this study's principal investigator Dr. Lisa Arnold, who found them to be viable. After that, codes were applied to all data.

This chapter has established what PAR methodology is and why it was used in this study. PAR's approach to collaboration, flexibility, empowerment, and its challenges with community-university collaborations, were all taken into consideration in choosing to implement PAR. A section on this study's details explains my positionality as a researcher. Additionally, I illustrated how I recruited participants, the DST workshop activities planned with them, and processes used to gather data. The DST model for storytelling was detailed throughout the three groups of participants. Finally, this chapter explained the methods of data organization and interpretation. Grounded theory was used to code inductively; a codebook was created to organize transcribed data; and a plan for analysis based on open coding in relation to the research questions was created. The following two chapters provide the results of my analysis after coding was complete and focus on participants' DST processes in relation to agency.

CHAPTER 4: STORYTELLING AND AGENCY

This study responds to three main research questions: first, which stories participants chose to tell and what choices they made in the process. While responding to this first question, I also demonstrate how participants employed their agency while storytelling. The second question responds to how the use of multimodal choices such as visuals, music, and voiceover display agency. Third, this study identifies the linguistic choices that New Americans make to tell their stories and how they exhibit their voice in doing so. This chapter responds to the first question by discussing which stories participants choose to tell and how their choices display their agency. While this first research question will be answered in this chapter the other two will be discussed in chapter 5.

In answering the first research question on which stories participants tell and how their choices demonstrate agency, a brief literature review of storytelling and agency is presented below. Additionally, in the "Theories of Agency" section below, I demonstrate how literature in agency has been focused on an unsolvable binary: does agency come from underrepresented people's voices or the tools of power they use? I propose a shift of perspective from agency as a thing or object to be gained, given, or lost, and one that comes and goes to perceiving agency as an action that people can engage in in different ways and at varying levels. Then, this chapter explores what agentive storytelling looks like in three different areas. The first one is Pre-DST storytelling. This section discusses participants' previous storytelling choices in relation to agency practices. The second one is DST workshop experiences, where participants discuss their experiences with the DST workshop. I reflect on their agency during the workshop stages. The third area is DST reflections, which explores different aspects of the DST workshop in relation to

other formats. I consider how participants' reflections display agency as an action. Finally, this chapter ends with possible limitations and implications of the results presented here.

Theories on Agency

Research on the concept of agency and voice in relation to storytelling is limited to a few works such as Yang (2012), Zhang (2017), Li (2007), and Sawhney (2009) which are discussed below. The distinctive discussion of agency in Flower's "Community Literacy and the Rhetoric of Public Engagement" (2008) challenges the definition of agency in community literacy and storytelling projects. According to Flower, the debate on agency includes two main arguments. The first suggests that an author's original voice could be considered a display of agency. To illustrate what "original voice" means, Flower discussed the writing of a student as an example of the agency of the underrepresented. The student, Raymond, used vernacular English to write in a community writing project. His writing was applauded and his story received praise for reflecting the raw stories of his community. This original voice, i.e., using the language from the margins and about the margins, was considered powerful and Raymond was seen as a writer with agency because he used the language of "resistance, assertion, and support" (p 192). Therefore, this camp argues that original voice has its own power and agency. Raymond can be himself, represent his culture and language and there is power in that. The second perspective on agency, according to Flower, claims that the author of academic discourse could gain agency when they join the "language of power." For example, Raymond's instructor was angered that her student was applauded for writing in a nonstandard manner (p 189). This second camp claims that agency comes from mainstream tools or language and is given to underrepresented students and communities. Flower illustrates that the first view of agency gives room for originality as writers reflect their unique voice of the underrepresented, but not necessarily power in the standard

definition. Meanwhile, the second view provides power as one joins the language of power but sacrifices local, ethnic and personal identity, which means that they lose their original voice.

Some DST research suggests that agency comes from the DST tools, and participants gain it after experiencing this format. These works argue that participants gain power due to their exposure and experience with DST as a format for storytelling. Yang's (2012) "Multimodal Composing in Digital Storytelling" illustrates how and why DST matters. Yang argues that immersing study participants in the physical and digital approaches of creating their stories enriches their experience as they further develop their digital skills (p. 226). The power of learning new multimodal skills illustrates the duality of agency as displayed in tools such as DST. Working in multimodal formats taught the study participants new skills that gave them power as they engaged in agentive tools. Using a similar argument, Zhang (2017) demonstrates the power of technological tools. In his dissertation, *Self-Representation of Chinese Migrants Using Digital Storytelling for Social Inclusion*, Zhang (2017) analyzed the correlation between access, technology, and voice within underrepresented communities. He identifies the positive and negative effects of digital storytelling in relation to voice. He notes that there may also be a level of discomfort with technology use with some participants (p. 150). Even though participants may feel intimidated or uncomfortable, they learn the DST tools and overcome the learning curve. He argues that DST empowers migrants by providing them with quality access to new media technologies.

DST research, furthermore, maintains that DST empowers underrepresented communities by giving them space to share their voice. Li's dissertation (2007), *Digital Storytelling as Participatory Media Practice for Empowerment: The Case of the Chinese Immigrants in the San Gabriel Valley,* argues that DST empowers those involved both through the process of creating a

story, as well as the product (p. 98). Li collaborated with the American Chinese Culture Association (ACCA) to create digital stories for the organization and community. This community collaboration resulted in powerful immigrant stories. This view also suggests that participants gained power from their use of DST tools.

In addition to Li's work, Sawhney's (2009) "Voices Beyond Walls: The Role of Digital Storytelling for Empowering Marginalized Youth in Refugee Camps" argues that DST gives agency to participants (p. 303). He discusses a three-year program of workshops he conducted in the context of Palestinian refugee camps in the West Bank and East Jerusalem. His work shares stories of refugee resiliency. He suggests that digital storytelling is an opportunity for creative empowerment of marginalized youth in the camps (p. 304). This study's participants took part in a DST workshop that is participatory and provides a new set of skills for the participants. The results suggest that participants gained power and agency from taking part in the workshop. However, they also displayed original voice and agency with the choices that they made regarding their topics, story format comparisons, and reflective learning. These choices that participants made while navigating DST showcase their level of personal engagement and the agency and voice that they brought to this experience. This action demonstrates agency that is enacted from the margins and not only the tools.

Does empowerment mean giving power to someone who does not have it, or does it mean giving opportunities for people who have power and need a way to display it? Or is it that people have agency and display it in ways that are not conventional, so we do not know how to acknowledge it as agency? Claiming that empowerment means giving power to underrepresented communities suggests that people do not have any agency with the skills, tools, language, knowledge, and experiences they already carry, but gain it by being exposed to language,

programs, and tools of power. This is problematic because power is defined my mainstream dominant cultures. This is the debate that cripples a consensus on what agency means. The concept of agency has traditionally been understood as a thing that one has or does not have. This central understanding limits our view of agency to a binary: original and powerless or powerful and unoriginal. However, a more productive understanding of agency is that all people have the capacity for agency because it is an action rather than a thing that is either present or absent. New American agency in this study is understood as the participants' actions, choices, and decisions during storytelling. In this study, participants' decisions to define what belongs as a story and their navigation of topics, or reflection of DST processes, are all actions they engaged in that demonstrate their power in the margins.

In the context of community literacy and storytelling projects, scholars should move towards accepting original voice as a form of power. Identity is a crucial aspect of community work, and power can be redefined to fit in the margins. Power can be gained through the standard, but power can also be identified within an original voice. Scholars should learn how to identify power on the margins where agency can be defined as both the original voice, from the margins, and the power of that can be found in tools such as storytelling formats. This study's results show that New American participants exert and demonstrate their agency as storytellers who speak for themselves as the underrepresented, while navigating DST as a tool of power. Therefore, they demonstrate that original voice on one hand and power gained from digital tools on the other hand can coexist and need to be identified more often for a full understanding of agency.

This chapter illustrates how agency can both be defined as an original voice from and for underrepresented communities as well as a gained power from tools (such as those used in DST).

New American participants' pre-DST storytelling reflections suggest that the storytelling process can sometimes be defined with limited agency when it comes to previous storytelling formats. However, agency was displayed when participants discussed how they navigated different story formats. The participants' choice of specific topics and moments from their lives to share is agentive action. Furthermore, when describing the DST workshop process, this study's participants articulated the agency that they gained access to through the workshop. In addition, participants demonstrated how they made their own intentional decisions that challenged some aspects of the DST format. Furthermore, DST reflections by participants indicate the intentionality, reflection, and decision making that participants engaged in as part of their experience. Therefore, the concept of agency reflects a dual action: originality from within the underrepresented participants when they used their voice, as well as power and agency that emerged as a result of engaging in a participatory workshop such as DST.

Agentive Storytelling in Action

To identify how New American participants display agency while storytelling, this section presents a look into how participants define "story," describes their past storytelling experiences, demonstrates their experiences during the DST workshop, and discusses their reflections on the DST process in comparison to other formats of storytelling. To address these four points, this section discusses three major areas: the first is participants' storytelling experiences pre-DST workshop. In this part, a definition of storytelling is provided alongside participants' experiences with it in the past. The second area illustrates how this study's participants experienced the DST workshop process. This part elaborates on DST workshop participant attitudes where they share their thoughts on different parts of the workshop process. While thinking about DST workshop processes, they also demonstrated participant group

dynamics, discussed the story circle, and considered the facilitator role. The third area demonstrates participants' reflection regarding the DST workshop. This final part shows the participants' considerations of alternative stories, possible story formats, possible DST topics, and advantages and disadvantages of DST. Furthermore, I illustrate how agency and voice apply to each of the three major areas respectively. The table below provides a map of these three areas visually, including the codes that matched with each area.

Table 2

Storytelling Reflections

Area 1: Pre-DST Workshop	Area 2: DST Workshop Experiences	Area 3: Reflections on DST
Story as a Product: This includes two codes that define what a story is. -Defining "Story": This refers to sentences that define what "story" means to participants.	Attitudes about the DST Workshop Process: How participants describe they felt about joining the DST workshop.	Alternative Stories: An alternative story they were thinking about telling or are thinking about telling for this project.
-Story in Cultural Contexts: Sentences where the meaning of "story" changes based on cultural experiences.	Participant Dynamics: Sentences that discuss how participants interacted with each other.	Future Storytelling Formats: Sentences that refer to participants listing story formats they might use in the future.
Past Storytelling Experiences: Participants' discussions of their previous storytelling involvement. -Past Storytelling Products: Sentences that describe a story that was told in the past and how participants felt about it.	Story Circle: Sentences that reflect participants' process and attitudes during the story circle of the DST workshop.	Future Storytelling Topics: Sentences that refer to participants listing topics they might make stories with in the future.
-Past Processes and Attitudes: Sentences that describe the format or process participants shared stories in before and how they felt about it.	Facilitator Role: Sentences that reflect how participants described/viewed the facilitator role throughout the workshop process.	Advantages and Disadvantages of DST: Sentences that participants used to describe how their DST workshop went in comparison to other formats.

Pre-DST Storytelling

Before the DST workshop, participants' previous experiences with storytelling were defined by two major factors: story as a product and past storytelling experiences. Story as a product reflects how participants defined what formats they previously engaged in that they considered to be “stories.” Additionally, when participants discussed past storytelling experiences, they discussed topics, story content, story formats and processes, and how intentional they were in choosing story topics as part of their DST workshop. Participants' definition of stories, as the formats they engaged in, are indicative of agency. However, in their past storytelling experiences, there are many examples of agency as well as lack of agency. Agency is exhibited when participants made choices about topics and decided how to tell a story, i.e., what to tell and what to keep private. On the other hand, participants sometimes displayed limited agency when stories were told in more restrictive formats, such as interviews, where the topics were predetermined and the formats pre-defined.

Story as product

Story as a product defines what story means to participants and how cultural context adds to that definition. When participants defined what story meant to them, they discussed formats and processes that they considered storytelling. Tanya and Edward discussed social conversations as a form of storytelling. Edward shared that “it’s interesting because coming as an international student, you are quite trained to every time say your story, say your story, say your story [*sic*].” He also considered questions about identity from host community members as requests for stories. Edward said, “Why are you here...oooh...how long have you been here?” were some of the requests he received for storytelling. Tanya added, “ya, just like Edward, conversation…like in conversations is always ohpapap [meaning “blah blah blah”]. Cause people

always ask you like when they...uh when they see me." Edward and Tanya both reflected on how social conversations can be identified as stories because they were asked to share about their journey and who they were, as others demanded that they share important life moments. Other definitions of story also discussed story formats such as newspaper and magazine interviews and community storytelling projects as the framework for their definitions. Participants' responses suggest that their definition of stories depends on what formats the stories are.

One participant, Leila, engaged in defining stories within a cultural framework. Leila understood storytelling as substantially different in her home country and the US. While the other nine participants focused on their storytelling in the US and what story meant to them in this context, Leila extensively discussed the differences between what story meant in her home country and in the US for her. Leila established the different attitudes of people in her home country and the US regarding personal stories, when she said "It seems interesting to me this storytelling project because in the way we brought [*sic*] up in our country, people don't want to hear stories." She explained that she had been hesitant to share her stories as a newcomer because of her previous cultural assumptions on storytelling. Leila stated, "So, I feel like Should I tell it here, should I say [*sic*]?" Her previous assumption that people did not share stories influenced her precaution of sharing personal stories. With time, she noticed how vastly different expectations of storytelling were in the US; especially as a newcomer, she felt she was expected to share about her background and experiences. Even though no other participants brought this cultural comparative aspect to the center of their definition of story and how it influenced their attitudes towards storytelling, Leila's perception is striking. Leila's cultural comparative reflection illustrates that her decisions of storytelling practices have been influenced by her previous cultural experiences.

In both defining stories as a product and defining them within a cultural context, participants displayed agency as they considered their experiences of storytelling to be valid. In their definition of story, participants considered many varieties of formats including ones we do not think of as stories typically such as community conversations. Therefore, “story” in this context is any format that requires sharing personal or professional journeys or life moments. Additionally, comparing storytelling in two different cultural contexts displays awareness of two systems and processes of storytelling. This intercultural comparative lens adds to participants' definition of story to include their previous cultural knowledge and assumptions.

Past storytelling experiences

Participants discussed their previous storytelling involvement in a variety of ways. In sharing their pre-DST workshop experiences of storytelling, participants displayed awareness of and intentionality about how they chose story topics. In addition, they defined past story processes and formats while reflecting on their attitudes towards these formats. Furthermore, participants demonstrated what their past story content and products were. They also shared their attitudes about the stories they had told in the past. Agency is shown in the choices made when selecting a specific topic, including making decisions on what parts of a moment to share and which not to. Additionally, participants demonstrated a lack of agency in some storytelling formats such as newspaper or magazine interviews, where topics and other factors are predetermined. However, even in those interview instances participants showcased agency in sharing their stories’ content and in choosing to participate.

In describing which stories they chose to tell and in which situations, participants displayed awareness of and intentionality about stories they had told in the past. For example, Judy reflected on her application to join a women’s empowerment project; she described the

application questions as requesting her story. She illustrates how she selected what to share, "Well, I just relate to the course. So, for leadership for women...so, I wanna share this part, not that part." Judy was aware that she had a choice of what life stories to share and was navigating her options with intentionality. Participants also reflected on their decision-making process to choose a topic. Judy explained that she intentionally selected specific things to share that fit the rhetorical situation. "Well, I choose *[sic*] what was relevant for the topic." Judy acknowledged that she thought about the topic. Additionally, participants described how they made decisions about whether or not they would share their stories. David and Leila both indicated that they had not shared a story before, while the remaining participants had varying levels of experience and in different formats. Even though Leila had not shared her story before, she demonstrated interest in starting with this DST workshop, "So, now I feel like... that I have many things to tell." This demonstrates Leila's intention to tell stories.

When participants told stories, they were always intentional about different aspects of the story. For example, Aymen recognized the power of his story, and he described the different opportunities he had, in which he chose to tell his story of coming to the US. Aymen states, "But I did share my story with NDSU administrative staff, Moorhead Public schools' administrative staff, and a lot of schools in the Fargo Moorhead area...some events." Aymen decided when and where to share his stories knowing the impact they would have in different settings.

Participants also realized that the story topics that they had been asked to produce by host community members in conversations were repetitive. Ali, for instance, described his awareness of the different topics he had shared in his stories before, and he realized that the DST workshop gave him an opportunity to tell a different one. Ali described his experiences, "I guess the reason why I didn't go with those is because I have shared so many times and I have told and retold and

retold so many people." Ali's past experiences indicate that he was asked multiple times to share similar story topics. Even though the topic was somewhat restrictive, Ali could select how to engage with it. The agency displayed by participants when selecting topics can easily be identified when participants negotiated what to talk about, as well as what examples and their life moments they chose to share within that story topic.

Participants described how they had previously told stories in a variety of formats, reported on the processes, and shared their attitudes towards them. Ali mentioned that he had shared stories in formats such as interviews for online or print magazines and newspapers. He had participated in community projects that brought New Americans together to tell their stories either in a workshop format or for a social media initiative. He had also shared his story at community gatherings in conversation or presentation formats. Describing his last interview with a newspaper, Ali expressed his attitude towards the interview format, "I felt like a hero in a movie." Edward, like Ali, had taken part in several different formats of storytelling in the community such as: interviews with local newspapers and magazines, community storytelling projects, and community conversation. Additionally, Aymen shared his story in conversation, community events, and official government or other office meetings.

In contrast, the remaining participants had fewer experiences with storytelling. Adam for example, described that he also did an interview with the local newspaper. In fact, he asked, "Do you consider that storytelling?" Adam did not remember this experience at the beginning of our conversation, but later remembered it, then proceeded to confirm if it fits a storytelling definition. Similar to Adam, Tanya had shared her story once before. She had written a profile for an online magazine about her professional field. She reported that the magazine had requested a short passage describing her background and current role in her job. She said, "So, it

was hard to make...because when you think about your story, you think about your life and it's really long." Tanya reflected that the amount of time and space given to her to tell her story in that format was insufficient. She further expressed concern that she would face the same issue with the DST workshop. Furthermore, Maria discussed having shared her story with a social media and community-based project, writing for a local magazine newspaper, and writing about her experiences at her job. As mentioned above, Judy had previously shared her story as part of an application for a women's empowerment program. Meanwhile, Fatima, David, and Leila had not shared their stories before.

Participants' agency in past storytelling experiences seems limiting because many of the formats required a specific topic or length, and participants did not have agency for final editing. Based on the participants' experiences, storytelling formats can be restrictive. The genre of media magazines or community projects often required a predetermined topic, a short length, direction from the media, and lack of choice and decision making from the participants. Tanya did not have a choice when she had to write a short profile on her job. She had a word length limit and a specific prompt to respond to. She wondered, "Oh, what do I talk about cause there are so many things to talk about, which one to do you choose [*sic*]?" Even though the genres themselves can demonstrate a lack of agency, the participants still have agency in choosing to be part of one project versus another, and they could agree to one form or topic of storytelling or another. So, in these situations, participants exerted their agency as much as they could within the limits of previous story formats.

Participants expressed telling different stories in their past. In discussing the stories that they told, participants delved into the topic choices they made in spite of limiting storytelling formats and processes. Most of the previous story topics were related to identity, personal

journey, and sometimes work experience. Ali, Adam, and Tanya all conveyed that they were asked similar kinds of questions regarding their identity and journey to the US in social interactions with host community members or by interviewers for different media or community projects. Ali said, “Pretty much what I shared so far is about my family, my culture, my experience coming to the US, and then after settling here in Fargo- Moorhead.” Adam added “They said, what do you like and dislike in the area”. Similar to Ali and Adam’s experiences, Tanya also shared, “When they don’t hear me speaking, they think I'm just from here but as soon as I open up my mouth, they think, oh where your accent is from, and like people ask you like where you’re from.” While speaking about stereotypes, Tanya discussed that she engaged in community conversations by responding to questions about her background. She mentioned that she chose how to answer the question and how much to engage in details. However, decision making about which story to tell is influenced by participants' perceived expectations; they generally felt that they were expected to tell stories about arriving in the US. This lack of agency or sense of responsibility to explain “why are you here?” limited the breadth of storytelling that participants could engage in.

As established above, participants agreed that community conversations are considered storytelling. Their attitudes towards this story format varied widely. Edward and Maria mentioned that sometimes they felt that social interactions sought specific information that was repetitive to them. Maria stated, “So, I repeat that story at least once a day.” Additionally, Edward commented, “It was funny when you said this cause I’m tired as well. I’m like I don’t have a lot of energy today, let me just give you basic [information], not very exciting.” Furthermore, Tanya noted, “That’s a good point, but sometimes even if you give basic [information], they keep asking questions.” Maria, Edward, and Tanya indicated that the stories

that community members requested of them were repetitive and they all agreed that they sometimes sound stereotypical. Participants' engagement with the storytelling process was not always positive in this format.

Meanwhile, Leila and Aymen were both excited to share stories in social settings. Aymen said, "So, I don't mind to share [*sic*] my story [with] anybody [*sic*], it's fine." Leila agreed, "And uh so I'm not actually yet get bored [*sic*] of…" Adam and Leila's perspective may be influenced by the fact that they are newer to the US and the local community. Their attitude was positive towards storytelling in community or other settings. They both believed that they had a lot to say. Tanya, Maria, and Edward, on the other hand, have been in the US longer and have already shared their stories in a variety of ways. These three did not get to exert their agency in storytelling situations to the extent that they wished due to community expectations for stories. Meanwhile, Ali, Adam, Judy, David, and Fatima did not explicitly recognize community conversation as storytelling. However, their perspectives on past storytelling agreed that some formats restricted their agency more than others and some community expectations of topics limited their ability to make different story choices.

Participants' definitions of story and their past storytelling experiences set the stage for their participation in the DST workshop. Participants' agency in defining story is based on their experiences and their descriptions of their past experiences. Their definitions of "story" are informed by their experiences with different story formats. Additionally, participants' past storytelling indicates engagement, reflections, and decision making. Agency as action was enacted in two ways: agency from the voice of underrepresented people as well as gained agency from the DST tools participants employed.

DST Workshop Experiences

Before delving into workshop experiences and particular story choices, below s a list of the story topics and summaries for each participant. Participates stories vary in theme. Approach and provide a wealth of experiences.

Table 3

Story Topic and Summary

Theme	Participant	Story Title	Story Summary
Arriving in the US	Fatima	"Experience of the Refugee"	A chronological list of events about her journey as a refugee. She focused on how she adjusted after arriving in the US and told her in-migration story.
	Aymen	"Aymen Story [*sic*]"	An asylum story about perseverance on his journey once he entered the US. He told his story of finding his way once released from asylum detention. Then, he shared how he adjusted to life in his new and current home.
Experiences in the US	Leila	"American Dream"	A story of excitement to travel to the US for "the American Dream." Her enthusiasm quickly met reality when she learned that she had to rely on herself and her sister through a harsh encounter with a friend.
	Tanya	"Limitless"	A story of ambition and dreams. She shares her experiences learning English and following her educational and professional dreams.
	Maria	"Small Things"	A story of social and cultural integration into a US community. She focuses on the daily tasks that she had to unlearn and relearn. Comparing grocery store sizes and items sold, she explored her first experiences in a new way of shopping.

Table 3. *Story Topic and Summary (continued)*

Theme	Participant	Story Title	Story Summary
Identity	Ali	"A Moment of Change"	A story of motivation and success. He shares a moment when he struggled academically and his father motivated him to follow his dreams and not give up.
	Adam	"A Letter to My Unborn Child"	A story in the form of a letter addressed to his son. He collects pieces of advice about life to share with his son. This collection includes lessons about different aspects of life and motivates his son to stay connected to his father's legacy.
	Judy	"Brazilian Pride"	As a story of cultural, national, and ethnic identity, her perspective shows pride in who she is. She shares her experiences in the US being asked about her background. She explains her background and her pride in her identity journey.
	David	"My Story"	A story of faith. He shared his beliefs on belonging and growing up. He explains that he only truly belongs in faith and is happy with his path.
	Edward	"A Rwandan Third Culture Kid"	A story responding to the question, "where are you from?" He shared his country of origin, countries he grew up in, and his experiences travelling. He explained that he found home in life moments and experiences, while people around him wonder what place he calls home. He answers that he belongs as a citizen of the world.

Five stories discussed refugee and immigrant experiences, two of them focused on their journey as New Americans coming to the US and three on their life in the US. Fatima's and Aymen's stories focused on the journey of leaving home and entering the US while Leila, Tanya, and Maria shared about their adjustment to life in their new home. Fatima's "Experience of the Refugee" told her story of coming to America. She discussed her journey's timeline and mapped her travel. She also described the processes at the borders when she moved between countries, as

well as her admittance to a refugee camp. She, then, described her US admission and how she traveled to her first host community. Additionally, she described the process of getting settled there. Finally, she discussed in-migration and her move to her new home in this community where she is settled now. Aymen's "Aymen Story [*sic*]" is a US border and detention story. He talked about the process of being admitted into the detention center and then released. He described how he did not know where he was or how to travel where he wanted to. He met and received help from another Somali person who was also released that same day. He described his arrival to Fargo-Moorhead, not knowing much at the beginning and how he made it into his home over time. He mentioned that, at the beginning, he was thinking of home and feeling alone until he started volunteering in the community. He then found community, work, and purpose.

In addition to stories of leaving one's country and one's journey to the US, other stories focused on journeys and learned lessons within the US. Leila, Tanya, and Maria all focused on sharing stories of their early life in the US. Leila's "American Dream" discussed the "end of a delusionment" where everything was supposed to be better. As Leila prepared to travel to study in the US with her family, a family contact in the US told her that they would let her stay with them when she and her family arrived in the US. However, while Leila and her family were in between flights, her contact changed their mind. For someone who had never left their country and who had a false sense of safety and comfort because of her US contact's welcome, it was a shocking experience. Leila mentioned that she did not blame them, but this incident made her think about the amount of work she would have to do to learn all the systems and that there was no one to rely on but herself. Tanya's "Limitless" told her story of arriving in the US, learning English, and her motivation. She mentioned that she wanted to learn English as soon as she arrived in the US. Thanks to a motivational and influential English teacher, combined with her

hard work, she was able to achieve her goal. She compared her motivation during her early time in the US with her lack of interest in learning English as a young girl in Russia. Tanya added that learning English early allowed her to go to school, work, and travel. Finally, Maria's "Small Things" discussed how adapting to the US and its culture was and is still difficult. She provided an example of cultural shock when she went looking for toothpaste and described her experience in big supermarkets. She noticed that shopping is much different in the US because the aisles in her home country were smaller and there were fewer brands to choose from. She also mentioned that in small stores, in her home country, people become acquainted with the vendors, whereas in the US, there does not seem to be a relationship. Maria added that she is still learning and making this community her home.

The remaining five stories revolve around the theme of identity. Ali's and Adam's stories focus on the concept of family legacy and advice from parents to their children. Ali's "A Moment of Change" described his middle school experiences and his father's intervention. He shared that even though teachers and others gave him negative comments, his father's motivation helped him move past the negativity. He learned to believe in himself and his grades improved. Ali's purpose in sharing the story was to instill in young people or those struggling with motivation to believe in themselves and have confidence. Adam's "A Letter to My Unborn Child" is a letter to his son, meant to be opened once he passes away. He gave advice to his son that could be used throughout his life. The advice came from Adam's personal life as well as many wise and influential people's experiences and quotes.

Judy's, David's, and Edward's stories discussed their identities as they were negotiated and questioned while living in the US. Judy's "Brazilian Pride" talked about her feelings of belonging as a person of Japanese descent. She stated that people in Brazil did not ask her

questions about her background or identity because they were aware of and embraced the diversity in their country. However, once she traveled to the US, she became aware of her difference, and that made her feel like a minority for the first time. Additionally, she discussed that over time and after learning some US history, she started to understand racial and cultural tensions. David's "My Story" discussed his cultural identity as a child immigrant to the US. He talked about not fitting in with either his home community in Uganda or the US Black community. His search led him to a spiritual and religious home. He shared that tribalism, nationalism, and cultural identity were not enough for true belonging, but faith was where he felt that he belonged. Edward's "A Rwandan Third Culture Kid" discussed his feelings when responding to the question, "where are you from?" He discussed how having to answer this question, for someone who moved around during his childhood, affected him. He added that humans' need to belong was justified. Thanks to his experiences as a third culture kid who embraced his background, he learned how to feel at home anywhere in the world. He suggested that home is where you decide, and that it is a feeling of belonging. Edward concludes the list of participants. Specific rhetorical, linguistic, and multimodal choices will be discussed in the sections below.

The DST workshop process was new to all participants. Participant's attitudes towards the process were generally positive and their purpose educational. Participants displayed agency throughout the DST process by engaging in conversation with each other. In addition, participants connected with each other's stories and recognized the importance of individual voices as well as collective New American voices during Story Circle. Finally, comments on the DST workshop facilitator role displays the level of comfort the participants felt and illustrated that a safe storytelling space allowed them to make many story choices.

DST Workshop process attitudes

In participants' description of how they felt about joining the DST workshop, their excitement about the workshop process was visible. Fatima mentioned that she never shared her story before and was happy to have an opportunity to do so. She exclaimed, "I'm so excited." (Group A.docx) She added what her purpose was, "Because I want to describe my experience, what happened my life [*sic*] when I was...that's why I take...uh so happy." Additionally, Leila had only shared her stories in conversation with colleagues before; she expressed how she felt after the workshop, "I just felt that it's...it's…it would be great or exciting and good to...because this...this...you know, I'm not familiar with this kind of making videos. And uhm I kind of find a kind of fun here." Fatima's and Leila's experience, like all participants, was positive. In addition, all participants regarded the DST workshop as a place to learn something new. Adam mentioned that he had always wanted to learn about multimodal storytelling, "I enjoyed the time cause as far as I was there [*sic*], I learned new things about digital storytelling." Being included in this workshop allowed Adam to try practicing some skills in a low-risk environment. When discussing the process of story production, some participants reflected that technology could be intimidating. David reflected that he did not have discomfort or issues with the technology," But I can see someone who hasn't used movie-making software a lot before, would have some issues trying to get past the learning curve on how to do certain things on the software." Even though all participants in this workshop went through the process at varying speed, they were all assisted throughout all the steps by the facilitators. David expressed a concern that possible technological issues that could happen in the future if participants were not prepared or supported.

The DST workshop process enabled participants to make many choices on topic, story multimodal elements, and language. While they reflected on the process, their discussion of

multiple story options displayed their awareness of the number of choices they had in this format. They also mentioned that they were excited to participate in the DST process. Additionally, they communicated that they learned new skills throughout the process.

Participant dynamics

During the workshops, participants built off of each other's stories and conversations constantly and created positive and rich participant dynamics. They asked questions and engaged with each other's stories throughout their interactions. For example, Edward and Tanya discussed their common experiences when engaging in storytelling through social community conversations. Tanya's discussion of how she was stopped at the grocery store and asked where her accent was from, sparked a conversation in group C. She declared, "It's not the same people but for me I'm answering the same questions and I'm just tired of it." Edward understood her position and added, "That's true, that's true." Edward and Tanya supported each other's experiences and validated their feelings about their common experiences. Leila also added onto Tanya's statement exploring the topic of stereotypes in her home country and in the US. Leila stated, "I think this stereotypes [*sic*] thinking, the point that you raised...that is really the same in our country." While all participants built each other's stories up, they also agreed and asked questions to engage with each other, Maria, Adam, and Judy's comments provide a few instances of that. Maria agreeing with Edward and Tanya's experiences of being asked to tell repetitive story topics said, "I think I saw it too." Adam expressed that he also considered sharing a different story like Ali, "The same for me." Judy commented on David's response to my questions "Ya, it's a good answer." Participants supported each other through these interactions. Since the structure and format of the workshop allowed for this social element, participants took liberties to build new stories, make connections, and engage in questions without it being

scripted as part of the process. Therefore, participant agency in the DST process is visible through the natural social interactions that occurred between all participants within their respective groups.

Story circle

The Story circle stage of the DST workshop refers to when participants met within their respective groups A, B, and C to think about which stories to tell and gave each other feedback. While reflecting on the process and attitudes during the story circle of the DST workshop, participants felt happy to connect with others while telling stories. Ali and Adam both expressed that they felt connected and were pleased to share their stories in a group setting. For example, Ali expressed, "Oh, I feel connected. I feel supported. You know, like, people are there to actually listen to your story and that gives me hope." Adam also reflected, "You know, I was pleased to share my work because like I said it's an overarching [*sic*]." This element of connection and support during the story circle can be seen with all participants. They also discussed how it was good to hear each other's stories. Aymen, Fatima, and Maria shared how meaningful and valuable it was. They described that it was a relief to learn that other New Americans had similar stories of struggle and other life experiences that than did. Aymen said, "I like sharing my story with the group because I feel like some other people have a similar story like mine I have [*sic*]." Fatima, additionally, explaining why she felt comfortable with the group setting during Story Circle, commented, "Because we are in the same group that we're sharing something, their idea [*sic*], their stories." Furthermore, Maria emphasized the power of listening to each other's stories, "It's fun to see other people's stories and how different they...like, their experience is [*sic*] even though we're all doing the same thing here. And then, you have a chance to actually hear it in their own voice." Participants acknowledged the importance of voice and

power over their own stories and each other's experiences. The agency practiced by participants when deciding what topics to share was noticeable during the story circle stage of the DST workshop. Furthermore, participants displayed an awareness and intentionality of voice, connection, and building community with each other during the story circle.

Facilitator role

The DST workshop facilitator role was discussed minimally by participants. However, all participants agreed that they felt supported and guided throughout the DST workshop. Edward and Leila were among those who commented on their experiences with the workshop facilitator. Edward noted, “Because I have been in many other opportunities to share one’s story where it didn’t feel right when doing it, whereas during this whole process, I felt at home and safe around the group. Leila also stated, “With the direction it worked for me, ya.” These observations indicate that participants were comfortable with the facilitator and the process. The participants' comfort during the process allowed them to engage in many decisions, questions, and conversations that allowed them to experience storytelling in a new and different way safely. Participants, following the direction of the facilitator, displayed many choices in the making of their stories.

DST workshop experiences varied from specific process elements, such as participation in the story circle, to overall feelings and attitudes regarding the workshop experience as a whole. The participants acknowledged that the DST workshop format was different and more advantageous than their previous storytelling experiences. Participants also engaged with the idea of having choices to make on their stories. They explored this workshop format with a positive learner attitude. DST workshop experiences demonstrate a level of agency that

participants show through their awareness of decision-making present in DST and limited in their previous storytelling experiences.

DST Reflections

When participants reflected upon the DST workshop, they covered alternative topics that they thought of creating as their stories. Participants also specifically thought about possible story formats in the future, as well as possible topics that they might want to share during DST. Finally, participants reflected on advantages and disadvantages of the DST workshop. The participants' reflections revealed their agency during the DST process. When sharing stories that they might have told, participants explored possible topics that they wanted to center their digital story on. Additionally, during their reflections, participants thought of multiple future topics and formats, which articulated the choice and power they had when it came to sharing their stories. Participants’ reflections of DST workshop advantages and disadvantages, furthermore, describe the participants’ navigation of different story formats and topics.

Alternative stories

Participants had many alternative stories that were ready to be told for their DST video. The story circle elicited many alternative topics and fully developed stories. It was notable that some participants told fully developed stories for their alternative topic options during the story circle or the post-workshop interviews. Aymen, like all the participants, explored many different story alternatives as options to create for the DST workshop. He mentioned, “Food is different, people is [*sic*] different, climate [*sic*] is different. It’s a good story to tell.” He, furthermore, added, “And also leaving back home is also uh another story to tell.” After listing possible alternatives, Aymen then took the time to tell the alternative story of his journey as well as many experiences from his home country. Maria similarly explored a variety of alternative stories that

she thought she might share. She discussed her upbringing and her journey as a newcomer to the US. Aymen, Maria, and other participants discussed many alternative stories for the workshop before settling on their chosen ones. Participants displayed agency by demonstrating an awareness of choice, making conscious decisions about which stories to tell, when, and why; in other words, participants explored several options and did not randomly choose a topic for their digital story.

Future storytelling formats

All participants listed several story formats that they might use in the future if they were to make more stories. They all mentioned that they would be willing to take part in a similar DST workshop to create more stories in the future. However, some explored other options like writing a book so that they could tell their full life story. Tanya, for example, in reflecting on future story formats said, “But I would like it to be longer and I would like to make more time for it to prepare. Tanya stated that the benefit of having a longer piece was to document her life events. However, she later acknowledged that DST provided a more manageable and shareable format. Edward mentioned that he could do DST in the future, but he is more comfortable with written or oral stories noting, “Spoken word or in writing it is the best therapeutical [*sic*] way for me. Simple and easy.” Adam, additionally, expressed his interest in audio recording stories as letters to his son. However, he reflected on more DST stories saying, “Ya, if I have time, of course with digital storytelling, cause now I know how to do that and I know that uh the effect of this work on people’s impression.” Furthermore, Fatima expressed her interest in further developing her chosen story and sharing alternative story topics if a similar opportunity for community storytelling arose. When asked whether or not she would be interested in telling more stories in the future, Fatima replied, “Ya, if I get the chance.” Fatima, Ali, Maria, Aymen,

Leila, David, and Judy preferred storytelling using DST thanks to its multimodal advantages. While Tanya, Edward, and Adam acknowledged many advantages of DST and said they would partake in DST again if prompted, they indicated that they would rather use oral or written methods to record their life events. For these participants, their preferences were mostly due to the time commitment it takes to make a digital story. Therefore, they would engage in DST again if and when time allows.

All participants acknowledged the choices and the power that the DST format enabled them to display. David, Fatima, Judy, Leila, Aymen, and Ali all discussed that they plan on making more digital stories. David opined, “Mmm, it would most likely be digital since that's how a lot of people communicate these days.” While David focused on DST’s multimodality and easy access to social media, Fatima expressed her interest in experimenting more with DST, “Ya, I will try to do that [*sic*] way.” When asked if she would use DST again to tell their stories, Judy said, “Ya, I can use DST” and Leila responded, “Oh, yeah definitely.” In addition, Ali answered, “I will plan to do those…the moments in a digital way.” Participants were not only able to experience a new format of storytelling with DST, but also compare it with other formats they may have engaged with in the past. With this new knowledge, participants can make more informed decisions about their choices of storytelling formats and topics in the future. Therefore, this is a new way for them to exert their agency.

Future storytelling topics

When participants thought of possible future topics that they might engage in to create stories in the future, they expressed an interest in expanding their DST topics. Additionally, they mentioned topics such as immigration, coming to and living in the US, and about their home countries. Edward discussed possibly creating stories about social and community matters, but

said that they were difficult topics for him to address. He added, “Probably but always trying to prioritize my well-being first. It is all contextual and depending my state of mind [*sic*].” Edward knew the emotional toll some topics had on him versus others. Judy echoed the idea of selecting a topic based on her wellbeing and readiness to share. She stated, “For the future one...how I can contribute to the future was hard because it’s hard to think about future [*sic*] I guess. And I thought it was too personal to share.” While discussing one of the Green Card Voices Prompts that Judy selected as a possible topic, she explained in her reflection that she did not choose it because it would be too emotional for her. Judy added that her choice for the DST workshop topic was still personal but safe. She was more ready to share her DST story topic than reflect on future contributions. The intentionality that Edward and Judy expressed demonstrates agency through availability of choice.

All participants had possible future topics they wanted to address. Leila was enthusiastic about telling more stories of relocation and lessons learned. She commented, “I think more about my life in Fargo. And my, kind of, making a comparison how this life is different from birthplace [*sic*], from my homeland.” Like Leila, all participants expressed intentionality and reasoning for how they chose one topic over another. Their agency in topic selection can easily be noticed because in most other storytelling formats such as interviews and community conversations or projects, participants were offered a specific topic to respond to. Meanwhile DST gave them the freedom to select what they wanted to share.

Advantages and disadvantages

Participants’ reflections on the advantages versus disadvantages of DST as a storytelling format suggest that they noticed more advantages than disadvantages. Taking part in this DST workshop was the first time any participant had learned about DST as a format for storytelling.

Their perspective in comparing DST with other formats that they were familiar with was an important step in their reflection on its value.

Some of the DST advantages that participants listed included the multimodality of DST, its emotional appeal, and the ability to share stories on social media. Ali, Adam, Tanya, and Maria all discussed their positive experiences with DST and why they thought it was a good approach to storytelling. Ali discussed DST's social media impact noting, "I feel like nowadays, like, people get connected through social media more than ever, more than they interact on a daily basis. So, I think that's one important aspect of it." Meanwhile, Adam commented on multimodality as a benefit saying, "You can remember most of the details, the themes in that story than just merely [*sic*] reading something…or just listening. So, that's multimodality ya, multimodality is very important." Tanya's reflection was concerned with the music and emotional appeal that sets DST apart when she added, "uh it includes music so you can deliver your emotions. So, like how…what you feel…how you feel about your story." Additionally, Maria thought about DST's multimodal and social media aspect in keeping the video alive for generations. Maria stated, "My grandchildren are gonna be able to see it." Overall, the participants' responses illustrate the value of multimodality in DST, because it enabled viewers to have more access to stories. Participants also discussed DST's advantages of having an emotional appeal for viewers, emotional attachment to a video story can draw viewers to empathize with the story and storyteller. Furthermore, participants noted that the DST format increased the availability of the story, which would allow for the story to have a larger reach than other formats.

Participants also discussed some challenges and possible disadvantages with the DST format. They suggested that the time limitation of three minutes put restraints on the content of

the story. Even though participants believed the time limit was a challenge, they also recognized that this format was not meant to tell a life story but focus on a reflective moment. Leila, for example, said, “So, to choose or making [*sic*] a video within 3 minutes that’s really challenging and it’s difficult to give it a shape.” Aymen added a similar thought, “I think people need to pay more time for them to build this story as digital.” This is a challenge that participants anticipated and did have to navigate as they were writing their scripts. However, the time limit is purposeful for participants to change their perspective from viewing DST as a tool to tell their life story, to selecting a moment of change and exploring that.

Agency in the DST process lies in the choices participants have throughout the process. Their reflections of advantages and disadvantages demonstrate their awareness of choice and agency over their stories and voice. All participants had a comparative approach to thinking of the value of DST. Participants were a little bit skeptical of the DST format but mostly excited for a learning opportunity. Their skepticism originated from the learning curve of what story means in the DST format as well as time limitations, technology, and the time that was required to build a digital story. When participants reflected on the DST process, they considered alternative topics, future DST formats, future DST topics, and advantages and disadvantages of the process. In their reflections, participants demonstrated participants' engagement with the workshop, each other, storytelling, and protecting their voice.

One of the study’s shortcomings includes the conclusions that can be made about what composes agency. Based on the results, it can be concluded that agency is a combination of original voice from the margins and power thanks to the DST tool. However, it cannot be measured how much agency is shown through an original voice from the margins and how much is thanks to the learned tools. Even though this study’s results do not resolve the debate on where

agency comes from, it adds a new perspective that agency is an action that participants can engage in and not a thing to give and take. Another possible study limitation involves generalizing results. The number of participants in this study is too small to make any generalizations on New Americans practices of storytelling or DST benefits. However, I do not attempt to generalize the results. I refer to each participant as an individual whose contributions can suggest future research into agency and storytelling.

The various components of the DST process discussed in this chapter reveal the kind of storytelling New American participants engaged in and how they responded to those experiences. Participants practiced storytelling with agency using their original voice. As shown above, this original voice comprises of their individual choices throughout the storytelling process. This means that participants were telling stories about themselves and their communities using their language, negotiation of processes, reflection, questioning, and contributions. Additionally, participants practiced storytelling with agency enacted thanks to DST as a tool of power. DST as a tool does not have power as a thing it gives to participants, but when New American participants engage in DST that has many affordances for them, their agency and power can be visible. The decision making that participants made in regards to their DST experience and story demonstrate their agentive actions that became visible thanks to the DST format. With this background set up on processes, formats, and attitudes, the next chapter elaborates on the specific multimodal and linguistic choices that participants engaged in during the DST workshop. Before concluding this chapter, some limitations and implications of these study results are explained below.

The results indicate that agency does not have to be black and white; it can live in the gray area middle ground. As the complicated concept it is, participant agency in storytelling

reflects their identity because they use their underrepresented voice to tell their stories. However, participants also exert agency from DST tools. Having practiced agency as defined by both camps indicated in Flower's work, research on agency should rather focus on how agency is displayed. A shift of perspective from the debate on where agency comes from to how participants display agency is a needed direction. More research on agency and DST is needed to learn more about the affordances and power of the tool versus the power from the margins. Therefore, the central aim is finding measures of defining what agency looks like as an action, such as community storytelling collaborations.

CHAPTER 5: TRANSMODALITY AND AGENCY

This study focuses on three main points: First, it establishes which stories participants chose to tell and what rhetorical practices they used to tell them. While responding to this first question in Chapter Four, I also demonstrated how participants employed their agency while storytelling. This current chapter addresses this study's second and third questions: How did participants define their rhetorical situation and linguistic choices, and how did they exhibit their voice through their stories? Finally, how did participants use multimodal choices such as images, music, and voiceover to display agency. I demonstrate rhetorical, linguistic, and multimodal decisions that participants made and explain that they matter because participant stories operate in a counter-narrative space. While participants do not typically have access to tell their stories or are limited by their previous storytelling experiences to make many choices, the DST approach provides opportunities for their voice to be visible. Researchers can finally have access to this voice thanks to all the choices they make rhetorically, linguistically, and multimodally. During their DST workshop experience for this study, participants created stories with a variety of topics, including refugees' and immigrants' experiences coming to the US, experiences in the US, and identity. The above overview of participant stories in chapter four describes topics and summaries for context.

This chapter first provides scholarship that conceptualizes transmodality. This section describes research on translingualism and multimodality in relation to agency detailed in Chapter two, as well as the link between the scholarship and this study's results. The results section elaborates on the stories' rhetorical situation, linguistic choices, and multimodal approach. The rhetorical situation illustrates participants' agency in story topic, audience, and story sharing choices. Linguistic choices explain how agency is demonstrated in language choice, tone and

wording, and script writing. The multimodal approach describes agency in action when implementing visual and auditory elements, as well as video production. To conclude this chapter, I present study limitations and describe the potential impact of this research.

Conceptualizing Transmodality

In discussing translingualism, translanguaging, multimodality, and agency, scholarship presents many different approaches and definitions. Based on the literature presented below researchers should, however, keep the focus on what impact agentive translingualism and multimodality can have in different research settings. The question of translanguaging in relation to both agency and multimodality becomes central. The translanguaging practice mixed with multimodality forms a new concept referred to as transmodality. Transmodality can be a rich site for debate on best practices; however, researchers should move to analyzing how agency and voice is enacted. The literature that comes out of transmodal contexts demonstrates that transmodal practices can benefit our understanding in a variety of fields. The convergence of translanguaging and multimodality creates choices and flexibility that researchers can use to recognize agency. Agentive transmodality is a slightly paved path for researchers. Applying Flower's discussion on agency as outlined in Chapter Four, original voice represents underrepresented communities. When exploring the scholarship below on translingualism, translanguaging, and multimodality in relation to agency, agency is considered actions that are taken to demonstrate original voice.

In understanding how to identify underrepresented voices, Alvarez's (2017) *Brokering Tareas* examines a grassroots literacy mentoring program that connected immigrant parents with English language mentors. Alvarez discusses how underrepresented communities use translanguaging as a tool to display their voice. He describes how the project mentors helped

emerging bilingual children with homework and encouraged positive academic attitudes. Alvarez gives an ethnographic account of literacy practices, language brokering, advocacy, community-building, and mentorship among Mexican-origin families at a neighborhood after-school program in New York City. Both students and their families are able to share their voice regarding their learning. A community-based project enabled underrepresented voices to be visible. My study also identified New American participants' voices through a community-based project where participants could practice their voice.

Some scholarship suggests that participants' agency can be identified through their navigation of different language systems. In Lu and Horner's (2013) "Translingual Literacy, Language Difference, and Matters of Agency," the authors argue that scholars should focus on how writing makes a difference. They provide a new perspective on agency, stating that agency is "the need and ability of individual writers to map or order, remap or reorder conditions and relations surrounding their practices, as they address the potential discrepancies between the official and practical" (p. 591). Lu and Horner's discussion of writer's agency as navigating standard English and other varieties of English or other languages demonstrates that agency does not lie in the standard as traditionally believed. For multilingual and monolingual users alike, agency is enacted through recognizing different systems of language and being able to navigate between them. My study participants practiced their agency through linguistic and multimodal navigation.

Participants' agency can also be identified through rhetorical attunement. In "Multilingual Writing as Rhetorical Attunement," Leonard (2014) argues that translingual writing uses some level of "rhetorical attunement." This means that multilingual writers "tune" into a situation and adjust their writing as the situation requires. Leonard suggests that "writers

call on or create literate resources in the process of making do, asserting themselves, or communicating on the fly in specific rhetorical situations" (p. 228). It is a similar practice to writing for different rhetorical situations and audiences. Leonard also argues that when multilinguals are displaced, they do not leave one literacy, history, and culture in the past; they carry those literacies with them. This means that multilingual users have access to different rhetorical situations and techniques for how to "tune" into them. In the translingual ideology where multilingual writers have access to the different languages and literacies they know besides English, rhetorical attunement becomes a challenging, rich, and agentive practice. I consider rhetorical attunement not only linguistically but multimodally as well.

In further identifying how agency is displayed through translanguaging, creative practices are presented. Melo-Pfeifer and de Araújo e Sá's (2018) "Multilingual Interaction in Chat Rooms: Translanguaging to Learn and Learning to Translanguage" demonstrates a strategic use of translanguaging skills with specific affective, cognitive, and social goals. Melo-Pfeifer and de Araújo e Sá illustrate that the Romance languages users who participated in this study were learning class content while implementing translanguaging practices. They also noticed that their study participants were accepting and rejecting what constitutes their common translanguaging vocabulary. Because translanguaging is creative work that comprises the "random" selection of linguistic codes, users in a particular context or community dictate what is acceptable and what is not. Creative use of language, unique understanding of participants' use of language, and creativity in multimodal use are all indicators of participant agency in my research.

As participants practice transmodality, they engage in agency. Martin et al.'s (2019) study "Pedagogies of Digital Composing through a Translingual Approach" is one of the few that explore this niche. In order to create what they call "dynamic and inclusive" classrooms,

Martin et al. claim that teachers should select familiar digital and linguistic practices and theories to use when implementing a translingual multimodal project (p. 144). While some scholarship offers new techniques, methods, and contexts for translingual writing and digital composition, Martin et al. argue that “we can draw on established teaching practices and resources to foster digital translingual classrooms” (p. 144). They define “rhetorical navigation” as the practice of aligning their pedagogical goals with existing composition theories while applying translingual and multimodal projects. Martin et al.’s contribution adds vocabulary to the translingual and multimodal work that my study participants did. “Transmodality” provides a concept that helps group different participants' story choices to discuss their agentive actions. In digital media, there are many affordances to using transmodal voice. Schreiber’s (2015) “‘I Am What I Am’: Multilingual Identity and Digital Translanguaging” presents a case study of the multilingual writing practices of a Serbian university student on Facebook. Schreiber examines how the participant used multiple varieties of English and Serbian, images, and video to shape his online identity and establish membership in local and global communities as an artist. The Serbian student’s use of Facebook with different media enables him to communicate using his voice in a variety of ways. Moreover, Schreiber suggests that the participant’s creative space allows for not only his individual, social, and artistic voice to come out, but also his creative, digital, and translanguaging one.

Affordances of transmodal work also include genre-based learning. In “Multimodality, Translingualism, and Rhetorical Genre Studies,” Gonzales (2015) argues that teachers and students of L1 and L2 learners can benefit from teaching genre-based writing that uses multimodality and translingualism. Multimodal composition taught with a rhetorical genre pedagogy offers an opportunity to perceive writing as “socially situated.” This means that

scholars who work on multimodality can shape the online and social media platforms as rhetorical genres with conventions and social situations. This approach helps students avoid viewing genre conventions as rules that have to be followed all the time because they understand that these multimodal tools can be reshaped as needed. The learning that students transfer from their multimodal experiences into genre-based concepts will enhance their composition practices. My study participants implement transmodality in their storytelling and take advantage of many educational opportunities through that experience.

Some literature provides insight not into how agency can be identified but why scholars should do so. Cioè-Peña and Snell's (2015) work, "Translanguaging for Social Justice," discusses the classroom environment in relation to New American learning. In this article, Cioè-Peña and Snell suggest that in speaking about newcomers who are identified as English language learners, teachers sometimes indicate that these children come to school "with nothing" (Cioè-Peña and Snell, 2015, Translanguaging for social justice, Executive Summary). The translingual view of language allows teachers to view students as coming with "something" because they bring their previous language(s) and their previous learning and literacy experiences to school. Once translingualism as a lens is adopted by the teacher, deficiency becomes richness. The act of translanguaging, therefore, becomes a rich source of content to work with. This inclusive pedagogy enables students and teachers to grow and learn in a just environment. In my study, participants are aware of their linguistic diversity. They also displayed agency through translingual practices.

The scholarship above helps illustrate how transmodal agency can be enacted by and for underrepresented communities. Additionally, the literature suggests that New American participants' voices can be identified by paying attention to their transmodal practices.

Participants practice their agency through navigating rhetorically, linguistically, and in multimodal ways. Rhetorical attunement is a tool used for creative understanding of the rhetorical situation, language, and multimodality. The scholarship in this section adds a transmodal layer to the concept of agency as action explored in Chapter 4. Additionally, participants' original voice can not only be found in participants' storytelling reflections, as described in the previous chapter, but also in their DST transmodal processes.

To identify how agency and voice is enacted, transmodal practices can assist in guiding that conversation. This chapter's results demonstrate that agency in action can be recognized when participants make different choices for their stories. Choices of story topic, audience, and story sharing are what compose the participants' rhetorical situation. These three aspects frame the participant's agency when considering their story's rhetorical situation. Participants' linguistic agency was enacted throughout the story creation process. Therefore, their specific choices and questions described show their linguistic agency in action. Participants' approaches towards multimodality were displayed in their choices of visual and aural elements, and story assembly. Transmodal voice, as defined by participants' choices, is one representation of what original voice looks like from and for underrepresented communities.

Transmodal Agency in Action

To describe transmodal agency in action in this study, this section describes in detail participants' agentive choices. First, I discuss the story's rhetorical situation where story topic, audience, and story sharing choices are explored. Second, linguistic choices are presented by explaining participants' language choices, tone and wording, and script writing. Finally, a description of the participants' multimodal approach includes visual and aural elements, and story assembly/video production. This section provides participant experiences and perspectives.

Additionally, it explains how all transmodal choices demonstrate agency as an action through engagement. When participants make transmodal choices for their stories, they are engaging with the content of their story. Therefore, they demonstrate how they are making counter-narratives.

The Rhetorical Situation

The rhetorical situation includes three themes that shape the participants' situational story choices: story topics, audience, and story sharing. When participants discussed their chosen DST story topic, audience awareness, and their preferences in regards to sharing their DST stories; participants molded their stories within a specific rhetorical situation. This section discusses how participants exert agency when making different choices that inform their story's rhetorical situation.

Story topics

Participants displayed their awareness of choice regarding what story topic to select. Before engaging with their stories, they defined their topics. For example, Fatima described her story topic choice when she said, "I will try to...my ability...to tell you about my story, the refugee experience, moving to a refugee camp, coming here." She narrowed down her focus on which part of her life story and journey to focus on when creating her story. Additionally, Ali reflected that, "what I'm gonna talk about is...I have not shared before, so it's like a moment of change." He indicated that he had shared different stories in the past, and this was an opportunity to tell a new one. Aymen also confirmed what topic he wanted to focus on, "There is...I…like I said I don't mind to focus [*sic*] the whole of my story. But yes, I think living in America is kind of…because when I was coming this country [*sic*] everything was different." Aymen defined his topic choice by selecting the breadth of his story and offering his justification for choosing to tell it in that manner.

Participants did not choose the first topic that came to mind without a reason and without exploring their choices. Participants negotiated many other possible topics. Tanya, for instance, explored her immigration process as an optional story topic. She shared, “what I’m thinking about what I will share, maybe about the general story...how I get to the U.S. And through all the immigration process I went through because it was a really long process.” Tanya explored what she would tell if she chose this topic further in her conversation with Group C. Maria also discussed a variety of topics. While sharing one of them, she said, “But at the same time there is the...I came here and how different my parents or my grandmother, who thought I was moving to Little House in the Prairie…” One of Maria’s options was talking about stereotypes that her family and people in her home country had of the US. She also shared with Group C what she would talk about if this were her story. Furthermore, she added, “That’s another thing…well, the thing is my family is not typical, that is the thing.” Maria indicated that her upbringing was so unique and she could tell many stories about it. Interestingly, participants indicated awareness of choice when not selecting other topics as well as when explaining the ones that they chose. Adam shared a story topic he might explore, then explained that he decided against it, “I was about to talk about that story but I changed my mind.” Adam’s statement mirrors participants' negotiations of different topic possibilities and their awareness of choice between them.

Participants provided reasoning for the topic they chose to tell and their process of selection. David mentioned that he chose his story “... because I had a lot to say about it, so it’s easy for me to produce.” He indicated that he had always wanted to share this particular story about his identity. Fatima added that, “Because I chose that...it was my journey, what happened my life, what is causing my life. That’s why I am starting to tell that [*sic*], to share with other people, ya.” Fatima’s explanation illustrates her interest in narrating her story to inform, educate,

and also, for her, to remember. Additionally, in discussing the process of selecting her topic, Tanya explained that the time constraints of the DST format pushed her to consider different topics and how to narrow them down to specific life events. She shared that, “The hardest part was, uh, to come up with the topic that would be interesting for others and personally for me...And something that could fit into two minutes.” Therefore, Tanya’s awareness of the DST constraints shaped her decision making on her story topic.

While all participants discussed their story topic and justifications, only two participants displayed awareness of current story kairos. Story kairos answers the question, “why this story now?” Fatima and Ali both reflected on why this story now. Fatima indicated that her story would help people around her to understand her better. She said, “It's difficult to adjust and connect with me there [in the community].” Without understanding her story, Fatima indicated that she could not make significant social connections. Ali thought through and explained what he was working through that brought this particular story about motivation to the surface. He claimed, “Now, I’m struggling with that attitude that I had when I was a kid. How come I don’t have that?” Ali’s reflection on how the life moment he focused on in his story brought a feeling of motivation that he needed to relive, which in turn affected his motivation at the time of telling the story. Even though other participants did not share their thinking about “why this story now?” explicitly, they discussed their purposes for their stories but they did not link them to why they are relevant in the present.

Participants displayed awareness of choice and agency by defining their story topics before engaging with their stories. Participants also did not choose the first topic that came to mind without a reason, and they explored their choices. They in fact negotiated many other possible topics. Additionally, participants provided reasoning for the topic they chose to tell and

their process of selection. Finally, two participants displayed awareness of current story kairos, while the rest described "why this story" but not "why now." When participants did not indicate the kairos for their story, they displayed limited agency. Participants seem to not have reflected on or not wanted to share what in their lives at the time of the DST brought about this particular story. However, once asked about why they chose their topics, they were able to provide a purpose. That purpose was not related to timing, but it was indicative of an assertion of agency in the moment they were asked, though not necessarily during the DST workshop itself.

Audience

Participant's choices of their story audience were intentional. This decision helped them make rhetorical, linguistic, and multimodal choices. The list of stories and audiences selected is listed below. The audiences vary from personal circles to large scale audiences. Each participant's story focused on either family and friends, or any community member who identifies with the issues presented.

Participants demonstrate their awareness and agency by identifying their story's audience. For example, when David was asked about who his story was meant for, he responded, "Really anyone who is interested in the stories about immigrants." Even though it sounds generic to say "anyone," David qualified it with those who are interested in immigrant stories. Similar to David, Maria started by saying "anyone," then qualified it by explaining that anyone can be an immigrant at some point in their lives. She explained:

> I thought about everyone because in my mind anybody can be an immigrant at some point of their life. Anybody can decide, you know what, I don't like it here, or I don't have good options here, I'm gonna go live in Italy and take off.

Even though David and Maria did not think of the audience from a conceptual frame, they knew who their stories would impact.

Table 4

Story Audience

Participant	Story Title	Audience
Fatima	"Experience of the Refugee"	-Friends and family primarily, then community.
Aymen	"Aymen Story [*sic*]"	-Children.
Leila	"American Dream"	-Community members.
Tanya	"Limitless"	-The future generation of her family primarily.
Maria	"Small Things"	-Everyone, because everyone can be an immigrant.
Ali	"A Moment of Change"	Young adults.
Adam	"A Letter to My Unborn Child"	His son primarily.
Judy	"Brazilian Pride"	-Her friends primarily, then the community.
David	"My Story"	-Anyone who wants to learn about immigrant stories.
Edward	"A Rwandan Third Culture Kid"	-Community members.

Tanya also said "everyone" at first, when asked about the audience for her story, but when I asked specifically by repeating her initial purpose, "So, if you said your audience was your future…?" She quickly added "Generation." Tanya's primary audience, therefore, was not an aspect she thought of as a theoretical concept, but she knew she intended her story for her grandchildren and great grandchildren. Furthermore, in identifying his audience, Aymen combined it with his purpose. Aymen noted, "So, I need, not only Somali, I need every kid to see

no matter where you are, you can step up and do whatever you want." Aymen's story had a precise audience from conception. He knew the reason and the direction it was meant for as he selected his topic and chose life moments to share.

Participants also discussed audience considerations in that they made story decisions based on their intended audience. Ali and Maria, for example, considered their choices of visuals and topic in relation to their intended audiences. Ali explained that, "I think what I shared...well because of my choice of animation, there is inclination [*sic*] towards teenage [*sic*] and uh young adults or kids maybe more like that [*sic*]." With his choice of animation, Ali wanted to draw teenagers and young adults in to view and benefit from his story. In Maria's reflection of her topic, she shared, "Oh, I wanted to make a story that was relatable, but at the same time that people would actually listen to." Maria mentioned that she explored many topics with the focus that the one she landed on would be "relatable." With Ali and Maria's intent when it came to audience considerations in relation to story choices, they demonstrated audience awareness from the beginning of the DST process.

Participants demonstrated agency through their exploration of the audience in relation to their stories. For example, participants identified their story audience. However, similar to issues that mainstream students face in identifying their audiences, sometimes participants' audience awareness was relatively vague and general. Most participants started by saying, "anyone, anybody, everyone," then they qualified it by adding, "who is an immigrant or who can identify struggles." Some participants, on the other hand, were able to pin down their audience at the beginning of their DST process. Participants who explained that they decided their audience first then tailored their story choices based on it, showcasing agentive audience awareness.

Story sharing choices

Participants indicated whether they wanted to share their story once it was finished and with whom. For example, Fatima said, “I want to share only some of my family.” She clarified early in the workshop that she was interested in making a private story. When interviewed at the end of the process once her story was created, Fatima still decided to only share it with her selected friends and family. Adam on the other hand noted, “Publicly yes.” He shared that he was comfortable with sharing his DST publicly. However, he added, “But not this one,” meaning that he was not satisfied with the video quality and wanted to revise in the future. When participants discussed whether they planned to revise their DST video or felt it was ready for publication, Adam explained, “the quality of the work that I did with this video doesn’t satisfy me because the voice is kind of low.” With the time provided for this workshop and the personal commitment that was spent, Adam decided that he would not mind sharing a story publicly provided that it was a better-quality production.

Participants negotiated where their story might be shared and reflected on what it would mean to share with different audiences. Judy stated, “Oh, I don't really know. When I was making this I thought, oh I can send…I just thought, I can send back to the people who was [*sic*] with me in Canada.” Judy’s first thought was to share her video story with the people who were involved in the story she told. Then, Judy also reflected, “So, the girls that was [*sic*] in the picture. I thought, oh I should share it to [*sic*] them. They will be happy to see in [*sic*] this movie. So…but I should share with American people, but I don't know.” She started thinking about the possible implications and impact of sharing with “American People.” She also considered how she does not see herself as representing New Americans, as there is only a small community with her background (Japanese Brazilian) in the area.

Participants took ownership of their stories and decided with whom to share them and in what capacity. They also demonstrated audience awareness in how their stories might be received. Furthermore, participants' perception of the quality of their videos impacted their choice of sharing their stories and with whom. Story topic, audience, and story sharing are what compose the participants' rhetorical situation. By choosing a specific topic with a clear purpose, participants displayed their agency over their story's direction. Participants' audience awareness was visible when they negotiated who their stories were meant for. Additionally, their agency was displayed when participants decided on their audience and then tailored their stories towards them. Finally, story sharing choices indicated that participants decided where their stories were going and why. These three aspects frame the participants' agency when considering their story's rhetorical situation.

Linguistic Choices

In this section, I discuss how participants indicate their awareness of their language choice while making linguistic choices for their DST. When discussing "language choice," participants reflected on the questions: "Why did you use English to tell your story?" and "Did you consider another language you speak?" In answering these questions, participants illustrated their awareness of language choices. This section also describes the tone and wording choices that participants engaged in. Furthermore, script writing decisions demonstrated negotiation of language within participants' stories. In addition to participants' reflections on their English language use, the tables in each subsection below demonstrate participants' linguistic choices. When discussing "language choice" their first story sentence was provided as an example of the English use. For the "tone and wording" section, an illustration of tone indicators and important

word choice was presented. Finally, in the “script writing” section I provide the last sentence of the stories as examples of script.

Language choice

Eight participants used English and no other languages in the telling of their stories. However, Tanya and Edward told their stories in English, but included one quote in their native language. This section discusses word choices in English as well as the Russian and KiRwandan.

Table 5

Story Language Choices

Participant	Story title	Language choice
Fatima	“Experience of the Refugee”	“Refugee experience: My name Fatima [*sic*] I came from Somalia; I want to explain my story about how came [*sic*] to America and [how I] live [*sic*] in the refugee camp.”
Aymen	“Aymen Story [*sic*]"	“When I reach [*sic*] the US border, the immigration officer asked for my papers.”
Leila	“American Dream”	“I came with the illusion of American [*sic*] Dream in USA [*sic*]. ”
Tanya	“Limitless”	--Uses Russian quote of a conversation with her English teacher in Russia, then translates it to “I didn't do my homework.”
Maria	“Small Things"	“People think that the hardest part about immigrating to a different country are [*sic*] the big things like getting a place to live, [and] finding a job.”
Ali	“A Moment of Change”	“A moment of change: when I was in middle school, I was not really paying attention to my school.”
Adam	“A Letter to My Unborn Son”	“A letter to my Unborn Son: I wish I could meet you and walk together with a cup of coffee in our hands to give you some friendly advice.”
Judy	“Brazilian Pride”	“Every time I tell people I’m Brazilian, people here in US [sic] look at me with a question mark on their face.”
David	“My Story”	“My identity is my own, is what many people say, or does it belong to the community?”
Edward	“A Rwandan Third Culture Kid”	-Uses a saying in his native language which translates to “God wanders the world during the day and at night comes home to Rwanda.”

The table above demonstrates participants' English language use by selecting the first sentences of their script. Participants at first demonstrated that they had not initially given much consideration to why their story was created in English. After some thought, they provided their perspectives on their language choice. For example, Adam created the letter that he used as his story in a class he took previously. He commented, “this was a part of uh English course assignment.” He was surprised that I asked, considering that we were communicating in English and the class he took where he wrote the letter was also in English. However, once participants thought about it, they displayed awareness of how they felt about telling the story in English versus other languages they knew. Adam explained, “Why it’s in English for my son, cause uh my son doesn't speak...doesn't read...Kurdish. The only thing that he can speak and read is English now.” In other words, considering his audience, Adam’s choice of using English was relevant in this situation.

Furthermore, some participants said they preferred English for storytelling. Edward, for example said, “I have lived ten years in the USA for higher education purposes; therefore, I am very comfortable and it is effortless for me.” Ali added, “Even though Kurdish is my native language...but I feel like I have more self-expression in English than Kurdish and I said my story in [*sic*] not in a very difficult or high register language. So low register, you know, like in normal life.” Edward and Ali’s English language use demonstrates that they know how to use each language and in what situations, which scholars would consider evidence of translingualism at work.

One participant, Fatima, considered the DST workshop as a sponsor of English literacy. She said, “Ya, it's more practice [in the English language].” She indicated that practicing English was one of her purposes in joining the workshop. Additionally, Fatima explained that her choice

of creating her story in English is linked to enhancing her language skills for communication, "It's in my language, but it is…when I share with other people, they are not understanding [*sic*] my language it's good to share the language." Even though she is able to communicate in English, Fatima keeps practicing English and wants to improve her skills to show that she works on belonging.

Participants implemented translanguaging i.e., going across languages, when they reflected on their story language choice. Once Tanya reflected about the possibility of telling her story in Russian she stated,

> I think I would tell the better story in Russian definitely because it's my native language. Uh cause in Russia [*sic*] I'm able to talk uh in different styles or…basically I have a better vocabulary in Russian. So, I think it would bring more meaning if I did that in Russian.

At first Tanya reflected on her ability to communicate certain ideas better in Russian. Then she considered the situation and audience of her story, adding, "But most likely the future generations will speak English not Russian, so it's for them not for me." Tanya's reflection on language use indicates her awareness of language choices depending on the situation.

Ali also demonstrates his awareness of how different languages would impact meaning. He notes, "If I wanted to pick my language like Kurdish or Arabic, I would've picked a poem because I love poems. I love poetry and for me poetry goes deeper than songs…goes deeper into my heart than songs." His understanding of what role each language plays illustrates his awareness of his linguistic choices. Ali further explained, "on the other hand, I express myself is English [*sic*] more than Kurdish and Arabic." Ali's experience learning English for a long time gave him the confidence to tell his story. Furthermore, Aymen states,

> English is my second language. And when I was writing my story, I just choose [*sic*] the words in English because I compare [*sic*] which is [sic] the best word I know in English for me to express this words [*sic*] in Somali, you know.

Aymen's explanation demonstrates that he thought of words in Somali for his story then translated them in his mind. He also illustrates that he chooses specific simple and available English vocabulary to communicate his ideas. Aymen displays language choices when communicating in Somali and English as needed. Therefore, his knowledge of both languages is based on practical use of language for specific meaning.

Participants displayed agency when making and discussing language choices. They chose English likely due to the English-speaking communicative situation we were in. Participants also linked their choice of English with their experiences in English, as well as their considerations of audience. Furthermore, language choice and awareness display participants' agency in this aspect of their story creation.

Tone and wording

This section showcases participants' choices that are indicative of tone and word choice in their stories. The table below lists all stories and their indicators of tone and wording. Next, participants' reflections on their choices are discussed. For each participant and story, I included a description of their music choice, their speech patterns, a quote or two that indicate their strong use of wording. These quotes also impact the tone of the story in some instances.

Table 6

Tone and Wording Choices

Participant	Story title	Tone and wording
Fatima	"Experience of the Refugee"	-Energetic traditional music included. -Speech was fast paced. - "Second, after a long process of applying to different countries of the world, I got an opportunity from America."
Aymen	"Aymen Story [*sic*]"	-No music included. -Speaks in a slow tempo with many breaks between words. - "he just make [*sic]* my way out and he was like good luck buddy, I was shocked" - "the first week was so hard, I was tired, scared, and mostly alone."
Leila	"American Dream"	-Soft instrumental music. -Soft spoken most of the story, but modulates moments of change. - "harsh realities are waiting for me in the Dubai airport." -"my sister did not take the risk of abandoning us in the airport."
Tanya	"Limitless"	-Uses upbeat and energetic Russian music. - "she [English teacher] was right, the more time I had spent in English program, the more distant my goals would be."
Maria	"Small Things"	-No music. -Slow and suspenseful speech. -Modulates her speech to indicate different emotions. - "I'll never forget the first time I went to an American supermarket by myself." - "I felt the most like a newcomer, an outsider while shopping."
Ali	"A Moment of Change"	-Uses a song in the background while speaking throughout the video to add meaning and a motivational tempo. -Adds some important quotes from his script on the screen to emphasize those messages. - "It was a crushing moment for me." - "He [father] told me you're smart, intelligent, and challenge [*sic*] taker."
Adam	"A Letter to My Unborn Son"	-Uses instrumental nostalgic music which sets a melodramatic mood. -Speaks slowly and with a low volume voice. -The pauses in speech allow the music to become the focus. - "My son, if you have time, sit alone peacefully by a cliff and read this letter which is the only living memory between us."

Table 6. *Tone and Wording Choices (continued)*

Participant	Story title	Tone and wording
Judy	"Brazilian Pride"	-The Brazilian National anthem plays in the background with a patriotic and energetic mood. -Modulates to emphasize some moments of emotional intensity. - "Brazil is a multicultural country; we cannot judge by their look [*sic*] if someone is a foreigner or a native." - "I had this mis-identity feeling when I went abroad."
David	"My Story"	-Uses a soft and slow WeVideo Stock piano music throughout the video. -Uses low volume of voice. -Modulates key emotional phrases. - "Many realized that I do not belong because I do not look like them but I spoke like them, and those that I did look like I did not speak like."
Edward	"A Rwandan Third Culture Kid"	-Uses soft traditional harp music. -Speaks with energy and a high volume voice. -Laughs in some passages to lighten the mood and add conversational elements like (uhm). - "Huh, Geez! Even in my country they ask me the same question"

As the table above displays, participants made varied choices in their story tone and wording. Not only that, but they also demonstrated their awareness of their agency. Participants' description of their intentionality when selecting their story's tone displays their agency. Aymen, Leila, Adam, and Ali provide some examples of how participants made intentional choices in terms of tone of voice and wording. Aymen, for example, said, "I was trying to express my emotional [sic] at that moment. So, of course yes in a sad moment because ya most of my story ya kinda sad." Aymen created a somber tone of voice with pauses, indicative intonations, and use of strong words to convey the emotional and "sad" aspects of his story. Leila described her tone of voice as, "realistic." Her tone of voice and wording choices within the story demonstrate her surprise about her experience and lessons learned. Furthermore, Adam described his story's tone, stating, "You know, it was in fact emotional [sic] sad story...whenever I read it for any people

even during the class." Adam employed pauses in his speech and low intonation of some words and passages to emphasize the emotional aspects of his story.

In discussing word choice, Ali expressed, "I want it to be as formal as possible but also as authentic as possible. I wanted to show emotional appeals, uh strong emotional appeals and also not too strong that people get so, you know, get kinda like emotional." Ali was trying to strike a balance between telling his story in a manner that the audience would empathize with and being too emotional. He was aware that the language and tone of voice would help him achieve that balance. Meanwhile, in navigating her tone of voice, Judy asked questions about my expectations as a workshop facilitator. Judy shared,

> So, I'm worry [*sic*], oh I don't know if I'm using the right intonation. Uh the way that I'm speaking, ya. I just thought like when you say, storytelling you need to imagine talking to someone sitting at the table right or no?

Her questions indicate that she understood the importance of tone and wording. She wanted to achieve the level of informality required by this genre, knowing that her style was typically more academic. Participants overall exhibited a desire to convey emotion through tone. Their choices in tone of voice, word choices, and questions about DST expectations of tone all highlight their agency as they composed their stories.

Participants demonstrate their agency through their choice and awareness of the tone of voice and word choice. Being able to define what tone participants intended and investigating ways to achieve it displays their commitment to their stories. Their engagement is a clear sign of participant decision making. When thinking of what words to use, they linked this task to the tone of their stories. This awareness demonstrates participants' control over their own voices in their stories.

Script writing

While participants describe their decisions on their script writing below in this section, I first provide a table that shows examples from their script. Using the last sentence of their stories as an example, it is noticeable how they conclude their stories with a message or a realization. It is interesting to observe the story scripts alongside their reflections of the script writing process. Participants' awareness and agency in this part of the story creation is visible through choices and reflections.

In addition to participants' script examples that demonstrate their choices, they also reflected on their script and writing processes demonstrating their decision-making awareness. Maria’s writing approach was informal and her process was informed by DST script length guidelines. She stated,

> I, honestly, wrote it the same way that I talk. Writing it was the longest, and then I wrote it. And then, I thought now it's fine. I narrated it and it was a minute and 30 seconds. That is not gonna work. So, I started fleshing it out. It needs to look a certain way or not.

In planning her script, Maria took into consideration the language and tone. Additionally, she wrote a script draft, then had to edit it, keeping in mind the time it would take to read through. Maria’s expectations of her own quality of work was high and she drafted the script until she was happy with it.

In contrast, Judy reflected on whether her script read like a PowerPoint presentation. She expressed concern about the script being too formal. Judy said, “When I did that, I thought like maybe I'm talking...I just thought like I’m talking in public and I’m showing the PowerPoint. So then, I thought I'm not really doing a conversation, I’m doing kind of like a presentation.” Judy

learned that DST scripts should sound more conversational. She took that to heart and drafted her script several times to achieve conversational language.

Table 7

Script Writing Choices

Participant	Story title	Script writing
Fatima	"Experience of the Refugee"	"I feel good in my [*sic*] job and school."
Aymen	"Aymen Story [*sic*]"	"Then my cousin help [*sic*] me to get started volunteering at [names organization] which is a nonprofit organization dedicated to help immigrant [*sic*] and refugees in our community all of whom are missing their homes as well."
Leila	"American Dream"	"That is the moment I realized that we landed on this so-called heavenly place, a dream place for many of us in my country Bangladesh.'
Tanya	"Limitless"	"That experience, immersing myself into a new environment and learning English really stretch [*sic*] myself outside of my comfort zone and taught me different things about the world around [*sic*] and my abilities. We are limitless!"
Maria	"Small Things"	"I'm learning every day and adapting more and more and finding my way home one bit at a time."
Ali	"A Moment of Change"	"It is up to you to either allow a negative comment make [*sic*] you stronger or destroy you."
Adam	"A Letter to My Unborn Child"	"I love you my son, I will see you in the heaven [*sic*], Your dad."
Judy	"Brazilian Pride"	"Skin color or physical appearance should not matter in multicultural [sic] country, I feel lucky to be born and raised in Brazil"
David	"My Story"	"As for me, I've come to realize that my identity is ultimately found in Christ, the hope of glory."
Edward	"A Rwandan Third Culture Kid"	"So now I say to you, no matter where you are, no matter who you're with, your home is not a physical place, it's where you have a set of memories and has grown within you." laughs.

In considering the three-minute time limit of the DST video, Leila's script writing process focused on her ability to get her message across. Leila commented, "how within, you know, very limited words and space...how to give the gist of the story, that particular moment of

the story to the viewers or the audience. I think that is the most challenging part." Her reflection on time, story message, and script writing illustrates her awareness of the impact of a powerful script in that specific rhetorical situation. While Leila was creating new content for the story, Adam already had previously written a letter for his son. Adam's emphasis was on editing the letter in a way that it would fit in length, tone, and other DST expectations. Adam noted, "That's why I deleted some of the parts, although all the parts are very important, cause the letter was much longer than two pages and a half." After feedback from the group, he revised the draft to fit DST guidelines.

Participants chose language that would be more accessible and "beautiful." While writing his script, Ali mentioned that language needed to be accessible. He said, "So, they can understand because that's important [*sic*] part of it too. If I talk and they don't understand, then what was the reason?" Ali's focus when he wrote his drafts was that his language was conversational register. This intent fell into place with DST informal language guidelines. When Tanya was asked what she would do if she had more time with her story, she responded, "I would make my speech more beautiful. Because I feel like in my story uh a lot of times, I repeat the same words in like...where I can use synonyms." During the follow-up interview, Tanya reflected on possible script revisions involving word choice, synonyms, and improved speech.

In addition to participants negotiating their script choices, they also asked the facilitator questions about it. Knowing that DST is new to all participants, they asked questions and showed the facilitator drafts to ensure that the script met expectations. Judy, for example, wondered, "Does it have any format?" She asked whether the script had an introduction, body, conclusion format, clarifying, "Sometime [sic] oh you need to do introduction…" Once I responded that DSTs typically sound like a conversation with a friend, so it follows the format of a story, Judy

then commented, “So, I never went to do a theater” and laughed. She was used to academic presentations, and a conversational script sounded “theatrical” to her. Then she explained, “We need to do [sic] because we are in a movie.” Judy made sense of the conversational style by noting that the story was to be presented in video format, and therefore she thought it could be more emotional than telling a story in person or writing a story. Judy believed that the visual aspect of video combined with other multimodal elements would make emotions stronger in this format. Judy’s insight was a new contribution to the DST format advantages. Judy was correct; the video genre brought more opportunities to be creative with visuals, script writing, and production.

When writing the script, participants focused on the tone, length, and expectations of the script in a DST format. Participants’ questions, negotiations, and decisions all showcase their choices and engagement when it comes to script writing. Knowing that they were going to record their scripts and add these recordings to the story, participants considered multiple choices in how it adds to other story elements. Agency can be seen in participants' recognition in their power to shape their stories through their script.

When making linguistic choices, participants reflected on their use of English and how it would compare to using other languages they knew. Their awareness of going across languages and its impact demonstrated their perspective on language (s). Additionally, participants thought carefully about their tone of voice as well as word choice in telling their stories. They articulated an understanding of the impact of word choice and tone of voice in the making of their stories. Furthermore, in the process of script writing, participants displayed agency as they negotiated many different rhetorical choices. Participants engaged in conversation and decision making on writing formally or informally, as well as writing within genre conventions. Therefore,

participants' linguistic agency was enacted throughout the linguistic story creation process because they were counter-narrating. As counter-narrators who do not typically have many choices in storytelling, if given an opportunity at all, participants' many linguistic choices show them as the agentive storytellers they are.

Multimodal Approach

Once the DST workshop participants reached the story creation stage, they combined their multimodal story elements. Participants went to iMovie or WeVideo to first upload pictures or search the Software stock for video clips or images. They, then, added their recorded script. Next, they organized their picture in a logical sequence for as long as they needed. Finally, they added music, transitions, and other edits as per their preferences. Participants used multimodality in three different and complementary ways: using visual elements, implementing aural components, and video production. The first subsection below provides examples of participant decisions, questions, and conversation around their visual story choices. The aural subsection below focuses on what music adds to the videos rhetorically. Furthermore, story production describes participants' experiences with aligning and organizing their stories. Moreover, participant agency in all decisions are explored and explained.

Visual elements

This section explores participants' choices of visuals and their reflections on them. First, the table below demonstrates the visual elements that were used in each story. In the description of which visuals were used, I demonstrate whether the images are personal or from online sources. A list of some of the images used is also provided. Additionally, a distinction between digital and physical pictures is discussed. Furthermore, I describe if visuals are still images or

video clips. After this table displays all the visual choices in the stories, I describe participants' reflections on their process of selecting and using visuals.

Participants did not only make specific choices that work best for their stories, but they also reflected on their intentionality with them. They considered visual elements to be a direct representation of the words and moments in their stories. They suggested that the visual could stand in for the script. When asked how he selected his visuals, for example, David stated that he chose "pictures throughout different time periods in my life to put in the story. Because when I go through the story, it mentions those time periods." David's selections of visuals were based on his story script and the moments in his life that he described. Tanya added that the visuals could supplement the meaning of the story. She commented that the visuals could help the "audience to understand more what I'm talking about. Because people are from different cultures and they maybe have never been to Brighton Beach, or to Russia, or even to New York. So, they may not know what I'm talking about." Tanya's and David's reflections on using visuals served a pragmatic purpose of showing examples of what they talked about in the story for context.

Table 8

Story Visual Elements

Participant	Story title	Visual elements
Fatima	"Experience of the Refugee"	-Uses pictures on the internet such as a veiled black woman covering her face with her hand. -Internet pictures of a map, plane, refugee camp, her first state she was resettled to. -Uses one digital picture of herself.
Aymen	"Aymen Story [*sic*]"	-Uses WeVideo stock images searching for pictures of Africa, Somalia (abstract meaning) -Uses pictures when he was young in Somalia (print photos of him growing up) -Uses digital photos taken in the US of him at different events.
Leila	"American Dream"	-Uses WeVideo stock videos. -Uses a print visual of her son's drawings. -Uses digital pictures of her son in her neighborhood in the US. -Uses abstract clips of the topics she discusses in her script (sky, Bangladeshi landscapes, airport, skyscrapers.)
Tanya	"Limitless"	-Uses internet images, WeVideo Stock clips, and her own digital and print pictures. -Uses internet images and WeVideo Stock video clips of New York, Brighton beach, trains and subway, and Russia. -Adds pictures of her different travels -Adds pictures in Russia and in the US.
Maria	"Small Things"	-Uses a video clip of Fargo as she starts talking. -Uses video clips from WeVideo stock visuals. -Uses clips about grocery stores in the US, open markets abroad, isles, vegetables, people laughing or confused. -Uses images that are racially representative of her and grocery clerks.
Ali	"A Moment of Change"	-Uses colorful animated pictures. -Uses playful transitions. -uses animates pictures of school, sports, father and son, and teachers to represent the themes in the story.
Adam	"A Letter to My Unborn Son"	-Uses internet still images from a Google search. -Images represent the words with direct meaning.
Judy	"Brazilian Pride"	-Uses images from an internet search. -Images include multicultural and multiracial people from Brazil, picture of the flag. -Uses physical and digital pictures of herself on a trip and with a Brazilian flag in the second half of the video.
David	"My Story"	-Uses personal digital and print images throughout. -Uses pictures of himself growing up. -Uses a few internet images such as the Cross at the end of the video.
Edward	"A Rwandan Third Culture Kid"	-Uses internet images such as Rwandan cultural symbols, Rwandan landscapes, city pictures, and some quotes. -Uses transitions.

All visual story choices were intentional. Participants decided to use specific visuals in a specific order. Tanya explained her process, saying, “It was very straightforward. It was not abstract.” (Interview 7.docx) Her use of visuals included having pictures that were a direct representation of words and moments from her story. Fatima also noted, “Because the image, it’s like to shape the story character, ya.” She chose a veiled black woman to represent her character in the story, which matched her own identity. Fatima emphasized the importance of representation. She added, “the story continues, when you are sad, it’s a [sad] person. When you are flying, you do flying [*sic*], it’s shaping [*sic*] that story.” Fatima explained that presenting the sequence of images with corresponding words and story moments was crucial. Echoing other participants on the importance of visual arrangements, Judy commented that, “Ya, I connect [sic] with what I was telling. It's just like to...to the people who are watching to visualize if I say Black, they will see someone Black. Indigenous, someone Indigenous.” Judy’s explanation shows that she also put the visuals in connection with her script and story moments.

In the process of searching for visuals to use in their stories, participants had different priorities and approaches. Maria was overwhelmed by the number of possibilities. She said, “Cause there's millions, and millions, and millions of stuff and when you have so much, it’s like that supermarket thing. But it took me like a week to find, what seven, eight things.” Maria’s experience when looking for visuals to tell her story overwhelmed her. Maria’s approach was to find images that would inspire her to write her script. Therefore, it was more difficult for her to start her story, since she did not have a script first. Participants had a choice in terms of whether visuals informed their script writing or if the script influenced their choices of visuals. David’s approach was to find pictures at the same time as writing the script. However, he had a topic and ideas for the script by the time he browsed photos. David noted, “for the pictures, I went on my

Facebook and went through my phone and got some pictures." Similarly, Judy considered different topics based on which pictures she had access to. Judy said, "Ya, and I don't…I change it three times my story [sic]. Because I had to think about which picture to put in movie [sic]." Judy thought of her story as a whole, with script and visuals. When she considered a topic, such as growing up and she did not have access to her early pictures, she decided against it.

While participants made decisions on which visuals to use and how, they also had concerns about privacy and copyright. Leila expressed her privacy considerations. She stated, "So, maybe I... I wish I could give real life pictures. But again, I thought that giving real life pictures might also...because I am also very like fastidious about like keeping privacy, because I don't want people recognize [*sic*] me." Leila's use of stock and internet images was not satisfactory to her, but her focus on her and her family's privacy was more important. She acknowledged that "real life pictures" could be better for her story. In addition to privacy considerations, copyright issues were also discussed. Judy said "And how about image [*sic*]? Can you [use online images]? Or else you would have to fight for copyright or something." Judy's questions started a conversation with David, who had some experience and knowledge of public domain and copyright issues.

Participants' agency in selecting visuals and deciding how to use them was visible. For the most part, they considered visual elements as a direct representation of the words and moments in their stories. Additionally, participants decided to use specific visuals in a specific order which demonstrates their rhetorical awareness and understanding of their stories and audiences. Furthermore, participants had different priorities and approaches to visual use. Their awareness of choice and varying understanding of visual impact shows participants' agency as

storytellers. Furthermore, participants' concerns about privacy and copyright represent their engagement with the DST process, thinking of all aspects of visual use in their stories.

Aural elements

Aural elements refer to audio and music used in participants' video stories. In the table below I indicate what participants' aural choices were. A list of songs, instrumental music, and choices of no music is provided for all participants. After this table, participants' reflections on their choices on music were presented.

Table 9

Story Aural Elements

Participant	Story title	Aural elements
Fatima	“Experience of the Refugee”	-Uses traditional instrumental and upbeat Somali music.
Aymen	“Aymen Story [*sic*]"	No music or additional sounds other than the recorded script.
Leila	“American Dream”	-Uses WeVideo Stock for music. -Choses a soft melody in the background.
Tanya	“Limitless”	-Finds Karaoke version of a Russia upbeat and energetic song and uses it throughout the video.
Maria	“Small Things"	-Uses no music or audio other than her script throughout the video.
Ali	“A Moment of Change”	-Uses the song “This World is Yours” by Julie Durden throughout the video with medium volume.
Adam	“A Letter to My Unborn Child”	-Uses “Nostalgia”, by Yanni.
Judy	“Brazilian Pride”	-Uses the national anthem of Brazil as a background throughout the video.
David	“My Story”	-Uses soft and slow Stock piano music.
Edward	“A Rwandan Third Culture Kid”	-Uses traditional Rwandan harp music. It is soft and mellow.

In follow-up interviews, participants described how they chose, found, and used music in their stories. Participants demonstrated an awareness of what music added to the story. For example, Judy illustrated that she used the national anthem of Brazil as her music to add the element of pride she thought visuals and words could not convey alone. Judy commented, “Ya, ya, [music is] complementary, that is needed. Because like, oh if I’m saying this, if it’s just a word and picture will be [*sic*] one way, but with music I’m trying to address or show more.” Judy considered music a supplemental rhetorical device that has its own meaning beyond what words and visuals can do. Additionally, Ali expressed the messages he planned to convey through the musical lyrics he selected:

> The song…well the first song that I wanted to put it on [*sic*]...because I feel like, you know, my life has been full of challenges, perseverance, and persistence. And I thought that song has that kind of motivation...that uh no matter what you’ve been through, no matter what challenge you have faced, there is always a way out.

To emphasize his purpose in creating his DST, Ali’s song selection “This World is Yours” by Julie Durden emphasized his message about motivation.

A connection between music and emotion was also clearly established. Participants acknowledged that their musical choices added an element of emotional appeal. David’s choice was intentionally selected to reflect a sad tone. He said he chose this music, “Because it’s more of a reflective story about uh my background and some parts can be sad. And I felt like I wanted to convey that to the audience.” David’s experience reflects his understanding that the tone of the music adds rhetorical value to his story. In addition, Leila stated,

> I mean I never...I don't want to make it more, you know, sad or exciting in the tone. I just wanted to make it like a normal one, not very happy with tone, not a very sad tone, but a kind of soft tune at the background [*sic*] and slow.

Leila's story included a calming music that was intended to be neutral. Even though she did not want to convey a specifically defined emotion, she knew that she wanted that sound to be "soft" and "slow."

Similar to her questions about copyright in visuals, Judy also asked questions about copyright issues in music. Judy wondered, "Can you use music or you need to pay for someone…you know…" Therefore, a conversation was sparked in her DST group with David. David explained that as long as one chooses music from the public domain, they may use it in their productions. I also explained that citing the music being used can help. Judy noted that there are some websites she could use safely. She noted, "Oh ya, they cite the copyright music." Judy's vigilance started an important conversation about using visuals and audio appropriately. The group discussed possible resources to use, which was helpful to all.

Adam learned how to detach images from a video to use its sound only, stating,

> While for the vid...for the uh music, it was basically a visual music [*sic*] by Yanni the musician…the pianist…the person that I like. Uh I just...what do you call it, detach [*sic*] the video, only I left uh…I kept the music part.

Having selected Yanni's "Nostalgia," Adam looked for the video, then asked how he could use this sound. Once he learned how to detach the audio and visuals, he was able to layer it in. Tanya's attention to detail enabled her to notice that the English voiceover and the Russia lyrics of the song could be confusing. She searched online for an instrumental or karaoke version, until

she found the one that she was satisfied with. Tanya wanted a music video but she needed to make an adjustment, she described her experience,

> But then, I realized when you talk in English and the music is in Russian, the words are in Russia, it actually can distract the listener. And it will not serve the purpose. Uh so, that's why I chose to remove like the words from the music. Or use like karaoke [*sic*] version.

Participants' agency was enacted when they chose and used music in the production of their stories. Moreover, participants demonstrated an awareness of the rhetorical dimension that music added to their videos. The participants' intentionality with music and emotion also displays their agency. Finally, a conversation on copyright issues in music demonstrates participants' commitment to the process. These conversations, additionally, showcase participant's agency as they navigated the music aspect of this multimedia genre. These choices demonstrate how participants display their agency in the aural aspect of their stories.

Video production

In the video production stage participants made many editing choices for their stories. The table below demonstrates what the editing decisions were for each story. This table illustrates each participant's decisions on how they start and end their videos, the sequence, layering, and special effects they used. Additionally, participants' reflections on how the story production went is described in this section.

Table 10

Video Production Choices

Participant	Story title	Video Production
Fatima	"Experience of the Refugee"	-Starts with a title page over an image of a black veiled woman with her hand over her face. -Aligns images with script content. Does not directly address the pictures, but it fits the theme. -No transitions, zooms, or pans. -Did not use a picture of her until the end of the video when she discusses her accomplishments.
Aymen	"Aymen Story [*sic*]"	-Starts with a title slide over a stock video of an African landscape. -Uses print pictures from Somalia the first half of the video, then switches back and forth between old pictures and digital ones from his new community in the US. -Text and images do not align exactly in an explicit way (script words do not represent the images shown) -Uses no transitions or other visual options like filters, zooms, or pans.
Leila	"American Dream"	-Starts with a title page over a video of clouds moving in the sky. -Uses abstract video clips of different themes aligned with the script in the first half of the video. -Uses pictures of her son and his art in the later half of the video. -Plays soft and low volume instrumental music. -Text and images mostly do not align exactly in an explicit way (most script words do not represent the images shown) -Uses some cross-fade transitions. -Ends with a closing page including her name and story title.
Tanya	"Limitless"	-Uses a video clip on the first page with no title and adds no script over, just music. -Aligns visuals with corresponding text/words directly. -Uses a multicolor funky transition. -Switches back and forth between images of the US, Russia, clips and still images, but corresponds meaning to visual. -Ended by holding a picture of herself travelling in Latin America long enough for her concluding idea. -Says the title of the story in words, then ends with only music fading away.
Maria	"Small Things"	-Starts the video with no title page and the only reference to Fargo, her local community. This is where the story is set. -Aligns video clip content with the words in her script directly and with explicit meaning. -No transitions, pans, or Zooms. Her clips are moving images so it adds a layer of action/movement. -Ends with a clip of a smiling Black woman (representing her).

Table 10. *Video Production Choices (continued)*

Participant	Story title	Video Production
Ali	"A Moment of Change"	-Starts with a title page with his name and title of the story. It was shown over an animated picture of a school. -Aligns directly and explicitly words with images that represent them. -Uses colorful and animated still images throughout the video in a sequence that fits the script. -Adds quotes from the script on some images. -Layers music with script and images which keeps it busy and engaging.
Adam	"A Letter to My Unborn Child"	-Starts with a title page over an internet picture of a boy sitting in nature and reading. -This image holds for the duration of the introductory piece. -All images hold the duration of the passage in the script that they represent. -Images represent story wording explicitly (ex. boy reading) -The music starts slow and becomes more dramatic towards the end.
Judy	"Brazilian Pride"	-Starts with the title over a picture showing Brazilian pride. -Uses internet images for the first half. -Uses pans and zooms for further effect. -Uses her personal pictures in the second half of the video. -Ends with a closing slide with her name.
David	"My Story"	-Uses a title slide with music, personal picture and start of script. -Adds images of him growing up as a child, with his family, and with friends. -All images were aligned and held in place for the duration of the corresponding script content. -Uses zooms on pictures for further effect. -Ends with an internet image of a Cross with his concluding message about faith.
Edward	"A Rwandan Third Culture Kid"	-Starts with a title page that includes a Rwandan cultural symbol, the title of the story music and the start of the script. -Aligns visuals with words in an explicit manner and holds the images for the length of a script passage. -Uses many different types of transitions which makes it informal and playful. -Language use is also conversation to match the transitions mood. -Ends with a quote, then his own concluding thought about what home is.

Alignment of different elements, planning of multimedia pieces, and transitions were all discussed as part of the story production stage. Adam's process of aligning pictures with corresponding paragraphs from the script was intentional. Adam stated,

> So, I tried to increase the time of that picture, stay [*sic*] there in order to complete the whole paragraph. Then, passing to the next paragraph and passing to the next picture. Ya, some pictures are ...uh stay there for a shorter time than others. It was basically based on ...how long and how short the paragraph is.

Adam's meticulous choice in visual placement at the corresponding place or the appropriate time was a noticeable expression of agency. Additionally, Edward described the different pieces of media that he prepared to include in his story. He stated, "I wanted to have my voice and text completed by visuals, plus the kora, with is [*sic*] an ancestral harp from west Africa which traditionally used [*sic*] to narrate orally tales of many west African empires." Edward's choices of different multimedia display an awareness of variety and complementarity among the different multimodal components. Tanya discussed her choice of visual transitions, saying, "Uh ya, like one particular transition I wanted to look crazy. Uh again just to make it more fun." Tanya used a colorful spinning transition to add to the mood she wanted her story to convey. Her awareness of how transitions impact the video and the audience was clear.

Participants expressed their feelings about the final product and provided their responses to using the new software of iMovie and WeVideo. When discussing the final story product, some participants shared that they were satisfied with their drafts but desired more time to continue editing. Tanya, for example, stated, "Basically, there is always place [sic] for improvement. But, overall, I think it's satisfactory." This feeling of continued editing is expected and typical of DST workshops. Participants' need to continue editing displays their engagement

with the stories and the format. As Judy reflected on her experience using iMovie, she commented, “But this software, like we wanna put three picture [sic] together and the software didn't really allowed [sic] us or the transition thing, so ya I think the software is a little limit [sic].” Judy’s comments provide an important description of the limits that participants could face in the production phase.

In the story production stage, participants made many choices regarding their stories. Their decision making on the alignment of different multimedia elements, planning of multimedia pieces, and use of transitions all demonstrate their agency as creators and storytellers. Participants' attitudes about their final products showcases the importance of sharing their stories with agency. As they could evaluate whether or not they were satisfied with their story and decide if they would like further editing, participants exert their agency over their produced story. Reflecting on their experiences using the new software demonstrates participants' engagement with the storytelling process. Participants’ approaches towards multimodality were displayed in their choices of visual elements, aural elements, and video production. Their agency in making visual choices was apparent when they negotiated different choices and made decisions of what to include or exclude. As participants worked with visual and aural elements, and as they assembled the final product, they were intentional.

The final product featured each participant's transmodal voice through their choices described above. Participants demonstrate their agency through engaging with the DST workshop in counter-narrating. Participant’s counter-narrative space is where they respond with the multiple choices afforded to them in this storytelling model. Additionally, participants being given the opportunity to tell their own stories in their own way is not a common practice.

CHAPTER 6: DISCUSSION AND CONCLUSION

Living in the Chthulucene means making connections with each other to survive current crises. This includes situations such as displaced peoples resulting from war or famine, which is an urgent situation that requires prompt action. In order to act in current crises, we must recognize the world in the Chthulucene to respond and take the attitude of "we're in it together." The stories produced in this study's DSTs demonstrate a space where action and connection can happen. It is especially important that these counter-narrative spaces are available to and for underrepresented voices. These counter-narratives can work to respond to misinformation that often leads to discrimination and violence. This space also provides an opportunity for New Americans to demonstrate agency. The field of *Rhetoric and Writing Studies* needs to operate in the Chthulucene; our mission should be to locate agentive spaces and provide opportunities where such spaces are accessible for communities and our students.

This study explores how scholars in Rhetoric and Writing Studies might operate in the Chthulucene to contribute solutions to the global refugee and asylum crises, specifically in their relocation and integration efforts. Many times, refugees and asylum seekers are grouped together with other immigrants under the title of New Americans. This grouping can sometimes cause generalizations and harm to these communities' efforts to build their lives in their respective communities. Many dominant narratives in the media not only generalize New Americans but also share negative stereotypes about them. In this study, I implemented DST to provide an opportunity for New Americans to tell their own stories. To understand their storytelling practices, I asked three major questions: First, how do New Americans shape their digital stories through specific choices, and how do these choices display their agency? Second, what do New Americans' storytelling processes reveal about agency through their rhetorical and linguistic

choices? And third, how do New Americans display their agency in multimodal storytelling? To answer these questions, I recruited ten New American participants from the Fargo-Moorhead metro community. This study's methodology included implementing PAR research approaches. I used focus groups, field notes, and individual interviews to gather information on participants' experiences with storytelling and to provide them with a platform to share their counter-narrative stories. These three methods were aligned with the seven-step DST model from the Berkeley, California, Story Center. Three DST workshops were organized with three, two, then five participants respectively. The workshops were held face to face on the campus of North Dakota State University, in Fargo, North Dakota, and virtually on Zoom after COVID-19 made it impossible to gather in person. To organize the data gathered, focus group discussions and interviews were transcribed, and Grounded Theory was used to identify themes. Then, a codebook was created and used to organize the results. Finally, the results were used to answer the research questions in regards to storytelling and agency.

The concept of agency is reflected through the original voice from within the underrepresented participants' stories. However, it cannot be disregarded that engaging in a participatory workshop such as DST can demonstrate participant's agency as well. My analysis suggests that participants were activating or not activating their agency based on the situation. This study's results demonstrate participants' innovation, commitment, and agency in producing their own stories. The participants' rhetorical, linguistic, and multimodal choices demonstrate their creative and innovative approaches toward storytelling. Additionally, participants' questions and engagement with the different elements of their stories displays their commitment to producing stories that represent them. It can also be concluded that participants' story choices are examples of agency as they operate in a counter-narrative space. Based on the results, it can

be concluded that agency is a combination of original voice from the margins and power that is recognizable thanks to the DST tool.

The results add a new perspective that agency is an action that participants can engage in and not a thing to give and take. This perspective demonstrates that New American participants showcase their voice in different manners. For example, when participants engaged in previous storytelling formats, they demonstrated limited agency due to the restrictions of the formats such as newspaper and magazine interviews. Participants' reflections of DST workshop advantages and disadvantages demonstrates their understanding of how tools provide them more opportunities for choice and therefore to show their agency.

New American storytelling demonstrates that their approaches and choices are varied and individualized leading to unique personal stories. Even though this is true of every person who tells a story, it is an important finding because many mainstream narratives tend to generalize and group together New American experiences. Participants' storytelling processes, approaches and reflections are different from each other. Additionally, participants' rhetorical, linguistic, and multimodal choices are individually situated. While New Americans in the U.S. have many shared experiences, they have unique individual experiences. This is especially important due to the generalizations and stereotyping that New Americans face in dominant narratives and community interactions. Their choices of story elements and their awareness of storytelling processes demonstrate their agency and individuality. For example, story topics that participants engaged in were varied. Fatima’s story focused on her refugee journey and Tanya’s story was about her motivation. New Americans’ perspectives on their journeys are impacted by their individualized experiences. Furthermore, Edward and Ali’s selections of media for instance were varied. While all participants displayed awareness of the audience when selecting their media

and language, Ali's choice of using animations, and Edward's decision to use short clips from WeVideo Stock make vastly different visuals.

The various components of the DST process reveal the kind of storytelling that New American participants engaged in and how they responded to this process. Participants practiced storytelling with agency using their original voice. This original voice comprises their individual choices throughout the storytelling process. Additionally, participants practiced storytelling with agency that was enacted thanks to DST as a tool of power. When New American participants engage in DST, which has many affordances for them, their agency and power became visible. Regardless of what tools and processes participants used, they made individualized stories that differed from each other. Due to their stories being generalized in most mainstream narratives, their DST choices enabled them to individualize and humanize their stories. Therefore, participants demonstrate their own personal agency and stories. Participants' reflections of the DST process as well as their reflections of their story topic and previous storytelling experiences have all shaped a comparative perspective between DST workshop approaches to story versus previous story formats. New Americans' engagement and reflection on DST is demonstrated through the participants' conversations about how they viewed the facilitator role, how they engaged and connected in the story circle, and the different possible alternative topics they explored.

When participants made rhetorical choices for their DST stories, they demonstrated their personal knowledge of previous rhetorics they knew. Their topics, audiences, and story sharing criteria were intentional. Fatima specifically said she only wanted to share her story with her family and friends. Fatima displays that she knows she has ownership over her story and establishes her guidelines. Ali expressed that his story could be shared in any setting that benefits

educational and community awareness. Even though Fatima and Ali have completely different preferences with privacy and goals for their stories, they both know they have ownership and agency. Moreover, participants' linguistic choices showed their agency through translanguaging. Participants' abilities to make story choices may sound obvious of any DST workshop; however, when New Americans are counter-narrating, these choices display that they have agency and demonstrate what this agency looks like.

Four major areas of scholarship were reviewed to frame this study. First, “DST and agency in the classroom and community” discusses the advantages of using DST as a storytelling tool in the contexts of the classroom and community. In the classroom, it is beneficial to use DST for student voice, agency, multimodality, foreign language instruction, and more. However, it is necessary to be cautious regarding the amount of impact instructors can expect of DST. In the community setting, the literature shows that DST collaborations can allow for and recognize power. Nevertheless, expectations of community change may be disappointing and discouraging in some instances. At times, DST can in fact be rewarding for all those who take part in it. In both contexts for DST projects, scholars can establish realistic expectations; trial and error are not only inevitable but needed. This study leads me to advocate that DST in the classrooms should be combined with DST in the community. In addition to the advantages that can be gained by students in the classroom building their DST skills, it can be further beneficial for them to participate in a service-learning experience where students and communities each tell their stories or where students help communities tell theirs. The challenges of DST’s impact remain the same, so instructors should gauge their expectations. The main goal of DST classroom-community collaboration would be building connections, collaborating, and learning DST processes.

When participants discussed their previous storytelling experiences using other formats such as community projects or news article interviews, they articulated the limited opportunity that those previous experiences had provided for them to share their voice. When they discussed and engaged in DST, their awareness of the opportunities it provided to share their voice was clear. Scholarship on DST both praises and cautions when it comes to DST. I found through this study that DST with New Americans is a critical tool to identify their counter narrative voices. The individualized choices that DST enables all participants to have, benefit New Americans in that they practice choice making more than other storytelling formats. Specifically, the Story Center model, with its focus on personal narrative can be impactful and educational as it has been in this study. The common themes of participant stories were self-awareness and identity formation, stories of connection and finding their place in their communities.

Second, "academic and community collaboration and literacy" illustrates that university community literacy projects raise questions of agency due to the complicated history of academic and community research. This is especially true with underrepresented communities. For example, Brandt and Clinton's (2002) claim that literacy does not hold its own agency, accompanied with Flowers' (2008) questions on agency, can prepare scholars to learn to recognize agency in participants. This can happen through participants' own literacy practices and epistemologies. A cautious call by Cella and Restaino (2012) and Clifton (2012), however, prepares researchers for putting the communities' needs first. Flexibility, adaptability, and open mindedness are all crucial criteria that define community literacy projects. In this study, participants were a combination of students and community members who all joined a community based DST workshop. The simple acknowledgement of this collaboration between myself as an academic researcher, having varied participant experiences has brought my and

participants awareness of the study's position and goals. Educating participants in the study setting, format, and goals can build better trust and yield a better connection, especially when seeking storytelling efforts.

Community and academic collaborations with PAR can both be challenging and rewarding for participants and academics alike. This study's approaches, process, and findings mirror the scholarship in this area. When collaborating with New Americans, as an underrepresented group whose history with researchers may be challenging, it was important that I was an insider. The trust that is needed can emerge from being an insider by belonging to the community of research or by investing time, relationships, and common goals.

Third, "translingualism and translanguaging in relation to multimodality and agency" offers a rich scholarship with many differing approaches and definitions. While some focus on defining translingualism against monolingualism, L2 writing, and similar fields, others keep the focus on what impact it can have on students and communities. Furthermore, the scholarship on translingualism focuses on the US context in which it is treated as a new concept in language studies. Translingualism scholars can look to European and many other examples where translingualism is practiced and studied. In addition, translanguaging as a practice also shifts from being applicable with multilingual users to monolingual ones as well. However, the question of translanguaging in relation to both agency and multimodality becomes central regardless of who the students or participants are. The translingual practices of New American participants are intertwined with their multimodal choices and agentive action. Therefore, agentive transmodality in the community or classroom settings is a slightly paved path for researchers and we need more work to understand this intersection. This study illustrates that

transmodal agency allows researchers to be involved in socially based inquiries, which enhances our learning of threshold concepts such as agency.

Translingualism believes that multilingual speakers use language within one continuum of one language, instead of two separate boxes of two separate languages. This belief is negotiated and tested in different contexts; theories of teaching translingualism vary and disagree on defining the term and whether or how it applied to monolingual speakers (see Canagarajah and Matsuda). However, it is essential to understand that this is not a new practice. Multilingual speakers practice translanguaging daily and they do so because they already have two or more languages in their repertoire. In this study New American participants knew several languages, so it is likely they practiced translanguaging before or as they learned English. This study demonstrates that participants were aware of their language choices and had a perspective on language that mirrors translingualism. For example, Aymen's reflection on his language use indicated that he thought about his story in Somali then translated the words in his mind to communicate with me and the audience. His cognitive work involves translingual practice as it understands languages as combined and mixed in one repertoire. When combined with multimodality, translanguaging participants demonstrate their creativity and voice in both spaces. These rich literacies contradict the stereotype that New Americans come to the U.S. with no literacy. This study further emphasizes that New American multilingual participants used creative transmodal methods to tell their stories.

Fourth, "The New American community's counter-narratives in the Chthulucene" discusses the three main perspectives that shape this study's framework. The concept of the Chthulucene, urgency vs emergency, and prejudice reduction vs collective action provide insight into how I understand and contextualize this study. The framework of urgent and emergent

solutions becomes crucial based on the goals of the community. Furthermore, the idea of prejudice reduction and collective action enables communities to respond to their needs appropriately. Researchers working on community literacy and addressing community problems can implement staying with the trouble in the Chthulucene to respond to discrimination and negative dominant narratives.

In the New American community context, counter-narrative personal storytelling is central to responding to the current discrimination and negative dominant narratives. This study is one example of counter-narratives in the Chthulucene where my collaboration with participants and their own storytelling were efforts in creative solutions against mainstream negative stereotypes. Counter-narrative spaces in the Chthulucene act as much needed establishing connections with New Americans. Because counter-narrative is responsive in nature, New American's engagement in storytelling choices means that they are taking action for themselves. We as researchers make kin with them and create relationships between these participants and others by sharing their stories and agency.

PAR describes research projects that are done in a community setting with extensive collaboration, leadership, or initiative with participants throughout the research. The goal of such research can vary from social action to simply implementing trustworthy, beneficial, and transparent research methods. These methods come in contrast to traditional and academic methods of research, namely qualitative, quantitative, and mixed methods. Frequently, when academic researchers go into a community using academic methods, they gather research that they deem beneficial for them with no added value to the community. PAR advantages include possible social impact, and challenges such as sustainability. This study's PAR implementation has enabled me to rationalize my methods choices.

This study’s findings can be summarized by discussing participants’ storytelling processes and their rhetorical, linguistic, and multimodal choices. The storytelling process indicates that participants practiced storytelling with agency using their original voice and with DST as a tool of power. These findings indicate that the PAR approaches used in this study have provided an opportunity for New Americans to speak in their unique voices. PAR’s sustainability challenges and unpredictability were present in this study, especially with switching to virtual data gathering due to the COVID-19 impact. However, PAR scholarship in different community settings as well as academic-community collaborations prepared me for these challenges. This study's results confirm that action can be achieved through PAR in that as a researcher I established a counter-narrative-based project. Additionally, New American participants have used this space to display their agency and demonstrate their counter-narrative voice. It also confirmed that varied expected or unexpected issues can arise; however, they can be overcome as long as PAR principles are followed. For instance, when COVID-19 spread and universities closed, I had to unexpectedly change my approaches of gathering data to virtual spaces. This change would not be as easily explained if I used a different method other than PAR. Its flexibility principle lists unexpected community factors as possible hardships, and researchers should find creative solutions with their participants. This flexibility that was built into the methods means that I had a good rationale for switching my methods mid-study.

This study has made some significant contributions to a variety of related fields. First, the results of this study demonstrate that agency is not a thing to be taken or given; rather agency is an action. Additionally, some tools like DST and methods like PAR enable participants to share their voice through their participatory model versus other formats like newspaper interviews that can limit choices and therefore voice. Therefore, the question remains that our field needs to

learn more about agency as an action, how it operates, who can wield it, and what opportunities are better suited for it.

Storytelling with DST can be advantageous to New Americans in many ways, as displayed in this study. For example, asking participants to explain their story choices, can help participants become more self-aware of their decisions or give them an opportunity to communicate their own understanding of their practices. Additionally, storytelling with New Americans can reach more participants due to the digital aspect of the workshops. Agency should remain a central focus in evaluating which storytelling methods enable participants to demonstrate agency and how different or similar they are. These projects will not only enable Rhetoric and Writing Studies to gain a deeper understanding of agency, New Americans, DST, and storytelling, but they will also allow it to work in the Chthulucene, where counter-narrative stories can be created. These stories have the potential to identify agency in different groups of New Americans. Operating in the Chthulucene with New American narratives can potentially resolve problematic and dangerous generalizations in the media. These can endanger New Americans integration efforts in their new communities.

This study's pedagogical implications center on agency and student identity. It is easy to assume that the results only apply to New Americans or BIPOC (Black Indigenous and People of Color) multilingual students. That is true and I will work to ensure these populations benefit from the findings. However, the impact is not only for BIPOC multilingual students. In my classes that are mostly mainstream white and majority male students I teach students about their complex identities. The theme of my Upper Division Writing classes is "intercultural communication." Whether it is a business or technical writing course I discuss techniques of writing to and communicating with multicultural and international audiences. One of my favorite

classroom activities is when I tell my students that they have an accent and ask them to tell me what the chartists of their accent is. Every semester they look at me with the same bewildered look. So, I ask them if they had travelled to other parts of the country and if anyone commented on their word choice or accents. Many of them have this amazing realization that they did encounter these conversations. Therefore, I know that mainstream, New American, and BIPOC students can benefit from an understanding of identify, agency, and transmodality.

Below is some advice that was gathered from my experience for scholar/teachers who want to work in the Chthulucene using PAR. Cthulucene and PAR project considerations include:

- Before beginning, consider carefully on what issues you care most deeply about – what is your larger goal/mission/legacy? Match this with your research topic.
- Read about PAR and look at other studies that have been done with these methods to help develop your own research questions before requesting IRB approval.
- Know what your institutional requirements are regarding university/community collaborations.
- Be flexible and adaptable with your research plans, community needs come first.
- Negotiate academic requirement for a designed study with the flexibility that PAR offers.
- Implement your reflection an other’s feedback on the scope of your project.

Rhetoric and Writing Studies needs to operate in the Chthulucene to recognize the importance of creating solutions and creative connections in this world to solve global issues. For example, this can happen through providing and recognizing New Americans agentive counter-narratives. This study demonstrates a path that can be used such as implementing PAR research and StoryCenter DST workshop format. Moreover, this study's focus on agency, original voice, and personal narrative emphasizes the importance of shifting perspectives from outcomes to processes. In the Chthulucene solving problems is the goal, however it is most important that it is done through connection and collaboration with each other. New American integration into their new communities is a critical social issue as the number of resettled refugees, asylum seekers, and immigrants in the U.S. rises. However, this effort of integration can be threatened by discriminatory language and violence against New Americans due to stereotyping and generalizing narratives. Therefore, this work can benefit Rhetoric and Writing in rising to the challenge which will allow it to be more relevant, in universities, communities, and the world.

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APPENDIX A: CONSENT FORM

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Agentive Digital Storytelling: New American's Rhetoric of Identity

This study is being conducted by:

Principle Investigator: Lisa Arnold. phone: 701-231-5097 email: lisa.r.arnold@ndsu.edu

Co -investigator: Ibtissem Belmihoub. Phone: 701-552-1239 email: Ibtissem.belmihoub@ndsu.edu

Key Information about this study:

As a New American (immigrant, refugee, or asylum seeker), you are invited to participate in a three-step study. The purpose of the study is to analyze how New Americans create digital stories. This study allows you to reflect on your story and sense of identity. The three steps include: 1) Focus group Interviews where you share your previous experiences with storytelling. 2) Digital Story Telling workshop where you reflect on your story, and use movie-making software to create it digitally. 3) Individual interviews where you will be asked to reflect on the choices you made in telling your story.

Here is a list of key information to help you decide if you are willing to participate:

- This study includes New Americans who live in the local community and are willing to share their stories. Participants have to be adults (older than age 18) and may be of any
race, gender, educational level, religion, linguistic, or cultural background. To participate, you must be comfortable with English and willing and able to work on a computer.
- This study includes both social and individual benefits such as connection with others and self-reflection. Risks include slight discomfort with use of technology, which will be addressed by guidance through the digital storytelling workshop process. Another risk may involve sharing private information. To address this, remember that you can choose to tell any story that you are comfortable sharing in a group.

- All three steps of the study combined will require a 12-hour time commitment. 1 hour will be devoted to a focus-group interview before the digital storytelling workshop. The workshop will take 5 hours (1-6pm) each day for two days. Shortly after the workshop (not on the same day), you will have a 1-hour individual interview.
- There will be no monetary or gift compensations. You benefit from the social and individual advantages mentioned above, as well as findings as a result of the study.
- The data gathered during the three steps will include: 1 video file (during the focus-group interview), a three-minute video story created by you, and 1 audio file from the individual interview after the workshop. Your name will be removed from all data and exchanged with a different name, selected by you. Since your name and identifiable information will be removed first, the information shared through this study will not be recognizable.

Why am I being asked to take part in this study?

You are invited to participate because you are a New American adult who lives in the local community and is willing to share your story and reflect on it.

What will I be asked to do? Below is a list of the steps:

1. Pre-story creation: Focus group

In this stage, 5 participants at a time will meet at the computer cluster based on your schedule. During the focus group, the co-investigator will ask you to respond to questions about your previous storytelling experience. This interview will last one hour. Your responses will be video recorded for ease of transcription.

2. Creating digital stories: Digital storytelling workshop

With the help and training of the co-investigator, you will be prompted to use iMovie video-making software to create your stories. The co-investigator will implement a seven-step digital storytelling approach to creating digital stories based on the Story Center model in Berkeley, California. You will follow these steps over the course of two days (5 hours each). The time frame allows you to process your topic, visual, audio, and video choices. You will be asked to collaborate with each other and myself at each stage of selecting the story, images, music, audio, video, and organization.

3. Post-story creation: Individual interviews

During individual one-hour interviews after the workshop (not on the same day), the Co-investigator will watch your story again with you to keep your choices at the forefront of both our minds. Then, the co-investigator will pose questions about the process you used to create your digital story.

Where is the study going to take place, and how long will it take?

The study will take place at Minard Hall on the NDSU campus. Prior to the workshop, two groups of 5 will meet for one hour each for focus-group interviews in Minard 318F (English

department conference room). The workshop will be held in Minard 332, in the media lab. The workshop will be set for 5 hours each day for two consecutive days. Individual interviews will be held in Minard 318F following the workshop, but not on the same day. Individual interviews will last one hour each.

What are the risks and discomforts?

The technology involved in digital storytelling may cause some nervousness, but the co-investigator will facilitate every step of the process to ease it. It may be difficult to share some parts of your story in a group setting, but you have choice over what stories to share, how much, and in what way. Even though English may not be your first language, your accent and word choices are welcome. Do not worry about being understood.

It is not possible to identify all potential risks in research; however, reasonable safeguards have been taken to minimize known risks.

What are the expected benefits of this research?

You can benefit on the individual level. As you mix visual, audio, and video materials using a digital software, you can gain or advance technological skills.

Social benefits may include connection with others through storytelling. Thanks to the group and workshopping format in digital storytelling, you can gain understanding of their own and each other's stories.

Do I have to take part in this study?

Your participation in this research is your choice. If you decide to participate in the study, you may change your mind and stop participating at any time without penalty or loss of benefits to which you are already entitled.

Who will have access to my information?

No identifiable information will be shared outside the research team, which involves the principal investigator and the co-investigator. All identifiable information will be removed and coded, then all data will be stored in my password-protected computer. All data gathered in this study will be coded and saved for three years and stored in a password-protected computer.

How will my information be used?

Collected data will not be used or distributed for future research, even if de-identified.

You will be invited to provide a different name to accompany your responses. This new name will be used at the point of data analysis through the written dissemination of research. At the end of the DST workshop, participants will be asked if they give permission to the research team to share their stories. Each participant's decision will be respected.

Can my participation in the study end early?

Yes, you may leave the study whenever you want without any penalty. You can stay in the study only if you are willing to take part. You may be removed from the study if you do not show up to meetings, show up late, distract others, or are disrespectful to other participants.

What if I have questions?

Before you decide whether you'd like to participate in this study, please ask any questions that come to mind now. Later, if you have questions about the study, you can contact the Principle Investigator: Lisa Arnold. phone: 701-231-5097 email: lisa.r.arnold@ndsu.edu OR Co - investigator: Ibtissem Belmihoub. Phone: 701-552-1239 email: Ibtissem.belmihoub@ndsu.edu

What are my rights as a research participant?

You have rights as a research participant. All research with human participants is reviewed by a committee called the *Institutional Review Board (IRB)* which works to protect your rights and welfare. If you have questions about your rights, an unresolved question, a concern or complaint about this research you may contact the IRB office at 701.231.8995, toll-free at 855-800-6717 or via email (ndsu.irb@ndsu.edu).

Documentation of Informed Consent:

You are freely making a decision whether to be in this research study. Signing this form means that

1. you have read and understood this consent form

2. you have had your questions answered, and

3. you have decided to be in the study.

You will be given a copy of this consent form to keep.

______________________________________ __________________

Your signature Date

______________________________________ __________________

Your printed name   Date

______________________________________   ________________

Signature of researcher explaining study   Date

____

Printed name of researcher explaining study

APPENDIX B: RECRUITMENT SCRIPT

Hello, for my dissertation, I am working with New Americans (Immigrants, Refugees, and Asylum seekers) to create digital stories and study how this process helps showcase powerful stories and identities. I am contacting you to ask if you would be willing to participate in my study. If you are interested in sharing your story for the first time or would like to try a new format, or tell a different story, I invite you to join my study.

If you are interested in learning more, please let me know and I will provide more information.

APPENDIX C: PRE-DST WORKSHOP FOCUS GROUP QUESTIONS

- Have you shared your story before?

  Why/why not?

  What was the story you chose to share?

  In what context did you share it?

- What did you choose to highlight in your story?

  Why?

  Who was your audience?

  How did you think the audience received your story?

  In what formats were previous stories shared?

  How would you describe your experience through that process?

- Why did you decide to share your story (again)?
- What do you expect will be the benefits and drawbacks of DST?

APPENDIX D: DIGITAL STORYTELLING WORKSHOP AGENDA

Day 1: 1-6pm

1-2pm: Introductions and Workshop Overview

2-3:00pm: Story Circle

3:00-3:30pm: Break

3:30-4:30pm: Script Writing and Review

4:30-6pm: Video Editing Tutorial: Explore Transitions/Pans and Zooms

Day 2: 1-6pm

1-2pm: Voiceover Recording
Each participant will record their voiceover to a smaller conference room while the rest of the group finish editing their scripts.

2-3:00pm: Storyboarding/Image Scanning and Preparation

3:00-3:30pm: Break

3:30-4:30pm: Edit Digital Story

4:30-5pm: Complete Digital Story Production/Music and Titles- Export Stories

5-6pm: “World Premiere” of Digital Stories

APPENDIX E: SEVEN STEP STORY CENTER MODEL FOR DIGITAL STORYTELLING

Handout from Story Center workshop, Spring 2019

1. Own Your Insights

   - We all have experiences. What do we understand? How do we act differently because of them? Write what you know because of what you experienced.
   - "Why this story, why now?" ask yourself, to gain entrance into the writing
   - What's the message, what am I trying to convey to the 'world'?

2. Own Your Emotions

   - Address the emotional content of the story. This may be easy to understand, but sometimes harder to execute.
   - Emotional content is what makes stories authentic. We watch and listen to compare our emotional journey to yours. We want to learn more about the journey – the struggle, the celebrations - of change. This is a fundamental aspect of being human.
   - Some strategies for accessing emotions:
     - Tell story from your heart to the heart of your audience rather than from an analytical space. Be careful not to be cliché with emotions. Be authentic.
     - Find emotion through evocative moments of story. What were the most "intense" moments of the story – how were you feeling – what did it mean that you felt that way?
     - Free write, pretend you are writing in a diary.

  - Question your reactions as you recall. Why did you react in a certain way – what happened to cause that reaction in you? Let the audience know these things.

3. Find the Moment
   - Create scene to bring people into your story, to the moment.
   - Use detail of the moment – small details, dialogue, etc.
   - Show emotions through evocative moments in story rather than describing/telling of them/talking above them.
4. Hearing Your Story
   - Write the way you talk.
   - Gift, uniqueness of your own individual voice
   - Tone, pacing of how you tell it
   - Consider how the sounds other than you voice may add to your story. Would it make your story more engaging? Would it situate a story in a particular time, place or culture?
   - Music can be used to encourage reflection by audience, or support the story's pacing
   - Music can undermine and detract from the story if it overpowers the story or contradicts (in lyrics or tone) the intended message of your story.
5. Seeing Your Story
   - Images help tell the story: provide visual 'proof', enhance scene, provide visual engagement…
   - Engage your audience to make connections between the images and the voiceover.

6. Assembling Your Story

- Levels of meaning conveyed through the various pieces, how they all work together (voice, images, sound).
- Voice, images, sound can all be thought of as separate layers of the narrative that need to work together to help convey the meaning of the story.
- The creative journey involves making decisions about what each of the layers looks like or sounds like, and how they will work together to accomplish the goal of your piece
- We will help you by providing ideas and options about how all of these pieces will fit together, but the final decisions will be up to yours.

7. Sharing Your Story

- Personal stories are. The process of writing and analyzing and creating brings us important new understandings of our world and ourselves. They can be used for much good, but stories can also make us vulnerable. Carefully consider how the process of sharing the story affects the content of the story.
- Need to consider what to include, what not to include, in order to stay safe (in both words and images).
- Reflect also on the implications of truth telling on others, on communities, etc. – for instance, how your individual narrative is situated within larger social/cultural/historic/political contexts.
- When editing, consider what information is more effectively shared as part of the introduction to the story or in accompanying information to the story, and what information is more effective when included in the story.

APPENDIX F: POST-DST WORKSHOP: INDIVIDUAL INTERVIEW QUESTIONS-SEMI STRUCTURED

- How was your storytelling experience with DST?
- Tell me about your linguistic, visual, audio, and video choices in making your story.
- Why did you select this particular topic/story?

  What other stories did you think about telling?

  Why didn't you choose these?

  Would you want to tell these stories in the future?

  What format might you choose to tell them in?
- What struggles have you faced with DST?
- What reaction/feelings did you have about the storytelling process?
- What reactions/feelings do you have about this story)?
- What else would you do to this story if you had more time/resources?
- What are the limits of DST based on your experience?
- How did you think about your audience during this process? How did it affect what you included or didn't include?
- How did you perceive the use of English to tell your story?
- How did you perceive the use of technology to tell your story?
- How did you perceive the group setting to tell your story?