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Working With Generation 1.5 Students and Their Teachers: ESL Meets Composition

■ This article describes a research project conducted at San Francisco State University on "Generation 1.5" learners and their teachers. In addition to providing a detailed description of who these learners are, this article warns of the pervasive likelihood of these students falling somewhere between the traditional institutional tracks of "native speaker" Composition and ESL, neither of which appropriately meets their educational needs. The article describes efforts at SFSU to mitigate this dangerous trend by bringing together faculty from Composition and ESL to explore some of the tendencies, preconceptions, and assumptions that inform the ways ESL and Composition program faculty respond to the writing of Generation 1.5 students. The article concludes by identifying a number of successful instructional principles and practices for working with this population of students, and considers the effects on teacher training and institutional policy should such practices be implemented.

Introduction

Over the past several decades, college-level English teachers have become increasingly aware of the special instructional needs of nonnative English speakers. To meet these needs, many college and university English programs have developed specialized instructional "niches," most typically in the form of English as a Second Language (ESL) courses. These courses are generally geared toward recent immigrants and foreign students—in other words, linguistic and cultural "newcomers." However, the great majority of nonnative English speakers in U.S. colleges and universities are *not* linguistic or cultural newcomers at all, but rather bilingual long-term U.S. residents who have received most or all of their education in this country. These students, whose language profiles and educational experiences appear to be somewhere between those of recently arrived *first generation immigrants* and U.S.-born *second generation immigrants*, are now being referred to as "Generation 1.5," a term that reflects their "in-between" status.

When such students take college writing placement tests, their particular language features often trigger placement into either remedial-level "basic writing" courses geared toward academically underprepared native English speaking students, or ESL courses geared toward newcomers. However, neither type of placement appears to be appropriate for such students. Basic writing teachers are generally ill-prepared to help these students with their second language writing difficulties, while college ESL teachers are generally ill-prepared to work with English-dominant students who have learned English primarily through informal oral communication rather than through classroom instruction.

In order to help both ESL and basic writing teachers develop strategies for working with these students, we conducted a 2-year research project focusing on the Generation 1.5 students at San Francisco State University (SFSU), a large urban university that serves a linguistically and culturally diverse student population. We asked the following research questions about Generation 1.5 students and their college writing teachers at SFSU:

- What are these students' histories of L1 and L2 language acquisition and what are their current patterns of L1 and L2 language use?
- What role has L1 and L2 played in these students' prior educational experiences?
- How do these students identify and describe themselves, in terms of their language affiliations?
- What special instructional needs do these student have during their development of college-level academic literacy?
- Which of their instructional needs are not being met in traditional ESL class and traditional basic writing classes?

Just as Generation 1.5 students are generally identified in composition literature as academically underprepared, so too are they identified in college writing programs. For example, in the Fall 2000 semester, 40% of regularly admitted first-time freshmen entering San Francisco State University were deemed by standardized placement procedures to be underprepared for college-level reading and writing. These "underprepared" students are placed into one of two institutional programs through which they can meet our university requirement for written English proficiency: the Composition program and the ESL program. The vast majority of these underprepared entering freshmen (94%) are placed into our "native-speaker" program where they will begin their journey toward written English proficiency by taking one or two semesters of basic writing.

Against the backdrop of these institutional realities, we gathered language profile and educational history data on students enrolled in basic writing classes. What our investigation made clear is that while these institutional tracks may be quite distinct in practice, in terms of who our students are, the lines between ESL and native-speaker composition populations are blurring. For example, San Francisco State's ESL program is increasingly made up of immigrant students, some of whom have been in the United States up to 10 years. Fifteen to twenty years ago, the population of the ESL program was one-third immigrant and two-thirds international, whereas to-

day our ESL students are two-thirds immigrant and only one-third international. Meanwhile, in the Composition program, basic writers are also an increasingly immigrant population (78%) and decreasingly students who are native English-speaking. A third group of basic writers are what Ferdman calls "ethnolinguistic minorities," students, both immigrant and U.S.-born, whose native language is hard to pinpoint, for it may be a creolized fusion of two or more languages (Ferdman, Weber, & Ramirez, 1994; Goen, 1997). Taking both our nonnative English-speaking and ethnolinguistic minority populations together, we found that the majority of our basic writing students do not fit neatly into either institutional track: They come to the university from home and community cultures where English may play only a limited role, but they also come to our classrooms from educational backgrounds that have been predominately in English. (For a more thorough profile of Generation 1.5 students, see the review article by Roberge in this volume.) What this suggests is that for many of our basic writing students neither the ESL nor the basic writing curriculum is appropriate to meet their educational needs. It is this institutionally unacknowledged group of students, those who fall somewhere between our institutional categories of "ESL student" and "basic writer," that we set out to investigate.

The Study

We conducted our investigation with two goals in mind, both of which were designed to help us better address the obstacles these students face in becoming proficient speakers, readers, and writers of English. First, we wanted to acknowledge these students' presence on our campus by describing them in some detail and to understand more specifically the language profiles and educational experiences they bring to their college studies. Second, we wanted to bring together faculty from both ESL and basic writing so that we might begin to bridge the disciplinary gap between these two programs.

To meet our first goal, we collected and analyzed language profile and educational history data from a sample of 85 freshmen students enrolled in Spring of 1998 in SFSU's lowest level basic writing course. To help us make meaning of this survey data, we also conducted a number of follow-up interviews, a component of which asked students to respond in writing to prompts about their perceptions of themselves as language users. (The survey is presented as Appendix A. Appendix B shows the writing prompts used to gather further data.)

To meet our second goal, in Fall 2000 we brought together 48 faculty from the two writing programs—ESL and native speaker Composition—in order to examine the tendencies, preconceptions and assumptions that inform the ways our ESL and Composition faculty respond to the writing of Generation 1.5 students. To conduct this phase of our investigation, we collected writing samples and language use surveys in 6 ESL classes and 6 basic writing classes and from basic writing students who had been referred for tutoring to the Learning Assistance Center (LAC). We then selected 8 sample papers that represented a range of Generation 1.5 student writing and dis-

tributed the samples to Composition and ESL faculty who had committed to attending a workshop in which these writings would be discussed; we then collected and analyzed faculty responses to these writing samples.

In the sections of this paper that follow, we report in turn on both the student survey and the faculty workshop. Following these discussions we identify a number of instructional principles and practices we have found to be successful in working with this population of students. We close with some implications for professional training and institutional research and policy.

Results of the Survey[1]

This section of the paper reports and discusses the findings of the student survey in the five categories investigated: language use, oral proficiency, literacy proficiency, cultural knowledge, and affiliation/motivation. These findings are supported by excerpts from student writing; additionally, the findings on Generation 1.5 students are compared with general knowledge about traditional ESL students, a population composed of international students in the country on temporary visas and of recent immigrants who have had most of their schooling in their home countries.

Among the 85 students who completed the survey, 18 students were monolingual English speakers. The results which follow report only on the 67 students (79% of those surveyed) whom we are calling "Generation 1.5."

Language Use

Table 1 summarizes the major findings of our first category of investigation, Language Use. The main and not at all surprising finding is that this group of 67 students in basic writing classes use two or more languages and these languages play complex and variable roles in their lives.

Table 1
Language Use

Survey Questions	*Generation 1.5 (n = 67)*	
#1–12, 15–17	Use two or more languages in complex and variable ways	
	"Best" Language	**Language used at home**
	(A) 42% English	7% only English
		32% only home language
	(B) 42% home language	2% only home language
	(C) 16% both languages	5% only home language

The survey asked the students to name their "best" language, and these results led to three categories: Group A: those who consider English their best language (42%); Group B: those who consider their home language[2] their best language (42%); and Group C, those who consider both languages equal as their best (16%). These three categories regarding "best language"

were then used to analyze other data from the survey with an eye towards using identifications that were meaningful to the students (here, their determination of their "best language") rather than other more traditional measures that we might impose, such as number of years in the U.S. or the age at which they began using English.

The survey also asked these learners to tell us how they use English and their home languages in various situations, and the findings regarding the language they use at home appear in Table 1. For Group A, the English-dominant group, 7% use only English at home and 32% use only the home language at home. This means that the majority—68%—of this group of students are using English and another language at home; a common pattern is that they use English with their siblings and the home language with their parents. For Group B, the 42% who are home language dominant, we found that 82% use this language exclusively at home. And for Group C, the 16% who are "balanced bilinguals," we found that 45% use only the home language at home. Overall, our survey revealed that only a very small percent—3%—of Generation 1.5 students are using only English at home.

The complex linguistic background of these Generation 1.5 students and the role English plays in their lives are illustrated by the words of a student named Wan, who is bilingual and names English as her "best" language and refers to Chinese as "my own language." This writing excerpt shows the varied ways and contexts in which she uses language and how she moves in and out of different languages depending on the situation and her relationships to the people she is communicating with.

Wan

There are different ways language can be use in communication. The language I use in school, family, and friends are all different. In school, I use English to talk to my instructors and fellow classmates. At home, I speak three different languages. I speak English to my brothers and sister, while speaking Mandarin to my parents and speaking Laotian with my brother-in-law. With all these different languages I use in my daily life, I find I am most comfortable with the language I use with my friends.

When I speak to my friends, I always use English. Even if some of my friends are Chinese and can speak the same language as I can, I have never spoke Chinese with any of my friends. I find myself to communicate better in English than my own language. When I speak to my friends, I don't pay attention to my grammars. We often talk to each other using slangs, that others might find it weird. But to us, it's fun because instead of saying one complete word, we tend to say a short cut of the word. Although I find myself speaking English, my best language, to my friends, it has somewhat affected me in my grammars.

Another example of student writing—a self-portrait of Bryan, who identifies his home language as his best—illustrates the ways in which language defines him and shapes his sense of himself as a multicultural person.

<u>Bryan</u>
The languages that we speak usually define who we are and it sometimes both separate and connect us from one another. There are many ways one can express one's self such as myself, I am a bilingual, a person who speak two languages. I use my second language, which is English wherever I am, whether I am in our house or out. The reason behind this is that I believe that practice makes perfect, but at the same time, I try not forget my roots. My primary language is called *Filipino,* to some its Tagalog, but to me it's the main thing that binds me with some *Pinoys.* Every time I used such languages, it is somewhat hard because I sometimes confused and usually join them into this *tag-lish* diction. Still, I adore both languages because both of them symbolize my diversity, from the culture I grew up to and this new culture that I myself subjected.

For a majority of the students, English may play a minor role in their language use outside school, or as with students such as Wan, the home language may be the language they use primarily at home, but not the language they use with peers or at school. As both she and Bryan point out, the version of English that they and their teenage friends use is filled with slang and their own "short cuts" in terms of vocabulary and form, a unique and often abbreviated form of English that reflects the urban American youth culture that they identify with and which distinguishes them from both native speakers and ESL students. In sum, the fact that 42% of these students consider their home language their best language suggests that they are using English in a more limited way than we might imagine.

Oral Proficiency

Even though Wan is someone who perceives English as her best language and Bryan says he practices using English wherever he is, both are referring primarily to an oral use of language, something we found to be true regardless of which language they considered their "best." In other words, when the students think "best" language, they are referring to oral proficiency.

Table 2 summarizes the results regarding oral proficiency. Here, the main finding is that the majority, 69%, feel they speak and understand English well, yet a fifth of the students, 21%, feel that their oral proficiency in English is weak. This finding shows how complex the picture of these students is: they are not unilaterally fluent in spoken English, or at least some feel a lack of confidence in their fluency. And if their oral English is indeed weak, this has serious implications for their ability to succeed in an academic environment where much content is delivered in the oral mode through lectures and class discussion and where their class participation is often a factor in grading. This weak oral proficiency is especially problematic for academic success if their writing skills are also weak, which is often the case.

Table 2
Oral Proficiency

Survey Questions	Generation 1.5
#14–17	Mostly fluent in <u>English</u>: often "ear learners"[3] • 69% speak and understand English "well" • 21% feel their English oral proficiency is <u>weak</u> Mostly fluent <u>in their home language</u> • 95% report <u>strong oral skills</u> in home language (group B, HL dominant, + group C, balanced bilinguals)

In contrast to the findings for English, most of these students report good oral fluency in their home language. For the subgroups of home-language-dominant and balanced bilinguals, 95% report they have strong oral skills in their home language. Overall, these statistics on oral proficiency paint a picture of learners who are by and large comfortable communicating in the oral mode but who lack confidence and skill in writing, as the following set of statistics suggests.

Literacy Proficiency

When we turn to these students' literacy skills, the picture of their proficiency is somewhat different, and perhaps bleaker. Table 3 presents these results. In contrast to their oral proficiency, for which 80% or more report that they are strong in both languages, only 37% rate themselves as proficient in reading and writing in both languages.

Table 3
Literacy Proficiency

Survey Questions	Generation 1.5
#14 – 17	Only 37% of all have literacy proficiency in both languages Varied proficiency in <u>English literacy</u> • 39% profess strong English literacy in addition to good oral skills • 61% profess weak writing skills in English • 67% are <u>most comfortable</u> reading and writing in English Varied proficiency in <u>home language literacy</u> • 64% say they are weak in HL literacy

The English literacy proficiency of these learners varies considerably. Less than half of the students—39%—say their English reading and writing proficiency is strong in addition to having good spoken English skills; thus, less than half of those we sampled can be considered fully functional in Eng-

lish. In fact, 61% of them say their English writing is weak. Despite the fact that they feel less than fully proficient reading and writing in English, a sizable number (67%) report feeling *most comfortable* reading and writing in English.

Concerning their home-language-literacy proficiency, we again found a great amount of variability. About two-thirds—64%—feel they are weak in their home language literacy.

An implication here is that transfer to English reading/writing skills from the home language is not likely. This is in contrast to traditional ESL students, especially those who are recent arrivals in the U.S. and who received the majority of their schooling in their native countries; these are learners who tend to have strong first language literacy skills and thus can often transfer these skills to the second language.

What these statistics on literacy demonstrate is that even if students report feeling more comfortable reading and writing in English than in their home language, they still seem to lack confidence in their ability to read and write effectively and accurately in academic English. The following piece of student writing by Sandy may reveal why this is true.

<u>Sandy</u>

My languages are Cantonese and English. My primary language is Cantonese which I speak at home with my parents and relatives. English is my second language, and I use it when I am in school with friends and at work to communicate with my co-workers and customers. I am best speaking in Cantonese because I have spoken it since I was little, and I practice it a lot in my routine. Therefore, I am more comfortable and confident speaking Cantonese with the Cantonese speakers, but I feel more comfortable using English in reading and writing. The reason is I have to read and write English almost everyday in my life since I came to America. Because we are require to read and write English in school, I use English more in reading and writing than Cantonese. I hardly read or write Chinese characters because I don't get use to them, only speaking for communication between family and friends. But both languages play its important role in my life. I have the advantage of being a bilingual student.

Sandy's description of her language use shows that she is typical of the majority of students in our sample, as seen in Table 4. She is among the majority (63%) of students who *do not* have literacy in both languages; she is also among the majority (67%) who feel most comfortable using English for reading and writing; and, in addition, she is among the majority (64%) who report that they have weak home language literacy—in fact, hers is virtually non-existent. Sandy's lack of Chinese literacy leaves her no option but to say that she is most comfortable reading and writing in English although she describes Chinese as her "primary language." It is important to note that Sandy, like many of these students, has been working at becoming literate in English, a second language, when she is not, in fact, literate in her first. How this lack of home language literacy figures into the language learning equa-

tion is not completely clear, but it is an important factor to consider as we work with students to develop their academic writing proficiency.

The example of Sandy and the statistics from the study reveal another feature which distinguishes Generation 1.5 from ESL students: Both groups fulfill the institutional definition for bilingual speakers, i.e., they speak two or more languages, yet in the case of Generation 1.5, many of the students are not literate in their home languages whereas practically all the students in the ESL group have L1 literacy skills as a result of receiving the majority of their schooling in their first languages. Although the Generation 1.5 students are like their native speaker peers in that English is their language of literacy, they are also like their ESL counterparts in that they are still language learners of English, a situation that is often not fully recognized and addressed in basic writing classes or in the research literature on basic writers. These statistics on language use also question the appropriateness of the instruction these students receive in the basic writing classes in which they are enrolled, courses which typically provide no instruction for second language learners and which typically are taught by teachers with little or no training in working with second language learners.

Cultural Knowledge

U.S. cultural knowledge was measured by amount of U.S. schooling. The survey asked students to tell their age of arrival and to chart their educational histories. The results regarding years of U.S. schooling are summarized in Table 4 with the three groups identified according to their determination of their dominant language.

Table 4
U.S. Cultural Knowledge (Years of Schooling)

Survey Questions	*Generation 1.5*		
	Years of school in U.S.:	**Average**	**Range**
#13	English dominant	11.4	9 – 13
	Balanced bilinguals	10.2	4 – 13
	HL dominant	8.6	2 – 13

The English-dominant group averaged the greatest number of years in U.S. schools (11.4), closely followed by the balanced-bilingual group (10.2), with the home-language-dominant group averaging the fewest, as might be predicted. It is interesting that these Generation 1.5 students are by and large U.S. educated, most arriving here before the critical period for second language acquisition and spending part of elementary school and all of junior and senior high in our schools. This length of time in U.S. schools sets them apart from students in the "recent immigrants" category in ESL programs, who generally have been here shorter amounts of time and are far less acculturated in terms of knowing American general culture and academic culture.

Some implications for the success of these learners in the classroom seem apparent: Generation 1.5 students who find themselves in ESL classes are likely to be confused and perhaps insulted by reading material and writing assignments focusing on comparisons of "your country/culture" and "U.S. culture." Conversely, Generation 1.5 students in basic writing classes may still be learning English, and those who have arrived more recently in the U.S. may identify with the basic writer population even though they may have gaps in their knowledge of American academic culture and general culture.

Affiliation/Motivation

Although the survey had no direct questions about motivation, it did ask in what grades and for how long students had taken ESL classes (question # 13) and asked students to indicate which of a series of labels identified them (questions # 7-12). The survey showed that one third of the students had never taken ESL classes. It also showed that almost two-thirds of the students surveyed said that they recognize that they speak English as a second language but stated that they do not consider themselves ESL students.

The following text, from a transcript of an interview of a student placed in a basic writing class, addresses this issue of labeling students and shows how we as educators often fail to hear what students have to say about who they are. But even more than that, this piece exemplifies how, by assuming we know what is "best" for students, we can undermine their self-confidence and sense of self-worth and even thwart their progress by not paying attention to what they say about themselves and what they need.

Tina

I took English 50 last fall but I upset when I wrote my first essay and my teacher told me that my quality and my ability is not good enough to take this class. She recommend me to go to the ESL office and sign up for ESL classes. It hurt my feeling because I take this writing class because I want to improve my writing whether she passed me or not. She should let me know at the end of the semester instead of tell me to go to the ESL office after my first essay. I feel ashamed of myself that somebody pushed me down like that. I feel this way because I came here for ten years and it very hurt my feelings. I just think that she is prejudice because English is not my original language. So I reject my teacher's advice and I drop that class and didn't take any English for two semesters. I have no problem with the teacher in that second class and got a B for the final grade.

The painful case of Tina illustrates the needs of a student who acknowledges that she has problems with English but feels that she has nowhere to go for help. She is a student for whom our institutional solution, that of leaving the basic writing class to take an ESL class, which she feels would not answer her learning needs, is not acceptable. She is truly part of Generation 1.5, for she does not "fit" in either the basic writing class or the ESL program. In the context of today's strict regulations on remediation, students

like Tina are especially vulnerable to falling between our institutional cracks because they cannot postpone completion of required writing courses or spend several semesters figuring out which program is really best for them.

As more and more students from this Generation 1.5 group find their way into our ESL and basic writing classes, we need to be aware of our own tendencies, preconceptions, or assumptions as we work with these learners in and out of the classroom and as we develop curriculum or policy that affects their success at the university.

The Workshop: Bridging the Gap Between ESL and Composition

In an attempt to heed our own advice about good practice, we decided to examine the tendencies, preconceptions, and assumptions that informed the ways our ESL and Composition program faculty respond to the writing of Generation 1.5 students. To prepare for a workshop in which both groups of writing faculty would do just that, we collected essays produced by students enrolled in ESL and in basic writing courses in which the teacher was willing to assign the following essay prompt (one not without its problems, of course):

<u>We are a society of addicts</u>

While some people become addicted to illegal drugs, others habitually devote an excessive amount of time, energy, or money to less harmful substances or activities such as drinking coffee, shopping, exercising, playing computer games, watching television, or working.

Identify one legal activity or substance to which people can become "addicted." You can choose one from the list above or write about one of your own ideas.

Write a well-organized essay in which you briefly speculate about what might cause this kind of behavior, discuss its effects on the individual or others, and explain why you think it is or is not harmful.

From this sample of writing, we selected eight essays—five written by Generation 1.5 students enrolled in basic writing, three by students in an ESL course—which were distributed (without names or course titles) to all faculty who had signed up for the workshop. To prepare for our discussion, faculty were asked to carefully read each essay, identify which writing program (ESL or Composition) they thought would best serve the writer, and come ready to cite the specific text features and error patterns that informed their decisions.

Before reviewing the overall results of our workshop conversation, we would like to introduce some of the writers and writing we discussed.

Student Texts
What follows is the essay written by William, one of the eight students in our sample.

> **William**
>
> Why people can be addicted on something so easily? You might think of many reasons to this question, but I think two main reasons are either, their looks or physical need. These two reasons are both connect on how you think about yourself. The things that you addicted to may not addict to others. That is why everyone addicts to things different from each other.
>
> Most people addicted on watching TV. I don't think it's because of the look, but it is the physically need. Some people think when they can not achieve things in reality, but by watching TV they can have a feeling of achieving it. For myself, I'm also addicted on watching TV. Watching TV can give me a feeling of relaxation. After I done with my homework and studies, I will sit on a sofa, turn on the TV and start watching it. Most of the times I like to watch comedy show. It will make we laugh and I also can enjoy watching the show. This can help me not to be so stressful all the times.
>
> Addicted on watching TV can also be harmful if you don't know when to say stop. Watching too much TV can cause eye problems and effect your health badly too. If you are really into watching TV for 8 or 10 hours a day, it is really a big problem. You will start sleeping late, can't get enough rest, your eyes will be tire all the times, and your body will get weaker and weaker each day. This situation happens to many people. But if you know when to stop watching when it need to be stop, you will be fine. You can make a time sheet for how many hours you can watch for a day, so this will prevent you not getting hurt from watching TV.
>
> Watching TV is just one kind of addiction. There are many things you can addicted to and may cause your health really badly. You need to think about is that addiction really important to your life and is in you can't live with out it? To me, I think if you are addicted to something that you really into it, it will not help you, but harm you in every ways.

Although born in Vietnam, William came to the U.S. at age six and started the first grade here. At home he speaks Vietnamese and Cantonese, the latter being the language he is most comfortable speaking, but one in which he can not read or write. Given this fact, it is not surprising that William says he is most comfortable reading and writing in English, the only language of instruction he has ever known. In fact, William does *not* identify himself as an ESL student and was enrolled in a basic writing class.

When we showed William's paper to our combined group of ESL and Composition teachers, both groups felt he should be in ESL classes. While his educational history clearly makes him an inappropriate candidate for an ESL class, it is not surprising to see why teachers overwhelmingly misplaced him: Although able to put together an essay which is generally coherent, William's language reveals a number of features that are typical of ESL writers: the incorrect question word order in his first sentence, "Why people can be addicted on something so easily?"; numerous count noun errors; inaccurate verb complement structures; the use of the wrong preposition; and inap-

propriate collocations. Beyond these errors are language problems typical of both basic and ESL writers: missing past participle endings, especially with "be + -ed" adjectives; word form errors; missing "be" verbs; subject-verb agreement, and lack of parallel structure.

When asked why they thought William would best be served in an ESL writing class, Composition and ESL faculty cited both the diversity of error patterns—and the number of errors within a given pattern in his writing—as the basis for their decision. Although faculty acknowledged William was able to produce an expository essay that was by and large well developed, they believed the errors were too numerous, the patterns too diverse, and the accent too "nonnative" sounding—"addicted on" and "it is the physically need," for example—to warrant his placement in basic writing.

Anna, another student discussed in our faculty workshop, wrote the following essay on addictions:

Anna

    I think being addicted to something can be a serious problem and can also be harmful too. I am also addicted to a few things. Although I knew it is not wisest for me. One of the things that I'm addicted to most is shopping for clothes and spending too much time on crafts. It seem like it is part of me and I would do it forever. It is something that I really like to do to make myself feel happy.

    Ever since I've got a job last year in the summer, I started to shop more than I usually do. I was afraid to lose my job and didn't worry much about school. All I cared for is what I wanted. As soon as the program ended, I felt terrible. I didn't have the money to go shopping anymore. My attitude started to change dramatically and got very lazy. I feel like I would never be happy if I do not get what I want. I am always in my room and I never want to go out. Sometimes I'm afraid to see my friends and if they have something nice on, I would feel very uncomfortable that I don't have it.

    Whenever I go shopping I have to get myself something. It will bring me to joy when I have something nice on me. Sometimes I don't even care what I get, but when I do not get anything I would be upset for a long while. No matter how sad or upset I am, I would be happy if I have something new to wear. I feel like I'm never satisfied for what I have. I always want to get something new or other different styles. Most of the time I would wear it once or twice then I wouldn't like it anymore.

    Another thing that I'm addicted to is making crafts. I love to make things with my hands. I makes me feel very special that I can do things by myself. I feel great when I learn to make something new. Whenever I learned to make something new I would not sleep for a few days. I would be working on it all night. I spend so much time on it that I'm going out of control. I don't have time to sleep and I can't concentrate in my studies. I would work on it until I get things right.

    Sometimes when I see other people addicted to something I would think it is very stupid especially drugs. I really don't understand why are

---

doing it and would do anything for it. I never look at myself that way, but other might think I am stupid to be addicted to shopping too. It is really hard to tell anything or listen to anyone when I'm addicted to something. Even if I knew it is not good for me I would do it any way. It is very hard to control myself.

My parents and grandparents explain to me a lot about shopping. I should be satisfied for what I have. If I keep on spending my money like that, in the future I might do anything for it. They are afraid that I might do things that are illegal. I never listen to them until recently. When I was a few months away from the graduation, I realized that getting a higher education is very important to me. I should always get what I need before what I want.

I have learned that shopping is not good for me due to my past experiences. Therefore, I will try to get out this addiction. Although I still like to shop, but I would always try to control myself.

Anna's survey information reveals she was born in the U.S. and the first language she learned to speak was Cantonese, the language she reports she is still most comfortable speaking. Although Anna is more comfortable speaking Cantonese than English, she, like William, says she is most comfortable reading and writing in English, and does not identify herself as an ESL student.

Anna's writing demonstrates her acquaintance with basic essay structure, her reliance on short, choppy sentences, and her need to work on essay focus and development—features common in both basic and ESL writing.

Like a traditional "basic" writer, Anna uses a number of oral markers, exhibits a strong voice, and indicates her familiarity with American culture. Anna also uses very native-like collocations and structures such as "One of the things I'm addicted to most is…" or "My attitude started to change dramatically..." Like a traditional "ESL" writer, Anna lacks control of her verb tenses (though she does control verb forms well), misuses the modal *would* consistently, and, at times, uses the wrong preposition.

When asked where they would place Anna, Composition teachers overwhelmingly thought she should be in basic writing classes, which is, in fact, where she was. Unlike their Composition colleagues, ESL teachers were divided regarding whether Anna should be in ESL or basic writing classes. This particular voting pattern, and the reasons ESL and Composition teachers cited to justify their placement decisions, held across most of the student samples we discussed in the workshop.

Teachers' Responses to Student Writing

In our workshop we brought together 48 teachers who were already aware of the existence of a "Generation 1.5 writer" and already asking questions about how best to support such students' language and literacy development. Nonetheless, their reading of the eight workshop essays suggests that both groups of teachers are understandably operating according to traditional categories about what basic writing is and what ESL writing is. As

Table 5 indicates, the tendency among Composition teachers was to see these students' needs as most appropriately addressed in basic writing classes (in six out of eight cases) and to believe so for reasons that follow a set of traditional givens about basic writing practice. Table 5 summarizes the placement decisions made by our ESL and Composition faculty.

Table 5
Placement Decisions Made by ESL and Composition Faculty

| Student | Actual Program | Program that best fits the writer according to: | |
		Comp. Teachers	ESL Teachers
William (in U.S. schools since 1st grade)	BW	ESL	ESL
Anna (born in U.S.)	BW	BW	ESL (55/45 split)
Kong (born in U.S.)	BW	ESL	ESL (60/40 split)
Jimmy (in U.S. schools since 3rd grade)	BW	BW	BW (55/45 split)
Angela (born in U.S.)	BW	BW	BW
Jennifer (in U.S. schools since 7th grade)	ESL	BW	BW (65/35 split)
Emily (entered U.S. schools in 12th grade)	ESL	BW	ESL (68/32 split)
Kim (came to U.S. after high school)	ESL	BW	ESL (55/45 split)
TOTAL		6 of 8 best served in BW	5 of 8 best served in ESL

The traditional construct of "basic writer" is one that characteristically assumes a writer's relative comfort using the English language, as well as competence using basic—although simple—essay structure and English syntax. Yet historically and persistently, basic writing is also marked by error, both in number and type. Even with this being the case, what became apparent in our workshop was that Composition teachers deemed a student to be ESL when the sheer volume and variety of error crossed a certain

threshold, and when the accent on paper was just too "nonnative" sounding (as with William).

Unfortunately, such assumptions have led many of us to make the ill-fated, although well-intentioned, recommendation—often to the dismay of students like Tina—that these writers be placed in ESL classes or, at the very least, receive some ESL grammar tutoring. We need only recall Tina's admission that she felt "hurt" and "pushed down" by her basic writing teacher to understand why such recommendations can be very troubling to these learners.

ESL teachers also displayed a consistent pattern of behavior, although a different one from their Composition colleagues. ESL teachers were almost evenly split on six of the eight essays, narrowly suggesting that five of the eight writers' needs could most appropriately be addressed in an ESL course. When we looked more closely at how the ESL teachers split on these six essays, we discovered that the teachers who placed the writer in ESL did so, like their Composition colleagues, on the basis of error frequency. Unlike Composition teachers though, ESL faculty identified a student as a basic writer, whatever the number and type of errors, if the writer displayed relative comfort with English and a knowledge of U.S. culture.

Some Observations

What we wish to highlight from these data is not so much how the categories of basic writing and ESL are used for program placement—that's old news, for we all know that decisions about placement are routinely made on the basis of such readings of student essays. What we do wish to highlight is that the traditional constructs of ESL and basic writing may inhibit us from fully exploiting the relationship among students' language histories, experiences, self-identification, and their literacy and language development.

As has already been demonstrated, our constructs of basic and ESL writers can not only blind us to the language needs of students like William (whom most people placed in ESL classes although he has been attending U.S. schools since the first grade), but also to the needs of students like Jennifer, a student who has been in the United States since the seventh grade, and who describes herself as most comfortable speaking, reading, and writing Vietnamese. What follows are the first two paragraphs of Jennifer's essay on addiction:

> ### Jennifer
>
> Nowadays, people are more introverted due to the new technology that has changed the way people socialize and maintain relationships through computers, especially the internet. People become addicted to the internet.
>
> Today, many people use the internet because they think the internet is a good source for them to communicate with all kinds of people. Although, the internet could connect the people to the outside world and is a good place to meet diversity of people. However, I think it's not a good idea to maintain relationship through internet because these people are impersonal. For example, I remember when I went on internet to chat with other people who came from different states. First, it was kind of fun, but I got bored afterward because most of the people in the "chat room" was looking for a relationship. All guys on the internet said they didn't have girlfriends yet, and of course I didn't believe in what they have told me.

In contrast to William, Jennifer identifies herself as an ESL student and is in fact enrolled in an ESL course. Yet all of the Composition teachers and two-thirds of the ESL teachers felt that Jennifer should be in a basic writing course because her writing, despite its errors, demonstrates the kind of cultural content and comfort with English we have traditionally associated with basic, and not ESL writers.

With more and more students like Tina and William and Jennifer in our ESL and basic writing classes, one of the biggest challenges facing language educators is our need to think outside of our comfortable disciplinary givens as we seek better ways to work with the Generation 1.5 students in our classrooms.

The following discussion is designed to do just that: to offer some of the principles and techniques we have found to be effective in our work with this population of writers.

Strategies for Working with Students and Their Writing

Background: How the Strategies Have Evolved

The results of this workshop for teachers in Fall 2000 reveal what may be our biggest challenge as ESL and Composition professionals: In working with Generation 1.5 learners, we need to get outside the confines of our ESL or basic writing thinking and our tendency to categorize writing as "ESL" or "basic writing" because of the quantity and/or type of error. Responding to this challenge requires that we develop pedagogy that specifically addresses the needs of 1.5 learners, leading us to consider the following questions:

- How can we move beyond pedagogical models from our individual disciplines that may not best serve the learners in our classes?
- How can we develop in students a sense of themselves as writers and, at the same time, assist them in understanding and attending to the functions and forms of language?

Over the past ten years, San Francisco State ESL faculty, including the authors of this article, have grappled with these questions both at the Learning Assistance Center (LAC) and in the ESL Program. Our response has been to try to develop materials and activities that better serve students. Since Generation 1.5 students have not been successful at learning in traditional formats, we have known that we need to develop a different pedagogical model, one that

- pays better attention to who the students are by taking learners' backgrounds and self-identification into account,
- acknowledges what students bring to the task of learning by taking advantage of learners' strengths as oral communicators, and
- addresses the gaps students have as academic writers by helping orally fluent learners develop as communicators in the written mode.

From the beginning, we have been aware of the importance of the last two points. However, the results of the Language Use Survey (Appendix A) and the students' written responses to survey-related topics clearly demonstrate the importance of the second point, i.e., the effect of the learners' backgrounds and self-identification on the language learning process. From this study, we began to fully recognize the importance of language and identity in developing effective teaching materials and strategies for working with Generation 1.5 learners.

In the years of working with Generation 1.5 learners in both the Learning Assistance Center and in the classroom, we have discovered that helping orally fluent learners understand themselves in their new role as writers is key in the process of teaching. In addition, we have learned that we need to help students recognize their relationship as writers to their readers, an audience that they probably have not thought about much before. If students have an awareness of this writer-reader relationship, they can begin to recognize what constitutes effective communication at the level of discourse. Developing an awareness in students of this writer-reader relationship can also move students to think about their own patterns of language, both oral and written, and how these patterns determine their success in conveying the message they want to convey in written form.

Principles to Guide our Work with Generation 1.5 Learners

Our work with Generation 1.5 learners has led to the formulation of principles for working with orally fluent second language writers under the general headings of (a) drawing on students' backgrounds to promote language learning, (b) setting priorities for learning and editing, and (c) promoting learner independence. (These appear in Appendix D.) The discourse-based activities described on the following pages are based on these principles and support the pedagogical goals outlined above. These examples demonstrate how to work with authentic student texts to help learners accomplish the following:

- understand the connection between how they speak and what they write,
- discover their own language patterns, including their patterns of error, and, finally,
- use this discovery to develop an individualized system for editing their work.

Assessing Writing and Setting Priorities for Teaching

Assessment of students' writing is the first step in designing appropriate teaching materials or activities. In working with Generation 1.5 learners such as Anna and her peers, we have found that prioritizing grammar concerns and figuring out a focus for teaching is critical so that we don't overwhelm students, especially Generation 1.5 writers who have had minimal second language instruction. The example of Anna's writing illustrates the importance of setting priorities. (See Anna's writing in the previous section.) Since the problem of tense shifts is the most pervasive language concern in Anna's paper, it is important to focus on the relationship between tense and time expressions and resist the urge to mark or teach "everything," especially since it is not likely that Anna will benefit from extensive marking of her paper.

The next step is to set up activities that take advantage of students' strengths as oral communicators. For Anna, and other Generation 1.5 learners, working at the sentence level will not be particularly useful since they are often able to find errors which occur in isolated sentences. Because of their limited experience with academic writing, these learners produce text that is writer-based and often lacks the written markers that provide coherence. In order to understand tense and its relationship to expressions of time and also think about what information the reader needs to have in order to understand what the writer intends, students need to work on language at the level of discourse. By offering learners uncomplicated text-based activities which draw upon their comfort with language in the oral mode, we are able to assist them in making connections to the written, academic mode, thereby helping them begin to make the transition from oral fluency to writing proficiency.

Activity #1: Setting Up a System for Active Editing

The purpose of this activity is to set up a system for analyzing text, identifying grammar features, such as subject-verb agreement and verb tense, and developing active editing strategies. First, teachers select a student text that helps teach a particular language feature. Then the student text is adapted by editing out any distracting errors that would sidetrack the students from the focus for teaching. (An example of such a text and the accompanying activities are in Appendix E.)

The directions for this activity ask students to begin by reading the student text in its entirety, thus encouraging them to think about how language works at the level of discourse, so they are not derailed by individual sentences. Then students are asked to follow a set of steps: to put a wiggly line

under time expressions, underline verbs, and circle subjects. Students also put a box around the modals since these are a frequent source of confusion. This procedure will eventually help students like Anna understand the problems in her use of modals. Consistency and extended practice are especially important, and students continue to use this technique of "wiggly lining," underlining, and circling throughout the semester in order to reinforce this system for focusing on subject-verb agreement and tense. Although particularly useful if subject-verb agreement is a problem, circling the subjects may be an optional step if learners do not need to focus on this feature in their writing.

Although perhaps not an easy task for Generation 1.5 learners, this simple activity of identifying sentence parts allows students to focus on the relationship between tense and expressions which mark shifts in time. As students work through the first paragraph of the excerpt following the steps, they will discover two shifts from present to past tense (lines 2 and 5 of Anna's text) but no time expression to warrant these changes of tense. When the teacher asks the question, "If you are the reader of this writing, is the meaning clear to you?" students quickly figure out that without the inclusion of markers to clearly designate time references, readers become confused.

As learners work with verb tense in the excerpt, they will also be focusing on the "boxed" modals and will be able to see inconsistencies in the use of "would" in such examples as "It seem like it is part of me and I would do it forever" (lines 4-5 of Anna's text) and "I feel like I would never be happy if I do not get what I want" (lines 11-12 of Anna's text). The focus here is not just on "finding errors," but rather, on developing that writer-reader relationship discussed earlier: figuring out what forms and markers the reader needs to have in terms of tense-time relationships in order to understand what the writer wants to convey.

This activity, a prelude to developing active editing strategies, is consistent with several of the principles previously illustrated for working with 1.5 learners (See Appendix D):

- Use meaningful texts that are relevant to students. (#5)
- Make basic grammar succinct and accessible. (#6)
- Help students develop focused strategies for editing beyond simply telling them to "check their work." (#10)

Activity #2: Grammar Reference Cards

Grammar reference cards, which are learner-prepared index cards with examples, "rules," and information about correct form, can be developed for any feature of grammar. As described below, the activity of preparing grammar reference cards for tense and time relationships builds upon the previous activity of setting up a system for active editing. Not only are students analyzing text and looking at the relationship between tense and time expressions, they are also looking at tense shifts, namely present vs. past, in academic writing. Through this analysis, students move from thinking in the narrative mode, which they are most comfortable with, to the expository mode, a genre that is not as familiar to them.

Since Generation 1.5 learners have not had the grammar training that ESL students have, this type of learner prepared grammar reference is especially appropriate and useful. With unfamiliar metalanguage and detailed explanations, traditional grammar reference materials are often not accessible to students who may find the information from these sources confusing and irrelevant. Creating and using grammar reference cards offers students a personalized, learner-based reference tool that provides them with a portable and succinct resource, tailor-made to their particular needs. An additional feature of this activity is that preparing and referring to the cards, which may be hole-punched and secured with a metal ring, appeals to kinesthetic and tactile learners. Thus, teachers are able to engage more active, easily distracted younger students, such as those who have recently graduated from high school, in the process of language learning and the study of forms and functions of English.

One key feature of preparing grammar reference cards is building them together as a class to engage students in active, inductive learning. (See examples of Grammar Reference Cards in Appendix F.) To begin, the teacher works from a "template" for a card, always starting with examples that demonstrate the grammar feature or problem and then working toward the definition or rule that gives the grammar explanation. Examples taken from student writing are especially useful for providing a meaningful context.

Using example sentences, students employ their system for analyzing and developing active editing strategies: in this case, "wiggly lining," underlining, circling. Next, the teacher inductively works with the class by asking questions to help them understand how the verbs of the sentences carry the meaning of "general truth": For example, for sentence #1 in Grammar Reference Card #1, "Many people spend too much time shopping," the teacher asks, "What is the time here, present or past? Now? What about tomorrow? Was it also true yesterday?" Answering these questions leads students to an understanding of how to appropriately use tense to formulate generalizations, a key concept in academic writing.

Continuing with the process, students move through each example, questioning as they go, labeling the statements either fact or opinion until they get to the past-tense examples that actually support the statements in the first three sentences. When students finally arrive at the line marked "definition" of present vs. past in academic writing, they are able to articulate the "rule" in their own words (e.g., "Use present tense for fact, opinion, general truth statements; use past tense for examples of events from the past that support my statements of opinion").

As with the active editing exercise mentioned previously, the activity of creating grammar reference cards involves using meaningful texts for teaching, in this case, examples from the students' own writing, and helps make grammar succinct and accessible. In addition, this activity follows the principles listed below for working with orally fluent second language writers (See Appendix D.):

- Appeal to visual, tactile, kinesthetic learners. (#2)
- Create practical, user-friendly reference tools. (#6)

Activity #3: Dictocomp

In a dictocomp activity, students listen to a text read two or more times by the teacher, take notes on key words as they listen, then working in pairs or small groups, negotiate meaning and form to reconstruct their own text based on the notes they have taken (Wajnryb, 1990). The text can be a piece of adapted student writing, an excerpt from a reading, or a brief paragraph constructed by the teacher. The text that the students produce conveys the meaning of the original but is not necessarily identical to it, as is expected when learners respond to a dictation. (A sample dictocomp text is presented in Appendix G.)

Telling students to take notes on "key" information only (not complete sentences) when introducing a dictocomp activity helps learners develop active listening skills. Teachers can also help students pay attention to both content and form by asking them in a prelistening activity to identify the language forms or features they have been focusing on in the course and discussing how to identify them during the reading by the teacher. For example, teachers might ask students to notice the time expressions that occur during the preliminary reading of the text and think about what tenses are used to show appropriate time-tense relationships. During the text reconstruction, students will negotiate both content and grammar, thus having to pay attention to both features simultaneously, and thus raising awareness of links between form and meaning.

Therefore, dictocomp activities are perfect vehicles for capitalizing on Generation 1.5 learners' oral fluency to help them work on expressing ideas while paying attention to language. In addition, this activity reflects the following principles and goals for working with orally fluent second language writers (See Appendix D):

- Use meaningful texts as grounding for helping learners understand grammar. (#5)
- Use activities that point out what strong oral communicators students are. (#2)
- Help learners make connections between how they speak and how they write. (#3)
- Take advantage of learners' oral fluency and comfort level with English by having students help and learn from each other. (#4)

Activity #4: Developing Self-editing Sheets

The activity of developing self-editing sheets moves students from group work to individual work and from working with shorter pieces of writing to more extended discourse. (See samples in Appendix H.) The purpose of this activity is to help students learn to formulate the questions that writers need to ask in order to make meaning clear for readers. Self-editing sheets can be created as a class with the teacher at the board by eliciting (a) the steps that students need to take to check for accuracy for a particular grammar feature and (b) the questions that learners need to ask themselves in order to successfully edit their work for that point. After constructing the steps and de-

veloping the accompanying questions on the board, students can copy the information in their notebooks for future use and/or the teacher can type up the procedure to hand back to learners. These self-editing sheets can then be used as a reference guide at home, during peer review, or during in-class essay writing.

Encouraging learners to develop and use self-editing steps and questions in conjunction with grammar reference cards, described earlier, helps them follow up on language analysis activities they participated in during earlier class sessions, but by presenting material with a fresh approach. With self-editing sheets, students are presented the same information as in previous activities but in a different format, in this case, a series of inductive questions that learners need to ask themselves as they analyze their writing. Thus, as students determine the answers to the questions, they can benefit from the "recycling" of previous material and apply what they have learned to their own writing. In addition, this activity is especially effective in helping fluent Generation 1.5 learners, who write as they speak, create some distance between themselves and their written work in order to analyze and interact with their writing, learn and practice grammar "rules," and develop meaningful strategies for editing. Therefore, when teachers ask them to "check their work," they will have a system in place that responds to the task of editing and proofreading on their own. The underlying goals and principles for this activity are (See Appendix D):

- Use meaningful texts to help learners understand grammar. (#5)
- Give manageable error correction tasks. (#8)
- Make grammar accessible. (#6)
- Help students develop focused strategies for editing beyond "check your work." (#10)

One last principle from our list (#14 in Appendix D) we would like to stress is that language learning is a slow and protracted process. Breaking old patterns and learning new ways takes time and time and more time. Not only is this true for students, but learning new ways and approaches for teaching can be a slow and protracted process for us as well. The approach and activities described on the previous pages have illustrated some new ways to look at and work with the learners in our classes and the writing they present.

Our hope is that we can begin to develop a new model, for both ESL and Composition, to guide our work with Generation 1.5 writers, one that begins with a focus on meaning, rather than on error, a new pedagogical framework that, with teachers as facilitators, supports learners in developing the awareness and the tools they need to become successful academic writers.

Moving Beyond the Classroom

As we develop new pedagogical approaches for working with Generation 1.5 learners, we are equally compelled to reevaluate the professional training and the institutional policies that constrain the shape these approaches can take.

Professional Training

In light of what we are learning about this population of students, it is clear that teacher training programs must change. Since universities have various ways of placing these students, it is not surprising to find them sitting in ESL classes in some institutions, and in basic writing courses in others. This being the case, we need to consider separately what the presence of such students means for the teacher working with traditional ESL students, and for the teacher working with academically underprepared native speakers of English. Programs can no longer afford to neglect the kind of preparation that would help basic writing teachers understand, and effectively respond to, the errors Generation 1.5 writers produce. Nor can programs fail to train ESL teachers to address the learning styles of both "ear" as well as "eye" learners (Reid, 1998), the *range* of cultural knowledge this group of students brings to class, the fluency with which they speak English, and the different motives they may possess for mastering academic language. Unless and until teacher training programs *themselves* recognize the existence of this group, students like Tina—who resist teachers' prescriptions for program placement—are going to risk being radically misunderstood by, and then resistant to, well-intentioned but uninformed teachers.

Institutional Research and Policy

In order to evaluate the soundness of their existing policies, institutions need to gather data on the linguistic backgrounds and educational experiences of those students who are variously and inaccurately categorized as "ESL" or "basic." Knowing who Generation 1.5 students are and how they came to us provides us with a basis and rationale for our recommended program designs and requested budget allocations. Knowing also about the educational trajectory and retention rates of these students provides institutions with a compelling measure of how well they are meeting their stated mission of embracing diversity and offering quality education to U.S. resident language minority students.

Trying to effect sensible institutional policies based on such data is likely to present significant challenges to faculty and administrators alike. What we as ESL and Composition teachers know and have known for a long time is that the acquisition of academic literacy is a slow, protracted process for native as well as nonnative speakers of English. Unfortunately, those of us working in higher education also know that for the past hundred years these institutions have operated as though there were a "conceptual split between 'content' and 'expression,' [between] learning and writing" (Russell, 1991, p. 5). In this system "writing [has always been viewed as] an elementary, mechanical skill" (p. 5)—one that should have been acquired prior to entering the university and thus one that has no direct relation to the instructional goals of higher education. Viewed in this way, attention to literacy education has been "relegated to the margins of a course, a curriculum, an institution" (p. 5). Thus, *any* proposed institutional reform growing out of research on Generation 1.5 students that would call for additional resources and faculty effort is likely to be met with serious resistance since such rec-

ommendations challenge the ways our institutions have traditionally viewed their role in, and responsibility for, literacy education. Add to this deeply rooted institutional stance faculty expectations that "adult language learners can attain completely monolingual-like command of an L2" (Harklau, Losey, & Siegal, p. 8), and you can see why, as educators, we need institutional data to help us be better prepared to respond to the deeply entrenched "not in my backyard" approach to literacy that has had, and continues to have, profound implications for institutional policy, academic standards, and resource allocation.

Another consequence of institutional research on this population of students is that universities might need to stop treating ESL and basic writing instruction as de facto remedial (non-credit bearing) work. If this population of students is eligible to enter our universities, and if they are coming in greater and greater numbers—both of which clearly seem to be the case— then we need to consider the standards we are using to define what "normal" or expected proficiencies of high school graduates are. Unfortunately, when standards are not held accountable to realities, and students' initiation into college-level work is deemed "*pre*collegiate," a sizable number of these students are forced to surmount the financial, emotional, and logistical challenges we know non-credit bearing courses pose—challenges that all too often set these students up to fail in the system.

Of course, understanding more about these students will also put pressure on universities to evaluate their exit standards for this population. Can or should we expect ESL—and in our case, Generation 1.5—learners to meet the same standards of written grammatical proficiency that we hold for native speakers of English? If not, who will set these standards, and what kinds of university resources might we expect to give to content faculty so that they feel better equipped to read and respond to the work of ESL and U.S. resident second language writers?

Unless and until we can document the presence and linguistic history of this burgeoning new group of students in higher education, they will be forced to try to survive the vicissitudes of a complex and challenging system that doesn't even realize they are there.

Recommendations

Although our efforts to meet these students' educational needs—both in and outside our classrooms—present us with significant challenges, they are challenges we can no longer afford to ignore. We would like to close by offering several recommendations for institutional practice and policy:

1. ESL teachers and basic writing teachers can/should gather data on students in their classrooms and urge their program administrators to compile summaries of such data, thus documenting the presence of Generation 1.5 students in their programs and showing the ratio of such students to "traditional" ESL and basic writing students. Such summaries should also include analysis of the students' language backgrounds, their educational histories, and their language needs in terms of their writing strengths and weaknesses. We en-

courage readers to use and/or modify the survey in Appendix A to gather such data.

2. ESL teachers and Composition teachers, along with other personnel that work with Generation 1.5 learners such as learning assistance programs and tutoring centers, need to find a way to work together to develop new frameworks and pedagogical approaches that will address these students' needs in their own institutions.

3. Faculty and administrators directly concerned with improving the writing of Generation 1.5 students need to formulate recommendations and policy for assisting these students both in and beyond the English classroom to ensure their success at the university, disseminating such recommendations to appropriate institutional personnel such as academic senates, policy committees, curriculum committees, and writing-across-the-disciplines programs.

With these recommendations, we want to underscore the important role language educators can play *outside* the classroom. After all, who better to convey to our respective institutions the sheer folly of believing or behaving as though this recently identified category of student is simply a temporary distortion of the demographics of students enrolling in higher education? Those of us teaching ESL and basic writing are already well aware of the presence of Generation 1.5 students on our campuses. Garnering and disseminating our own data on this group of learners can only help to promote their institutional visibility, as well as secure resources and effect policies that better serve them and the faculty responsible for teaching them.

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Endnotes

[1] Appendix C presents the major findings of the survey in table form. The table sets the data in the context of information about the two groups of students with which we can compare these Generation 1.5 students: basic writers and ESL writers. The information describing the two comparison groups represents our common knowledge about *traditional* basic writers and *traditional* ESL populations; it is not based on empirical data. Infor-mation about ESL writers is categorized according to two subgroups, "Re-cent Immigrants to the U.S." and "F-1 Visa or international students." These two designations follow a useful distinction that is often made in college and university ESL programs, especially those in urban areas with large immigrant populations, a distinction made because of the differing language and cultural proficiencies these two groups of students bring to the ESL classroom. (See Reid, 1998; Bosher & Rowenkamp, 1998.)

[2] We have used the term "home language" (HL) rather than the traditional "first language" (L1) to refer to the students' language other than English, as it is often unclear just which language is their first language. Many of these students grew up in multilingual environments and thus had a hard time identifying their first language. Generally, the home language is the language their parents usually speak.

[3] The term "ear learner" (Reid, 1998, p. 4) refers to learners who have ac-quired a language (here English) primarily through their ears—through be-ing immersed in the language and the culture, taking in oral language from those around them and developing their knowledge of the language subcon-sciously, rather than through explicit instruction. Reid contrasts them with "eye learners" who have learned primarily through reading and the study of rules.

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Appendix A
Language Use Survey

Name:_____

Note: If you are a native speaker of English and do not speak any other languages (excluding those studied in high school or college as school subjects), please answer questions 1-7 only.

I. My Background

1. I was born in the United States. Yes____   No____
2. I was not born in the United States. I was born in: ____ (what country)
3. I was not born in the United States, but I came here when I was:
    Under 5 years old
    6-12 years old
    13-18 years old
    Over 18 years old
4. English was the first language I learned to speak.
    Yes____ No____
    If not English, I first learned to speak: ____ (what language)
5. English was the first language I learned to write.
    Yes____ No____
    If not English, I first learned to write: ____ (what language)
6. English was the first language I learned to read.
    Yes____ No____
    If not English, I first learned to read: ____ (what language)
7. I am a native speaker of English.   Yes____ No____
8. I am a nonnative speaker of English.   Yes____ No____
9. I speak English as a second language. Yes____ No____
10. I am an ESL student.   Yes____ No____
11. I am bilingual.   Yes____ No____
12. I am neither an ESL student, nor bilingual.
    I am:_____ (what best describes your language background)

II. My Education

13. Please complete the chart below regarding the location of your schools, the languages you used, and whether or not you had ESL instruction.

School grade	Location (country)	Languages used in school	Did you have ESL instruction? (yes/no)
Kindergarten			
First			
Second			
Third			
Fourth			
Fifth			
Sixth			
Seventh			
Eighth			
Ninth			
Tenth			
Eleventh			
Twelfth			
Community College			

III. HOW I USE LANGUAGE

14. Please list in the chart what languages you know. (Don't include languages you studied only as a school subject.) Tell how well you understand, speak, read, and write these languages by circling the appropriate number that corresponds to the following: 1= *well*, 2= *some*, 3= *not much*

Language	Understand	Speak	Read	Write
1. English	1 2 3	1 2 3	1 2 3	1 2 3
2.	1 2 3	1 2 3	1 2 3	1 2 3
3.	1 2 3	1 2 3	1 2 3	1 2 3
4.	1 2 3	1 2 3	1 2 3	1 2 3

15. Please indicate how much you use any language other than English in the following situations by circling the appropriate number that corresponds to the following: 1 = *not at all*, 2 = *less than half the time*, 3 = *half the time*, 4 = *more than half the time*, 5 = *all the time*

a) Talking to my parents   1 2 3 4 5
b) Parents talking to me   1 2 3 4 5
c) Talking with brothers/sisters 1 2 3 4 5
d) Talking at work   1 2 3 4 5
e) Talking with my friends   1 2 3 4 5
f) Reading/writing at home   1 2 3 4 5
g) Reading/writing at school   1 2 3 4 5

h)	Reading/writing at work	1 2 3 4 5
i)	Writing to friends (email, letters)	1 2 3 4 5
j)	Reading for pleasure	1 2 3 4 5
k)	Dreaming	1 2 3 4 5

16. When I take into consideration all the situations where I use language (my home life, my work life, my social life, my school life, etc.), I would say that, overall, my best language is:

17. When I take into consideration all the situations where I use language (my home life, my work life, my social life, my school life, etc.), I would say that, overall, I am most comfortable:

    speaking   _____   (what language)

    reading   _____   (what language)

    writing   _____   (what language)

Appendix B
Writing Topics for Students: Exploring Language Use and Identity

Topic I

Write about the languages you use on a daily basis at home, at work, at school, with friends. Discuss the situations when you use a particular language and how you feel when you use it. Include the following in your paper:

- what the languages are
- which language you feel is your <u>best</u> language and why
- which language you are <u>most comfortable speaking</u> and why
- which language you are <u>most comfortable reading</u> and why
- which language you are <u>most comfortable writing</u> and why

Topic II

Background: In our group discussion, we brainstormed ideas about identity and the words we choose to identify ourselves. We also talked about how other people identify us and how we feel about the names they use.

Directions: Please respond to the statements below in the space provided. Then, in writing, on a separate piece of paper, explain the reasons why you answered the way you did. Use details and examples from your own experience as support for your ideas. (1 to 2 pages)

1. I am a native speaker of English.   Yes _____   No _____
2. I am a nonnative speaker of English.   Yes _____   No _____
3. I speak English as a second language.   Yes _____   No _____
4. I am an ESL student.   Yes _____   No _____
5. I am bilingual.   Yes _____   No _____
6. I am neither an ESL student, nor bilingual.

       I am _____ (what best describes your language background)

Appendix C

	Basic Writers 21% (N=18) Monolingual	Generation 1.5 79% (N=67) Non-monolingual	ESL Students (not surveyed)	
			Recent Immigrants	F-1 Visa Students
Language Use Survey Questions #1–12 #15–17	English used in all contexts	Use 2 or more languages in complex and variable ways "Best" Language: • 42% English (7% only Eng., 32% only HL at home) • 42% Home language (82% only HL at home) • 16% Both languages (45% only HL at home)	• English for school, daily survival • L1 for family • Mostly L1 for literacy • Both Ls for social	• English for school, daily survival • L1 for family • L1 for literacy • Both Ls for social
Oral Proficiency Questions #14–17	Fluent in English	Mostly fluent in English Often "ear learners" • 69% speak, understand "well" • 21% feel oral proficiency weak Mostly fluent in home language • For HL dominant and balanced bilinguals: 95% strong oral	• Varied fluency in English • Often "ear learners," thus strong comprehension • Often use oral proficiency for help in writing • Fluent in L1	• Weak fluency in English • "Eye learners," thus weak comprehension • Can't rely on oral proficiency for help in writing • Fluent in L1

	Basic Writers 21% (N=18) Monolingual	Generation 1.5 79% (N=67) Non-monolingual	ESL Students (not surveyed)	
			Recent Immigrants	F-1 Visa Students
Literacy Proficiency Questions #14–17	Weak in English	Only 37% "proficient" in both languages Varied proficiency in English literacy • 39% say English literacy strong in addition to good oral skills • 61% say English literacy weak • 67% most comfortable reading and writing in English Varied proficiency in HL literacy • 64% weak in HL literacy, so transfer from HL not likely	• Weak in English but some transfer from L1 likely (weak English vocabulary, some cultural schema) • Usually strong in L1	• Weak in English but high transfer from L1 (weak vocabulary, collocation; weak cultural schema) • Strong in L1
US Cultural Knowledge Question #13	Strong: born in US	Strong: Average years of school in US • English dominant: 11.4 • Balanced bilinguals: 10.2 • HL dominant: 8.6 • Range of years in US schools: 2–13	• Mixed: ranges from moderate to weak • Years in US: 1–6	• Weak (academic, social)
Affiliation Motivation From writing samples, interviews, questions #9, 10	Depends on ethnicity, class	Varied affiliation • 2/3 say they speak English as second language but are not "ESL students" • 1/3 never in ESL classes	• Mostly affiliation with L1 culture • Varied motivation	• Affiliation with L1 culture • High motivation for academic survival

Principles for Working with Orally Fluent Second Language Writers

I. Drawing on students' backgrounds to promote language learning

1. Avoid making assumptions about your students' educational backgrounds, language use, and/or how they identify themselves. Use some kind of survey or interview questions at the beginning of the semester.
2. In lesson planning and responding to writing, work to connect the backgrounds of your students with how they learn and how they write. Try to appeal to different learning modalities: visual, oral, aural, tactile, kinesthetic.
3. Help students see the connection between their backgrounds and their writing: specifically, help them to make connections between how they speak and how they write.
4. In structuring in-class work that focuses on form, capitalize on students' oral fluency and comfort level with spoken English through small group activities that encourage students to help and learn from each other.
5. Consider the literacy backgrounds of your students by using meaningful texts for teaching. Whenever possible, teach from the students' own writing.

II. Setting priorities for editing

6. Since you can't assume that "1.5" learners have knowledge of grammar terms and rules, make basic grammar information succinct and accessible.
7. Prioritize concerns/errors and figure out a focus for your response to student writing. Resist the urge to teach and mark "everything."
8. Give manageable editing and error correction tasks. Don't overwhelm students, especially students who have had minimal language instruction.
9. Help students set "grammar and writing" goals for now, for the future. Help them follow up and see their progress.
10. Help students develop focused strategies for editing beyond "check your work."
11. Encourage students to participate in their own language learning processes by giving them choices about what they want to work on and how they want to work on it.

III. Working with students

12. Whenever possible, give students the opportunity to "write through" their errors through the revising process.
13. Help students learn to be patient with themselves and develop their own "voices" as academic writers.

14. Remember that language learning is a slow and protracted process. Breaking old patterns and learning new ways takes time and time and more time. The work you do this semester may not show up as "success" until much later.

Appendix E

Activity 1
Finding out What You Know about Grammar Terms and
Setting up a System for Active Editing

First, read the student writing below all the way through once. Then follow the steps. If you can't do any of the steps because you don't understand the words in the directions, put a star next to the word(s) you have questions about.

Understanding Grammar Terms
- Draw a wiggly line under any **time expressions** you find.
- Underline the **verbs** that show tense in the sentences below.
- Circle all the **subjects** of the verbs.
- Put a box around **modals** in these sentences.

Identifying Errors
- Write "s-v" in the margin in front of any line where you think there is a **subject-verb agreement** error.
- Put an x in the margin in front of any line where you think there is a **tense** error.

Student Writing
Here is what one student wrote in response to the topic, "Addiction."

I think being addicted to something can be a serious problem and can also be harmful, too. I am also addicted to a few things. although I knew it is not wisest for me. One of the things that I'm addicted to most is shopping for clothes and spending too much time on crafts. It seem like it is part of me and I would do it forever. It is something that I really like to do to make myself feel happy.

Ever since I've got a job last year in the summer, I started to shop more than I usually do. I was afraid to lose my job and didn't worry much about school. All I cared for is what I wanted. As soon as the program ended, I felt terrible. I didn't have the money to go shopping anymore. My attitude start to change dramatically and I got very lazy. I feel like I would never be happy if I do not get what I want. I am always in my room and I never want to go out. Sometimes I'm afraid to see my friends and if they have something nice on, I would feel very uncomfortable that I don't have it.

Appendix F

Grammar Reference Card #1

Present vs. Past in Academic Writing

definition / rule :

① Use present tense for fact, opinion, general truth statements.

② Use past tense for examples of events from the past that support
your statements of opinion.

examples:

① Many (people) spend too much time shopping. [general truth]

② (I) am addicted to shopping. [fact]

③ (An addiction to shopping) can negatively affect your life. [opinion]

④ Ever since (I) got a job last summer, (I) started to shop more
than (I) usually do. [past example]

⑤ (I) spent too much time and money shopping last semester.
[past example]

Grammar Reference Card #2

Passives

Definition : The subject of the verb receives the action.
The subject of the verb doesn't do the action.

How to form it : ① Most passives need a be verb.
ex: is/are was/were   has/have been
② be form + past participle : watch dropped endings.

Examples

① Most (people) are addicted to watching TV.

② Your (eyes) will be tired all the time.

③ If (you) know when to stop watching TV when (it) needs
[to be stopped], (you) will be fine.

Grammar Reference Card #3

Clause

definition: a s+v combination; some clauses are independent
        (sentences) and others are dependent (fragments).

examples:
    ① She is an addict. [sent.] ② Because she can't
        stop shopping. [frag.] ③ An activity which
        causes her to spend all her time and money. [frag.]

Phrase

definition: a word or words which do not contain both a subject
        and a verb

examples
    ① shopping and watching ② addicted and unhappy

Grammar Reference Card #4

Sentence Fragments

definition: a group of words punctuated like a sentence but not
        an independent clause. (It has a period at the end, but
        it's not a complete sentence.)

examples:
    ① We are a society of addicts. (sentence) ② People who
       are compulsive about doing or consuming something. (frag.)
    ③ The action or substance eventually becomes a habit
       which is out of control. (sent.) ④ Because getting
       addicted to something can blind us to face reality. (frag.)

Appendix G

Activity 3
Dictocomp[1]: Listen, Write, Negotiate
Making Connections Between Speaking and Writing

Steps for the Dictocomp

1. The teacher reads the whole text through at a normal pace, pausing slightly between sentences. Students don't write.
2. The teacher re-reads the text at a normal pace, pausing briefly between clauses. Students take notes.
3. Students, in pairs, triads, or small groups, compare notes to reconstruct the text. Groups can write on the board, on overhead transparencies, or at their desks.
4. After constructing their texts, students apply their active editing strategies, negotiate form and meaning with one another, and revise and correct their work.
5. As a class, students with the guidance of the teacher, compare different versions, examining the relationship between form and meaning, between spoken word and written text. Students look for evidence of oral forms or patterns in their written work: dropped endings, missing subjects, missing time expressions, or joining words.

Sample Student Dictocomp Text

> We are a society of addicts living in a world full of passions and desires. Our world is a place where we find desirable activities that give us joy and happiness, or sometimes cause problems or poor health. These activities are the things we do habitually, such as eating, walking, talking, or sleeping. They are also activities, such as smoking or watching TV, that we include in our everyday routine and that somehow have become addictions. Addiction is defined as the state of having a compulsive need for a habit-forming substance or activity. An addiction creates a physical dependence which causes a physiological reaction upon withdrawal.

Focus for teaching: sentence boundaries, fragments, joining words, being aware of audience

[1] Wajnryb, R. (1990). *Grammar dictation*. Oxford, England: Oxford University Press.

Appendix H
Activity 4
Self-Editing Sheet

Follow all the steps below on your essay. When you correct or edit, use a
brightly colored pen. Use your grammar reference cards to help you.

I. Tenses Checklist.

For each sentence:
1. Underline main verbs, circle subjects, wiggly line time expressions, box modals.
2. Think about *your meaning* in relationship to other sentences in the paragraph.
3. Ask yourself the following questions:
    *   Do I want to show past time, present time, OR
    *   Do I want to use present tense for fact, opinion, or general truth?
    *   Have I shifted tenses? Do I have a clear *reason* for shifting?
    *   Are my time expressions clear?
4. Correct and edit: Correct verbs for tense and agreement.

II. Joining Words Checklist

Read through the sentences in your essay. Put double lines under each
joining word that you find.
1. For each joining word, ask yourself the following questions:
    *   What is the logical relationship that the joining word shows? (e.g., contrast, opposite idea, condition, etc.)
    *   Does the joining word connect my ideas the way I want it to? Does it make sense? If not, what is the better choice?
    *   What kind of joining word is it? (e.g., subordinator, coordinator, transition word?)
    *   What kind of punctuation (if any) do I need?
2. Make necessary corrections.

III. Adjective Clauses Checklist

Read through the sentences in your essay. Put [brackets] around each
adjective clause that you find.
1. For each adjective clause, ask yourself the following questions:
    *   What is the verb and subject of the adjective clause? (Check for tense and subject-verb agreement.)
    *   Is the relative pronoun a subject or object in the adjective clause? (Check for missing subjects, double subjects, double objects.)
    *   Is the adjective clause placed where it should be? (i.e., close to the noun it modifies)
    *   Does the adjective clause "work" in the sentence? (Check for "*thats*" used as joiners when you should be using a joining word.)
2. Make necessary corrections.